

The resulting statement was endorsed unanimously by the committee and stands as the guideline for this endeavor:

## LAW AND JUSTICE

### A Statement of Principle

Over recent years outbreaks of civil disturbance and disorder, often spontaneous, have signalled the rising distress and alienation of millions of American Negroes.

Across the nation responsible elements of the black and white communities are moving urgently and with humanity to correct the circumstances that underlie much of the civil disorder and threaten the most precious institutions of the nation.

Leadership of private industry, labor, religion and education and of local government have combined, through the national Urban Coalition, to fight for massive Federal support of programs to lift disadvantaged people out of poverty and despair.

In the cities, support is being marshalled for private assaults on these problems, including the establishment of effective community leadership, so that the community of the poor, black and white, may achieve a full effective participation and self-determination in actions and decisions affecting them.

Here in Detroit large forces are on the move to bring to the people of this community a better life, a full measure of respect for their human rights and dignity, and genuine equality of opportunity.

But the problems we seek to cure are severe, ancient and deep-seated. With maximum effort, they will still require time, much patience, and much good will.

*Full resolution of these problems can be brought about only in an atmosphere in which violence, fear, hatred, prejudice and inequity are eliminated.*

Our area has been torn by violence, and the aftermath has been a lingering increase in random violence, arson and other crime.

Extremists of the right and left hint of further violence to come and seek to inflame the minds of the victims of injustice and discrimination, as well as of the general populace, to irresponsible action.

In many of our neighborhoods, the person and property of inhabitants, both black and white, are in constant danger; police



protection is not adequate to present community needs; and the fall of night too often marks the beginning of fear.

Both the black and white communities need to be protected against violence and crime, and it is the deep wish of both black and white to make ours a safe and secure community for all.

The response of the community to the July riot was not generally vindictive or punitive. In most instances, it was a constructive determination to understand and improve the conditions at fault. It revealed a recognition that the society as a whole shares some responsibility for the events of last July.

This response of the community was not a sign of weakness; it was a sign of maturity and strength. It should not be misread as condoning past, or inviting future, lawlessness.

*Responsible Americans, black and white, know this: Our society can survive only with respect for law.*

The society must and will act to protect itself against all forms of lawlessness, especially those that tend toward anarchy.

Moreover, no valid human rights can be advanced nor deep human needs fulfilled outside of a system of law. Who violates the law tramples on the rights of others, and where there is no law, none can be safe.

By the same token, the law cannot stand if it is not justly conceived and justly administered. No human emotion is more painful or more deeply inflammatory than a sense of injustice and unfairness.

There cannot be two kinds of law: one for the rich, one for the poor; one for the black man, one for the white.

*Respect for the law must be based upon just and equal enforcement of the law,*

Equal enforcement of the law includes:

- Equal protection of the human and civil rights of all citizens in the process of arrest, search or seizure.
- Equality of treatment by the legal profession and the courts, in arraignment and bail proceedings, in the quality of defense accorded defendants and in the nature of sentences imposed by the courts.
- Non-discrimination in hiring and advancement in all police forces.

*Violated  
by  
Courts*



- Equally effective police protection of the persons and property of all citizens without regard to race or station of life.

*For these reasons, New Detroit calls upon all citizens of the community to reaffirm their commitment to law and justice.*

- by pursuing social improvement by lawful means with great vigor;
- by strengthening the professionalism, morale and capability of the police authorities, and giving them the same respect that they are asked to give the community;
- by supporting a major assault on violence, crime and juvenile delinquency;
- by studying, changing as required, and continuously remaining alert to all the processes of justice, court administration and law enforcement to assure effective, equal, fair and sensible treatment of all our people.

New Detroit believes that the achievement of an open society, free of crime and criminality, in which the police power acts as guardian and protector of the individual, is a goal worthy of the best efforts of each of us in this community. We announce herewith our determined dedication to that goal, and urge that all our fellow citizens join with us in seeking it.

**GUIDELINE:** Members of the New Detroit Committee will continue to adhere to this Statement of Principle and encourages others to adopt its use and principles.

## COMMUNITY ATTITUDES

Difficult as it will be to provide enough jobs, adequate low-cost housing, acceptable standards of education, and all of the many other requisites of a strong and peaceful urban society, undoubtedly the most difficult achievement of all will be the alteration of personal attitudes. Bigotry, prejudice, distrust, fear, hate — all are words which apply to a great many whites and to a great many Negroes in and around Detroit.

At the time of the preparation of this report the community was deeply concerned by a drastic increase in the purchase of guns, by the formation of vigilante groups, by the spread of rumors which suggested invasions and kidnappings and burnings. The lack of understanding appeared to be greater than ever, and even within the white and within the Negro communities a polarization