



I then checked the cellblock and found most of the weapons that the prisoners described in their complaints. Some of the items retrieved were baseball bats, hockey sticks and pool cues that were used to beat prisoners. When I removed these weapons, I promptly got a grievance from the D.P.O.A. and some verbal complaints from white sergeants that I was leaving the officers who worked in the cellblock unprotected.

Department of Police
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Coleman A. Young, Mayor
City of Detroit

April 9, 1980

Honorable Coleman A. Young, Mayor
City Of Detroit
City County Building
Detroit, Michigan, 48226

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353
Burt Small / [Signature]
FILING INST: _____

Dear Mayor Young:

After reading the article published in The Detroit News on April 2, 1980, which indicated that you were furious about the top command officers apparently unaware of the alleged use of battery-charged cattle prods on prisoners in the Second (Vernor) Precinct and hadn't stopped it. And that you now boil at the Department's top command because you feel they have let you down after you had them put in these positions for this purpose, I felt compelled to write this letter regarding my feelings on certain situations in the Department.

This letter is to let you know that you are not alone in your feelings of disappointment. I too, along with a number of other black officers, feel that when you instituted Affirmative Action, the situation within the Police Department would dramatically change for the citizens and the black police officers. However, the black command seems to have failed to significantly make an impact on the old power structure within the Department with their power. For some reason, they seem to allow it to consolidate and openly operate in some areas of the Department unchecked.

Therefore, it is my opinion that the reason incidents such as the one that occurred in the Second Precinct go unreported to the command staff because many of the black officers do not have the confidence or trust the command staff enough to report these types of incidents against white officers without fear of repercussions.

When I was first promoted to Lieutenant in August, 1977, I was assigned to the Fifth Precinct. I attempted to correct some of the brutality that was occurring there and everyone thought I was crazy, even some of the command staff. I checked all of the complaints reported that year and found that most were made by prisoners who had been incarcerated in the Fifth Precinct cellblock.

In May of 1978, two white officers beat a black citizen to death while attempting to effect a traffic arrest. Perhaps this crime would have probably gone unnoticed or justified if it had not been for a black female officer who witnessed the beating and trusted me and had confidence in me that I would take the proper action. However, we both have had repercussions for reporting this incident.

The incident I have just alluded to is why I made the comment at the beginning of this letter, that I was disappointed in some of the top command officers also. It appears that when officers do come forward and report brutality, the command officers are not very supportive of those officers. They seem to feel that this is your job and you are on your own if you want to report someone for improper conduct.

Even as I write this letter, I know I will probably get repercussions for writing it. But as I have stated, I felt compelled to do so in order to let you know that I and a lot of other officers who were promoted and hired through Affirmative Action would like to assure you that we are willing to do whatever is necessary to correct the ills in this Department. However, we need command officers who will lead and support us.

If there is anything further I can do, please let me know.

Sincerely,

McKinley Douglass
McKinley Douglass
Lieutenant
Seventh Precinct