

The Honorable Common Council
City-County Building
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Gentlemen:

Nineteen hundred sixty-eight marked a "Triple A" year for the Detroit Police Department --- much was attempted, much was accomplished, and our achievements were many and proud. Nineteen hundred sixty-eight was a year of action.

During January, February, and March, the department conducted a highly successful in-service training program in human relations. Some six-hundred officers of all ranks and from all assignments participated in this innovative training experience which was financed by a grant from the Office of Law Enforcement Assistance, U. S. Justice Department. Classes were held in the MacGregor Center on the campus of Wayne State University. The twenty-four hours of training consisted of lectures by distinguished professors and prominent experts in the field of criminal justice, followed by small group discussions led by officers who had received special training in group dynamics techniques. The program was described by the Office of Law Enforcement Assistance and by other police agencies throughout the nation as one of the best of its kind ever devised. The professional evaluation and the informal opinions held by department members and executives also concur that this program should be expanded and repeated.

In March, work began on a second project financed by an \$111,000 grant from the Office of Law Enforcement Assistance. During the one-year duration of the grant, the department is joining with Wayne State University in a coordinated effort to apply advanced scientific and technological knowledge to law enforcement. Areas which have been subjected to study include the PREP radio system, scout car dispatching procedures, and the department's method of reporting offenses. In addition, tests are being made to determine the feasibility of using mobile teleprinters in scout cars, and improvements in the physical design of patrol vehicles are being sought.

In April, following the tragic death of Dr. Martin Luther King, outbreaks of violence and bitter rioting occurred in a number of cities. Detroit poised herself to deter a disturbance, and her efforts were successful since only a few minor incidents marred a period of relative calm. The teamwork operations of city agencies, law enforcement agencies, public utility companies, civic, business, and religious organizations, and of Detroit's citizens proved that such cooperation is effective in quieting community tensions.

The intensive recruiting program sponsored by the Greater Detroit Board of Commerce and begun during Commissioner Ray Girardin's administration reached its zenith of effectiveness during 1968. The department not only came closer to reaching its authorized strength than in any previous year, but it also made significant advances in attracting qualified black men and women to a career in police work. Much of the credit for this tremendous achievement belongs to the Mayor and Common Council who saw the need to raise officers' salaries to a level commensurate with the high quality and quantity of professional police services provided by the department. In the latter months of 1968, the department studied its long and short-range manpower needs in an effort to take advantage of this recruiting impetus. This study will become part of the department's continuing effort in this area.

In August, the Community Oriented Patrol (C.O.P.) concept was introduced to Detroit and late in September, the scooter patrol took to the streets. Teamwork is the essence of Project COP. From the suggestion of the idea to the present operation of the scooter patrol in five of our thirteen precincts, the cooperation of the Mayor and Common Council, the Chamber of Commerce, and the citizens of Detroit has been unparalleled.

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The scooter officers operate in teamwork relationship with each other and with other specialized department units. They also operate to promote the teamwork relationship between the police department and the community. Scooter patrol members are all volunteers, specially screened and selected, and they receive special training in human relations at Wayne State University. Reaction within the community and within the department to the scooter patrol has been highly favorable because the patrol serves so effectively in the preventive policing functions and in fostering police-people harmony.

Plans are being formulated for the expansion of Project COP and for the increased use of this unique unit. The scooters represent a new dimension in police work --- a dimension and a direction which show signs of hope for the solution of the problems of crime and community tensions.

During September and early October, Detroiters cheered their Tigers on to the American League and World Championships of baseball. Visitors from all over the country poured into our city to see the World Series games. When the Tigers won the Series, hundreds of thousands of Detroiters took to the streets to unleash their joy and pride in their team and their city. During this period, our department was confronted with difficult crowd control and traffic situations. Again, advanced planning and teamwork paid off. The large crowds were handled in the most expeditious manner by scooter officers working in teamwork relationship with traffic officers and scout cars. Coordinating these operations during the World Series was a helicopter which was on loan to the department. The value of airborne command and control for police work was confirmed beyond question.

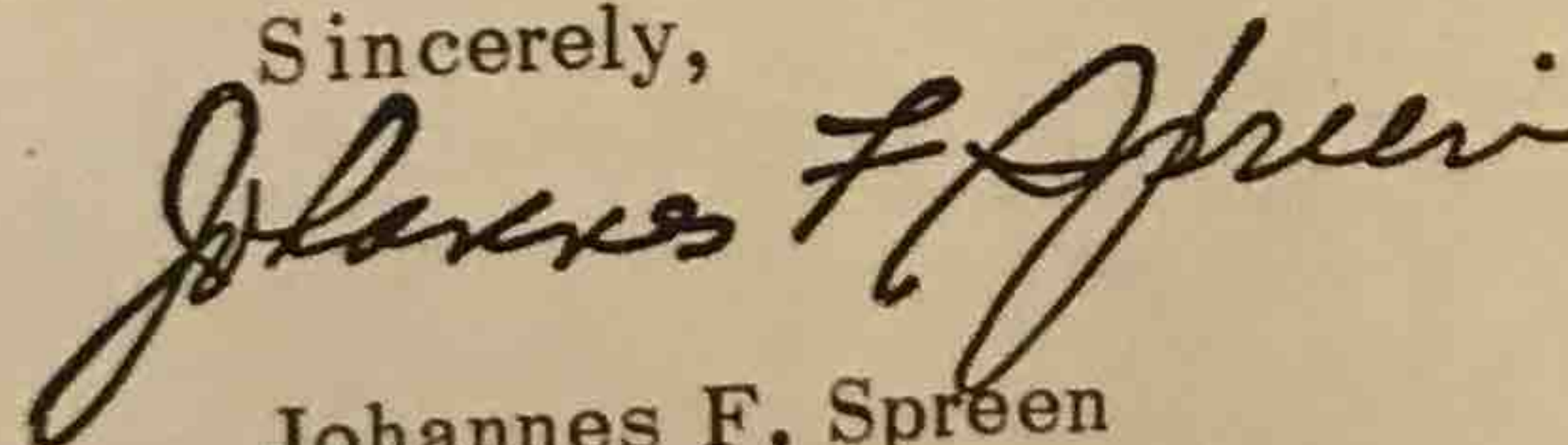
During 1968, the department adopted the use of name-tags for each officer. The tags, which are now being worn, give the officer a personal identification with the public. Another personal touch was added during the Christmas season when officers distributed police coloring books to all children who visited the Christmas Festival at Cobo Hall.

The end of the year brought continued accomplishments in the area of police training. Preliminary groundwork was laid for the establishment of an innovative police training method --- television. TV training is advantageous because it allows the public to learn with the police and to see the difficulties and problems inherent in police work. This project will come to fruition, hopefully, early in 1969.

Again in 1968, all American cities experienced a general increase in the incidence of crime. Compared with other cities of over a million population, Detroit's major crime increased only half as much. Crime in Detroit decreased during the last four months of 1968 compared with the same period in 1967. In September, total crime was down 6.2 percent; October, 11.2 percent; November, 3.2 percent; and December totals reveal a 5.3 percent decrease. Let me give credit to the members of this department for their long hours of diligent work and especially to our overworked patrolmen who fight crime on the front line.

On behalf of the Detroit Police Department, I thank the Mayor and the Common Council for their valuable support and help in making this "Triple A" year possible.

Sincerely,



Johannes F. Spreen
Commissioner