

METROPOLITAN DETROIT BRANCH  
American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan

808 Washington Boulevard Building / 234 State Street / Detroit, Michigan 48226 / 961-4662

30 October 68

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Honorable Jerome P. Cavanagh  
Mayor, City of Detroit  
Two Woodward Avenue  
Detroit, Michigan 48226

RECEIVED  
JLT  
pls. draft reply

Dear Mayor Cavanagh:

This morning substantial evidence has been presented to the Metropolitan Detroit ACLU indicating that a large number of persons attending a public rally sponsored by supporters of George Wallace for President and who there demonstrated their opposition to certain of the policies advanced by Wallace were attacked and clubbed by Detroit Police officers many or all of whom first concealed their badge numbers. The attacks, strongly reminiscent of those perpetrated upon demonstrators by Chicago Police during this year's National Democratic Convention appear to have been deliberate, according to a pre-conceived plan and were preceded by no request to the demonstrators to disperse. As a result several persons, many of whom were simply by-standers, have sustained serious physical injuries.

ACLU has repeatedly made it clear that it does not support or condone the disruptive tactics which have on occasion been employed by those opposed to all of the presidential candidates during the current campaign. In our view attempts by protestors to break-up or interfere with meetings of persons with whom they disagree is intolerable and cannot be justified on grounds of free speech.

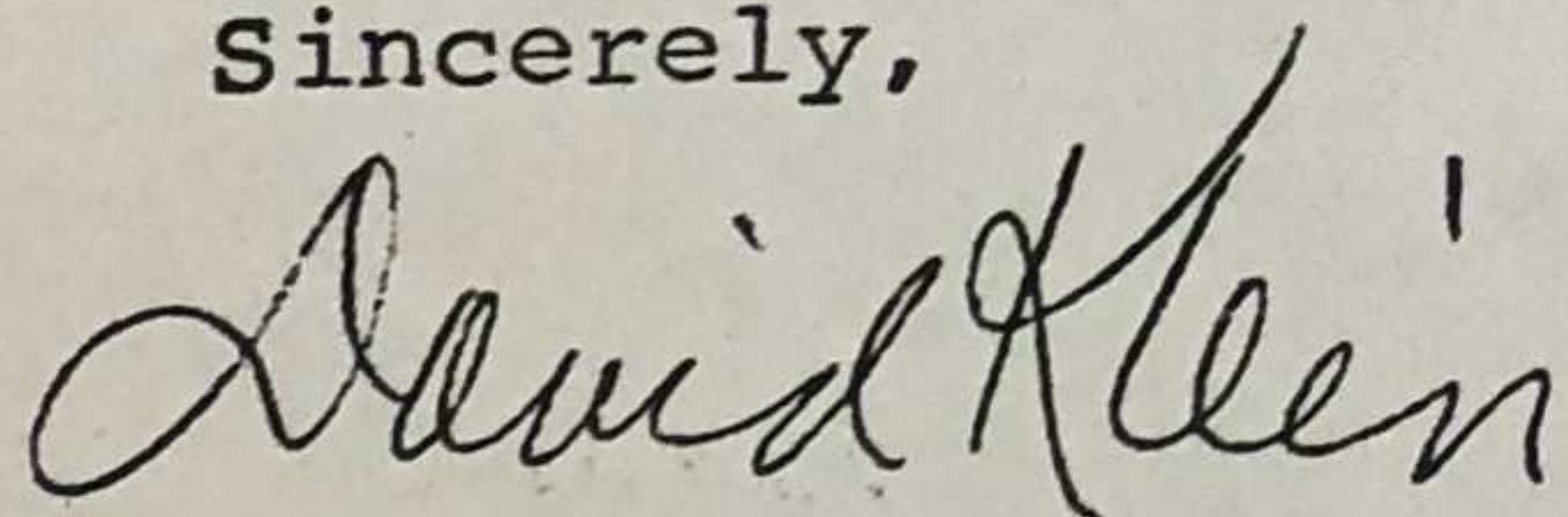
However, the fact that certain demonstrators, individually or collectively, may, by their conduct, have exceeded the protections of the First Amendment and violated the law

cannot justify contemporaneous retaliation by the police. We are sure you will agree that it is the duty of the police to apprehend those individuals whom they believe have violated the law and bring them before the courts for determination of their guilt and punishment.

The pattern followed by officers of the Detroit Police Department Tuesday night appears to be a repeat of the unfortunate experience during the visit of the Poor Peoples Marchers to Detroit some months ago. The fact that no action has been taken by your office or the Police Department to bring to account command officers and patrolmen responsible for that incident, notwithstanding the fact that the report and recommendation of the Citizens Complaint Bureau has been in the Commissioner's hands since July, appears to have encouraged a repeat performance.

We request a meeting with you and Commissioner Spreen at the earliest opportunity to discuss the means by which further repetition of incidents of this sort can be prevented.

Sincerely,



David Y. Klein, Chairman  
Metropolitan Detroit Branch, ACLU

cc: Commissioner Spreen