

COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



“Building Peaceful Communities” ----
Federal Conciliation Service
for the Resolution of Community Racial Conflict and Violence
November 2, 1998

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Divider Title: 1

I. INTRODUCTION

The President led a year long initiative to examine the state of race in America and to explore ways to bridge racial divides. It has focused the nation on race and race relations. The Community Relations Service (CRS), the federal government's race relations arm for the past thirty five years, has helped to achieve these same goals day in and day out in communities across the country.

Recently, President Clinton personally demonstrated, during the October Israeli-Palestinian summit, how third party impartial mediation can help adversaries find common ground. CRS has utilized the same principle in communities where racial harmony and community stability were threatened. The agency consists of professional race conciliation specialists who work hand in hand with Federal, State and local officials providing racial conciliation services to help resolve racial tensions and conflicts. CRS' experienced conciliators help to maintain community safety and peaceful race relations by building racial understanding and cooperation.

Proposal:

\$3,300,000

"Building Peaceful Communities," will provide adequate funding for a well- resourced federal race conciliation corps to ensure conflict resolution services are more promptly and effectively available to those vulnerable communities who request and need assistance in managing volatile community racial tensions, unrest and violent disturbances.

This proposal will assure expanded and enhanced delivery of racial conciliation services by strengthening regional operations with the addition of 20 conciliation specialists and establishing ten new strategically located field offices staffed by mediators. (Staff distribution will be based on a number of relevant factors: demographic shifts, population makeup, history of racial conflict, analysis of socioeconomic data, unmet requests for service, and caseload and current staffing levels.) This budget request would also allow a modest growth in CRS headquarters to establish basic capabilities for management, administrative, programmatic, operational and technological support to the field.

Justification:

A management review conducted by the Department of Justice's Management Division, (JMD) concluded that CRS needs to be fully funded at 121 positions by FY 2000, which would provide a more responsive, customer-oriented service delivery system of conciliation services. (See Appendix for April 1998 report)

Based on more than 150 interviews, the JMD report concluded that "... There is nearly universal agreement that conciliation is a more efficient and desirable approach to community conflict than law enforcement force. ... The consensus of all interviewees was that the Community Relations Service is needed more than ever." [It concluded that] "... Current conditions argue persuasively that there is more citizen demand for CRS community conciliation than can be met today."

II. THE NEED: Conditions of Racial Conflict and Tensions in the United States

While there is general agreement that significant advances have been made in affording all Americans greater protection under civil rights laws, and that schools, housing and workplaces are more integrated, there are still too many communities experiencing significant racial tensions, conflict, and violence which threaten peaceful relations and community safety.

Presently, there is a dearth of reliable external documentation for predictions of heightened racial tensions and conflicts. However, our customers -- police chiefs, school personnel, and local officials -- indicate that racial and ethnic conflicts are increasing and intergroup relations deteriorating.

Based on law enforcement experience, academic research, and social commentaries, there are predictions of a future fraught with violent racial confrontations unless comprehensive efforts are undertaken to build community capabilities and infrastructures to positively respond to and address the challenges of racial progress.

Social scientists project there is a greater potential for racial unrest and violence due to economic dislocation, community reaction to new immigration influx and demographic shifts, and dramatically disparate socioeconomic differences between the urban poor and suburban affluent.

In too many areas where there have been recent changes in the community's racial and ethnic composition, there have been marked increases in hate crimes against minorities, and violent clashes with new racially-identified youth "gangs" with other youth groups and law enforcement.

Hate crime incidents and retaliatory actions have risen sharply in the last few years. According to FBI statistics released in January 1998, reported hate crimes increased nationally by at least 16 percent over the previous year. Of the hate crimes that were reported, 65% were committed by white teenagers and young adults.

In addition to the increase in hate crimes, organized groups which advocate race-based violence (domestic terrorism to some observers) are on the rise. According to Klanwatch, law enforcement and human relations officials throughout the United States are reporting the appearance of large numbers of Skinheads in many communities.

Finally, according to law enforcement experts, the greatest potential for violent civil unrest continues to be where police-minority community relations are troublesome. Where thorny issues of police use of force, racial profiling, and civil rights violations are prevalent, and accompanied by a lack of confidence in local mechanisms to address these issues, the conditions are ripe for a single incident to trigger discontent into community-wide violent disturbances.

If unabated, and absent an established readiness with a cadre of trained experienced conciliators to deploy for racial crisis response, the nation may suffer grave social and economic consequences, especially tears in the social fabric that hold our democracy together.

III. CRS Conciliation Services and Tangible Benefits

CRS is an integral part of the Department of Justice's arsenal to help State and local governments prevent violence and promote public safety. Its services are provided to local communities on a voluntary and cost-free basis. CRS has no law enforcement authority and does not impose federal solutions. It does not assign blame or fault, or investigate and prosecute cases. It relies on impartial mediation practices and established conflict resolution procedures to help officials and community leaders find local resolutions to issues that cause division. CRS provides its most invaluable resource -- independent skilled race mediators to aid communities whose race relations are troubled creating a potential for violent disruptions.

Here are a few examples to illustrate the benefits of CRS services:

A. CRS Crisis Response to Stabilize Community After Racial Violence and Church Arson

- Immediately upon reports of the brutal murder of James Byrd, Jr. in Jasper, Texas, a CRS mediator was "on the ground" helping public officials and community leaders restore calm, and assure public readiness and safety for a series of public events, including the funeral, Klan rallies and counter demonstrations. CRS has continued to provide technical assistance to local and school officials who seek to eliminate fear and distrust and promote racial reconciliation. To overcome fear, suspicions and polarization, CRS helps create the conditions and provide the tools for people across racial lines to come together to have honest dialogue and work through their differences moving to community actions.

In more than 230 localities where black churches were burned, CRS helped facilitate community rebuilding efforts such as in Rocky Mount, South Carolina where Black and White ministers forged a multiracial alliance to combat racial bigotry and find ways for congregations to worship together and join in community betterment activities.

These and many other examples are promising practices that can be replicated in other communities facing racial misunderstanding and division.

- In the aftermath of a series of arson attacks on three Black churches in Aiken County, South Carolina, CRS brought together County and local law enforcement officials, served as a communication link and overcame barriers of distrust and suspicion. Successful investigations and prosecutions depend on community cooperation. As a result, distrust over the police investigation was lessened and community leaders agreed to cooperate with police authorities. The potential for violence was reduced, and County and local leaders worked together on joint arson prevention activities.

B. CRS Averting Violent Civil Disorders Following the Use of Force

- CRS deployed mediators to St. Petersburg, Florida, in October 1997, when the results of the Department's Civil Rights Division investigation of a fatal police shooting were to be announced. Advance planning by CRS working with local, State, and Federal officials helped avert possible third civil disorder and assured peaceful protest events following a decision not to prosecute.

CRS experience has shown us that it is not necessarily the use of force incident alone that creates the flashpoint for a riot, but the community's perception of the public response by local officials. CRS provides technical assistance on recommended protocols and best practices to avoid violent outbursts.

- In October 1998, a Grand Jury announced that it would not indict six Houston, Texas police officers for the killing of a Mexican immigrant. No serious community unrest developed. This result is directly attributed to the work of the CRS mediator, who had brought together police and local community leaders over a three-month period to develop a comprehensive plan for improving police-community relations.

Racial tensions can be defused when CRS provides a forum for airing of community concerns and developing good faith steps toward resolution.

C. CRS Conciliating Police-Minority Community Frictions and Disputes

- When discussions between West Haven, Connecticut city officials and minority leaders faltered in the aftermath of serious tensions over the beating of a Black youth by four white men, a CRS mediator was requested. In January 1997, an agreement was reached on the establishment of a human relations commission and affirmative action plan, and racial tensions were abated.

CRS helps establish a mechanism for the local resolution of community grievances and improves the ability of local officials to handle future disputes.

- Immediately following a police shooting in September 1998, in Santa Maria, California, CRS convened a community forum for community residents and police officials to directly address concerns. Prompt CRS action headed off escalating racial tensions, and an agreement was reached on permanent ways to increase community cooperation and confidence in law enforcement.

As a neutral party, CRS can be helpful in restoring trust in the administration of justice and by providing technical assistance to police officials.

D. CRS Resolving Community Racial Conflicts to Avoid Violence

- A CRS mediator assisted high school officials in May 1998, in Inglewood, California, when racial skirmishes broke out between Black and Latino students. CRS and the school administrators worked together over three days to finally stabilize the disruptive situation. In order to avoid future violent reactions, CRS organized a task force of community and school officials to formulate strategies and action plans to achieve more lasting intergroup understanding and cooperation.
- After a faction of the Ogichida tribe blocked the tracks of the Wisconsin Railroad in Odanah, Wisconsin, and the local Sheriff had exhausted his approaches to end the stand-off without resorting to force, the Governor asked for the Department of Justice's intervention.

CRS mediation avoided imminent violence. Railroad shipment of toxic sulphuric acid across the reservation had prompted the blockade and threats of other violence. A CRS mediator, with the imprimatur of the Department of Justice, was accepted by the parties, helped them reach agreement on new environmental safeguards for shipment of the chemicals.

In tense racial conflict situations, conciliation may be a more appropriate strategy than an enforcement approach.

E. CRS Using Mediation as an Alternative to Civil Rights Prosecution and Litigation

- City officials in Cincinnati, Ohio called for CRS assistance when serious racial unrest developed after a fatal police shooting. CRS successfully mediated a comprehensive agreement on improving police/community relations. Announced on February 10, 1998, the agreement was produced from a "collaboration of unprecedented significance" by City officials and community agencies, and helped avert significant violence.

While a mediation agreement may contain similar elements as a consent decree from a civil rights action, it can be faster and less expensive.

- CRS completed successful mediation of the long standing, once-violent Little Rock, Arkansas school desegregation case. Appointed by the U. S. District Court, CRS helped multiple parties reach agreement on an education plan, approved January 16, 1998 which lead to court declaration of unitary status, an end to court supervision, and savings of time and significant court costs and legal fees.

School officials asked CRS to help create the capacity of schools to resolve racial conflicts that may arise in the implementation of the revised education plan.

IV. CRS Staffing History and Growing Unmet Requests for Service

From 1992 to 1997, CRS' budget declined by more than 80 percent, and its staffing by nearly two-thirds to an all time low. In 1972, more than 350 permanent and contract employees conducted conflict resolution activities. In 1973, its budget and staffing were reduced by fifty percent, and remained at an average of 120 employees until 1996, when its budget was again cut by fifty percent reducing staff levels to only 41 full time employees. (See attached budget levels and staffing history chart in Appendix.)

In FY 1998, CRS was able to conduct its work at minimal levels of service, only after the Attorney General transferred \$2,000,000 in reprogrammed funds to CRS. At the present time, CRS services are provided by 36 mediators stationed at 14 sites across the nation (See a listing of CRS 10 Regional and four field offices in the appendix.) These mediators operate without administrative or technical support in their offices, and must rely on a skeletal CRS headquarters staff (Director and seven support staff) for all management, administrative, programmatic, technological, and other operational assistance.

In a period marked by racial tensions and conflicts over highly publicized excessive use of force incidents, confrontations involving Ku Klux Klan and other organized hate groups, continued church burnings in the Southern states, and violent racial clashes and hate crimes, CRS resources are stretched well beyond the capacity to respond

CRS' thirty-five years of experience has shown that there is no substitute for mediators on-site, and no substitute for the Justice Department's CRS-independent conflict resolution professionals who work directly with local officials and civic leaders in finding local, mutually developed solutions to the challenges of racial conflict and violence.

CRS responded at both the national and local levels to only the most urgent and explosive situations, especially those which threatened public safety or new violence. Due to limited staff resources, Regional offices continue to decline or postpone many other requests for conflict resolution assistance by other Federal, State and local officials. As a result of the reduction in staff, regional offices are faced with service backlogs well exceeding their present capability to respond. In the last year, more than 40% of requests for conciliation assistance could not be met. Simply put, there are not enough conciliators -- the lifeblood of CRS work -- to meet the demand for assistance. (See Appendix for charts that depict unmet service requests and related data.)

For regional operations, the major consequences of the reduction of staff result in the following: reduced expectations of available CRS services by our customers; lost or shortchanged opportunities for racial progress; quality and depth of CRS service jeopardized by competing demands on staff; and many racial conflicts left unattended and unresolved. The potential for racial disorders and outbreaks will increase nationwide, as conflicts left unattended and unresolved will fester and make communities more vulnerable to serious violence. The Rodney King riot taught us that a riot can spark violent disturbances in other cities where there exists a crisis of confidence in the justice system and unresolved concerns.

V. Proposal and Funding Request and Staffing for “Building Peaceful Communities”

This proposal, “Building Peaceful Communities,” would assure expanded and enhanced delivery of racial conciliation services to local communities through the establishment of ten new strategically located field offices staffed by mediators. The determination of the sites for these new field offices would be based on a number of factors including demographic shifts, population, history of conflicts, analysis of current assessments, and case load, accessibility and travel distance.

These additional field offices will assure that CRS services are more accessible and available to those who most need its services. Localized services will allow CRS staff to be on-site in these communities, and develop and maintain the essential working relationships with local officials, law enforcement agencies, and civic leaders, which is especially critical during times of community unrest and disorder.

“Building Peaceful Communities” would also strengthen Regional operations by the addition of 20 mediators for the 10 Regional offices which will be allocated based on relevant criteria. This will double the number of professional mediators and allow more prompt, effective and comprehensive response to requests for assistance by Federal, State and local officials in the multi-State service areas.

“Building Peaceful Communities” would add to the skeletal headquarters office basic capabilities for management, administrative, operational and technological support. These personnel will provide expert programmatic assistance and staff development to conciliation specialists on handling prevalent issues (administration of justice, hate crimes, and youth racial violence).

Budget Information

In FY 1998, CRS operated its program at a base appropriation of \$5,319,000, which barely supported 41 work years and 41 positions. For FY 1999, the appropriation of \$7,199,000 is expected to support 50 work years and 56 positions. The Department of Justice’s proposed budget for CRS for FY 2000 is \$9,699,000, 81 positions, and 68 work years. This increase will allow CRS to establish 15 new field offices staffed by one conciliator, will provide a single administrative/clerical staff person to each Regional office, and restore basic management, administrative, and technical support to headquarters operations.

Funding Request

\$3,300,000

This budget request would fund an additional 35 positions, 18 work years at \$3,300,000 for the Community Relations Service in FY 2000. This increase, along with the Department’s proposed increase for FY 2000 totaling \$12,999,000 would allow CRS to deliver its much needed services in a timely, effective and comprehensive manner to communities across America. A fully restored CRS is critical to the community safety. The cost of just one riot would exceed CRS’ budget. An elite corps of experienced race conflict conciliators is one of the federal government’s best investments in the peace and stability of our nation’s communities.

BUDGET FOR THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE
FY 1998 - FY 2000

FY 1998 CRS ACTUAL BUDGET	FY 1999 CRS ENACTED BUDGET	FY 2000 CRS BUDGET PROPOSED TO OMB	BUDGET FOR "MAKING PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES"	TOTAL FY 2000 PROPOSED BUDGET
FTEs: 41	FTEs: 56	FTEs: 86	FTEs: 35	FTEs: 121
WORK YEARS: 41	WORK YEARS: 48	WORK YEARS: 71	WORK YEARS: 18	WORK YEARS: 89
\$5,319,000	\$7,199,000	\$9,699,000	\$3,300,000	\$12,999,000

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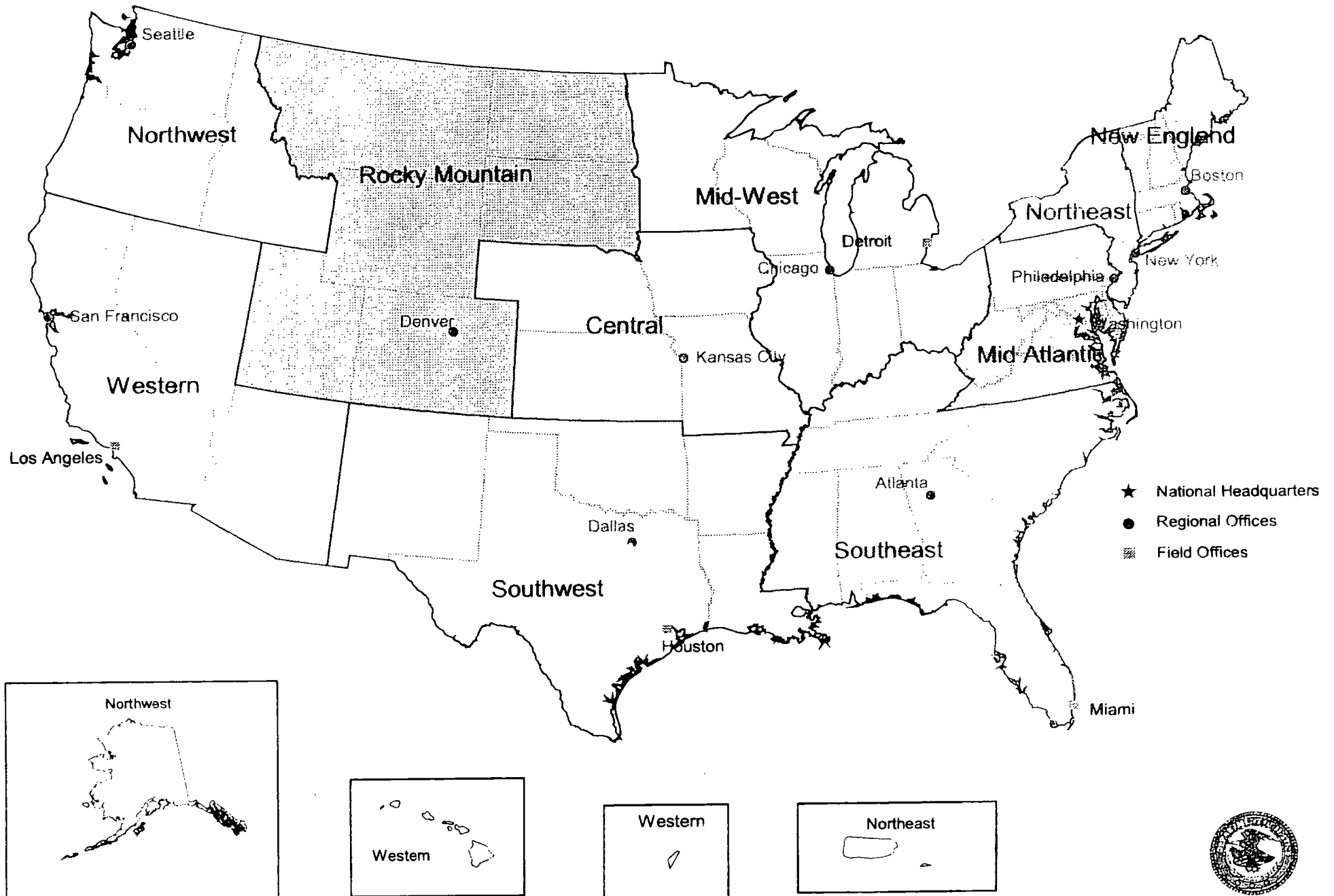
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Divider Title: 2

Listing of Regions

And

Field Offices



CRS Offices

CRS Headquarters Office

600 E Street, NW, Suite 2000
Washington, D.C. 20530
202/305-2935
202/305-3009 (FAX)

Regional Offices

New England Regional Office

(CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)
99 Summer Street, Suite 1820
Boston, MA 02110
617/424-5715
617/424-5727 (FAX)

Northeast Regional Office

(NJ, NY, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands)
26 Federal Plaza, Suite 36-118
New York, NY 10278
212/264-0700
212/264-2143 (FAX)

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office

(DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV)
2nd and Chestnut Streets, Suite 208
Philadelphia, PA 19106
215/597-2344
215/597-9148 (FAX)

Southeast Regional Office

(AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)
75 Piedmont Avenue NE, Suite 900
Atlanta, GA 30303
404/331-6883
404/331-4471 (FAX)

Midwest Regional Office

(IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)
55 West Monroe Street, Suite 420
Chicago, IL 60603
312/353-4391
312/353-4390 (FAX)

Southwest Regional Office

(AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)
1420 West Mockingbird Lane, Suite 250
Dallas, TX 75247
214/655-8175
214/655-8184 (FAX)

Central Regional Office

(IA, KS, MO, NE)
1100 Main Street, Suite 1320
Kansas City, MO 64105-2112
816/426-7434
816/426-7441 (FAX)

Rocky Mountain Regional Office

(CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)
1244 Speer Blvd., Suite 650
Denver, CO 80204-3584
303/844-2973
303/844-2907 (FAX)

Western Regional Office

(AZ, CA, HI, NV, Guam)
120 Howard Street, Suite 790
San Francisco, CA 94105
415/744-6565
415/744-6590 (FAX)

Northwest Regional Office

(AK, ID, OR, WA)
915 Second Avenue, Suite 1808
Seattle, WA 98174
206/220-6700
206/220-6706 (FAX)

Field Offices

Miami Field Office

51 SW First Avenue, Suite 424
Miami, FL 33130
305/536-5206
305/536-7363 (FAX)

Detroit Field Office

211 West Fort Street, Suite 1404
Detroit, MI 48226
313/226-4010
313/226-2568 (FAX)

Houston Field Office

515 Rusk Avenue, Suite 12605
Houston, TX 77002
713/718-4861
713/718-4862 (FAX)

Los Angeles Field Office

888 South Figueroa Street, Suite 1880
Los Angeles, CA 90017
213/894-2941
213/894-2880 (FAX)

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Divider Title: 3

Historical Tables to Follow by FAX

Will be Provided by Daryl Borgquist, Community Relations Service, 202/305-2966

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Divider Title: 4

Budget Levels
And
Staffing History Chart

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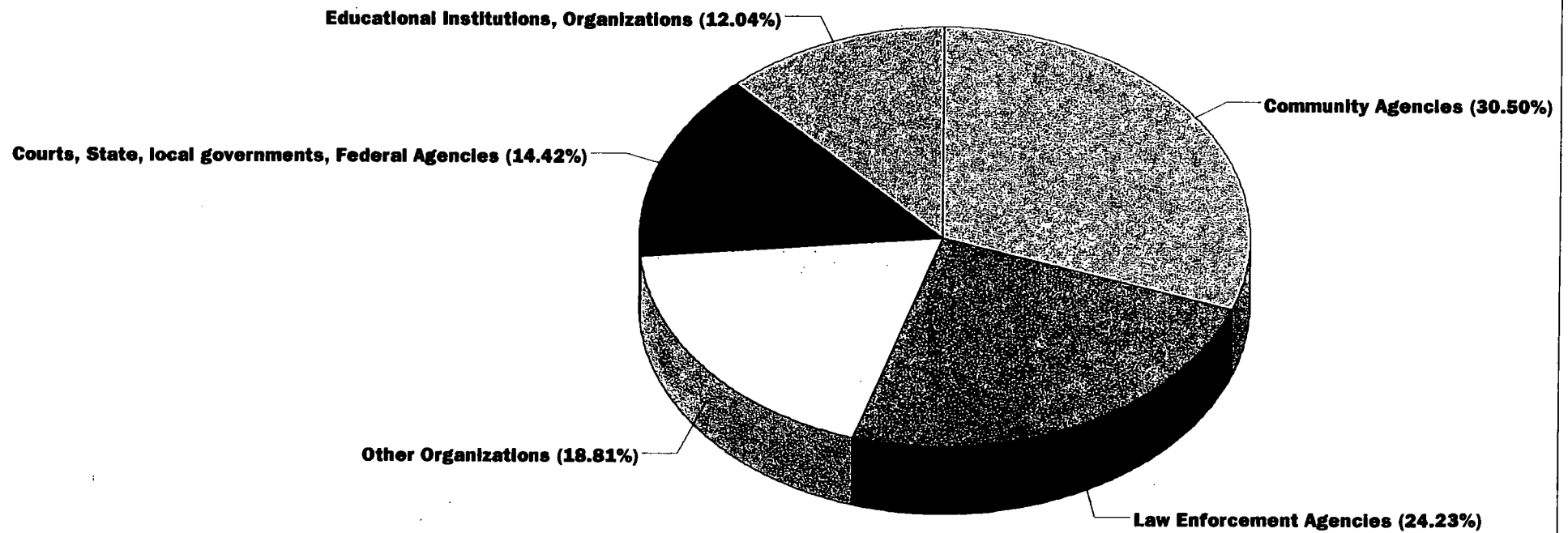
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Divider Title: 5

CRS Services
And
Unmet Requests

CRS Services FY 95 - 97

CRS Services FY 95 - 97



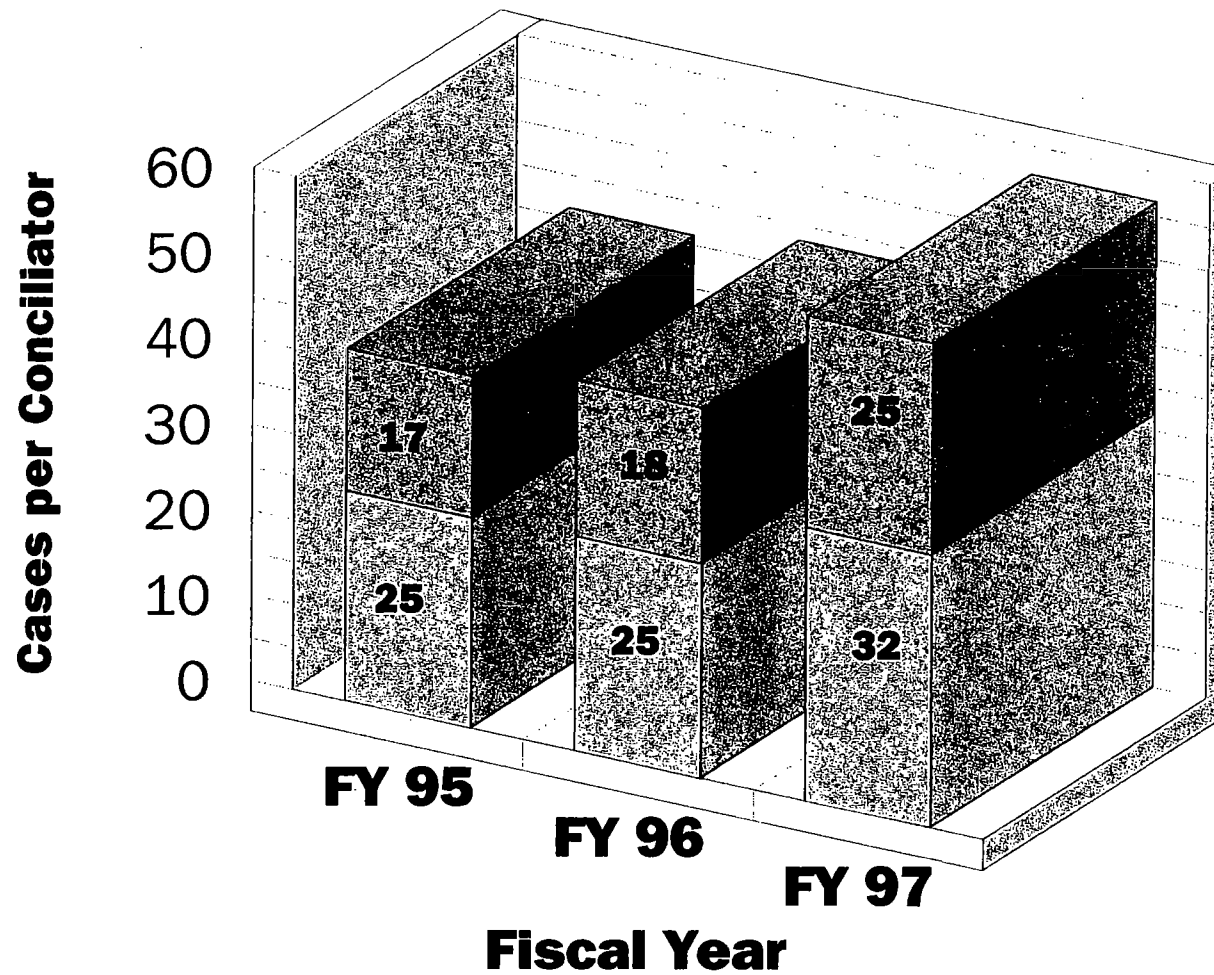
CRS Services FY 95 - 97

- **CRS helps to prevent and resolve community racial violence and conflict**
 - **CRS services are provided to four major groups:**
 - **law enforcement agencies (24%)**
 - **courts, State and local governments, Federal agencies (14%)**
 - **schools, colleges and universities (12%)**
 - **community agencies (31%)**
 - **other local agencies and organizations (19%)**
-
- **CRS provides its violence prevention and conflict resolution services when they are requested by State and local officials**
 - **CRS services are provided by trained impartial conflict resolution specialists**
 - **CRS services help State and local agencies develop local solutions to local problems**

CRS Response to Demand for Services FY 95 - 97

CRS Response to Demand for Services

FY 95 - 97



Service Requests met per Conciliator



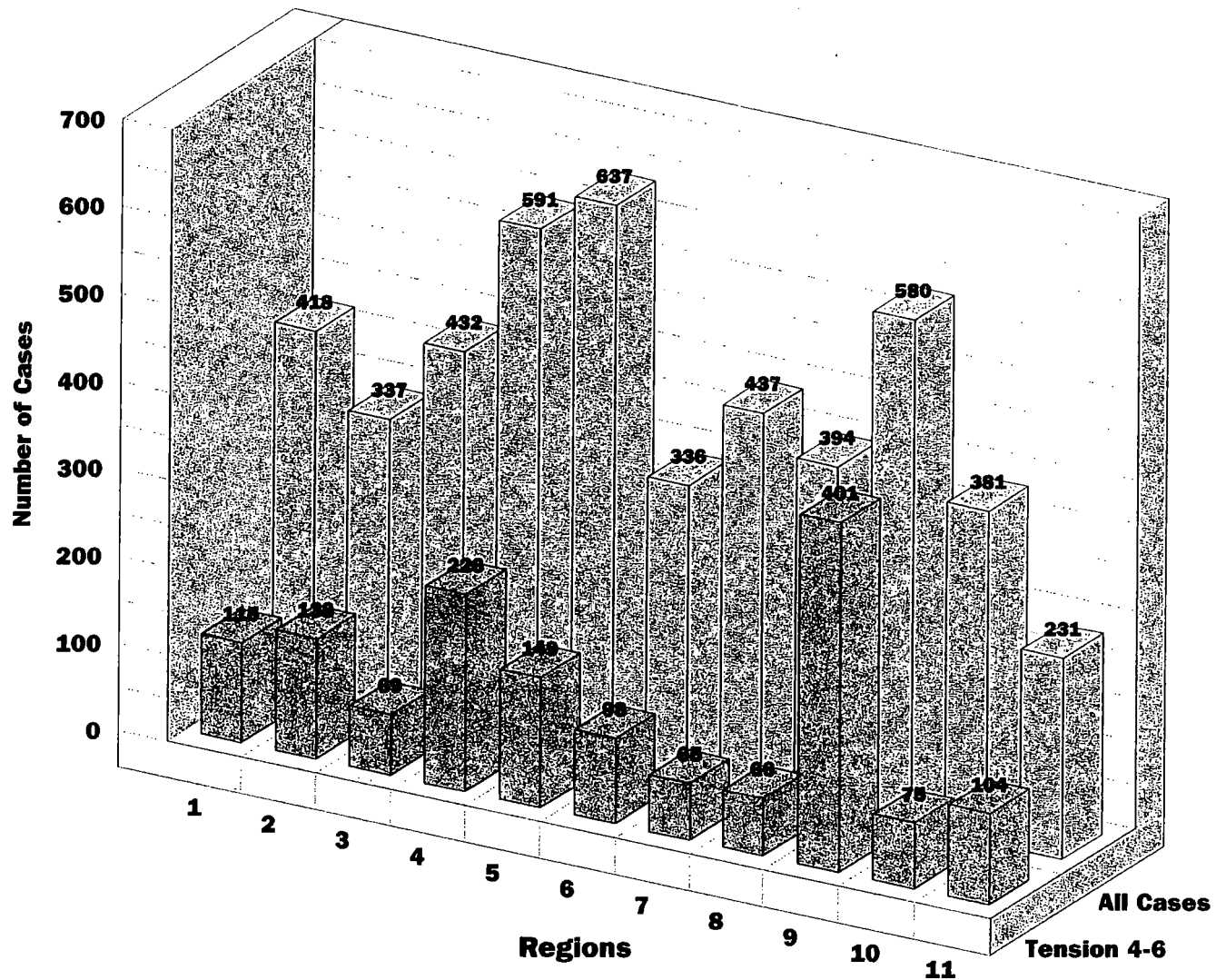
Unmet Service Requests

CRS Response to Demand for Services FY 95 - 97

- **CRS conciliators are conducting more casework per capita than ever before**
 - **The number of requests for service is increasing each year**
 - **The number of unmet service requests is increasing each year**
-
- **Without additional staff, CRS will exhaust its conciliation corps**
 - **Regional managers must “triage” demand for services, responding to only the most urgent, violent, or potentially explosive situations**
 - **Without additional funds, CRS will be forced to decline or defer even more requests for service**
 - **Without CRS assistance, unresolved community racial conflicts will fester and become the fuel for even more serious community wide violence**

CRS Casework Activities By Region FY 95 - 97

CRS Casework Activities by Region FY 95 - 97



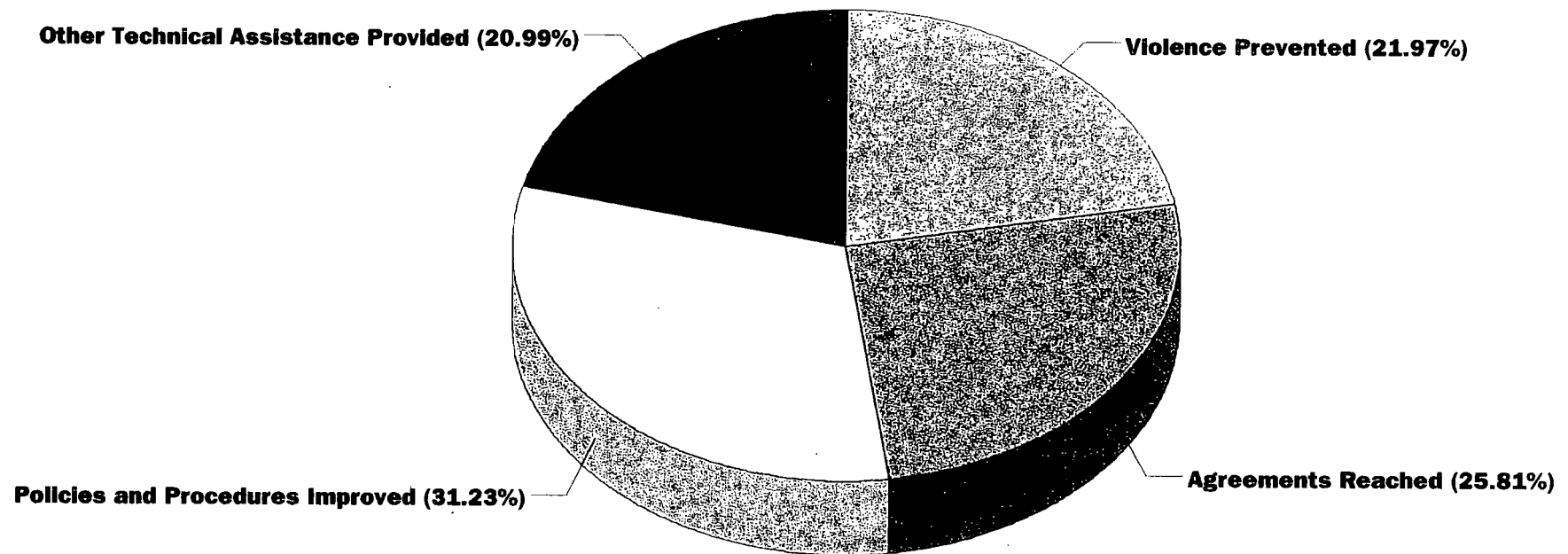
Note: Region 11 represents CRS' work with the Church Arson Task Force in FY 97

CRS Casework Activities By Region FY 95 - 97

- **CRS tracks its casework activity by Region and tension level**
 - **The heaviest concentrations of casework activity during FY 95 - 97 were in the Southeast, Midwest, and Western Regions**
 - **The concentration of cases with the most serious conflict and violence were in Western and Southeast Regions**
-
- **In the three Regions with the heaviest concentrations of casework, there were a total of 8 conciliators available to respond:**
 - Southeast Region: 3 available conciliators**
 - Midwest Region: 2 available conciliators**
 - Western Region: 3 available conciliators**
 - **The two Regions with the most serious cases of violence and conflict were overwhelmed, requiring redeployment from other Regions, whose casework was then left unattended**
 - **New demographics portend increases in racial violence and greater demand for CRS services**

Outcomes of CRS Casework FY 95 - 97

Outcomes of CRS Casework FY 95 - 97

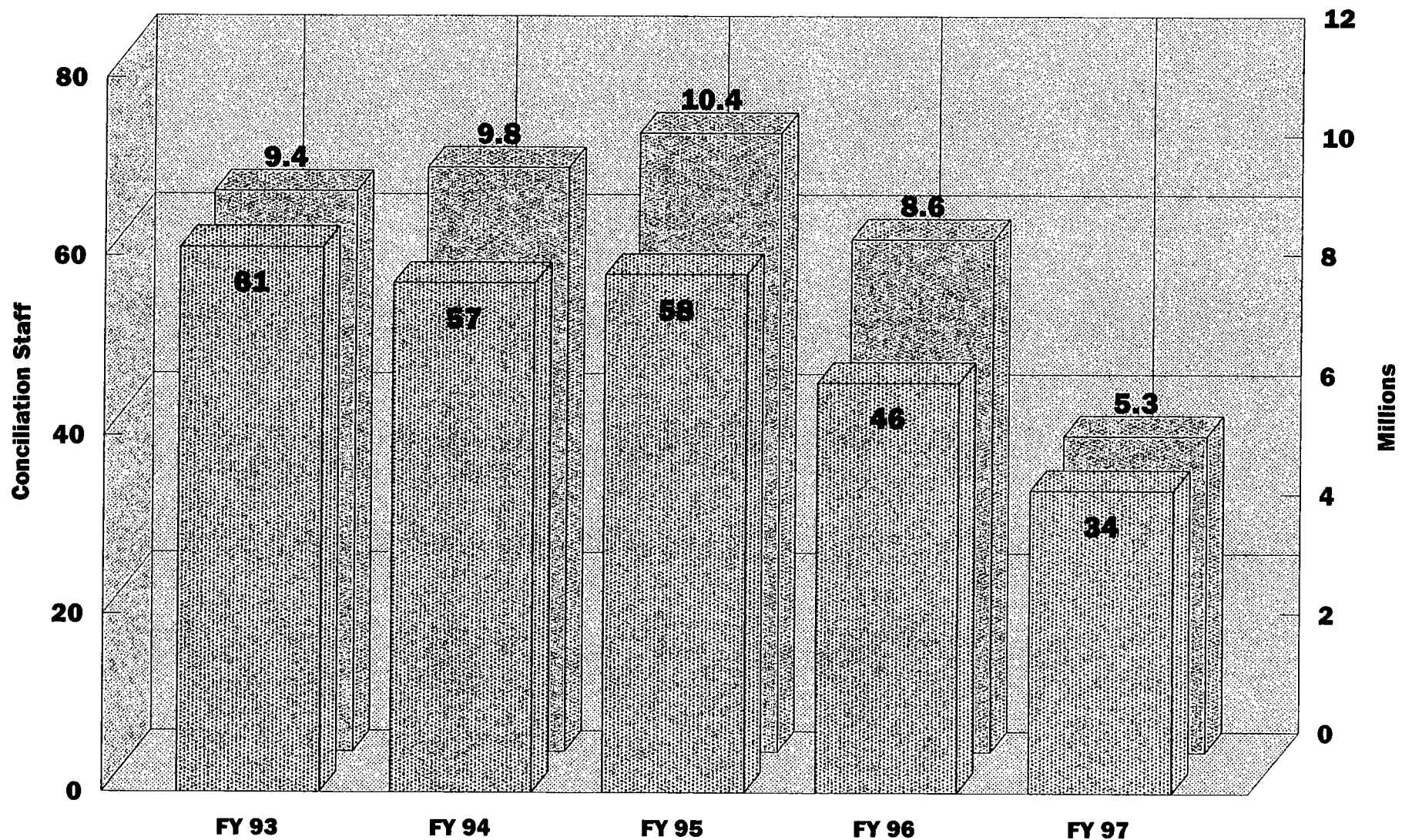


Outcomes of CRS Casework FY 95 - 97

- **CRS measures the effectiveness of its work by specific tangible outcomes**
- **For case activities conducted over the past three years, CRS can point to four major outcomes**
 - **Community violence, including property damage and personal injury, was prevented**
Contingency Planning in St. Petersburg, Florida
Community Preparation in Leland, Mississippi
 - **Mediated agreements were reached among parties in conflict**
School Desegregation Case in Little Rock, Arkansas
Toxic Chemicals Through Odanah, Wisconsin Reservation
 - **Local policies, practices and procedures were improved**
Biracial Task Force in Boligee, Alabama
Problem-Solving Process in Reading, Pennsylvania Schools
 - **Other technical assistance, including training, was provided**
Training of Police on Response to Hate Crimes in Phoenix, Arizona
Police-community Patrol in Kansas City, Kansas

Budget and Conciliation Staff Levels FY 93 - 97

Budget and Conciliation Staff Levels FY 93 - 97



■ Conciliation Staff Level ■ Budget Level

Budget and Conciliation Staff Levels FY 93 - 97

- **The number of field conciliators available to conduct violence prevention and conflict resolution work has declined over the past five years**
 - **The number of available field conciliators in FY 97 is at the lowest point in the history of CRS**
-
- **While the number of field conciliators is now at its lowest point, the demand for CRS services will continue to rise, according to law enforcement authorities**
 - **CRS conciliators, stretched to the limit, must shortcut services. They can no longer provide in-depth or comprehensive services**
 - **When CRS conciliators do not have the time to help communities establish their own mechanisms to prevent and avoid racial violence, there is a greater likelihood that CRS services will be required again in the same communities**
 - **The prospects for racial violence increase when CRS cannot assist communities in preventing and resolving conflict in the first place.**

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Major Accomplishments

MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE FY 1997

I. OVERVIEW

A. Community Relations Service (CRS) Mission: The mission of the Community Relations Service of the U.S. Department of Justice is to prevent conflicts and potential violence. It assists State and local units of government and private and public organizations restore community racial stability. When violence is imminent, CRS, at the request of local officials, moves swiftly to reduce tensions and restore peace.

From the social unrest of the 1960's to the Los Angeles riots of the 1990's and to the recent alleged police excessive use of force in New York, CRS has played a vital role in conflict resolution and restoration of peace. It has also provided valuable training and technical assistance to local law enforcement officials in their efforts to achieve greater stability and avert violence in their communities.

B. CRS: A Unique Arm of Federal Government: As the Federal government's "peacemaker" for community conflicts and tensions arising from differences of race, color and national origin, no other Federal agency is equipped or charged to handle the breadth and scope of CRS's services. As a component of the Department of Justice, CRS has the established relationships and credibility with law enforcement across around the country which allow it to serve as an impartial third party in resolving conflicts.

CRS' main focus is preventing and resolving conflicts before they escalate into violence. Further, while the local public and private sectors may use dispute resolution professionals for minor disputes, CRS conciliators are specifically trained to deal with issues involving community racial conflicts and violence. Further, because more than 50 percent of the cases involve State and local public agencies, mediation of conflicts can only be undertaken by an external conciliator.

CRS' small staff is made up of 34 professional conciliators who are specially trained to be impartial and objective. With 10 regional offices and four field offices, CRS is active across the country. Currently, there are only 7 professional staff to handle the management and administrative responsibilities of CRS in their Washington, DC headquarters. In previous years, CRS had more than 40 professionals to handle these administrative duties, and an additional 30 professional conciliators in the field.

C. CRS Has Earned The Support of Law Enforcement: CRS is nationally recognized for its unique role and vital work and has earned support and praise from law enforcement, Federal agencies, elected leaders, local officials and communities across the country.

Attorney General Reno states:

"For more than 30 years, Attorneys General of both parties have relied on CRS to help calm racial flare-ups, mediate disputes, and avert hostilities and riots... Peacemaking doesn't make headlines, but it doesn't happen by itself. It takes commitment and experience."

Former Attorney General Dick Thornburgh, General Jack Sheehan, Commander in Chief, United States Atlantic Command, U.S. Senator Connie Mack and Florida Governor Lawton Chiles are just a few of the officials who have first-hand knowledge of CRS' contributions.

Because of its work in violence prevention, CRS is recognized nationally by law enforcement officials for its effectiveness and cost-efficiency. In fact, the President of the International Association of Chiefs of Police Darrell Sanders stated recently:

"CRS has proven itself invaluable to our nation's law enforcement community by quickly providing expert technical assistance in resolving racial and ethnic conflicts before they turn into destructive violence and lawlessness."

D. CRS' Methodology: Simply stated, CRS helps local communities avoid violence and restore and maintain peace through the application of conciliation and conflict resolution techniques when conflicts arise due to race, color, or national origin. Providing this assistance empowers communities to take the initiative in identifying and addressing racial divisions before they escalate into litigation, civil disorder, or violence. Prevention and training resources are provided to local communities only upon their request for such assistance.

Because it cannot respond to the many requests for services, CRS provides its assistance only where there is significant community conflict, where there is interest in using CRS services, and where CRS impact will be greatest. In all CRS cases, the agency works cooperatively with local officials and undertakes activities only with their concurrence and at their request.

II. CASE STUDIES: CRS IN ACTION

Below are examples of cases CRS resolved during FY 1997.

A. Case Study I: Church Arson -- Bridging Racial Polarization

Origin of Case: In June, 1996, a National Church Arson Task Force was established under a bipartisan emergency authorization from Congress, to

investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of church arsons concentrated in seventeen Southern states. CRS joined in this Federal effort as a principal partner. Due to staff reductions, CRS mobilized a separate Church Burning Response Team (CBRT) comprised of former CRS employees, detailees from other Federal agencies, CRS staff from regional offices and contracted employees.

Situation Analysis: Beginning in 1995 and as recently as this month, church arsons have been a major problem facing our country. Since 1996, the CBRT worked in over 250 communities throughout the country that have experienced arson and related tensions.

Challenges & Obstacles: Often communities are shaken and alarmed after a church arson. Minority community members are sometimes apprehensive and wary of cooperating with local authorities. In Macon, Georgia and many other locations, minority community leaders expressed dissatisfaction with the method, pace and findings of investigations by agencies.

Work Performed: The CBRT arranged and convened a series of meetings between the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearm (ATF), the FBI, local law enforcement and the clergy to address this problem. As a result of the meetings, all parties had gained knowledge about investigations and its process and have forged a new relationship that helped with the investigation and boosted community morale. Mark Logan, ATF Officer of the Year, stated at the Congressional hearing on church arsons:

"Without CRS we could not have done it. We needed CRS on the ground calming the community and making sure a violative situation did not get much worse. With CRS' help we were able to conduct a thorough investigation which lead to indictments of suspected church arsonists."

Moreover, CRS has worked in tandem with other Federal agencies to address concerns related to arson prevention and control. It has participated in FEMA efforts to disseminate information on arson prevention, assisted HUD as it developed information on insurance issues, developed a "Best Practices" Manual that ATF agents use as they work in the communities, conducted workshops with the U.S. Attorney's offices to address communities in crisis and collaborated with the Bureau of Justice Assistance on state training symposiums and conferences.

Results & Benefits: CRS has reduced tensions by convening meetings between law enforcement and minority communities, affording all parties the opportunity to express concerns directly to each other, to understand another's viewpoint and to appreciate the difficulties of the situation. Major work has been done in

strengthening ties between the minority community and law enforcement. Rev. Dr. Joan Brown Campbell, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches, stated:

"CRS is one of the best kept secrets in the Justice Department. The work that CRS does to reduce racial tension and to restore healing in communities that have experienced loss by church arson make them a valuable resource to our government and the American people."

B. Case Study II: Resolving Tough Disputes -- Averting Violence

Origin of Case: The Governor of Wisconsin Tommy Thompson contacted Attorney General Reno after all other avenues had been exhausted by the Sheriff of Ashland County, Wisconsin and the Tribal Council of the Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians in resolving a dispute that threatened to erupt into violence. CRS was called to mediate as an impartial Federal agency.

Situation Analysis: The dispute arose between the Chippewa Indians and the Wisconsin Central Railroad, which was shipping toxic sulfuric acids across its reservation on tracks they believed to be unsafe. When the railroad continued the shipments, the Chippewa Indians blocked the tracks. The railroad's threat to run the blockade intensified the tension between the tribe, the railroad, and State and local law enforcement officers. Violence appeared imminent.

Work Performed: All parties agreed that CRS should mediate the dispute. Through mediation sessions conducted by CRS, a Memorandum of Understanding was reached which averted violence and lead to a resumption of shipments under new safeguards.

Results & Benefits: Tensions eased immediately after CRS' involvement. The Ogitchida Warriors, who had blocked train traffic through the reservation, agreed to vacate the protest site, in exchange for an agreement to pursue additional issues and concerns with the railroad. By October, an agreement was reached that included a significant reduction in shipments of toxic chemicals by the railroad company.

In a letter to the Attorney General, Tribal Chairman John Wilmer, Sr., tells about the mediation:

"Mr. Terronez (CRS mediator) met with all parties involved in the dispute and almost immediately instilled a shared sense of trust in his integrity and ability. He worked tirelessly to find common

ground among the parties and ease any existing tension. Because of his efforts, the parties have worked through most of their differences and are looking forward to a resolution of the matter...I am sincerely grateful that the Department of Justice has a program like CRS."

C. Case Study III: Maintaining in Restoring Peace in Our Schools

Origin of Cases: School authorities and parents requested assistance from CRS following a series of racially charged incidents.

Situation Analysis: In Orange Glen High School in Escondido, California a fight between students escalated into a racially charged standoff between at least 100 American Indian and Latino students. The potential for escalation was high as police and campus security were required to separate the students engaged in physical fighting.

In another high profile case, charges were filed in Chicago, Illinois against three White teenagers who allegedly beat a Black youth. National attention to the case grew as the Mayor of Chicago and the Rev. Jesse Jackson visited the youth in the hospital. Tensions were heightened as the alleged attackers were released on bond and the FBI classified the case as a hate crime.

Work Performed: In both cases, CRS assessed tensions at the schools and found them to be high. In the first case, CRS convened a meeting to address interracial conflict among students and plan steps to diffuse escalating tension. Following CRS training with students, school and local officials, the school initiated CRS' STARS (Students talking and Able to Resolve Situations) program, a peer mediation program. CRS convened and mediated meetings between students, community member, parents and school officials. Students were trained in peer mediation to avert future hostilities.

In Chicago, CRS met with the Director of the Chicago Catholic Archdiocese Office to help develop programs in high schools, including the one attended by the alleged perpetrators. CRS helped avoid violence at a community demonstration conducted by dozens of Chicago Guardian Angels. CRS established communications with neighborhood residents and business representatives.

Results & Benefits: Violence was averted and tensions subsided in both cases. Communications between parties improved. An infrastructure and mechanism was developed and implemented in the community to avert and resolve future tensions. The schools districts developed violence reduction policies and procedures as a result of the conflict. Students, community members and school officials received training to prevent future incidents.

II. 1997 ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE

A. Highlights: In 1997, CRS was called upon to resolve conflicts throughout the country. Typically, CRS is called into action when local law enforcement, businesses, elected officials and school administrators need the services of an impartial agency. Often, these agencies of the private and public sector need the independence and authority of the Federal government to help them resolve disputes in which they are one of the parties in conflict.

In FY 97 CRS had an active case load of more than **1309** cases and has closed approximately **468** of these cases.

Three recent incidents which received national attention within the last two weeks illustrate CRS' important role in resolving tensions and averting violence. A CRS mediator is currently working on-site to assess and help reduce the level of racial tension surrounding the alleged brutal torture and police's excessive use of force upon a Haitian immigrant in New York City, the decapitation and burning of an African American man in Elk Creek, Virginia, and the riots in Nashville following a police shooting. Each of these situations brought an immediate CRS response.

B. Priorities: Currently, CRS is carrying out Justice Department priorities. Specifically:

- that **every** child should live in a safe, secure community with equal opportunity to grow and thrive;
- that efforts should be made to **prevent** racial and ethnic tensions before they escalate into violence; and
- that communities must be **empowered** to resolve their own conflicts.

C. Preventing Violence in Schools: Schools, once a safe haven for our children and their teachers, have now become some of the fiercest battlegrounds in cities, suburbs and rural districts throughout our country. CRS services were requested in FY 1997 by more than **150** school districts and **100** colleges and universities. CRS was asked to help address racial conflicts and violence, reduce tensions, develop plans to avoid potential incidents, and conduct conflict resolution and peer mediation training programs for students, teachers, administrators and parents.

D. Preventing Violence and Civil Disorders: When local capacities are insufficient, law enforcement agencies seek CRS assistance to respond to civil disorders and racial violence. In FY1997 CRS, responded to civil disturbances in St. Petersburg, Florida, community unrest in Leland, Mississippi and Phoenix, Arizona. CRS mediators were on-site, helping police and local officials calm tension, end the violence and begin constructive dialogue. **CRS dedicates 40 percent of its resources to assisting police agencies.**

E. Restoring Calm After Church Burnings: The last two years has seen a rash of church arson primarily directed towards African-American congregations. In 1996 and 1997, more than 250 churches in 13 Southern states were burned or desecrated. CRS has played an integral role in the comprehensive response by Federal agencies. (First Year CBRT Report attached).

F. Ensuring Safe and Peaceful Demonstrations and Marches: CRS mediators, when requested by march organizers and local law enforcement officials, assist in event planning to help reduce potential conflicts and to minimize any prospects of confrontations. Key assistance was provided to the Republican National Convention. Gerald Sanders the Chief of Police in San Diego states:

"CRS provided invaluable service when San Diego hosted the Republican National Convention. They kept the protestors and demonstrators at safe distance so that the convention could proceed smoothly."

Recently, officials in Philadelphia requested assistance when the Nation of Islam marched through the white neighborhood of Gary's Ferry. In New York this past week, CRS assisted when more than 4,000 Haitians demonstrated outside the 70th Police Precinct over allegations of police brutality. In San Francisco, local authorities are using CRS' assistance in preparation for Rev. Jesse Jackson's planned protest march across the Golden Gate Bridge scheduled for August 28, 1997.

Additionally, CRS was called upon to assist at the Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, the Million Man March and the National Hispanic March in Washington, D.C. In these and other events, CRS facilitates and encourages advance coordination, cooperation and contingency planning, promotes and trains "self-marshals" to sustain violence-free events, and conducts conciliation activities when conflict occurs.

G. Responding to Hate Crimes: In 1997, CRS responded to 165 cases involving community racial tensions associated with hate crimes or hate groups activities, approximately 15 percent of the agency's active caseload. CRS services include helping civic leaders and public officials maintain and restore stability when hate group activities heighten tensions; assisting local officials in the development of policies and practices for responding to hate crimes; conducting training sessions for police on recognition of and response to hate crimes; assisting businesses which experience property loss and damage; and delivering hate crime prevention and education programs in schools, colleges, and communities.

H. Resolving Disputes in Indian Country: In 1997, CRS responded to more than 25 cases involving disputes and conflicts between local, State and tribal governments; corporations and tribal government; and non-Indians and tribes. CRS provided conflict

resolution assistance, helping to resolve issues over the use of reservation lands for sanitary and hazardous waste landfills; tribal voting rights; leasing of tribal lands for housing and business ventures by non-Indians; cross-deputizations between Federal, State and local governments, and law enforcement in gaming, taxation, and business regulation, and return of ancient Native American remains and artifacts unearthed by land development.

I. Supporting Other Departments and Federal Local Partnerships: In addition, CRS supports interdepartmental cooperation and public and private sector partnerships. CRS has created many partnerships that help reduce racial and ethnic tensions in local communities. For example, CRS' services are regularly engaged by U. S. Attorneys seeking to improve communication with minority organizations, and CRS helps support other Federal initiatives, including community oriented policing, Operation Weed and Seed, and Pulling American Communities Together. Within the Department of Justice, CRS is partnering with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention on hate crimes; Office of Community Oriented Policing Services on its youth violence; Office for Victims of Crime on assistance to hate crime victims; Office of Tribal Justice on tribal conflict; Federal Bureau of Investigation on hate crime response; Civil Rights Division on excessive use of police force protocols; Environment and Natural Resources Division on resolution of environmental issues; and the Bureau of Justice Assistance on training for law enforcement on conflict prevention and community relations.

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THE DEMAND FOR CRS IS LARGE AND GROWING

A. Lowest Staff Level in Agency's History--Demand is High While Resources are Less: Currently, CRS operates with its smallest staff in its more than 30 years, down from a peak staff of more than 300, CRS now has a total staff of only 41. Despite this low level of resources, CRS has diligently attempted to meet its Congressional mandate and provide professional services to those communities which need them most.

Each regional staff of only 1 or 2 persons covers an average of 5-6 states. Most offices have no clerical or administrative support personnel. Professional conciliators valuable time is spent handling administrative duties as well as conflict resolution activities, drawing their time away from the field where their presence is needed most.

Given the budget realities, CRS has over the past few years cut costs to the "bare bones". The Director has instituted tight restrictions in travel, frozen new hires and performance pay, deferred managers' meetings and trainings. This goes way beyond "providing more with less," which CRS has done for many years. Because of the nature of our work, CRS conciliators must be "on the ground," in local communities to perform their work. Unfortunately this zero sum proposition forces CRS to spend less time on each case and handle fewer cases while the calls for CRS services continue to grow.

B. Changing Demographics: America of the 1990's has a different racial landscape compared to when CRS was created more than 30 years ago. Racial conflicts cut across all racial lines and are no longer limited to Blacks and whites. Given the fundamental demographic changes, the agency's services are in greater demand than ever. As our country and its neighborhoods have become more diverse, racial conflicts and tensions are bound to arise. With people of many cultures, without common customs or languages, attempting to live, work, play and attend school together, minor misunderstandings can often escalate to full blown conflict and violence.

We see this happening in our neighborhood schools where youths are clearly divided by race, in housing projects where residents often live in fear and mistrust of their neighbors, and in the streets and communities where the outbreak of riots and clashes is cause for alarm. Criminologists project a greater potential for riots based on demographics alone, citing such factors as additional economic dislocation, higher urban unemployment, and a ballooning of teenage minority population over the next decade.

C. Heightened Racial Tensions: Civil rights leaders are calling for more public protests and demonstration over issues ranging from cutbacks in social service programs, police shootings and excessive force, regional high rates of joblessness, and scapegoating. Unresolved racial tensions escalate into civil unrest, violence, and destruction of property, resulting in an increase in crime and costs to local governments. We can only expect the situation to grow worse as underlying economic and social problems and demographic shifts continue to persist in rural and suburban areas, inner-cities and hate group enclaves.

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