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# Judge Calls Suit to Force Police Uniforms 'Ridiculous'

Judge John E. Swift, in equity session of Middlesex superior court yesterday, denounced efforts of the Tewksbury board of selectmen to force the town's three policemen to wear uniforms whenever on duty.

While declaring that he would study the briefs presented by Town Counsel Melvin G. Rogers and by Atty. Joseph P. Donahue, counsel for Police Chief Cyril L. Baker, before rendering a decision, Judge Swift termed the selectmen's effort "ridiculous."

"In other words," the jurist said, "they could tell the chief how to press his trousers and how many buttons to wear on his uniform."

"I'm inclined to believe that the regulations of the selectmen are arbitrary, and I might say ridiculous."

Atty. Donahue charged that the bill in equity brought by Selectmen William B. Carter, Victor N. Cluff and Edward J. Sullivan against Chief Barker was a "pure case of spite and hatred."

He said there were many occa-

sions when it was advantageous to the department for the chief to investigate a crime in plain clothes.

Donahue added that this was not the first instance of an attempted blackmark on the police chief by the selectmen. He said the town voted a 10 percent wage increase to police, firemen and school department employes last year, but that the selectmen excluded the chief.