

July 16, 1963

The Honorable Samuel H Olsen  
Wayne County Prosecuting Attorney  
1300 Beaubien Street  
Detroit 26, Michigan

Dear Mr Olsen:

We join with the many other citizens of Detroit to protest both the unwarranted shooting of Miss Cynthia Scott by a member of the Detroit Police Department and to most vigorously protest the failure of the Wayne County Prosecutor to continue his investigation of the peculiar circumstances and the conflicting reports of witnesses to the Scott affair.

If the reports of the daily press are to be given credence, it is inconceivable that retaliation for a cut finger and/or a slashed uniform should be the loss of a human life, or that that life should be taken by way of bullets through the back! How does one relate or equate the two?

One great man has said, "We have nothing to fear but fear itself" and he is often quoted to remind us that the byproduct of fear is disaster. Yet it would seem this fear has permeated the ranks of those who supposedly dedicate their labors to defending, enforcing and upholding the law. I would respectfully point out that defense and enforcement are not to be construed as the conferring of right or power to judge or to pronounce sentence based on that judgment.

That Miss Scott's profession was illegal is totally irrelevant here; that she had a record based on her continued pursuit of that profession is not germane, for I do not recall a report that she was pursuing that profession at the time of her death. A life for a cut finger, sir, and not even the dignity of facing your executioner -- for shame!

We would remind our Honorable Prosecutor that there are times when all that is decent, all that is humane must come to the fore and must of necessity determine our course of action. At such a moment prior commitments, pressures, speculations and ambitions must be sacrificed to that which is humanly decent. We call upon you, sir, to take that stand. Obviously, "your own satisfactions" are insufficient. It may be quite true that a criminal warrant may be a "political warrant calculated to appeal to a minority group", but we would point out that there is no minority group involvement in the second incidence of back-shooting involving the Detroit Police Department. How say you now, Mr Prosecutor?

We would further remind our officials that these same "minorities" take on a new community significance at the point at which their votes are needed.

Councilman William T Patrick said it so well. . . . . "If we take refuge in legalisms, this leaves a lot of frustrations. . . . .". Detroit citizens -- all of them -- are entitled to something better than frustration!

Sincerely yours,

Mr and Mrs D Rex Edwards

cc: Commissioner George Edwards  
Arthur L Johnson, Executive Secretary, Detroit Branch NAACP  
Rev Charles Franklin, Detroit Council for Human Rights