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Press Release

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*Crime Com
Bob Toohy
For your information
if you haven't already
seen it* *BT*

Less than three weeks ago the voters of Detroit rejected "crime on the streets" as a legitimate issue in the election of a mayor and Common Council. The leading exponents of "get tough" law enforcement and a "take the handcuffs off the police" policy were emphatically repudiated at the polls.

Mayor Cavanagh's latest brainstorm in the form of a proposal to arm policemen with unconstitutional "stop and frisk" authority causes many of us to wonder just who won the last election. It comes as a distinct shock to thousands of voters who supported the Mayor's appeal to join in a team effort to move our city forward.

The "search and frisk" proposal is especially shocking and a complete surprise to Detroit members of the State Legislature who would normally be expected to carry the ball for any state law of particular interest to the citizens of our city.

It is unfortunate that Mayor Cavanagh chose to go directly to the press and over the heads of Detroit legislators with an appeal to the Governor in regard to proposals directly within the jurisdiction of the state legislators.

Mr. Cavanagh knows all the citizens of Detroit and Detroit members of the State Legislature are just as interested as he is in any legislative matter effecting the welfare of our city. We have demonstrated in the past our readiness to give him our full cooperation on legislative areas of mutual interest.

We stand ready now and at any time to sit down with the Mayor and work out with him and members of the Common Council a joint legislative approach to broad state legislative solutions not only toward the control of crime but also toward the elimination of poverty and ignorance which are among the primary roots of crime.

We will be glad to cooperate in legislation that will provide expanded educational and job training programs for unemployed and drop-out youth in order to get at the source of the problem.

We are in favor of expanded detention facilities and half-way houses to keep repeat law breakers off the streets and provide a chance for rehabilitation.

We will cooperate in making money available for more policemen and better paid policemen, for more street lighting, etc..

We are in favor of additional legislation to provide better training for our policemen.

We will cooperate in rallying the community in a massive effort of crime prevention and cooperation with the police based on mutual respect between the police and the citizens and the strict observance of constitutional rights.

We are willing to work out any reasonable solution to this problem but we refuse to allow the Mayor or anyone else to panic us into ill-advised legislative actions which will do more harm than good.

We cannot unite Detroit or move our city forward by legalizing the type of "crackdown" by the police department that in the past has violated the rights of the law-abiding while fail failing to control the operation of the criminal.

We cannot eliminate "crime on the streets" by waging war against the constitutional rights of law-abiding citizens.

We cannot expect citizens to respect and cooperate with the police when the police are encouraged to be disrespectful and to refuse to cooperate with those very same citizens.

We have no reason to doubt Mayor Cavanagh's sincerity in seeking state legislative solutions to the control of crime in our city. We do feel, however, if he is trying to influence and cooperate with the state legislature and the citizens of Detroit who are all genuinely concerned with this problem, he has a strange way of showing it. We, therefore, call upon the Mayor at this time to return to his original conception of team effort. We, in the legislature, stand ready to meet with him and any other interested citizens to work out this common problem in a manner that will serve to unite our city and thus enable us all to continue to move forward.

SIGNED:

Senator Coleman A. Young, 4th Senatorial District

Representative James Bradley, 8th District

Representative Rosetta Ferguson, 9th District

Representative David S. Holmes, Jr, 10th District

Representative Thomas W. White, 11th District

Representative William Ryan, 3rd District