

# City of Detroit

## INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

TO: O. Stoner

DATE January 24, 1968

FROM: J. Herman

SUBJECT: Re: Meeting at Mr. Jim Garrett's  
House Concerning the Infernos on  
1-23-68 at 10:00 P.M.

The main order of business was concerning the alleged police brutality of Gwen Warren, age 17, President of the Infernos.

Many community people were present from the Fitzgerald Community Council, Sarah Foley, Leon Atkinson, Aid to Congressman Conyers, John Hoskins, representative of the DFT Executive Board, etc.

The meeting began with Gwen Warren giving an explanation of what happened the night before. She left the Garrett's home on January 22, 1968 at approximately 10:30 P.M. and on her way home at the corner of Marygrove and Indiana, she was stopped by police. Police: "Black bitch, where are you going?" Gwen's reply was: "I am not your Mother". Upon hearing this, the police hit Gwen with a nightstick in the stomach. At this point, she related to the police that she was pregnant and they left with her still on her knees in the snow. Police: "If we don't get you this winter, we will get you next summer". (Believed to be a reference to the Infernos because of an earlier meeting at the Inferno-Burger at which time a Lt. Head indicated that he would instruct the police in his precinct as to the proper method of confrontation with citizens.) Gwen was asked if she could identify the police. She said that she didn't have the badge numbers and that she couldn't identify them.

Mrs. Garrett related that during the day she had contacted Central Inspector Bartoni. Inspector Bartoni said that this would not happen again and that he has ways of finding out who the officers were and if the local inspectors don't do something, they will be removed. Mrs. Garrett thought Inspector Bartoni was sincere. Mrs. Garrett believes that with all the organizations involved that if we can't be successful in stopping this obvious harassment, what chance do lesser organized community councils or individuals have.

Sarah Foley said it seems as though we have a quasi-police state and that the authorities have no control. It seems that among some officers, the feelings are that they can take law into their own hands.

Leon Atkinson suggested a press conference to educate the public to police brutality with the general theme "leave the kids alone". Mr. Atkinson went on to say that riots usually are caused by confrontation between police and Negroes. Some police, he believes, would like to have a riot "to use their new guns and tanks, etc.)

Jim Garrett suggested that they should also start bringing law suits against the City of Detroit Police Department on harassment.

Two definite plans of action were decided on by those present:

- 1) Civil suit concerning Gwen Warren's beating by police to be filed in U. S. Federal Court. Attorney Charles H. Brown, Assistant District Attorney, was called on the telephone and then came over to the meeting. Mr. Brown said that he would file a suit in Federal Court, but that we must get the proper documentation. Mrs. Garrett will check with Inspector Bartoni to see if he can identify the patrol car that was on duty in the area. Also, a group from the community will go down to the police station to check whatever police records are available and to try to obtain a letter of apology involving earlier arrests of the Infernos that had been promised to them by Lt. Head.
- 2) A press conference on TV involving as many influential people as possible to speak to the public on the problem of police brutality.

JH:vt