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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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In these times of intense social change, chaos and fear are rampant. It is critical that those who have the power and/or the ability to educate and formulate public opinion act in the interest of truth, of justice, of humanity - and not strictly from self-interest and its foundation in racism. We of the Ad-Hoc Action Group are compelled to articulate our outrage and disgust with the current policies of the Detroit News.

In all policy the Detroit News appeals overtly to the ignorance and paranoia of the white racist. It has completely abdicated its community responsibility and has in fact become a diabolical menace because of its racially inflammatory editorials, features, distorted reporting, its omissions and innuendo.

We demand accurate and objective coverage of the activities and concerns of the entire community. A newspaper cannot claim to be objective when it gives unquestioning support to all police action, especially in light of the report of Dr. Robert A. Mendelsohn, Ph.D., on police attitudes and tendencies in this community. (The Detroit News ignored this otherwise widely published report.) It is the duty of a newspaper to report in an unbiased manner, and in reality, the Detroit News functions as little more than a public relations arm of the Detroit Police Department - without factual evidence to support any pleasant picture of Police-Community Relations in Detroit.

In its coverage of crimes committed by blacks against whites, the Detroit News has a policy that shockingly differs from its coverage of crimes committed by whites against blacks. Murders and other crimes of violence by whites against blacks receive second-page coverage, minimal follow-up and are generally reported as isolated incidents. On the other hand, murders and other crimes by blacks against whites receive front-page, top headline coverage for several days, human interest stories on the victim's family and invariably, editorial comments on the "rising crime rate."

On June 25, 1967, a black man attempting to protect his pregnant wife from a gang of white youths was shot in the head at Rouge Park. The eyewitness story of terror by the victim's wife, Mrs. Thomas, appeared only in the Michigan Chronicle - a Black newspaper. The News reported the Rouge Park incident on page 2.

Mrs. Thomas lost her baby the following week, a point of "follow-up" not noted at all in the News. The only further coverage within a full week of the incident appeared in the Free Press of June 27: an article about the release of all but one of the men held for investigation. There was no editorial comment about the judge who released them.

On November 31, 1966, a white store clerk in downtown Hudson's was stabbed by a black shoplifter. This incident received front page coverage in the News, with an additional human interest story also on the front page. On December 2 the News followed with another front page, top headline story, then on December 3 with a page 3 story, front page again on December 4, and an editorial on December 8 entitled "What's the Answer to Crime in the Streets?--It's More Policemen." The editorial read in part: "The fatal stabbing of a salesman by a shoplifter in Hudson's downtown store simply drives home the gravity of a crime problem which seems to grow deeper each month."

Why is the stabbing more indicative of a growing crime rate than the fatal shooting of a man in a park? Why does this stabbing indicate the need to fight crime while the murder of a black man by a gang of white youths does not? Why is there no call for investigation into the release of all but one of the youths?

Why has the Detroit News harrassed and vilified the good name of Recorder's Court Judge George W. Crockett, Jr. over an extended period of time. Why is his expertise in interpretation of Constitutional Law acknowledged only in out of town publications (NY Times and various Bar Association statements) and ignored in the News. It is no wonder that people with only a racist media to guide them have telephoned, telegrammed, protested and made resolutions concerning Judge Crockett. The people's response to the biased and inflammatory policies of the Detroit News is the ultimate example of the power of the media to mis-educate and mis-inform.

We accuse the Detroit News of forming and re-enforcing racial hysteria and ignorance to a point worthy of a Facist state. Regardless of motivation, we hold the Detroit News responsible for the continuing polarization of our community.

It must be understood that this is not just the tragedy of a 3rd rate newspaper also being a racist publication. This same ownership, same policy, extends to Channel 4 TV and Radio Station WWJ. The Detroit News, in this dominant position, has close to a communications monopoly on the perpetuation of this insidious racism in our community. It is not co-incidental that all 3 organs spew forth the same vile and inflammatory propaganda. This is Policy... And it comes from the top.... from Mr. Peter B. Clark.

BOYCOTT THE NEWS...BOYCOTT THE NEWS...BOYCOTT THE NEWS.
TRUTH...TRUTH...TRUTH...TRUTH...TRUTH...TRUTH...TRUTH...TRUTH...

(Acknowledgement is given to PAR for research on media)