



# METROPOLITAN DETROIT BRANCH

## American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan

808 Washington Boulevard Building / 234 State Street / Detroit, Michigan 48226 / 961-4662

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"Continued harrassment, intimidation, illegal search and seizure, and excessive and unlawful use of force against the citizenry by the Detroit Police Department is creating a police state of terror in Detroit," according to Adrienne James, chairwoman of the Metropolitan Detroit Branch of the American Civil Liberties Union. "Acts of violence against citizens are never justified by acts of violence against police officers. Both are criminal behaviors and both are to be condemned."

"Apprehension and arrest of those persons who attack police officers should be diligently pursued, as should crimes against other persons, but the law must be upheld in pursuit of these objectives," the ACLU Chairwoman said. The right of the people to be secure within their own homes is constitutionally guaranteed and must be protected, not violated, by police. Persons who are detained by police should be brought to arraignment as soon as reasonable, not after four days in jail, as was revealed in one case this morning."

The ACLU has long been concerned about STRESS, joining in the legal challenge filed last spring to stop that unit's illegal activities. Unfortunately, that suit has not yet been heard--and the stress continues.

Commissioner Nichols speaks of the need for community cooperation with the police. The ACLU agrees that such cooperation is essential to the maintenance of a just and lawful society. To do this, however, the community must be able to trust and have confidence in its police force.

Lack of that confidence is indicated by the community's failure, refusal, or inability to produce the suspects wanted in the STRESS shootings and by the innumerable complaints and allegations by citizens against police for their indiscriminate use of violence, harrassment, and intimidating methods.

ACLU urges the entire community to join together to stop the violence on both sides. An open investigation and hearings by the Detroit Common Council could be a first step toward peace. Bringing the conflict between citizens and police into the courtroom, via the suit previously referred to or by other means, could be another.