



INNER CITY ORGANIZATION

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Rev. Albert B. Cleage, Jr., Chairman

May 20, 1968

Mayor Jerome P. Cavanagh
City-County Building
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Dear Mr. Cavanagh:

The recent brutality of Detroit police officers against participants in the Poor Peoples March at the entrance to Cobo Hall and the national attention which this incident has focussed on police-community relations in Detroit, as well as the contempt demonstrated by police officers towards the black community at the Common Council hearing on May 17, serve to highlight the urgent need of appointing a new Police Commissioner in the City of Detroit.

The enmity between the police and the black community today can be compared only to the conditions existing in an occupied country. The Detroit Police Department is viewed by a growing majority of black citizens not only as a source of harassment and brutality but as the naked instrument of containment, pacification and repression by a white citizenry, determined to retain political, social and economic power over a community in which it does not reside and which in the words of the Mayor himself it surrounds like a "white noose."

With this crisis in police-community relations clearly in mind, we make the following demands:

- 1) Immediate appointment of a Black Police Commissioner for the City of Detroit.
- 2) Community Police Review Boards in each police precinct, elected by the people of the precinct and with the power to regulate and discipline the actions and practices of police officers in that precinct.
- 3) A clear and unambiguous statement from you that the United States Constitution and Federal rules in regard to arrest, search and seizure, police interrogation, etc. will be employed in the city of Detroit, and a clear and unambiguous repudiation by you of the prevailing police practices of Stop and Frisk and other forms of physical and psychological brutality by police against black citizens.

Our Police-Community Relations Committee is ready to meet with you to discuss the immediate implementation of these demands before the situation further deteriorates.

Very truly yours,
Rev. Albert B. Cleage Jr.
Rev. Albert B. Cleage Jr., Chairman