

cc: W. Hledsco, Don Bauder, Melvin Byrd

*L. B. ...
Dept*

July 2, 1970

Mr. Patrick V. Murphy
Commissioner
Detroit Police Department
1300 Beaubien Street
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Dear Commissioner Murphy:

It is my understanding that the purpose of the monthly police-community relations meetings is to candidly discuss issues concerning the citizenry and the police. It would also appear that during these critical times, police-community relations groups would be concerned with hearing views contrary to their own.

After receiving reports on the 5th Precinct's police-community relations meeting last month, I am left somewhat amazed at the thought of the group denying a citizen of that neighborhood his constitutional right to be present in a public meeting. It is ironic that Mr. Frank Ditto, Director of the East Side Voice of Independent Detroit, should be barred from a police-community relations meeting when his views are shared by, and his programs have appealed to, a segment of that community.

What Mr. Ditto has to say is not as important as his right to say it. In my judgment, his exclusion is detrimental to community confidence and has served to alienate a part of the community rather than relate the police and the community. His exclusion may also give impetus to the view that police-community relations groups are established to stifle any innovative action and monitor those organizations seeking some change.

Fully recognizing your tremendous responsibilities, I would hope that you might suggest that Inspector Tarazy and the officers of the 5th Precinct refrain from taking a dominant role in this particular issue and allow Mr. Ditto to exercise the constitutional right given all of us, the right to attend and express opinions in a public community meeting.

Very truly yours,

Thomas J. Feloso, Jr.
Acting Executive Director

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