

City of Detroit
EXECUTIVE OFFICE

COLEMAN A. YOUNG
Mayor

March 21, 1974

The Honorable George W. Crockett, Jr.
Judge, Records Court
Criminal Division
1441 St. Antoine
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Dear Judge Crockett:

I have given serious thought to your proposal for a special One-Man Grand Jury investigation of the narcotics traffic in Detroit. Your letter to Councilman Hood of January 13 which you sent to me contains persuasive arguments for this course of action.

As you know, I have had reservations about this judicial procedure for several reasons. First, I am concerned that this method of investigation should at all times be sensitive to and protective of the constitutional rights of every individual involved.

Secondly, I would not favor a One-Man Grand Jury if it were to be headed by a non-resident of Detroit.

My past reservation about One-Man Grand Juries is that too often they are urged as part of a "knee-jerk" reaction to crime problems, with little thought going into the question of whether they can provide the solution. They are not unlike the calls often heard for the reinstatement of capital punishment and other so-called "remedies" that in the end could become part and parcel of a drive to restrict the rights of individuals.

The historical dangers inherent in assigning virtually dictatorial powers to one person are truly frightening. However, the damage done to our city and its citizens by the continuing flow of drugs with the resultant terrible toll of street crime, murder and waste of human life and dignity demands an equally strong legal response.

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I observed with considerable interest and great expectations the deliberations of the 23-person Wayne County Citizen Grand Jury during 1972 - 3. The inability of this body to produce more tangible results in the area of drug prosecutions is, as you point out, evidence that a new approach is needed to identify and expose the many and powerful drug importers and large dealers in our city together with their accomplices, wherever they may be.

In view of these conditions, I now agree that the One-Man Grand Jury may be the most potent, viable and hopeful method of rooting out the cancerous evil of drugs from our city. I would therefore be glad to render any assistance this office may be able to provide in establishing a One-Man Grand Jury consistent with the aims and safeguards described above.

Reduction or elimination of the drug traffic has my highest priority. For this reason, I would like to know if and when your court might again consider the establishment of a One-Man Grand Jury in Detroit.

On a related criminal matter, it is my hope that I may be allowed to sit down with you and the other judges of the Recorder's bench soon to discuss the problems of handguns and the possible stricter enforcement of state and city gun laws.

Best wishes for a better Detroit,

COLEMAN A. YOUNG
Mayor

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