

# Victims of police brutality vent frustrations

By SAMANTHA MCKENZIE  
Chronicle Staff Writer

Nine-year-old Tyrone Green has a fascination with rocks. One day he brought his favorite crystalline rock to school. School officials mistook it for drugs and called the police. The small boy was interrogated for an hour by police at the school before his grandmother arrived. After the rock was tested and proven to be a mineral, not a drug, Green was allowed to go back to class. He now has a criminal record.

A white male, Rodney Ross, testified that he was stopped by three state troopers, handcuffed and then kicked, slapped by the officers. He sustained bruises on the face and body.

The community hearing on police brutality held at Emmanuel Baptist Church Friday served as an open forum for citizens to air their concerns and testify to incidents

when they have been harassed or abused by police officers.

At least 15 people — both black and white — were heard by a panel, which included community leaders Larry Little, Walter Marshall, D. D. Adams, Bill Booker and Jacqueline Teal. The panel was responsible for taking notes of the testimonies which will be used for a full report.

The hearing was organized by the group Citizens United for Justice. According to one of the groups organizers, the Rev. John Mendez, a report will be made and submitted to city and police officials. The group is hoping to establish the need for a citizen's police review board.

"It's clear that we have to develop a network for exposure. There is no question in anybody's mind whether or not police brutality is in fact a reality here in Winston-Salem as it is in Los Angeles," said Mendez. Mendez and other group orga-

nizers, which included the Rev. William S. Fails and the Rev. Carlton Eversley, said they were surprised to see so many white citizens testifying that night. "One of the things that was learned tonight is that police brutality is not only aimed at African-Americans, but also poor people in general, which means poor white people," Mendez said.

Marshall said the report will hopefully make the police department take a better look at its policy, procedures and practices.

After sitting through five hours of testimony, Marshall said, "Police violence is becoming more fascist. It's no longer a thing of racism," he added.

Mendez stressed that the hearing was not held to discredit the police force, but to put an end to the mistreatment of citizens by a "few bad officers."

"We recognize there are some good, honest, decent law enforcement officers in the police depart-



**Tyrone Green**  
merit and we realize they would like to see the gap between the community and the department closed. But that will never happen until these rotten apples are weeded out," Mendez said.

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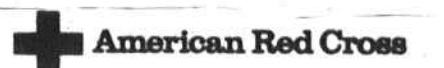
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## Giv'em what they want

Continued from page A1

what the masses of black folks may really think about an issue, deferring instead to the "most-leader-like-looking Negro" and thus, by default, another black spokesman is born.

### Best of Intentions

The result of the good intentions of many of our black leaders has been that we as a people now find ourselves having fallen from the lofty perch of personal achievement and self respectability established by our forefathers, to one of being in a helpless condition of "blaming white folk's racism" for every damned-negative thing that has ever happened to us.

It has gotten so bad that many black folks have started to wake up without a clue as to who's in charge of their own lives and who ain't. On the one hand every Sunday morning, poor darkey is being told that God can make all things possible, but come Monday morning, the power of him and God appears to have all but gone to dissipated, leaving the poor helpless Negro to the vices and devices of the mean ol' white folks of the world.

Such is the pitiful state of mind into which many of our black leaders have led us. No longer do we as a people ascribe to be better than white folks in everything — regardless of whose history or what obstacles may lie ahead. No, unlike our ancestors who knew better, some of us are now acting as if we believe the white man's original lie that said blacks were inherently inferior.

This is not to absolve white folks of their rightful share of blame in this country! They are due plenty of blame and Los Angeles reminds us that they and the system ain't through with needing to be reminded of such, BUT what do white folks have to do with you and I teaching our own children the value of self-discipline and self-denial? What do white folks have to do with us teaching our own children the value of learning to read and write? The list could go on and on and on...

### Asking the Tough Question

By electing our black spokespersons and leaders, you and I would have an opportunity to participate in a far more meaningful discussion about the serious issues facing black folks in America.

For the first time in modern history, we could begin to debate critical issues as the idea of choice for public schools, whether all-black-male academies is a good idea, should we return to segregated schools and forget about busing? Or separatism or conservatism the best political philosophy for black folks? Or should blacks split their vote between Republicans, Democrats, and now Independents? Just what is the best course for black America?

By electing our own shadow government of elected officials, ministers, president, senators, black folks could debate these and many other issues in a public forum, using our best minds to determine the best course of action. We could conduct our own town-hall kind of meeting.

Just imagine how much more meaningful this upcoming election could be if the black leaders for the past 20 years were coming up for reelection this fall? — to be held

accountable in the same way that we are holding George Bush and Dan Quayle and the rest of Congress accountable for the mess of the past 12 years?

Imagine how much more meaningful this entire process would be to black folks if black leaders for

the past 20 years were forced to both ask and answer the same question that Reagan posed, "are you better off today than you were 20 years ago?"

I can assure you that it would be a most revealing discussion. Most would be hard pressed to say "yes" — especially since most have

made spent a lifetime of preaching that things were getting worse. The question then would be why are things getting worse?

With such a dismal record, it would seem to me that our leaders would either voluntarily step down or we should elect new ones.

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