

Aldermen Urge Laws to Halt Abuses by Ambulance Firms

The president pro tem of the city council issued a scathing attack against abuses by the city's private ambulance companies yesterday and called for legislation that would permit the "prosecution and license revocation" of offenders.

Ald. Claude W. B. Holman [4th] said he will introduce a resolution in the council tomorrow calling for the legislation and urging the council's committees on health and licensing to "conduct public hearings into this matter and make recommendations and findings to the council. . . ."

Holman was joined in drafting the resolution by Ald. Wilson Frost [21st]. The aldermen acted after THE TRIBUNE and Better Government association disclosed the sadistic treatment of the sick and injured by some of the city's private ambulance companies.

The companies are licensed

by the board of health and the city vehicle commission.

James Y. Carter, city vehicle license commissioner, expressed strong concern over the disclosures in THE TRIBUNE articles and pledged a "prompt and very thorough investigation."

The reaction by city officials was praised by Richard E. Friedman, executive director of the B. G. A., who said immediate action is necessary to curb future abuses against citizens needing emergency transportation and care.

"Long-range planning to insure that this kind of grotesque treatment of the ill and injured does not reoccur can be mapped at a later date," said Friedman. "What is needed now is prompt action against the violators to insure every citizen that a member of his family will not fall victim to these conditions."

The Holman and Frost resolution says in part:

"Whereas recent disclosures supported by ample evidence developed by THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE and its prize-winning reporter, William H. Jones, have brought to our attention that the ambulance companies in the city of Chicago are engaged in unethical, unsanitary, unfair, and unkind practices to the public.

"Be it resolved that the city council direct its committees on health and licenses to jointly conduct public hearings in this matter and make recommendations and findings to the council in order that the necessary legislation can be enacted."

"Said legislation to provide penalties by way of license revocation of all companies found guilty of aforesaid practices and further to provide personal prosecution with penalties of fines and imprisonment to individuals found guilty."