

PRESS RELEASE

UNITED BLACK COALITION

We, the now United Black Coalition, have previously witnessed from our respective partisanships, a continuing and escalating denial of human rights as well as numerous travesties of Justice. Disproportionally involved in such acts have been and are various Black citizens of the City of Detroit.

Therefore, with the current Police-Community crisis as our genesis, the respective members of the Black Coalition are now compelled to throw aside our various political and social philosophies so as to more emphatically concentrate on the Detroit Police Department in general and STRESS in particular.

The formation of STRESS, with its original reliance upon decoy methods as a primary operational tool, has caused and been involved in, a level of violence which is of great concern. To date, as a direct result of STRESS actions, there have been 25 homicides in Detroit. The number killed consists of 15 Black citizens, 1 white and 9 police officers.

The STRESS unit as originally conceived and reported was designed to combat street crimes. The name, itself, signifies the limited nature of its operation functions. As such, STRESS represents: Stop The Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets.

Under that concept and design, it receives, in some instances, approval by some portions of Detroit citizenry. However, the general community has been made starkly aware of recent actions involving reported operations of the STRESS unit which indicated that it has extended its jurisdiction into other areas of police work. This has occurred without the facts being related to the public.

Recent events which have occurred since December 4, 1972 and December 27, 1972, indicate that the Police Department is using more tactics than appears prudent and reasonable in their search for the suspects involved in these two incidents. The community attitudinal reaction to such conduct is that of dismay and anxiety.

As an organization and as private citizens, no one in our community is more conscious of and extend more approval of effective, efficient, and professional methods of providing protection of the citizenry and enforcement of the laws of our City. For we are well aware that our community suffers worse from crimes and provides the most victims.

However, we have never in the past, nor do we now, nor will we ever in the future, condone the course of action presently being conducted by the Police Department of the City.

For these reasons we demand that the Common Council of the City of Detroit:

1. Thoroughly investigate and resolve present charges of police harrassment.
2. Suspend or deny any further approval of appropriations to the STRESS unit, including private and Federal funds until the completion of such investigations.

UNITED BLACK COALITION - Partial List of Supporters

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