

Detroit Urban League

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Executive Director

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This is our Position A R 1/18/72

Francis A. Kornegay, Executive Director of the Detroit Urban League, today strongly urged Mayor Roman Gribbs to immediately enforce his proposed controls on the STRESS unit and develop additional guidelines for STRESS or abolish the unit.

Kornegay said, "In previous months, the Detroit Urban League has supported the use of the STRESS unit to reduce crime and bring greater safety to the city of Detroit. Because STRESS has come before the public eye in killings too often, the League now calls upon the Mayor to immediately change the direction of the STRESS unit or reconsider his decision and abolish STRESS today."

If the Mayor keeps STRESS, the Executive Director urged Mayor Gribbs in addition to his recent controls proposed to tighten up STRESS, to develop more specific guidelines for STRESS officers regarding the degree of force to be used in apprehending law-breakers, to better orientate the volunteer policemen selected, and to make sure there is a thorough understanding among STRESS officers as to their special function of protecting the community from robbers.

Kornegay emphasized that officers must be orientated to always keep foremost in their minds that their duties include the protection and preservation of life.

"Muggers should be arrested for the crimes they commit," Kornegay said, "but they should not be killed for them."

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Kornegay said new techniques are essential for STRESS to become the community service it was intended to be. He said officers that violate the guidelines of STRESS must be reprimanded and dropped from the unit or Detroit citizens cannot be expected to cooperate with police in combating crime or supporting the continuation of STRESS.

The Executive Director asked Gribbs to set a trial period to test the effectiveness of the new guidelines and procedures developed for the unit.

"If within a reasonable time new directions for STRESS fail to yield a good community protection police unit," Kornegay said, "it must then be immediately abolished."

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