

PRESS RELEASE
Tuesday, July 9, 1968

Mayor Cavanagh today signed the Crime Control Ordinance recently passed by the Detroit Common Council. In doing so, the Mayor made the following statement:

"I am today approving the Crime Control Ordinance -- the so-called 'Stop and Frisk' law -- as passed on July 6 by the Common Council.

As in the past, I have based my decision on the interpretation of the law by the United States Supreme Court. Detroit has been a leader in promptly implementing those decisions which, in the past, have protected the rights of individuals against police abuse. I have always been concerned with law, order and justice in this city.

This ordinance closely parallels the language of Chief Justice Earl Warren in his opinion of June 10 which set forth the power of a policeman to stop and frisk an individual when he has reason to believe that a crime has been committed or is about to be committed and when he has reasonable cause to believe his life is in danger.

The Court recognized, as I must, 'the nature and extent of the governmental interests involved', and particularly the responsibility I have as Mayor of this city for effective crime prevention and detection. The Supreme Court stated 'it is this interest which underlies the recognition that a police officer may in appropriate circumstances and in an appropriate manner approach a person for purposes of investigating possible criminal behavior even though there is no probable cause to make an arrest.

(More)

Mr. Johannes P. Spreen

I shall, however, ensure that this power will not be abused.

I have talked with the new Police Commissioner, Mr. Spreen, and he has assured me that guidelines will be issued to protect the rights of the individual from abuses that might occur under this ordinance. I have made it clear that I will not tolerate any such abuse. I have directed that the Commissioner make periodic reports on the use of this ordinance, in order to determine clearly whether or not it is effective in crime prevention and detection.

As a further safeguard, I invite any citizen who may feel that he has been unjustly treated as a result of this ordinance to present his complaint directly to the Police Commissioner.

Our common objective in this city must be, and shall be, to enforce the law fairly and firmly.

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