

NOV. 26, 1968

We of the Ad-Hoc Action Group - Citizens of Detroit are compelled by events, circumstance and our commitment to return again to 1300 Beaubien.

We will not accept "justice" when it has only taken pacifying efforts to dilute community concern and commitment. We are referring specifically to Police Commissioner Spreen's action regarding Cobo Hall I (the charge of the White Brigade, May 13, 1968 on the Poor People's Campaign.)

We applaud the far-reaching plans which you, Commissioner Spreen, spoke of in your statement regarding Cobo Hall I: "Training for supervisory officers and subordinates. . . more equipment. . . sound equipment. . . more effective portable loud trailers and public address systems. . . more supervisory officers at the first and second echelons of command. . . Citizens Complaint Bureau procedures being reviewed and strengthened. . . the recognized need for a police-community relations unit within this department. . . project community-oriented patrol must be expanded and accelerated. . . specially designated task force, utilized to augment the Citizens Complaint Bureau in their efforts to investigate."

These plans, if implemented, would definitely work to establish real Police-Community relations. The question is, Commissioner Spreen --- CAN IT BE DONE??

Can you understand and appreciate the distrust --- the lack of faith in your words --- with which many people in this community view your pronouncements? We need an act of good will on the part of the Detroit Police Department. The erosion in police-community relations has a history of many years and many broken promises.

So we come here today bereaved, in a funeral spirit --- it seems that justice has died in Detroit --- if not all of America. We are compelled to witness this reality with a symbolic funeral --- and at the same time re-dedicate ourselves to the cause from which the movement came --- namely, an end to police brutality and the resurrection of justice in our city. We ask that you come out from within your office and commit yourself and your department to the resurrection of justice in Detroit by taking the following ACTIONS, not promises:

- 1 Because of a six and one half month delay in action regarding Cobo Hall I, we demand that the trial board proceedings be opened to the public. We have no assurance that "the Commissioner's hearing" will in fact take place. Or will that, too, take 6 $\frac{1}{2}$  months?
- 2 Lt. Gerlach is named, specifically, in the eye-witness account of Phillip H. Mason, Field Representative, Community-Relations Service, United States Department of Justice, as the OFFICER WHO CALLED FOR THE INITIAL CHARGE OF THE MOUNTED POLICE; he MUST be held accountable for his actions. He MUST be brought before a Trial Board proceeding --- IMMEDIATELY.
- 3 Inspector Anthony Bertoni is named as the inspector in charge of the Poor People's Campaign --- Cobo Hall I AND HE IS RESPONSIBLE for the conduct of the police at Cobo Hall II. He, as command

officer must be held accountable for the collective action of the Detroit Police Department. It appears that under pressure Inspector Bertoni cannot act with clear-headedness and leadership. It is our considered opinion that Inspector Bertoni be transferred to an area of police work where human lives are not his primary responsibility, and that he, too, be brought before a Police Trial Board.

- 4 Attached to this statement is a copy of a memorandum from a field representative of the Commission on Community Relations to his superior, Mr. Richard Marks. In this memorandum he states that he saw photographs of Inspector Sylvester standing by watching as Patrolman Kursteiner beat a young man. Pontius Pilate washed his hands and stood by --- we know what came from that lack of courage and leadership. We are incensed that this kind of silent acquiescence to police brutality is existent in 1968 in Detroit. Inspector Sylvester must be held accountable for these actions at a Police Trial Board.

We believe that in the interest of justice that Command Officers must bear the same punitive action as Patrolmen. It is a poor form of elitism to punish only those who take orders and not those whose orders or lack of orders create an atmosphere and an attitude that leads to beaten, bloodied heads, racial slurs, and rioting on the part of police.

Your promises of meetings and future training for command officers DOES NOT undo the carnage left on May 13, 1968 and October 28, 1968 and November 1, 1968 --- not to mention the daily incidents that do not come to the public's attention.

Our symbolic ceremony today is crucial in expressing a re-dedication to the principles and goals that we set down last May. We demand that officers in command be held accountable for their actions as well as their negligence to act on May 13, 1968. Today we come to reaffirm our commitment to JUSTICE WALKING HAND IN HAND WITH LAW AND ORDER IN THE STREETS OF DETROIT, and we urge you, Commissioner Spreen, to show this community by your actions, not by words, that you, too, are dedicated to a Justice that is inseparable from Law and Order.