

STRESS Cops Shot

Open Season In Dodge City?

Fifth Estate Collective

1972

In what seemed like “Shootout at the OK Corral,” an old Jimmy Cagney movie and “Superfly” wrapped into one, four white STRESS officers were shot and wounded in the early morning hours of Dec. 4 by three black gunmen.

This was a dramatic turnabout from the toll of 15 lives STRESS has taken in the black community during 18 months of its existence. Opinion in the streets and auto plants ranged from undisguised glee to a feeling that the STRESS squad had “just messed with the wrong people.”

After the shoot-out police and the FBI began a national manhunt for the three gunmen. Detroit Police Commissioner John Nichols offered a \$6,000 reward (through the *Detroit News*) for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the three. As a result of the offer, the police were recipients of countless phone tips. In checking out the tips, police made several illegal raids, and in one case, a black male was shot and killed under highly questionable circumstances. In two other instances, police illegally (no warrant) raided the wrong house and terrorized its occupants.

A MAGNUM, A SHOTGUN, AND AN M-1

The incident began when STRESS patrolmen Richard Grapp, Robert Rosenow, Eugene Fular and Billy Price pulled over a Volkswagen fastback they had followed from a Westside dope house. As Price and Fular got out of their squad car, the three black men in the VW leaped from their car and opened fire on the officers with a .357 magnum pistol, a sawed-off shotgun and an M-1 carbine.

Grapp never got a chance to leave the wheel of the police car as slugs struck him in the throat and chest. Rosenow also never made it out of the car. He was hit three times. Fular was struck twice with shotgun blasts and Price fell with a minor wound in his leg.

Price was released the same night but as of this writing Fular and Rosenow remain hospitalized under 24 hour police guard, as does Grapp, who is still in “critical” condition.

The three gunmen escaped the scene and abandoned the VW a few blocks away. Police Commissioner Nichols speculated that the trio, all Detroiters, were “hit men” either protecting a shipment of heroin or about to rip-off the dope pad they were tailed from.

NOT EXPECTED TO REACH TRIAL

As we go to press a massive search is underway by police for the three with attention centering on the inner city network of dope houses and dealers.

On Dec. 8 officers from STRESS and the Highland Park Police shot and killed a man identified only as being in his early 60s when they went to search a Northside house on a tip. Police said the man fired on them first, but the word is out that the police have no intention of bringing back the wanted men alive.

Police units have been breaking in doors all over town and in several incidents hit the wrong house. Several hours after the shooting, police terrorized an entire family at gunpoint until they realized their error.

In another incident best reported in the words of a *Detroit News* headline, "Ann Arbor Co-eds are Routed in Nighties." This too turned out to be the wrong house.

The police have warned in a wanted circular sent out on the men that the three "were known" to have vowed "they will shoot any officer on sight." The *Detroit News* has posted a \$6,000 Secret Witness reward for information leading to the capture of the three fugitives.

That's the law in Dodge City.

In other STRESS developments, the three undercover officers involved in the Rochester Street shoot-out with Wayne County Sheriff's deputies last March were returned to STRESS duty.

STRESS co-commander Gordon Smith said, "These three men were cleared of criminal culpability in court and in a prior department investigation. Plus this psychological testing has shown they are free of any abnormal urge to kill or things like that."

All three STRESS officers were carrying three guns apiece at the time of the Rochester shooting. One of them, James Harris, said this week that he was declining the offer to rejoin STRESS because he had been involved in ten shoot-outs in a year and it was more than he could take.

Also, a reliable source states that STRESS officer Virgil Starkey was one of over 30 officers named in Grand Jury testimony as being heavily involved in heroin trafficking.

According to the source, 15 of those named have left the force and the rest have been transferred to less "sensitive" assignments.

In fact, the night of the shoot-out with the deputies the STRESS officers had just left a notorious dope dealer hang-out on the Westside.

Attempts by the *Detroit Free Press* and by this paper to see a copy of the mysterious psychological examination allegedly given to all STRESS officers to gauge their emotional stability have been totally thwarted. Even Co-Commander Smith admitted he had not seen a copy.

One observer noted that the tests had cleared killers like STRESS crew chief Raymond Peterson, who has killed eight persons on STRESS duty. "They probably would have found Adolph Eichman duty-fit with those tests," he said.



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