

I

POLICE HARASS THE BLACK COMMUNITY

The frequent irrational and unwarranted assaults on people in the Black community have led to a genuine and understandable fear for individual and community safety. The question of police harassment surfaces in an especially harsh way. At these times the public eye and sensitivity are focused on these activities. In the Black community police harassment often turns into a question of survival.

Ministers, Doctors, Lawyers, students, teachers, politicians, housewives, working mothers have all experienced the degrading and disrespectful abuse of STRESS.

These kinds of wholesale invasions have left the Black community under a cloud of siege. Fathers and mothers fear for the safety of their children, husbands and wives - brothers and sisters all wonder if their journeys will be safe and sure. Not from fear of the so called criminal element but from fear of the protectors of liberty.

Brothers and sisters homes have been broken into ripped apart and then robbed not be the so called criminal element but by STRESS - the so called protectors of liberty.

The survival of our community is at stake. The STRESS unit has repeatedly demonstrated a total disregard for the dignity of our community leaders as well as the general Black community. They are willing to do anything to maintain their death grip on the Black community.

II

POLICE VIOLATE BLACK PEOPLES' CIVIL LIBERTIES

The Black community of Detroit raises its voice in protest against the tactics of the policemen servicing our neighborhoods.

We have been told by the government that we have certain unalienable rights and civil liberties, and that that body is sworn to protect these rights. Why, then, can policemen in Detroit damage and ransack our homes without search warrants? Why can these police shoot and kill our sons and husbands on suspicion of criminal intent? Why does the Police Commissioner have the authority to publicly declare Black Men suspected of crimes guilty and order that they be shot on sight if found? Why are we as an entire community subjected to the fanaticism of policemen who are supposed to protect us and instead pull Black people indiscriminately off the street and out of our homes in illegal arrests, and then deny us our right to counsel or fair and speedy trials?

Where are our civil liberties being protected? Where can we get protection from our "peace officers of law and order" who regularly infringe upon and deny us those rights awarded us in the very constitution of this country. Action must be taken to halt the criminal activities that the Detroit Police department inflicts upon Detroit's Black community. We are aware of our rights and we want action to recover them from the hands of Detroit's racist law enforcement agency.

III

MEDIA FAIL TO ACCURATELY REPORT POLICE ACTIVITIES IN BLACK COMMUNITY

The media whose services cover the entire Detroit Metropolitan area have played a strategic role in misrepresenting the extent of police activities in Detroit proper. Their representation of crime in the inner city has been misleading and at best, confusing.

Major news papers, and television and radio reports and editorials have lauded the bravery and efficiency of the police department, as proved by steady drops in that nebulous statistic called the "crime rate" and simultaneously deplored the increasing occurrences of homicides. Media utilized the funeral of Officer Bradford and other fallen policemen to play upon the emotions of the community while not reporting the malicious destruction of the suspects' families' property or the many funerals of the Black victims slain at the hand of S.T.R.E.S.S. What these white news media report as the activities of the police are actually only their successful arrests and raids, police department politics, and expressions of outrage and racism from the police concerning the shootings of some of their comrades.

What these media consistently fail to report are the routine search and destroy missions that the police perpetrate upon the Black community. What these media fail to report are the daily occurrences of innocent Black People being harassed by illegal searches, unwarranted arrests, brutality, insults, and other such questionable tactics employed by the police. The white media are failing in their purpose which is supposedly to objectively inform the public of the news. These media historically have worked in collaboration with our aggressors by providing a one-sided view. What they neglect to report indicates extreme bias against the welfare of the Black community and a blatant attempt to disparage the integrity of that community.

Black people of Detroit see what is lacking in the news available to them and are concerned about finding the facts about this urban army and its activities in their neighborhoods. The establishment of a legitimate clearinghouse of information is of utmost importance to the Black community at this juncture. The community depends upon the white mass media for most of its news, and therefore a vehicle must be created to effectively express the truth to the people. The independent Black Commission of Inquiry represents a positive step toward this end.

IV

BLACK COMMUNITY CALLS FOR END TO S.T.R.E.S.S. ACTIVITIES

As noted above, the present police crackdown and harassment of the Black community has resulted from the two separate shootings upon S.T.R.E.S.S. officers. The recent events have been totally centered around the operations of the S.T.R.E.S.S. units. Dating back to the mass mobilization of the Black community, on September 23, 1971 many sectors of the Black community have focused on the need to abolish S.T.R.E.S.S.

We have seen that when the Black community has organized in its own defense, the oppressors' terror has been cut back. For instance, over a period of several months, the S.T.R.E.S.S. units have not gunned down our Black youth. That is

the importance of the commission itself. A "Black Committee of Inquiry to Police Terror" and a Black investigating commission on police brutality is such a organizing vehicle for independent Black political action against police terror & brutality. Ultimately, the logical extension of this activity is to take up the question of the IMMEDIATE ABOLISHMENT OF S.T.R.E.S.S. "!"

V

BLACK COMMUNITY CALLS FOR ACTION AGAINST POLICE TERROR

Because of the concern for the well-being of Boyd, Brown and Bethune....

Because of the murder of a 60 year old brother as a result of an international manhunt, for Boyd, Brown and Bethune....

Because of the many beatings, harassment, denial of civil liberties of Black men and women as well as the molesting of many Black women....

Because of the necessity to rid the Black community of a decoy unit called S.T.R.E.S.S....

Because "Stop The Robberies Enjoy Safe Streets" has really added to crime in our streets - that is crime by the police department upon the Black community....

Because of the blatant rampage and racist attack by the Detroit Police Department and the lack of Black control of this institution....

Because of the racist and vicious slur that Boyd, Bethune and Brown are "mad dog killers", by Commissioner Nichols....

Because of these and many other reasons a wide and diversified number of Black individuals & groups have come together to form a committee to produce a Black Commission of Inquiry into Police terror whose stated aim is set forthwith....

THE INDEPENDENT BLACK COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

The Commission shall investigate the extent of police - more specifically the STRESS Units - harassment in the wider Black community and poll the sentiment of the Black community with regards to what steps they feel should be taken to alleviate what ever problems that have been revealed. The Commission shall act as a clearinghouse for all information related to their investigations. The Commission shall mobilize all the forces at their disposal to implement the investigation. The Commission shall publicize their findings. The Commission shall take into advisement both the findings of their investigations and the sentiment in the Black community and act to facilitate the changes mandated by the People.

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