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CRIME-

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policy REVIEW

Spring 1995

Number 72

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Clinton's Crack Babies Why Won't the White House Let Us Save Our Children?

Yes, Virginia, We Abolished Parole
Governor George Allen

Hay Hay, Hoe Hoe
My Farm Subsidies Have Got To Go

Big Bird Goes Cold Turkey
Laurence Jarvik

"Honey, I Shrunk the Tax Base!"
Marion Barry's D.C. Woes

Hire Education: Job Training at Its Best
Stephen Glass

Black Business Leaders Decry Minority Set-Asides



PROFESSOR SEES CRIME WAVE AHEAD, 2A

→ THE DEAN OF DEATH

James Fox uses statistics, 'seasoned speculation' to study murder
COVER STORY

Expert seeks 'classroom of millions'

'My adrenaline starts to pump when there is a mass murder somewhere'

By Joe Urschel
USA TODAY

BOSTON — There have always been precursors of death.

Ancient Greeks would hear it in the cry of a hawk. Roman augurs would read it from the entrails of a goat. On the island of Tahiti, it was foretold by the song of a bird.

James Fox sees it in a computer.

puter.

Dean of the criminology department at Northeastern University, Fox, 43, has spent his career studying murder. Homicide, patricide, serial murders, mass murders, cult murders. Killers, young and old. He is a professor of murder. The nation's dean of death.

Using computer modeling, he looks into the future, and what he sees is grim.

"This is the lull before the crime storm," says Fox. "There is a tremendous crime wave coming in the next 10 years," fueled not by old, hardened criminals, but by a group he calls "the young and the ruthless" — children in their early and midteens who are turning murderous.

After four decades of steadily rising crime rates — a six-fold increase in armed robbery and aggravated assault, a tripling in the number of rapes, a doubling of the murder rate — people do not want to believe things will get worse. But that is what Fox sees, and that is the message he is trying to get out.

For nearly 20 years, he and his software have predicted where the nation's murder rate would go. He has been wrong only once, when he underestimated in the late 1980s.

"I didn't envision crack," he says.

His prediction, like his others, is based on statistics and demographics. The numbers boil down to this:

There is a huge group of people moving through the nation's population. They are the so-called "baby boomlet," the sons and daughters of the baby boomers.

The number of teens age 14-17 began ratcheting up this year and will peak in 2005. Because this age group is committing far more murders than it used to — up 165% between 1983 and 1993 alone — the nation's overall murder rate will rise as well.

It is that simple, says Fox. And that complex.

"We have seen a radical change in the nature of violence," he says. "Murderers are getting younger and younger."

Databank of murders

Even his colleagues, who may disagree with some of his conclusions about crime or his recommendations for fighting it, have respect for his statistical projections.

"I wouldn't say anything directly critical of his work in this area," says Arnold Barnett, a sociologist at the MIT-Sloan School. "Those are facts, and he has done a great job bringing them to the public."

Fox has a databank of more than 380,000 murders in his computer, equipped with a 22-inch monitor and software that allows him to enlarge the type. (Fox is legally blind, the result of his premature birth.)

He studies them by age, by race, by region, by style, by almost any factor that can be measured. He can define who is most likely to commit mass murder, who will commit serial murder, who will kill his parents.

His résumé — listing his published scholarly works, popular books, newspaper and magazine contributions — is 14 pages long.

Fox is arguably the nation's foremost criminologist. He certainly is its most quoted.

He has appeared, frequently, on Oprah, Donahue, 48 Hours, Face the Nation, Hard Copy, Inside Edition, The CBS Evening News, The CBS Morning News, Good Morning America, The Today Show, Larry King Live, A Current Affair, Un-

solved Mysteries, Sally Jessy Raphael, Montel Williams and others, as well as hundreds of radio shows. He's testified before Congress, been joked about on Saturday Night Live. He is interviewed, on average, three to four times a day.

If you spend any time in his tidy office at Northeastern in downtown Boston, you can almost see the media crosshairs on his telephone.

"That was Newsweek," he says. It rings again.

"New York Times."

Then the Norfolk Virginia-Pilot. Another ring.

"James Fox. Really? Well, would you mind if I call you back? I'm talking to somebody else from USA TODAY in my office right now."

"Some of my colleagues are critical of my profile in the media. They somehow feel it is undignified," he says without apology. "My students love it, and so do their parents. So I don't concern myself."

Besides, he's well aware of what the university's president thinks.

"Jamie brings prestige to the university. We get a large number of students who want to come to the College of Criminal Justice as a result," says Jack Curry, Northeastern's president, who compares Fox's recruitment power to that of a high-profile athlete or tournament level basketball team. He is, says Curry, "a fund-raising asset."

Crime a hot-button issue

It helps, of course, to be doing research into what Curry calls "the red-hot issues" of serial murder, workplace violence and youth crime — issues that both entrance and upset the public.

"What I do is combine hard data with seasoned speculation," says Fox, who correctly predicted — based on a radio report — that the mass killer in the 1984 attack at the San Ysidro, Calif., McDonald's would turn out to be an unemployed security guard.

"I don't like ... hunches. But if you only use data, your conclusions will be uninspired."

UPDATE

2 Killers Elude Police in Costly Florida Manhunts

By MIKE CLARY
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

MIAAMI—Despite massive manhunts that have involved more police—and cost more money—than any two criminal cases in South Florida history, two killers are still on the loose. Police are frustrated, and so, too, are taxpayers, who have watched the costs of the pursuits climb past \$1.5 million.

Now, some of the reward money is about to vanish as well.

State police have set an expiration deadline for next Monday for the \$30,000 bounty on the head of Juan Fleitas, a 30-year-old convicted murderer who broke out of a Belle Glade, Fla., prison on Jan. 2. Of the four other killers who tunneled under the fence with Fleitas, one was shot dead by police and three were caught within days.

"It's a hefty sum, so if someone is sitting on information, we hope they come forward now," says Lee Condon, an agent of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. "He's not existing in a vacuum. Someone is helping him with lodging and food."

The object of a second manhunt is known only as the Tamiami Strangler, the person believed responsible for killing five women and a man, all cocaine-addicted prostitutes who worked a west Miami section of U.S. 41, known as the Tamiami Trail. The first victim was found Sept. 17; the sixth on Jan. 12.

For information leading to an arrest in the strangler case, police had offered a reward of up to \$11,000, which includes \$10,000 from the department's own trust fund of money seized from drug dealers. That gesture is unprecedented here. But in almost three months since the strangler last struck, the leads have dropped off, and the cost of the investigation has soared past \$1 million.

"Clearly," says Metro-Dade Police Sgt. Felix Jimenez, "this is going to be a long-term investigation. These cases are hard to solve."

Although the cases are not linked, they are consuming manpower and the money needed to pay overtime. Because of the dangers each killer poses, and the publicity each has generated, dozens of officers have been pulled from other investigations.

To University of Miami law professor Jonathan Simon, the hunts for Fleitas and the Tamiami Strangler illustrate what he calls "the high cost of Americans' distorted picture of crime and punishment, and how we use our limited resources." While the high profiles of both cases have led to the public expectation that police do anything they can to catch the killers, Simon says, "in truth, most crimes solve themselves."

Jimenez agrees that the investigation into the strangler murders has meant pulling officers off other cases. "This has taken a lot of time," Jimenez says. "We have had 34 officers full time on the Tamiami case, but we can only go on so long. [This week] we will cut back by half."

"It is frustrating, not just to law enforcement, but to the community in general," adds Metro Sgt. John Roper, who heads up Crimestoppers Anonymous, the Police Department's telephone tips line. "Homicide has put in a lot of long hours and followed leads all over Florida and the United States on this."

If anything, the Fleitas case has been even more frustrating, since police have the fugitive's mug shot, his case history and a long list of relatives and friends. He has been sighted several times in the Miami area. In January, police paid \$874 to hire a plane to tow a banner begging Fleitas to give himself up.

At one point, the multi-agency task force set up to track down Fleitas included 100 officers and a pack of bloodhounds. The cost of the chase so far: about \$400,000.

Times researcher Anna M. Virtue contributed to this story.

7

The public cannot seem to get enough. Crime ranks first on national polls as an issue of concern. It is the basic fiber of popular fiction, television, movies, even music.

And though the extent of the coming surge in teen murders may not yet have captured the attention of the nation, Fox's prediction has

made an impression in Washington.

Thomas Constantine, administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, used Fox's study of the homicide rate of young teens in presenting his 1996 budget to the House Appropriations Committee. It was cited again by Constantine when he and FBI Director Louis Freeh testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee. The White House requested a copy.

Teens are much more threatening than adults, Fox says, "because they will kill over trivial matters — a jacket, some sneakers, a dirty look. For them, murder is just not the taboo that it once was. A lot of that is television.

"We used to blame television and the movies for not showing consequences of violence. Now, they do. And kids have become desensitized. They'll rent these movies ... and play their favorite scenes — often the most violent — over and over.

"What do you think the effect on a young kid is when his first exposure to sex is a brutal rape scene? That is a very powerful image."

While advocates for unfettered artistic freedom may not like Fox's implicit attack on these forms of expression, others on the opposite side of the political spectrum may not appreciate his message about crime prevention: It does little good to "get tough" with this group.

"Kids are the least deterrable," he says. "They don't consider the consequences of their actions and many of them don't expect to live to be 21 years old. Why would they worry about prison?"

"You can ... try a 14-year-old as an adult. But a 14-year-old is not an adult," he says.

Fox has plenty of opinions and ideas about how to address this problem — ranging from boys clubs to after-school activities to athletic programs. He's even pleaded with major league baseball to

televisize one afternoon game a day so there's something decent for kids to watch after school.

Most juvenile crime, he notes, occurs from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

But these are not the crime issues that the public wants Fox to talk about.

"People are fascinated by the kind of crime that is so bizarre it might as well be fiction," Fox says. "They aren't really interested in the common and ordinary crimes like mugging and burglary. The more bizarre the better."

A very public professor

Fox's criminology course on homicide is the most popular in the college, in part because it does deal with the grim and grisly mass murders and serial killings. Because of the demand, he used to try to teach 320 students at once. But "it got to be a zoo." Now, it's capped at 90.

And so, he turns to the electronic media to spread his message.

"There are only so many people I can reach in the classroom or through academic publications," he says. "With just one appearance on Oprah, I have a chance to reach a classroom of millions."

In 1985, Fox and Northeastern sociology professor Jack Levin collaborated on the first of many efforts — a book for the popular press called *Mass Murder: America's Growing Menace*. They established themselves as the experts on serial killers and mass murders.

Then came Jeffrey Dahmer, the murders of five college students in Gainesville, Fla., a spate of indiscriminate killings in the workplace and a string of other incomprehensible atrocities that both fascinated and repulsed the nation. The media turned to Fox and Levin for explanations and information, and they readily obliged.

"Donahue had gone down to Gainesville to do a show on those

murders, and it was right in the heat of it," Fox says. "The people there were very much against this. They wanted nothing to do with it. He invited me and I agreed to go on. He did the show outside and I remember people were yelling and holding up signs and honking horns, trying to disrupt the show.

"And right in the middle of it, I said that Humphrey wasn't the killer. He was the leading suspect at the time, but he did not fit the profile of that kind of murderer."

Fox wasn't the only one with doubts that Edward Lewis Humphrey had committed the grisly series of stabbings on the campus.

The Gainesville police wanted to know more about Fox's theories, and they brought him back for interviews. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement put him under contract, and he went to work on the case, analyzing data and using his knowledge of serial killers to help draw a crucial link to murders in Shreveport, La. — work that ultimately helped lead to the conviction of Danny Harold Rolling.

"We'd have solved it with or without him, but he was good," says Lee Strobe, a special agent who worked on the case. "He was one of the few who believed that Shreveport was connected to the Gainesville homicides."

Strobe admits some of the other officers resented the intrusion of a "civilian" on their case. "He'd have to hold papers about three inches from his face to read them. Some of the guys would mimic him a lot."

Nevertheless, Fox says he enjoyed the experience, and liked the work he did for the prosecution in other cases, including the Robert Berdella serial killings in Kansas City and the Randy Kraft killings in California.

He's the first to admit, though, that he is not a cop — nor did he ever want to be.

Continue

And though he has spent his career studying homicide, and poring over the specifics of hundreds of thousands of them, he has never been on the scene of a murder.

"I wouldn't be of much use at a crime scene," he says. "I'd probably step on something important."

A strain on family life

On the other hand, he might discover something serendipitously, just as he did his profession.

"I got into this field by accident. I needed a course to finish my undergraduate degree — I was trying to do it in three years." Criminology was available, and convenient. So he took it. He was hooked.

Still, Fox seems an unlikely personality to be consumed by such a grim topic. Small and trim, he is neat to a fault. Even his language is squeaky clean. "I find I only swear when I'm around cops," he says.

There's nothing about him that suggests his fascination with the century's most heinous criminals.

He even lives on Pleasant Street, although life there is not always tranquil.

The combination of the media pursuit — reporters have his home number, his home fax number, his pager number and his Internet address — and the nature of his specialty, can be a strain.

"My 10-year-old son knows the names of more serial killers than any of his friends. That's not because I teach him. That's just from his overhearing me talk on the telephone," Fox says.

His wife, Sue Ann, however, does not share these homicidal fascinations, and finds the constant discussion of murder abhorrent.

"I think what really bothers her is that my adrenaline starts to pump when there is a mass murder somewhere," Fox says. "The media calls start coming in and I'm just overtaken by it."

"He's a workaholic," says Sue Ann. "But he loves what he's doing and that's a gift. Of course, when the phones are ringing off the hook and the TV crews are setting up their cameras and lights, and the rest of us are upstairs trying to be quiet while Jamie does his interviews, it can be ... disrupting."

Even over cocktails or at parties, everybody wants Fox to talk homicide. "There are a lot of serial murder groupies out there," he says. "I frequently get asked, 'Who is your favorite serial killer?'"

"I just say, 'I don't like any of them.'" Though he's interviewed and written about some, "I don't spend my life introducing myself to serial killers. They are not very insightful and they are all pathological liars."

Plus, they can be a bother. Clifford Olsen, Canada's most notorious serial killer, got in the habit of calling. "He'd call me collect from his cell, on his cell phone. I had to tell him to stop."

But if his job has made him famous, it hasn't exactly made him rich. "People see you on television (and) ... they wonder, 'How much does that pay?'" In fact, the only time I ever got paid by a television show is when I didn't actually get on. (The show was trying to make up for the inconvenience.)

"The fact is, what I love is being a professor. I just happened to end up as a professor of criminology. I'd be just as happy teaching math."

Still, there is a sense of resignation about him, a sadness about his inability to steer the country off the murderous path it is on.

"There has been a pervasive disinvestment in American youth over the last 30 years — negative forces such as drugs, guns, gangs, television and movies have grown more powerful as the positive forces of family, school, church and community have grown weaker."

"Too many kids are unsocialized and unsupervised."

He says the USA is about to see the results of that disinvestment.

"Unfortunately, Americans are obsessed with quick solutions and easy answers when it comes to crime, and none of the popular ideas like 'three strikes and you're out,' the death penalty or even high school mediation programs will work against this kind of youth violence," he says.

"You have to start much earlier — in the primary grades — when you have some hope of reaching them. But those programs are expensive and don't show results for eight to 10 years and nobody has the patience for that."

And so the dean prepares for yet another round of testimony before Congress, another interview, another talk show appearance. Hoping to change the future, rather than merely predict it.

USA TODAY

DATE: 4-11-95PAGE: A-2

Murderers, like populace, are younger

By Joe Urschel
USA TODAY

In 1983, there were 3,647 teen-age killers.

In 2005, says Northeastern University's James Fox, there will be 4,000 of them.

And that's the cautious prediction.

If the murder rate goes up as much as Fox expects, about 6,000 young men and women in the 14-17 age group will commit murder that year.

Those sobering statistics are at the core of Fox's latest prediction of a coming youth crime wave.

It's a crime wave, he says, that will be particularly deadly along the Pacific Coast and the Southwestern states, and will most affect minority groups.

Behind Fox's prediction is a simple formulation, based on two trends converging:

- Murderers are getting younger.
- The percentage of the population in younger age groups is getting larger.

The result: Where the population surge of 14- to 17-year-olds is greatest — among blacks, Hispanics, in the Southwest and on the Pacific Coast — the murder rate will increase the fastest.

But there are going to be so many people in the 14-17 group that the entire country will feel the impact. Already the teens are making their presence felt in murder statistics.

Based on the demographic trends that have been consistent for decades, the USA should currently be enjoying a significant drop in the national murder rate. As the population ages, fewer murders should be committed, because the 18- to 24-year-old age group has always been the most unlawful.

There are fewer people in the 18-24 group now, but this new breed of younger criminals in the 14-17 age group is offsetting the declines.

Double Portrait of Man in Mob Trial Astounds His Friends

By SELWYN RAAB

For 15 years, Thomas J. Petrizzo was a vital force in fashioning the skyline of New York. Major contractors and developers lionized him for his acumen in shaping and delivering the steel frames for the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, Battery Park City, the new Federal courthouse in Foley Square and numerous Manhattan skyscrapers.

But while Mr. Petrizzo projected a gentle, grandfatherly glow in conferences and lunches with construction industry executives and lawyers, Federal prosecutors and agents say there was also a darker side to him. At the same time that he ran four companies based in Keasbey, N.J., the authorities assert, Mr. Petrizzo was a Colombo crime family capo, plotting murders and rigging multimillion-dollar construction deals for New York's Mafia bosses.

This portrait of Mr. Petrizzo's double life has emerged over the last year since he was arrested in December 1993 and accused of participating in a mob war for control of the Colombo family.

Mr. Petrizzo, 61, who has been held without bail since his arrest, and five other suspected Colombo family members are scheduled for trial on Monday in Federal District Court in Brooklyn on charges of conspiracy to murder and firearms possession.

In addition, law enforcement officials said that Mr. Petrizzo is the target of other

mob-related investigations. Search warrants obtained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation disclosed that he is suspected of extorting \$1.3 million from a Swiss engineering company and camouflaging the payoffs as consulting fees. The warrants also indicated that the F.B.I. had evidence that Mr. Petrizzo's companies were used to launder illegal payoffs.

Despite the charges, more than 50 construction company executives, lawyers and relatives have rallied to Mr. Petrizzo's defense and written to Federal judges urging his release on bail. In court documents and in interviews, they maintain that Mr. Petrizzo had an unblemished, business reputation and that he worked so exhaustingly for his companies — 15 to 20 hours a day, six and seven days a week — that he could never have found the time for Mafia crimes.

"He was one of the most sincere and honorable people I ever met in this business," said Karl W. Koch 3d, a steel industry consultant and the former vice president of the Karl Koch Erecting Company in Carteret, N.J. "There was never any threats or angles from him — his services and word were like gold."

That view was echoed by Angelo R. Bisceglie Jr., who was Mr. Petrizzo's labor lawyer for three years.

"As a former prosecutor, you have a sixth sense for someone who might be

connected," said Mr. Bisceglie, who was an assistant prosecutor in Essex and Morris Counties and a special counsel to former Gov. Jim Florio. "This man was a gentleman without the slightest hint of anything unsavory about him."

But at pretrial bail hearings over the last year, Federal prosecutors said that Mr. Petrizzo rode in convoys of Colombo gangsters in 1991 and 1992 hunting for rivals in a family war and that he was the Colombo representative on a Mafia council that controlled labor unions and divided the spoils from the construction industry.

George A. Stamboulidis, the lead prosecutor, maintained at the bail hearings that Mr. Petrizzo was promoted to the rank of capo, or captain, because he was the "liaison for the Colombo family on the organized-crime construction panel that has a stranglehold on the New York City-area construction industry."

Law enforcement officials say it is impossible to pinpoint the exact costs of what they say were Mr. Petrizzo's mob activities. But experts estimate that organized crime influence and payoffs inflate overall construction prices by about 10 percent through rigged bids and through honest competitors' being discouraged from seeking contracts.

At pretrial hearings, Mr. Stamboulidis also charged that Mr. Petrizzo used his office in Keasbey for underworld meetings and to store ammunition and disguises for hit men.

Mr. Petrizzo, who has pleaded not guilty and is being held at the Federal detention center in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, declined to be interviewed. But details of his life were gleaned from court and financial records and from interviews with

lawyers, business associates and law enforcement officials.

He grew up in East New York, Brooklyn, and dropped out of school when he was 16 to work on a private garbage collection crew. Later, he was a truck driver and manager for freight companies. In 1969, at age 36, he began a steel hauling business, but the company failed in 1974.

In 1975, despite his previous business reverses, he formed a new company, A. J. Ross Logistics Inc., in Keasbey, in Middlesex County about 50 miles from Manhattan. The company's main business was making steel reinforcing bars and trucking steel columns and girders.

James M. LaRossa, Mr. Petrizzo's chief lawyer, said at a bail hearing

An man whose word is gold or a Colombo crime family capo?

and in an interview that Mr. Petrizzo founded the company with a loan of \$5 million from Paul Milstein, a prominent New York real estate developer and builder.

But Nicholas Scoppetta, a lawyer for Mr. Milstein, said that Mr. Milstein denied that he or his company, the Milstein Properties Corporation, ever lent money to Mr. Petrizzo or his enterprises. According to Mr. Scoppetta, Milstein Properties' only significant transaction with Mr. Petrizzo were payments in 1985 and 1986 totaling \$2.1 million for storing, shaping and delivering steel bars.

As A. J. Ross Logistics prospered, Mr. Petrizzo expanded his opera-

Continue

June 7, 1994

TO: Bruce Reed
Jose Cerda

FROM: Bill Galston

SUBJ: Protecting and Developing Public Spaces

As you may recall, an informal private citizen working group met here a few weeks ago to explore the various problems besetting our public spaces and to consider possible remedies. The co-organizer of the meeting, Amitai Etzioni, has produced the attached summary of issues/discussion/policy ideas. I thought it might be of interest.

The Communitarian Network

Communitarian Council

Enola Aird

activist mother

Virginia Austin

Nat'l Assn for Community Ldrshp

Karl Berozheim, Esq.

Ross & Hardies

John Brandl

former MN State Senator

Christine Cassel, M.D.

U. Chicago Medical Center

Ernesto Cortez, Jr., Dir.,

Texas Industrial Areas Fnd.

William D'Antonio

The Catholic University

Martha Darling

The Boeing Company

Carol Tucker Foreman

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Stanford University

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Harvard Law School

David Low

Pres., U. Texas, Health

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Kay Maxwell

former Pres., CT League

of Women Voters

Newton Minow

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Irene H. Nagel, Comm., US

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Gilbert Omenn, Dean,

Sch. of Pub. Hlth, U. WA

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Pres., National Civic League

Sylvia Peters

Co-Founder, Edison Project

William Ruckelshaus

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Margaret O'Brien Steinfels

Editor, Commonweal

Terry Williams

Dir., McKinsey & Co.

Daniel Yankelovich

Pres., Public Agenda Foundation

Raul Yzaguirre

Pres., Nat'l Council of La Raza

May 4, 1994

Dr. William A. Galston

Deputy Assistant to the President

Domestic Policy Council

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20500

Dear Bill:

This is a preliminary report on the discussions during the White House Conference on the Protection and Development of Public Spaces hosted by you and organized by The Communitarian Network. The summary does not constitute minutes but rather a focus on select items that are actionable. A list of the participants is attached. In many cases, references are made to ideas that require more exploration. This is the case because this meeting was exploratory and deliberately open ended. We hope to have more conclusive suggestions following future work of some sub-groups now envisioned. Thank you again for your leadership and guidance. Please note that copies of this memo are being shared with conference participants.

Background:

1. The conference recognized that there are no magic bullets (single policy initiatives) that will ensure public safety once and for all.

2. A recent social science review of the evaluations of a large variety of anti-crime measures has shown that each by itself provides at best limited benefits; a combination of several programs is necessary -- even for partial treatment of the tough problems American society faces in this area.

3. The same review (*Neighborhoods and Crime: The Dimensions of Effective Community Control*, by Robert J. Bursik, Jr. and Harold G. Grasmick; New York: Lexington, 1993) stresses the importance of community building and participation in enhancing the development and protection of public spaces.

Founder & Chair Amitai Etzioni • Exec. Dir., Joan A. Bronk • Ass't Dir., David S. Brown

2130 H Street, NW, #714 Washington, DC 20052 • Tel: 202-994-7997/7907 • Fax: 202-994-1606

4. There was universal consensus among the participants that to nourish community, public spaces need to be developed and protected; that communities happen not in private homes and cars but in plazas, parks, streets, etc. It follows that new investments, design, placing (for instance entertainment), and protection of public spaces are cardinal elements of pro-community (or communitarian) policies.

5. The media has been recently arguing that crime is really declining, and that the issue is fear. This is like saying that because a patient's temperature has fallen from 104.5 to 104.3 she should not worry unduly about her health. Violent crime has declined only a few percentage points. Moreover, its victims are "accumulative." That is each year we add millions of citizens who have been mugged, assaulted, raped, etc. to those of previous years. Hence, the proportion of the society that has direct personal experience in being victims of crime is still growing and very much so. We need to enhance public safety and not merely or mainly focus on fear. (George Kelling has strong data on these issues and Mark Kleiman has numerous insights.)

I. Fourth Amendment Issues

There is a need for a systematic new rationale on Fourth Amendment issues. As recent events in public housing in Chicago illustrate, narrow interpretations of this amendment stand in the way of serving the common good, as perceived both by most members of the communities involved and by fair-minded observers. This holds not merely for sweeps but also for drug checkpoints, screening gates, drug testing, and other such measures.

Instead of searching ad hoc for justifications for this or that public safety measure, we should note that (a) practically all of them are under attack by civil libertarians; (b) their interpretation of the Fourth Amendment as to what constitutes unreasonable search is not shared by courts in many cases but is implanted in the minds of the public, many editorial writers, and even in some members of the Administration.

We hence recommend that a small task force be appointed of members of the Administration, especially from the Department of Justice, and some outside constitutional scholars and social thinkers to examine the case that search is allowed ("reasonable") when the intrusion is minimal and the common good is considerable. One need not diminish people's rights, let alone treat some citizens, say in public housing, as "second class citizens," in order to justify legally and morally certain kinds of searches. The task force would share its brief with district attorneys and prosecutors throughout the country as well as with the public. (Roger Conner has worked on these issues and I explained it in *The Spirit of Community*, chapter 6.)

Closely related is a need to call attention to new forms of community traffic patterns and gates that enhance both public safety and community identity. By localizing traffic and reducing access to neighborhood streets from highways, as well as new patterns of flow among neighborhoods, these new devices both reduce crime and enhance community bonds. A separate report on these should be prepared, maybe in conjunction with the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Justice. (Oscar Newman did important work in this area.)

II. Strategies for the Inner-City

A major strategic issue that arose during the meeting is what is the best way to deal with the inner-city. The following options were charted:

- A. Bring businesses to the inner-city (e.g., empowerment zones).
- B. Bring inner-city people to jobs.
- C. Thin the inner-city by placing families in other neighborhoods (one or two families per block).
- D. Transfer the population en masse to the suburbs (e.g., as was done in Gautreaux in Chicago).

I do not see evidence that these alternatives, other options, or mixes have been fully examined by the new Administration. Indeed, several of the participants, including Vince Lane, Bart Harvey, and Oscar Newman, argued that the prevailing focus of trying to bring businesses to the inner-city, rather than people to jobs and de-intensifying the inner-city, is misplaced. The Domestic Policy Council (and The Department of Housing and Urban Development) may wish to decide if this deserves additional deliberation.

Closely related is a much more delineated issue of law. Conference participants indicated that there are several laws that hinder even experimentation in these matters. For instance, attempts to relocate some of the poor to middle class neighborhoods are hampered by legal prohibitions on "caps" (promising a neighborhood that if it will incorporate some low income families, its culture and economy will not be "tipped" by the introduction of ever more families from a different background). Legal objections were also raised when housing developments attempted to use caps to preserve integrated communities. While the more encompassing strategic matters are contemplated, this issue seems to deserve attention in which one may wish to draw on both The Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Justice.

III. Community Filters

One of the issues you flagged is the trouble people face when various facets of the same person are treated separately, aiming a public service (sometimes several) at each facet rather than dealing with the whole person. During the meeting several ideas were expressed that might provide leads to deal with this difficult issue. In combination they amount to introducing a filter between the services that flow into a community from numerous sources (which it is assumed will continue to happen rather than the services being integrated into one pipeline) and the individual members of the community. Two examples follow. They do not necessarily provide The Answer but illustrate the kind of thinking that deserves additional examination.

A. Travis County Community Justice Council:

Public safety officials in Travis County have created a unique community justice system, which consists of three decision making bodies: community justice council, task force, and

action committee. The council consists of ten elected officials in the field of public safety. The task force is made up of appointed officials whose jobs have a similar nature. Finally, community citizens are nominated onto the four community justice action committees. These three organizations are required to work together to create community justice plans for Travis County. (Additional information is available from Ron and Twila Earle.)

B. Nurturing Village:

The Urban Family Institute has developed a program designed to create a "seamless web of care" for children. The strategy is based upon the idea that the entire community-- relatives, friends, neighbors, schools, churches, elders-- comes together as the "nurturing village." The village would be comprised of "Kids Houses" (single unit family groupings) and "Corridors of Care" (where providers of care are located). A group of "village elders," a coalition of all child and family organizations and community leaders, would oversee and guide the "nurturing village." Source: Kent Amos

These and related ideas about community filters are particularly novel and require much more study before one may be ready for a recommendation. I will try to get such a study going.

IV. Thick Community Policing

The Administration may well cease to refer to community policing of the old thin kind as a new major source of public safety and instead call attention to the need for the real thing. Merely getting cops out of their cars and away from a responsive mode, to walk the beat and be proactive will not do. The community must be truly involved in its protection. The ways this may be achieved remain to be determined but a report to the conference illustrates the direction one might search for such an approach.

A. PACE (Police Assisted Community Enforcement):

Norfolk, VA has created a type of community-oriented government which is defined as a partnership of city departments, community groups, businesses, and religious organizations who have come together to address a variety of community needs and problems, including: community policing, safe housing, health and social services, education, recreation, and the environment.

PACE initiatives include: PACE-SAFE (a coalition of religious organizations which sponsor neighborhood block parties, music, and inspirational speakers for youth); PACE Athletic League (involves youth in productive recreational activities); Nighthawk Basketball (program for older teens in the evening); PACE-ALERT (supports and provides training to develop community leaders); Community Development Corporation (a new way of coordinating community services to address and resolve neighborhood concerns); Youth Forums (an opportunity for students to voice their concerns and propose solutions); and Community Police Mini-Stations (Formed in collaboration with citizens

and businesses and staffed by volunteers, the mini-stations act as neighborhood offices for community police).

Since PACE's inception in 1990, overall crime has dropped in the city of Norfolk by 18 percent. From 1992-1993, residential burglaries are down by 21 percent, commercial burglaries down 24 percent, vandalism down by 12 percent, stolen cars down by 21 percent, homicide down by 42 percent, and overall crime in initially targeted PACE neighborhoods declined by 23 percent.

More information on this effort is available from George Crawley and Melvin High.

V. Quality of Life Issues

The conference showed interest in protecting public spaces by coming down hard on lifestyle offenses such as people relieving themselves in public, using boom boxes, aggressive begging etc. I suggest that these experiments deserve careful watching for now before one runs them up the flag pole. However, the vexing question of how to ensure that public spaces are available to one and all and not monopolized by any one group, whether they are drunks or gangs, requires additional attention both from legal experts and social scientists. I will be looking into the question of who could attend to this matter. (Meanwhile particularly good sources of ideas on these matters are Jeremy Travis, Antonio Pagan, Fred Siegel, Roger Conner, George Crawley, and Melvin High.)

VI. Guns

The strong presentation on this matter by Katherine Kaufer Christoffel left little doubt that the Communitarian Position Paper that calls for domestic disarmament rather than gun control is the correct ultimate goal. There was no discussion of where the next opening for work in this direction might lie.

I would like to call attention to one matter: it is now almost easier to become a gun dealer than to buy a gun. One should examine the registration of gun dealers (a list seems to be currently unavailable to local authorities), the ways and costs of licensing them, etc. (Debbie Leff is supporting important surveys in this area.)

VII. Set Asides for Public Spaces

Currently, when the Department of Housing and Urban Development grants funds to communities or housing developments for redesign or improvement, as a rule there is no portion that is set aside for community institutions such as schools, neighborhood centers, libraries, parks, playgrounds, etc. As a result, often housing developments are built or refurbished around

rundown core institutions, leaving incomplete communities. One should consider requiring that grants include a given proportion to be set aside for core community institutions. (Robert Embry made significant observations on the role of schools as core community institutions.)

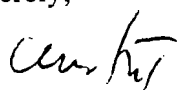
VIII. A Random List of Specific Limited Ideas

- A significant proportion of the population in state prisons are illegal immigrants. They are now released upon completing their term and asked to show up for deportation hearings, of which many do not do. Suggestion: hold deportation hearings in prison, before they complete their term.
- There seems to be a serious decline in the quality of work done by US attorneys. The proportion of cases they bring to trial that are dismissed or acquitted has risen sharply. The reasons and remedies seem to require urgent attention.
- The conditions under which one may draw on the National Guard's and Department of Defense's resources to enhance public safety require examination. There are many idle resources here.
- The new American Disabilities Act seems inadvertently to define active (as distinct from past) addiction to drugs or alcohol as a disability, entitling the person to continue disability payments that are in effect used to subsidize the addiction.

Please note that rather little attention was paid, at the conference and in this memo, to non-safety issues, such as the development of schools, parks, libraries, and museums as public spaces. It is a topic to which we need to return.

I need to reiterate that this is but a preliminary report. We are looking for ways to reconvene sub-groups of those who participated in the White House conference and others to work out at least some of these ideas.

Sincerely,


Amitai Etzioni

enclosed lists of participants:
March 19 from the community
March 19 from the Administration
March 18 additional participants

**White House Conference
on the Protection and Development of Public Spaces
March 19, 1994**

Participants
(from outside the community)

Kent Amos
President
Urban Family Institute

Roger Conner
Executive Director
American Alliance for Rights and Responsibilities

Ellis Cose
Contributing Editor
Newsweek

George Crawley
Assistant City Manager
Norfolk, VA

Ronald Earle
District Attorney
Travis County, Texas

Robert Embry
President
The Abell Foundation

Amitai Etzioni
University Professor
The George Washington University

Melvin High
Chief of Police
Norfolk Police Department

Twila Hugley Earle
Professor
University of Texas, Austin

Katherine Kaufer Christoffel
Spokesperson for the American Academy of Pediatrics
on the Firearm Issue

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John F. Kennedy School of Government
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Vincent Lane
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Deborah Leff
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Oscar Newman
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Daniel Ortega
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Antonio Pagan
Council Member, 2nd District
New York City Council

Fred Siegel
Professor
The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art

Jeremy Travis
Deputy Commissioner of Legal Matters
New York City Police Department

**White House Conference on
The Protection and Development of Public Spaces
March 19, 1994**

**Participants
(from the Administration)**

William A. Galston
Deputy Assistant to the President
Domestic Policy Council
The White House

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend
Special Assistant to the Attorney General
Justice Programs
Department of Justice

David Kusnet
Special Assistant to the President/ Chief Speechwriter
Office of Communications
The White House

Sondra Myers
Special Assistant to the Chairman
National Endowment for the Humanities

Marc A. Weiss
Special Assistant to the Secretary
Department of Housing and Urban Development

**White House Conference on
The Protection and Development of Public Spaces**

Conference Dinner
March 18, 1994

Additional Participants

Almo Carter
Associate Director
Urban Family Institute

Jack Chorowsky
Counsel
Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Justice

Father George Clements
American Alliance for Rights and Responsibilities

Bart Harvey
President
The Enterprise Foundation

Michael Levett
President
Business for Social Responsibility

Will Marshall
President
Progressive Policy Institute

Susan Stroud
Senior Advisor
Corporation for National and Community Service

Ron Weich
General Counsel
Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources



Just Take Away Their Guns

By James Q. Wilson

Forget gun control. To separate guns from the people who kill, let police stop likely suspects on the street, frisk them, and seize their weapons.

The president wants still tougher gun control legislation and thinks it will work. The public supports more gun control laws but suspects they won't work. The public is right.

Legal restraints on the lawful purchase of guns will have little effect on the illegal use of guns. There are some 200 million guns in private ownership, about one-third of them handguns. Only about 2 percent of the latter are employed to commit crimes. It would take a Draconian, and politically impossible, confiscation of legally purchased guns to make much of a difference in the number used by criminals. Moreover, only about one-sixth of the handguns used by serious criminals are purchased from a gun shop or pawnshop. Most of these handguns are stolen, borrowed, or obtained through private purchases that wouldn't be affected by gun laws.

What is worse, any successful effort to shrink the stock of legally purchased guns (or of ammunition) would reduce the capacity of law-abiding people to defend themselves. Gun control advocates scoff at the importance of self-defense, but they are wrong to do so. Based on a household survey, Gary Kleck, a criminologist at Florida State University, has estimated that every year, guns are used—that is, displayed or fired—for defensive purposes more than a million times, not counting their use by the police. If his estimate is correct, this means that the

number of people who defend themselves with a gun exceeds the number of arrests for violent crimes and burglaries.

The available evidence supports the claim that self-defense is a legitimate form of deterrence. People who report to the National Crime Survey that they defended themselves with a weapon were less likely to lose property in a robbery or be injured in an assault than those who did not defend themselves. Statistics have shown that would-be burglars are threatened by gun-wielding victims about as many times a year as they are arrested (and much more often than they are sent to prison) and that the chances of a burglar being shot are about the same as his chances of going to jail. Criminals know these facts even if gun control advocates do not and so are less likely to burgle occupied homes in America than occupied ones in Europe, where the residents rarely have guns.

Some gun control advocates may concede these points but rejoin that the cost of self-defense is self-injury: Handgun owners are more likely to shoot themselves or their loved ones than a criminal. Not quite. Most gun accidents involve rifles and shotguns, not handguns. Moreover, the rate of fatal gun accidents has been declining while the level of gun ownership has been rising. There are fatal gun accidents just as there are fatal car accidents, but in fewer than 2 percent of the gun fatalities was the victim someone

mistaken for an intruder.

Those who urge us to forbid or severely restrict the sale of guns ignore these facts. Worse, they adopt a position that is politically absurd. In effect, they say, "Your government, having failed to protect your person and your property from criminal assault, now intends to deprive you of the opportunity to protect yourself."

Opponents of gun control make a different mistake. The National Rifle Association and its allies tell us that "guns don't kill, people kill" and urge the government to punish more severely people who use guns to commit crimes. Locking up criminals does protect society from future crimes, and the prospect of being locked up may deter criminals. But our experience with meting out tougher sentences is mixed. The tougher the prospective sentence the less likely it is to be imposed, or at least to be imposed swiftly. If the legislature adds on time for crimes committed with a gun, prosecutors often bargain away the add-ons; even when they do not, the judges in many states are reluctant to impose add-ons.

Worse, the presence of a gun can contribute to the magnitude of the crime even on the part of those who worry about serving a long prison sentence. Many criminals carry guns not to rob stores but to protect themselves from other armed criminals. Gang violence has become more threatening to bystanders as gang members have begun to arm themselves. People may commit crimes, but guns make some crimes worse. Guns often convert spontaneous outbursts of anger into fatal encounters. When some people carry them on the streets, others will want to carry them to protect themselves, and an urban arms race will be underway.

Our goal should not be the disarming of law-abiding citizens. It should be to reduce the number of people who carry guns unlawfully, especially in places—on streets, in taverns—where the mere presence of a gun can increase the hazards we all face. The most effective way to reduce illegal gun-carrying is to encourage the police to take guns away from people who carry them without a permit. This means encouraging the police to make street frisks.

The Fourth Amendment to the Constitution bans "unreasonable searches and seizures." In 1968 the Supreme Court decided (*Terry v. Ohio*)

that a frisk—patting down a person's outer clothing—is proper if the officer has a "reasonable suspicion" that the person is armed and dangerous. If a pat-down reveals an object that might be a gun, the officer can enter the suspect's pocket to remove it. If the gun is being carried illegally, the suspect can be arrested.

The reasonable-suspicion test is much less stringent than the probable-cause standard the police must meet in order to make an arrest. A reasonable suspicion, however, is more than just a hunch; it must be supported by specific facts. The courts have held, not always consistently, that these facts include someone acting in a way that leads an experienced officer to conclude criminal activity may be afoot; someone fleeing at the approach of an officer; a person who fits a drug courier profile; a motorist stopped for a traffic violation who has a suspicious bulge in his pocket; a suspect identified by a reliable informant as carrying a gun. The Supreme Court has also upheld frisking people on probation or parole.

Some police departments frisk a lot of people, but usually the police frisk rather few, at least for the purpose of detecting illegal guns. In 1992 the police arrested about 240,000 people for illegally possessing or carrying a weapon. This is only about one-fourth as many as were arrested for public drunkenness. The average police officer will make *no* weapons arrests and confiscate *no* guns during any given year. Mark Moore, a professor of public policy at Harvard University, found that most weapons arrests were made because a citizen complained, not because the police were out looking for guns.

It is easy to see why. Many cities suffer from a shortage of officers, and even those with ample law-enforcement personnel worry about having their cases thrown out for constitutional reasons or being accused of police harassment. But the risk of violating the Constitution or engaging in actual, as opposed to perceived, harassment can be substantially reduced.

Each patrol officer can be given a list of people on probation or parole who live on that officer's beat and be rewarded for making frequent stops to ensure that they are not carrying guns. Officers can be trained to recognize the kinds of actions that the court will accept as providing the "rea-

sonable suspicion" necessary for a stop and frisk. Membership in a gang known for assaults and drug dealing could be made the basis, by statute or court precedent, for gun frisks.

And modern science can be enlisted to help. Metal detectors at airports have reduced the number of airplane bombings and skyjackings to nearly zero. But these detectors only work at very close range. What is needed is a device that will enable the police to detect the presence of a large lump of metal in someone's pocket from a distance of 10 or 15 feet. Receiving such a signal could supply the officer with reasonable grounds for a pat-down. Underemployed nuclear physicists and electronics engineers in the post-cold-war era surely have the talents for designing a better gun detector.

Even if we do all these things, there will still be complaints. Innocent people will be stopped.

Young black and Hispanic men will probably be stopped more often than older white Anglo males or women of any race. But if we are serious about reducing drive-by shootings, fatal gang wars, and lethal quarrels in public places, we must get illegal guns off the street. We cannot do this by multiplying the forms one fills out at gun shops or by pretending that guns are not a problem until a criminal uses one.

[from the *New York Times Magazine*, March 20, 1994]

James Q. Wilson is James A. Collins Professor of Management at UCLA and chairman of AEI's Council of Academic Advisers. His most recent books are *The Moral Sense* (Free Press, 1993) and *On Character* (AEI Press, 1991).

1994 - # 25

NATURAL BORN KILLERS?

Preventing the Coming Explosion of Teenage Crime

PAUL J. McNULTY

From 1985 to 1991, homicides committed by boys in the 15- to 19-year-old age group jumped 154 percent. From 1982 to 1991, the juvenile arrest rate for murder rose 93 percent, for aggravated assault 72 percent, and for forcible rape 24 percent.

If these statistics scare you, brace yourself. A breathtaking rise in juvenile crime is occurring even as the national rate of violent crime has leveled off, and the nation's population of juveniles has fallen. The greatest danger lies ahead. In the final years of this decade and throughout the next, America will experience an "echo boom"—a population surge made up of the teenage children of today's aging baby boomers. As today's five-year-old children become tomorrow's teenagers, America faces the most violent juvenile crime surge in its history.

The warnings of this coming storm are unmistakable. More violent crime is committed by older teenagers than by any other age group. Teenagers from fatherless homes commit more crime than teenagers from intact families. Put these two demographic facts together, and we are in for a catastrophe in the early 21st century.

KIDS AND CRIME

Teenagers account for the largest portion of all violent crime in America. Offenders under the age of 21 commit more than one-fourth of all violent crime. Older teenagers (ages 17 to 19) are the most violent of all age groups: More murder and robbery is committed by 18-year-old males than any other group, and more than one-third of all murders are committed by offenders under the age of 21. No population poses a larger threat to public safety than juvenile and young adult criminals.

This violence is getting worse. While the teenage population in America has declined over the past decade, violent crimes committed by juveniles have risen sharply. According to the FBI, from 1988 to 1992 juvenile violent crime arrests increased by 47 percent. More juveniles were arrested for violent crime in 1991 and 1992 than in any other two-year period in U.S. history; the number of serious crime cases handled by juvenile courts rose nearly 70 percent between 1988 and 1992. Perhaps most disturbing, the number of 13- to 15-year-olds arrested for murder jumped from 390 in 1982 to 740 only 10 years later.

By the time the courts finally lock up an older teenager

on a violent crime charge, the offender often has a long rap sheet with arrests starting in his early teens. And actual lock-ups are rare. Nowhere does the revolving door of justice spin faster than in the juvenile court system. Nearly one-quarter of all juvenile arrests are dismissed immediately, and only 10 percent result in detention of the offender. A 1987 justice department *Survey of Youth in Custody* reported that 43 percent of juveniles in state institutions had more than five prior arrests, and 20 percent had been arrested more than 10 times. Approximately four-fifths of these offenders had previously been on probation, and three-fifths had been committed to a correctional facility at least once in the past.

A large majority of teenage criminals are from broken and single-parent households; many teenage boys are growing up without fathers as moral guides and role models. The *Survey of Youth in Custody* reports that some 70 percent of offenders did not live with both parents while growing up, and more than half reported that a family member had served time in prison. Another study found that 75 percent of teenage criminals came from single-parent homes. These numbers are consistent with surveys of adult offenders in state prisons. Only 43 percent of these inmates grew up in homes with both parents.

The single most reliable predictor of violent crime in a neighborhood is its proportion of single-parent families, according to the *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*. The last thing America needs is a population surge of teenage boys growing up in single-parent homes. Yet by the turn of the century, that is exactly what the country will face.

THE NEW WAVE

While the population of male teenagers has actually decreased over the past decade, the number of crimes they commit has skyrocketed. Soon the demographics will begin to change in favor of even more youth violence. In 1980, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were some 10.7 million males in the 15- to 19-year-old age

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Statistics reveal that America has been heavily victimized by recidivistic teenage thugs. Government must affirm the indispensable place of accountability in juvenile justice.

group. By 1990 this population had declined by 15 percent to about 9.2 million. This downward trend will continue into 1995, when America will have the fewest number of young men since 1965. But by the turn of the century, the population in this age cohort will have rebounded to more than 10 million, and by 2010, the number of 15- to 19-year-old males will be 11.5 million, an increase of 30 percent from the 1995 low.

CATCH AND CONVICT

The young men who will comprise the crime-committing cohort by the middle of the next decade are now young boys in the critical stage of human moral development. But the moral training ground of these 10 million boys has changed dramatically over the past 30 years. Consider these grim statistics: Some 4 million babies were born in both 1961 and 1991, but in 1991 five times as many of them were born out of wedlock. Today, one out of every three children is born to a single parent, triple the rate of just 25 years ago. Nearly 70 percent of black children are born to unwed mothers. Over the same period, the divorce rate in the U.S. tripled, from 393,000 in 1960 to 1,175,000 in 1990. Today more than 25 percent of all children live with only one parent.

The combination of these population projections and the decline of the American family portends big trouble. At the beginning of the next century, the United States will have an extremely large number of young men under the age of 20. An unprecedented number in this group are today growing up in troubled family circumstances. Only by taking decisive action now, and most importantly by slowing the revolving door of juvenile justice, can America prevent this cohort from committing more violent crime than we have ever witnessed.

Nothing can be done to stop the 5- to 10-year-olds of

today from becoming the 15- to 20-year-olds of tomorrow. Since repairing the home life in which these children are now being raised is, with few exceptions, one of the many tasks beyond the reach of government, America's future safety rests in its ability to discourage young trouble-makers from committing violent crimes when they reach their peak crime-committing years.

How this is best accomplished is where the debate begins, and largely the ground where the recent battle on the crime bill was fought. President Clinton wanted billions for so-called "crime prevention" programs, such as the now-famous midnight basketball program, but Republicans denounced this spending as a relapse of the Great Society programs that have already failed.

Indeed, the crime-bill dispute is the most recent example of a

long-standing clash over the role of government in relation to crime prevention. Liberals argue that crime results from such things as inadequate education, economic deprivation, and low self-esteem. Consequently, they favor early intervention government programs aimed at preschoolers, government-initiated job opportunities, and treatment-oriented responses for young criminals.

Conservatives, on the other hand, argue that crime results from a lack of moral self-restraint. The absence of such restraint ordinarily follows from the absence of nurturing parental care, including consistent discipline. Families and government are not interchangeable in this regard; raising children is a task largely beyond the reach of government. Instead, government must focus on what it was created to do—catch and convict law breakers.

The challenge for conservatives now lies in suppressing juvenile crime at the first sign of trouble, often with young teenagers or even pre-teens, before these criminals become violent young men. Government's role is to enforce the law, and it should be vigorous and purposeful in the acceptance of that duty. When families fail to instill virtue in children, government must be prepared immediately to send a clear message to those children, and their parents, that lawbreaking will not be tolerated, and that the children will be held accountable. To do that will require a complete overhaul of the juvenile justice system. The first step in this effort is to understand the flawed nature of the current system.

MISGUIDED JUSTICE

The failure of the juvenile justice system to stem the tide of youth crime is the result of a shift in philosophy. Punishment is now considered contrary to its intended mission.

The first juvenile court was established in 1899 in Cook

County, Illinois; by 1925, there were juvenile courts in 46 states. Describing the hopes associated with this institution, Charles Silberman notes in *Criminal Violence, Criminal Justice*: "Juvenile courts have been monuments to American optimism. In their rhetoric, if not their actual operation, the courts represent expressions of faith in judges' capacity to change behavior and thereby turn wayward children into law-abiding citizens."

The goal of the juvenile justice system—rehabilitation—is a clear departure from the goals of the adult system—accountability and punishment. Because children are not fully developed, physically or mentally, it was argued that they could not be held accountable for wrongdoing. Criminality was not seen as the result of a decision by a morally responsible individual; rather, it was a type of youthful illness to be treated through the individualized attention of so-called experts. To ensure proper treatment, these experts—juvenile court judges, probation officers, reform school administrators, and parole board officials—were given broad discretion to develop and implement a rehabilitation program for each case.

The candid descriptions by juvenile judges of their role in relation to young criminals should shock and outrage inner-city residents held hostage by the rise in juvenile street violence. Judge Ben Landsay, founder of the Denver Juvenile Court, has described his role within the court as "part educator, part artist, and part physician." He summarily declares: "[A] child's case is not a legal case." One of this century's most influential juvenile court judges, Harvey Baker of Boston, likened himself to a doctor in a dispensary, with there being no more formality in his courtroom than in a "physician's examination room."

TOUGHEN UP

In 1975, Justice William O. Douglas recounted a conversation he had with a juvenile court judge who, in the words of Douglas, "explained what I think was the original purpose of the juvenile delinquency acts of the various states. 'I, the judge,' he told me, 'and the bailiff and the other court attendants are like those on a hospital staff, dressed in white. We are doctors, nurses, orderlies. We are there not to administer a law in the normal meaning of criminal law. We are there to diagnose, investigate, counsel, and advise.'" More recently, Judge Walter Whitlack, now with the Cleveland Juvenile Court and a past president of the National Council of Juvenile Court Judges, stated, "...[A] child who has violated the law is not a criminal, but rather he is to be taken in hand by the state as protector and ultimate guardian rather than as his enemy."

Every step of today's juvenile justice system reflects its



The Bettman Archive

The young men who will comprise the crime-committing cohort by the middle of the next decade are now in their critical stages of moral development.

orientation toward treatment and rehabilitation and away from accountability and punishment. Those who commit crimes while under the age of 18 are not termed criminals, but are "delinquents." Juveniles are not arrested; they are "taken into custody." They are not jailed; they are "detained." And they are not charged with a crime; they are "referred" to the court. There, they are not tried; a "hearing" is held. A hearing cannot lead to a conviction and sentencing; it can only lead to a "finding of delinquency" and a "placement" in a "detention center" or "residential facility."

The result of this confusion? The highest juvenile crime rates in American history. It is time to abandon this misguided philosophy. Government must affirm, through the consistent enforcement of law, the indispensable place of accountability in juvenile justice. Statistics previously cited unquestionably reveal that America has been heavily victimized by recidivistic teenage thugs who were quickly returned to the streets by idealistic judges.

The juvenile justice system must become a tough criminal justice system for young offenders. Three principles must guide its reform. First, the gap between lawbreaking and accountability must be significantly narrowed. Too many "minor" crimes by young offenders, such as truancy and vandalism, are tolerated by law enforcers, sending the message that there is no sanction for illegal behavior. Such wrongdoing left unaddressed may be a precursor to more serious crimes. Some jurisdictions are attempting to increase accountability in this regard. The "ASAP" initiative (Absent Students Assistance Program) in Houston, Texas, founded by Constable Victor Trevino, has had remarkable and cost-effective success through aggressive enforcement of truancy laws.

Second, violent crimes must be punished with appropriate penalties. Violent juveniles should receive substantial time in prison—with no early parole—as a matter of both justice and public safety. The offender's age may be

taken into consideration at the time of sentencing.

Third, there must be a sanction for every crime. As noted criminologist James Q. Wilson observes, "There ought to be penalties from the earliest offense...so that juveniles are treated by the state the same way we treat our children. You don't ignore the fact that they're wrecking the house until they finally burn it down. You try to deal with it right away."

PAY UP

Every offender must pay for his criminal actions. While sanctions for less violent crimes will vary and may be creative, and in the majority of cases not involve incarceration, these punishments must nonetheless communicate the basic message that punishment will be imposed every time an offender is caught and convicted. Punishments should also range in severity, with offenders receiving more severe sanctions if they fail to complete their original sentences.

Measures that would serve these objectives—many of which currently exist in various forms—include:

Hard Work and Financial Responsibility: Restitution should be mandatory and involve physical labor to compensate victims, including reparations to neighborhoods and businesses that are devalued because of criminal activity. Studies have found that restitution reduces recidivism, because the criminal becomes aware of the true consequences of the crime. An analysis by Anne Larason Schneider and Jean Shumway Warner in the *Yale Law and Policy Review* concludes, "By reconfirming the moral base of the law and by emphasizing that those who commit crimes will be held accountable to their victims because it is 'right' to do so, restitution may increase commitment to the moral order."

Loss of Freedom: In some circumstances, confining a nonviolent juvenile offender after the first conviction may be warranted. Factors such as the nature of the crime, family history, and school performance may indicate serious trouble ahead. The conditions of such confinements should be designed to encourage the development of moral self-government.

This would differ from the current smorgasbord of rehabilitation and treatment programs from which a juvenile's criminal sentence is now selected. Character-oriented confinement would encourage the development of moral habits through discipline and responsibility over time.

Partial Loss of Freedom: Electronic monitoring technology could be used to ensure that a juvenile offender follows a specific schedule of school attendance and home confinement. This sanction works best when parents demonstrate a willingness to assist the government and support the goals of law enforcement.

Facing the Victims: Giving the neighbors of young lawbreakers a voice in the administration of punishment through "Neighborhood Accountability Councils" could teach young offenders that bad actions actually bring about bad consequences. The councils, comprised of citizens from neighborhoods victimized by juvenile

crime, would work in partnership with the juvenile justice system and have authority to prescribe a range of sanctions, including restitution and community service. This approach is particularly well suited for the youngest offenders who violate curfews, truancy laws, and commit acts of vandalism.

By involving neighbors in determining punishments for juvenile offenses, wrongdoers are more likely to be confronted with the direct consequences of their actions. Moreover, the stigma of being sentenced by individuals from the offender's own neighborhood may provide additional deterrence. Juvenile courts in Washington's King County sent nearly 5,000 offenders to such councils in 1993. The results appear promising; few of the offenders have been rearrested.

Parental Responsibility: A growing number of jurisdictions are employing performance bonds for releasing adults pre-trial. A performance bond is a financial guarantee by some third-party guarantor that an arrestee will appear for court dates and comply with other specified requirements in exchange for the arrestee's release from jail. If the arrestee fails to perform as promised, the guarantor forfeits his surety and the arrestee is returned to jail. This tool could be used for juveniles after conviction, or, in the current lexicon, a delinquency adjudication. Family members and friends would sign a contract with the court agreeing to forfeit particular assets if a juvenile offender fails to comply with the court's requirements. All who sign the bond would then have financial incentive to supervise the juvenile offender closely to ensure compliance.

Procedural Reforms: Certain procedural reforms must be included in the juvenile justice system's overhaul. Every juvenile arrest should be recorded and every arrestee should be fingerprinted. Juvenile records should be available to all law-enforcement authorities and to the courts. Court hearings for juveniles accused of felonies should be opened to the public. Finally, there should be no expungements or fresh starts at the age of majority. The notion that a juvenile criminal's remaining punishment and criminal record should disappear when he turns 18 is rooted in a treatment-oriented philosophy.

CATCH THE WAVE

Every night, Americans watch as the nightly news displays fresh pictures of teenage boys who are unafraid of the police and the criminal justice system. There are lots of smiles and taunts and confident glares, and virtually no worry or remorse. The stories are frequently the same: a teenager with multiple prior arrests now charged with a hideous violent crime.

Facing the largest potential crime wave in our history by the year 2000, America must start to deal swiftly and effectively with young law-breakers on the verge of becoming the violent teenagers on the evening news. Older siblings are telling them that the current system is a joke. The kindergarten boys of today will be tomorrow's violent thugs unless America gets serious about punishing juvenile criminals.



SMOKING THEM OUT

How to Close Down a Crack House in Your Neighborhood

TUCKER CARLSON

"Ill tell you how powerful it is," says Manfred, a former crack user in Washington, D.C., of the drug he once used daily. "When I first started, I had a girlfriend. Sex doesn't even compare to getting high. You can have the finest woman on the face of this earth in front of you with no clothes on begging you for it, and you'd tell her to put her clothes on and go home. You'd tell her, 'Get dressed, honey, because here's my girlfriend, right here inside this bag.'"

Though he has since quit using drugs and found a job, Manfred still sounds like an addict when he recalls the lure of crack cocaine. A few years later, the memory of his hunger for the drug remains fresh. Manfred says that during the time he smoked crack, he never had much interest in victimizing his neighbors or causing disorder in his community. His greatest desire—often, he says, his only desire—was to smoke more crack.

Individually, crack addicts often seem more pathetic than menacing. Desperate, confused, filthy, the typical addict poses little threat to his neighbors. He is more likely to beg change than rob a liquor store to support his habit. But when a group of heavy users gathers in a house, ordinary citizens have reason to fear. Together, the users' addiction can dominate not only their lives, but the life of an entire neighborhood.

PARTY ANIMALS

Most crack houses evolve slowly. Initially, a crack house may consist of several friends meeting periodically to smoke cocaine. Their use of drugs may be purely recreational, and not at all disruptive to the surrounding community. Neighbors living down the street from the house may not notice its existence.

Over time, and almost imperceptibly, the atmosphere in the house may change. As their addictions grow, so too does the amount of time the crack users spend inside. After a while, they seldom leave. The building begins to fill with strangers. Other users come, as do dealers and assorted hangers-on—prostitutes and addicts, trading what they can for crack, burglars fencing stolen goods, the destitute looking for a place to sleep. Suddenly, the street outside is choked with cars, with people yelling and fighting late at night. The yard is littered with food

wrappers and empty bottles of malt liquor. Addicts fire guns into the air and sometimes into each other. The neighbors become afraid to leave their porches. What was once a party between friends has become a crack house. What was once a quiet neighborhood has become dangerous.

Roger Conner knows how crack houses start, and about how hard they are to close down. In 1991, the Washington, D.C. lawyer co-authored *The Winnable War: A Community Guide to Eradicating Street Drug Markets*. Three years after he published his book, Conner's neighborhood is still afflicted. The author of *The Winnable War* lives down the street from four crack houses.

"It's an affront," says Conner of the drug trade that still flourishes in his neighborhood, despite years of legal battles and calls to the police. "It's like someone urinating on your lawn on a regular basis. That's what it feels like."

NO 'DRUG DEALING HERE'

There were not always crack houses in Roger Conner's neighborhood. For years, drug dealers congregated around the corner from his house, in front of a reggae bar on Georgia Avenue. Conner and his neighbors took the owner of the bar to court and shut down the business. The drug dealers scattered. But they did not go far. Instead of selling their wares on the street, they moved inside, into houses in the neighborhood. Once out of public view, the dealers became less conspicuous, and harder to dislodge. "A police car driving through my neighborhood—even a very watchful police officer—would not know that there's a drug market operating here," says Conner. "They don't hang signs out that say, 'Drug Dealing Here.'"

But neighbors know. Conner says crack buyers routinely show up at the wrong house late at night. "People will come knocking on neighbors' doors asking for Fat Boy (a local dealer) at two o'clock in the morning looking for drugs." There have been burglaries. In the last year, police have responded to three drive-by shootings during

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Photo by Trenton/Philadelphia City Paper

Barbara Smith, a founder of Mantua Against Drugs (MAD) in Philadelphia, holds a neighborhood meeting. Mantua residents are so well organized that MAD leaders say that they can eliminate a crack house in less than two weeks.

day-light hours. "At night," says one neighbor, "there's always somebody shooting." Although Conner himself has never been threatened by drug dealers, he and his family feel their presence. "I don't like using the back driveway because of the dealers who operate back there." He lives in fear, he says, that a bullet "could end up in somebody's house or somebody's kid. It's nerve-racking."

Conner and his neighbors repeatedly told police and the local vice squad about the crack houses, but to little effect. What Conner and his neighbors saw as a threat, the police considered just another crack house—and a relatively unimportant one. The drug dealers on Conner's block were active enough to disturb life in the neighborhood, but not enough to interest the vice squad. "Apparently these people are not drug king pins," Conner says.

Looking back, Conner says he and his neighbors may have put too much confidence in local law enforcement. "The police do not view their job as shutting down a house like this," he says. "They view their job as arresting people." As Conner explains it, arresting dealers will not

solve the problem. "As long as the buyers know to come there, somebody else will replace this guy if they put him in jail, and that's the reason that the whole house needs to be gotten control of."

CIVIL-IZED

Even if the police had been more responsive and interested, there is no guarantee they would have made much difference. A drug dealer who lives near Conner seems confident the police would have been unable to close down the houses. "Police have got to have probable cause," he says, displaying his legal knowledge. "They can't just bum rush your house. The police can't just come in because there's too much traffic. And we know better. We're not going to let anyone in who we don't know. And we're not selling out in front of the house. So the police can't do anything about it. All they can do is be suspicious."

Ultimately, Conner and his neighbors gathered residents in the area into a community organization they called G-FEDS, an acronym created from the names of their streets. The group became legally incorporated and

found a lawyer to sue the owners of the crack houses for creating a public nuisance. In the meantime, the group complained about the houses to the U.S. attorney's office in Washington, which promised an investigation. "I'm hoping that we can get a federal judge to issue an order that would basically require them to keep a sign-in book of everybody that comes in the house and show it to the police periodically," says Conner.

More than a year after the group was incorporated, members of G-FEDS seem confident that federal authorities can do what Washington police could or would not. Still, the crack houses remain.

Steve Tullberg, another Washington, D.C. lawyer who lives several blocks away from Conner in the Shepherd Park neighborhood, spent months trying to close a crack house near his home. Unable to get help from the police, Tullberg and his neighbors also filed a civil suit, this one against the tenants of the crack house. In his case, the neighbors' efforts produced quick results. Hours before the trial, the crack dealers moved out. Almost instantly, the neighborhood changed. The crack addicts left. So did the lines of cars clogging the street. "It was like we'd moved to the country," Tullberg says. With victory came a lesson. "It was kind of shocking," says Tullberg, "to see that the only way to close down a blatant criminal enterprise was through civil court."

What was shocking to Tullberg has become routine in other cities, where anti-drug groups frequently find civil law a more powerful ally than police departments in the fight against crack houses. The Community Law Center in Baltimore specializes in bringing owners and tenants of drug houses to court on behalf of neighborhood organizations.

Michael Sarbanes, a staff attorney with the Community Law Center, says that when it comes to fighting crack houses, civil court can have distinct advantages over criminal court. Civil proceedings usually are quicker, capable of providing a remedy in weeks, rather than months or years. Also, says Sarbanes, victory in civil court requires only a "preponderance of proof, which is easier [to obtain] than beyond a reasonable doubt."

In order to gather proof that a residence is functioning as a crack house, the Community Law Center trains residents of drug-plagued areas to watch for suspicious visitors to their neighborhoods. The residents, most of them elderly and retired, record in log books activities around a crack house, sometimes taking down license plate numbers of suspected drug dealers. The evidence can help bolster a case in court. It may also spur local police to decisive action. "If you can lay all that information out for the police," says Sarbanes, "then you just went to the head of the list in getting a warrant."

Armed with testimony from police and neighbors, neighbors can take the owner and occupants of a crack house to court under Maryland's drug nuisance law. In order to win a case using the law, neighbors must show that drugs have been sold out of the house. With enough evidence, the tenants can be evicted, and the owner forced to take preventative measures, such as screening future renters for drug convictions. Since the late-1980s, Sarbanes and his organization have represented several neighborhood organizations in Baltimore, forcing scores

of landlords to expel drug dealers from their properties.

While there is little question that filing civil suits against landlords can be an effective way to close crack houses, the process cannot begin without neighbors like Roger Conner and Steve Tullberg. Both Conner and Tullberg are lawyers, both live in solidly middle-class, racially-integrated, and relatively cohesive neighborhoods. Both had the energy, knowledge, and resources to fight the encroachment of drug dealers into their communities. Without too much difficulty, they were able to call upon other attorneys and take their disruptive neighbors to court. Even so, both Conner and Tullberg found their battles against crack houses long and difficult.

MR. WRICE'S NEIGHBORHOOD

Unfortunately, most crack dealers live in neighborhoods that are very different from Tullberg and Conner's. Most live in blighted, disorganized slums, where the only real opposition to their activities comes from the police. Most live in places like the Mantua section of Philadelphia. Until several years ago, Mantua seemed a perfect place for a budding crack dealer to set up shop. But things have changed in that part of Philadelphia. The man behind much of that change is Herman Wrice.

Herman Wrice is the president and founder of Mantua Against Drugs. 6' 4" and thickly set, Wrice wears a T-shirt emblazoned with his organization's logo and a white construction helmet plastered with stickers bearing various anti-drug messages. "We're the best there is," he says, with a preacher's cadence. "They talk about us in the Mariana Islands, they talk about us in Hawaii, they talk about us in Georgia." In the space of a few years, and almost single-handedly, he has rid his neighborhood of dozens of crack houses.

Wrice has been involved with drugs in one way or another for most of his life. Starting as a pharmaceutical salesman in Philadelphia during the early-1960s, Wrice later worked for the Episcopal Church. After losing a bid for the city council in 1974, he moved to Iowa, where he ran a rehabilitation program for addicts. By the time Wrice returned to the city in 1986, large parts of Philadelphia were under the influence of crack. Wrice's own neighborhood, the Mantua section, ranked among the worst. More than 40 percent of its population lived below the poverty line. The neighborhood's infant mortality rate was among the highest in the nation.

Within a year of moving back to Philadelphia, Wrice started a group called Mantua Against Drugs. The organization had one aim—to rid Mantua of crack houses. According to Wrice, his group has nearly succeeded. "We can eliminate a crack house in less than two weeks," he says. "The trick to solving the crack problem," says Wrice, "is getting the neighbors involved."

It can be quite a trick. Many citizens will not join an anti-drug group for fear of retribution from dealers. Others may hesitate out of loyalty to friends and relatives who sell drugs. Even for those not tied by blood or friendship to the drug trade, there are ample reasons to stay away from groups like Herman Wrice's. Many people in a neighborhood may rely, at least indirectly, on the sale of drugs for their livelihoods: bodega owners who can sell



Herman Wrice's group gathers outside a suspected crack house. Every time a junkie comes to the house, the group begins to sing: "Drugs are no good."

malt liquor and cigarettes at inflated prices to teens flush with crack dollars; repair shops that do a lucrative trade keeping dealers' cars running; otherwise law-abiding families that rely on the extra income generated from drug sales to live well. As one part-time crack dealer put it, "I know a guy who has three girls, five kids, his mother, his aunts to support. They're all used to having the best. He wants to stop hustling, but he's stuck. He's hooked on the money." And so, too, are many drug-infested neighborhoods.

HOLDING COURT

Despite these obstacles, Wrice has succeeded in organizing citizens to take on crack houses. Nowhere is his ability to organize—and the power that comes with it—more evident than in his own neighborhood. One morning in his office on North 35th Street, a cramped, dark room lined with civic awards and framed magazine articles, several men sit on low couches, smoking and reading newspapers. This is where Herman Wrice holds court.

A woman in her thirties appears at the door. "My name is Latifa Ali," she says, "and I'm looking for a Mr. Wrice." Wrice identifies himself, and the woman explains her problem. While walking with her son from the playground at a nearby housing project, she says, a young boy ran by and swore at her. "He called me the B word." Being new to the area, the woman says she looked for the local block captain, the citizen who, in most parts of Philadelphia, is elected by his neighbors to handle minor grievances. As her new neighbors soon explained, in this part of Mantua there is no block captain. There is only Herman Wrice.

"What did the kid look like," asks Wrice. "Dark complexion, about 10," replies the woman. Turning to an assistant seated on the couch, Wrice says, "find the kid, would you?" Turning back to the woman in the doorway, he assures, "We'll track him down for you, Miss Ali. And we'll have a conference with his mother this afternoon."

Relieved, the woman thanks Wrice and turns to leave. Before she does, Wrice reminds her to come to the park down the street on Saturday for a meeting and picnic. "So you can meet the neighborhood," he says. Part godfather, part high school principal, Herman Wrice keeps his little patch of Philadelphia running smoothly. But most of all, he keeps it organized.

Citizens who want Wrice's help closing a crack house must first gather a group of five or six neighbors willing to form an anti-drug organization. In order to expel crack dealers, Wrice says, a neighborhood must work together, as well as work with him. On the last point he is firm. "We only go where we're invited," he says, "and only stay where we're appreciated." Once

assembled, the fledgling group attends a meeting of Mantua Against Drugs. The meetings have been held every Tuesday night since 1987 at Grace Lutheran Church, which is around the corner from Wrice's headquarters. On a typical night, 40 volunteers come to recount the marches and vigils of the past weekend.

Sometimes a cop shows up at the meetings to read a list of all the drug arrests made in the area over the previous week. The police presence is more than symbolically important. Wrice recognizes that Mantua Against Drugs is unlikely to get far without the support of local law enforcement. But overcoming the suspicion and hostility between residents of Mantua and the police department has proven difficult. Many citizens resent the police for failing to stop crime. Police may resent residents for what they believe is misplaced blame for crime. Some cops are wary of anyone who lives in a crime-plagued neighborhood, and particularly of self-appointed community leaders like Wrice, who sometimes take a greater interest in securing federal grants than in cleaning up their communities.

The mutual suspicion can hamper efforts to close crack houses, a point that Wrice makes clearly and often. He calls the police department frequently, addresses officers by their first names, and gives cops information about local drug activity.

The gestures seem to have paid off. Pinned to Wrice's T-shirt is a laminated badge designating him a Drug March Coordinator. Much like a press pass, the card is issued by the police department and entitles the bearer to hang around tough neighborhoods at night without being hassled by the authorities. "The cops don't mess with you when you wear it," says Wrice. The badge is a symbol of the wary but increasingly respectful bond that has grown between Wrice and Philadelphia police.

Wrice has developed a system for closing down crack houses, the heart of which is a Thursday night march. Armed with bullhorns and wearing white hard hats, he

and his group assemble outside of what they suspect is a crack house. The distinctive hats are important. "All armies need uniforms," says Wrice, and in this case it's true. The hard hats help give the group a collective identity; they also help police quickly identify members of Mantua Against Drugs. Perhaps most important, the unusual headgear lets drug dealers know just who has come calling.

The dealers hardly ever welcome the attention. "They moon us," Wrice says, "they pull their pants down. That's a 15-minute ritual." And the epithets start. "You're racists, you don't like blacks," goes a common refrain. (Which is puzzling, since nearly all the members of Mantua Against Drugs are black, but Wrice seems to ignore the taunt.) "Then, all of a sudden," says Wrice with the sound of a director reciting stage directions from a well-rehearsed play, "it gets quiet." Their jeers ignored, the crack dealers retreat back inside, leaving the crowd to wait on the sidewalk for the other half of the drug problem to arrive—the users. Pretty soon, they do.

"Every time a junkie comes down the street," recounts Wrice, "we start singing: 'Drugs are no good, drugs are no good' and they turn away. We don't let them go into the house." On it goes, often for hours. Users hoping to buy drugs usually turn the other way when they see the commotion. Like carolers, Wrice's group stands on the sidewalk and serenades the drug house: "If you keep selling crack we will be back," belt the voices in unison.

The group means what it sings. Demonstrators return Friday and Saturday during the day to clean up the neighborhood, mowing lawns and picking up trash. At night they assemble again with bullhorns and chants, often staying until well past midnight. Police may stop by to lend support. The effect is predictable. Drug dealers find their flow of customers pinched, and sometimes cut off, during their most lucrative selling hours. It's the equivalent of closing a shopping mall the week before Christmas. "We disrupt the business," says Wrice simply. "We stop people from buying."

'SOMEBODY'S GOING TO SHOOT YOU'

The dealers don't like the loss of trade. Sometimes they become menacing. Wrice brushes off the threat of violence. "What are they going to do? Come outside and fight 35 people, and the police?" In the event the occupants of the house decide to do just that, Wrice is prepared. "If you come out with a two-by-four," he says, "I'll get one too." It has happened before. Somebody firebombed Wrice's office several years ago. "We've been in pushing matches, brick throwing. We throw bricks back if you throw at us. We're not going to stand there and take it. We didn't come here to be nice. We're not Gandhi and King here. They [the dealers] know that, too, and it makes them think. We're not there to get spit at and slapped in the face." Standing in front of a crack house one night, a dealer warns Wrice, "Somebody's going to come and shoot you."

"Well you do it," Wrice answers. "You shoot us." The dealer backs off. "We're not brave people," Wrice says. "We worry about it, too. But we worry more about having a crack house in our neighborhood." He has reason to worry. A brief economics lesson follows: "Think about

it—you pay \$50,000 for your house, a crack house comes to the neighborhood and its value drops to \$25,000. If they stay there long enough, it'll drop to \$10,000."

A couple weekends of such demonstrations, and the residents of many crack houses are ready to move on or tone down their behavior. The profits from selling drugs may no longer compensate for the attention they find their house receiving from the demonstrators and the police. Plus, the ordeal is embarrassing. According to Wrice, dealers "can't stand embarrassment, not that kind." It is this kind of pressure, says Wrice, that closes crack houses. "People can't wait for the system to work. The system can help, but the cops can't be on the block all the time. But the neighbors are there."

LIGHTS OUT

Another favorite method of closing down a crack house is trying to get the utilities cut off for nonpayment. When a representative from the gas company, say, comes to shut down service to the crack house, Wrice provides a welcoming committee. "We'll have 4 or 5 people standing there when he shows up. The pressure comes in a lot of ways."

If Wrice's group can confirm the occupants of the crack house haven't paid their bills, Wrice systematically pressures each local utility company to shut off service to the house: "Then we go after the electric. Then they haven't got power. We bring in constant pressure. Once we turn off the water, then we go talk to [the department of] license and inspections. They've got no water here, so now you've got a sanitation problem, you follow?"

City inspectors follow code enforcers in increasing the bureaucratic harassment. What follows is a drug dealer's nightmare. According to Wrice, "Then the city asks for rent receipts. 'Oh you don't have rent receipts? Now there's a problem. You're living here illegally, in this unsanitary place that has no water, no gas, no electricity. So we're going to have to get an eviction notice.' Then the police get involved."

Even crack dealers can't stand such hounding—for long. Many flee the building for more friendly neighborhoods within a week. When they do, Wrice pounces. "The first time they [the crack users] leave the building, you nail it up with ply board." End of crack house. Case closed.

Usually. Even without power, water or heat, some houses manage to hold on. Committed crack users have an almost superhuman ability to live in squalor. When the power goes out, they use candles. When the water trickles off, buckets take the place of commodes. In cases like these, when the occupants stay after the utilities go, Wrice switches to Plan B—find the owner of the house. And, of course, apply pressure. Liberally.

Tracking down the legitimate landlord can be harder than it sounds. "By the time these people have taken over the house," Wrice says, "they're like squatters; they've just moved in and nobody can find the owner." Sometimes the owner would rather not be found. Unable to bring a building to city standards, a landlord may abandon it, transferring the deed to a shadow corporation to avoid liability for the property. In some cases, it may take an experienced lawyer considerable effort to locate the legal

owner of a crack house.

When it is possible, Wrice checks land and tax records to find out who owns the property. Once he has found the landlord, Wrice explains that the city can confiscate the house unless the crack dealers leave the property. This advice-*cum*-threat usually works. "When they hear that," he says, chuckling, "they're really ready to work with you."

Some owners don't require such encouragement; they are happy for Wrice's help. Wrice explains: "You can't collect rent from people on crack. They won't pay. When we do find the owners, 90 percent of them will say 'Please get them out so I can get somebody in there who will pay the rent.'"

Wrice's assertive approach also has worked with telephone companies. In many cities, open-air drug markets flourish around pay phones. Dealers use the phones to receive orders from buyers. Buyers use the phones to call dealers on their pagers. Wrice has asked telephone companies in Philadelphia to replace their touch-tone pay units with older, rotary-dial models that are incompatible with pagers. Eliminating the phones, he reasons, will give dealers less incentive to loiter around street corners.

SCARE THE JUDGES

Occasionally, Wrice takes his confrontational tactics into the court room. "We can scare judges," he proclaims with some pride. During bail hearings for accused crack dealers, he says, "we're going to stand in court with our shirts and hats on and say 'you better make the bail a hundred thousand.'" Few accused dealers can post such high bond, which, explains Wrice, is exactly the point. "That's why they're still in jail," he says laughing. Other times, Wrice and his group simply stare at the judge in silence. "He gets the point. If he does that [gives low bail] a couple of times, we put it in our newsletter." In a city where judges are elected, a few members of Mantua Against Drugs assembled in a courtroom can add thousands of dollars to the price of bail.

Wrice contends that his bail-hearing performances aren't intimidation, simply community input. "We go to court to make sure the lawyer doesn't say 'you know Johnny wasn't selling drugs, Judge. He was framed by the cops.'" Because they often live in the very neighborhood in which the accused dealer was arrested, Wrice says that members of Mantua Against Drugs are qualified to dispute the lawyer's claim with first-hand observations. "He did have drugs on him," Wrice and his group counter. "He threw them in the bushes. In our bushes. We saw it. We're the neighbors and this little nut has been doing it for six or seven months." In the face of this chorus of angry neighbors, it doesn't take some judges long to raise bail. According to Wrice, his solutions "aren't always above board, but drug dealing isn't, either."

Herman Wrice's justification for his tactics can seem a little thin in places, but to those who live in drug-blighted neighborhoods, getting rid of the crack houses is justification enough. In Mantua, many crack houses are rowdy non-stop parties that cause extreme strains on their neighbors. Police are not always certain whether a residence is actually a crack house—that is, a place where drugs are sold—or simply a noisy house where drugs are



Volunteer groups across the country shut down crack houses using Herman Wrice's techniques.

Courtesy of PAIN

shared among friends. Such questions may bother civil libertarians, and hamper police departments, but they do not trouble Herman Wrice. "It not for us to prove it's a crack house," he says. "If the place disturbs the neighborhood, we'll go there."

The freedom to act without making fine distinctions is one of the reasons Wrice and his group have been effective. And it is the primary reason Mantua Against Drugs can act more quickly and decisively than police. Wrice puts it simply: "Cops need hard evidence to f*** with you. Neighbors don't."

Whether or not one agrees with his methods, Wrice has reason to be proud of the changes taking place in his part of Philadelphia. In 1989, two years after Mantua Against Drugs was founded, District 16, the section of Philadelphia in which Wrice's neighborhood is located, had the highest crime rate in the city. That year, police reported 1,614 serious felonies—including murder, rape, robbery, burglary and aggravated assault—in Mantua. With a population of just over 25,000, that's nearly one major felony for every 15 Mantua residents.

Four years later, in 1993, the number of major crimes reported had fallen by almost 40 percent, to 990. During the same period, the number of arrests for narcotics offenses in Mantua fell from 326 to 241.

Has Herman Wrice cleaned up Mantua? To some extent, the change may reflect a general trend in Philadelphia, where the number of many serious crimes re-

ported fell during the same four years. The change may also reflect criminal saturation in Mantua. The neighborhood simply may not have been able to support any more burglars or car thieves. Violence and turf battles may have killed some criminals and pushed others out of the neighborhood.

Still, the number of serious crimes reported in Mantua declined at more than twice the rate of that in Philadelphia overall. It is not likely that demographic changes alone can explain such a precipitous drop in serious crimes, not when it takes place over only four years. Criminals in Mantua didn't just stop committing as many crimes. Something, or somebody, made them stop.

WEED AND SEED

Statistics do not prove that Herman Wrice is responsible for Mantua's reduction in crime, but the federal government believes he had a lot to do with it. During the Bush Administration, the Department of Justice (DOJ) began sending Wrice to towns around the country to lecture citizens and police departments on fighting crack houses. Wrice has traveled to scores of small cities around the country under the auspices of DOJ's "Weed and Seed" program. One of these places is Taylor, Texas.

Located less than 40 miles up Route 79 from Austin, Taylor is a town of about 13,000 people, with a population almost evenly divided between blacks, whites and Hispanics. Until recently, Taylor had a crime problem. Many of Taylor's most serious offenses took place in a section of town south of the railroad tracks called the Line.

A long row of beer joints and honky tonks, the Line had been the scene of violence and drug dealing for more than 20 years. It was a hangout for local thugs, as well as a popular destination for soldiers on leave from Fort Hood. According to the chief of police, Fred Stansbury, the area was "an open drug market, a high violent crime and homicide area." Lieutenant Ed Dubec, who has been on the Taylor police force since the late-1960s, didn't believe anything would ever clean up the Line. "We could double up the force and go out there and work 24 hours a day," he says, "but nothing worked."

Then Herman Wrice came to Taylor. Wrice stayed for a few days in the spring of 1994, gave lectures to the police department and organized marches in the Line area. He left in April. By late August of the same year, says Chief Stansbury, violent crimes in the Line had been reduced by 90 percent. Serious crimes overall were down by 32 percent. One Friday night in August, police counted only three people on the street in the Line area. At the same spot four months before, Chief Stansbury remembers, there were "two or three hundred people, just hanging around, selling dope when the lights changed."

Many residents of Taylor reacted skeptically when Wrice first described his plans to clean up the Line. Officer Ed Dubec was among the doubters. "I just kept my mouth shut, but I just didn't believe it," he says. "I was 100 percent wrong, and I admit it. I've been at this department for over 25 years and I've never seen anything like this."

The plan was simple—with the protection of police, residents began marches like the ones organized by Wrice in Mantua. The effort enjoyed broad support. Taylor's

mayor, its state representative, and members of the school board marched through the Line. So did various county officials. The marchers positioned themselves in front of bars and vacant lots where drugs were sold. Some brought cameras and took photographs of suspicious characters. Not surprisingly, it did not take long for loiterers in the area to leave. Ed Dubec says the marches taught him a simple but important lesson: "Most drug dealers don't want their pictures taken."

With the marches a regular event, the police department decided to close down the Line permanently. A seldom-used Texas law states that if a business is the site of three or more incidents of crime, the building may be declared a public nuisance, and closed for a year. During those 12 months, the owner of the business may neither lease nor rent his building. Nearly all the bars in the Line area met the law's criterion, having been the scenes of arrests for gambling, prostitution, aggravated assault, and narcotics offenses. The city of Taylor took several bar owners to civil court under the law and won. Upon losing in court, some of the owners decided to get out of the tavern business all together, or at least in the Line. As of the end of 1994, seven of the bars were scheduled to be torn down.

Next, the city attorney dug out musty zoning maps and found that businesses had existed in the Line area for half a century. With the state's approval, the city officially designated the area an "historical business district." Overnight, public consumption of alcohol in the Line became illegal, punishable by a \$500 fine. Knots of young men no longer milled around on the sidewalks or sat in the back of pick-up trucks drinking beer. Fewer people on the streets meant less cover for drug dealers.

Finally, Taylor strengthened its existing building ordinances and passed others. The city further restricted unsafe buildings, and passed new health codes that forced owners to clean up vacant, weedy lots. Contrary to some expectations, the new laws were welcomed by residents of Taylor's poorer, predominantly black areas. "We got total support from the business community, civic groups and the NAACP," says Stansbury.

Much of the support came in the form of donations to the police department. Grateful for the reduction in crime, local businessmen and civic groups gave Stansbury's department computers, bicycles for patrols, and paid for the city's first canine unit. One organization refurbished Taylor's aging squad cars.

END OF THE LINE

Four months after Herman Wrice came to Taylor, there were still drug dealers in eastern Texas. But there were far fewer in Taylor. That's fine with Chief Stansbury. "Drug dealers can always go somewhere else and sell it," he says. "Our motto is: 'There are a lot of other towns across this country they can go to other than Taylor.'"

Police in Taylor do not plan to eliminate drug dealing, not in their state, not even in the rest of their county. Nor do they spend much time dwelling on an abstract Crime Problem, or on America's moral decline. The police in Taylor, Texas hope only to move criminals past the city limits, out of their jurisdiction and beyond the reach of the citizens for whose safety they are responsible.



PAIN volunteers in Marion, Indiana, often spend the entire night outside crack houses, shaming the drug buyers away.

Herman Wrice believes the police in Taylor are doing the most any police department or neighborhood group can do—moving criminals somewhere else. Wrice happily admits that drug dealers who are expelled from one neighborhood often simply go to another. “We didn’t say we were in the solving business,” he says. “We know how to close a crack house. Suppose they open another one? We’ll do it again.” Life in drug-infested areas, he says, amounts to survival of the best organized.

MARION’S PAIN

Marion, Indiana doesn’t seem like the kind of place that would have a crack problem. Aside from a General Motors plant and a state champion high school basketball team, there isn’t much to set the town of 37,000 apart from dozens of other small cities across the Midwest. Police in Marion have a one-word answer to account for their town’s struggle with crack cocaine: geography. Situated along Interstate 69 midway between Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, the city is a natural refueling stop for truckers. During the 1980s, it also became an inviting destination for drug dealers from Detroit, less than 250 miles up the interstate away.

To dealers, Marion’s attraction was economic. While a rock of crack might sell for \$5 to \$10 in Detroit, the same amount of cocaine could command \$30 in Marion. By the fall of 1992, the central part of the city supported 18 crack houses, all within an 11 by six-block area.

Less than two years later, Marion is not nearly as inviting to drug dealers. All but two of the city’s crack houses have been closed. As in Taylor and Mantua, the clean-up began with a march organized by Herman Wrice.

Wrice came to Marion in the fall of 1992, on a trip financed by the Justice Department. By the time he left, the marchers he led had founded an organization, People Against Illegal Narcotics. To Marion’s drug dealers, PAIN has been just that. The group’s plan of action is familiar: After meeting first at a local church, the group sets out for a suspected crack house. The city provides transportation for the elderly and incapacitated. A throng of about 40 volunteers, often joined by local firemen, police officers, the mayor, sheriff and chief of police, loiters in front of the house, chanting slogans and glaring at would-be crack buyers. Members usually return on Friday and Saturday nights to stand in the darkness and watch the crack house. Volunteers bring lounge chairs and coffee. In the winter, they light fires in oil drums to keep warm. Local restaurants give the volunteers free food. The group stays during prime dealing hours, from dusk to one or two in the morning.

Norma Stone, a gravelly-voiced woman in her mid-50s, is the president of PAIN. On the subject of drugs, Stone is a zealot, and has reason to be. Her son has gone to prison on drug charges, and three of her sisters are addicts. Stone clearly enjoys the effect the presence of her group seems to have on drug dealers. “We just sit in their faces. As long as we sit, they can’t make any money. We have a good time, but they have a miserable time.” Over weeks, she says, the marches have a larger effect. “Buyers don’t want to go into the houses for fear we’ll stop by. We may pull up to a house and there will be 25 people standing around. But when they see our cars, they leave. We’re like the welcoming committee. We welcome them out of town.”

Dec Jones, a 24-year veteran of the Marion police department, says the marches have closed more drug houses than any approach he has seen. Says Jones, “By no means have we wiped out the crack problem in Marion, Indiana,” he says. “But we’ve sure slowed it down a lot.” Asked how an assembly of civilian volunteers, many of them middle-aged, most of them women, could scare hardened crackheads away from their source of drugs, he pauses. The answer, he says, is simple: “You’re not going to go into a house to buy stuff that’s illegal when you got a bunch of people out there watching you.”

PARANOID REACTION

While Herman Wrice focuses on community organization, other groups have been effective at exploiting the mind-bending affliction crack causes in chronic users: paranoia. And no group has manipulated crack users' fear more successfully than the Fairlawn Coalition in Washington, D.C.

A break-in at Ethelyn Hammond's house in the Fairlawn section of Anacostia in Washington was the catalyst for the group's beginning. The burglars entered by tearing a door off its hinges, and left with nearly everything in the house, some \$20,000 worth of property. Hammond, a school teacher in her fifties, was frightened. It was the second time in a month burglars had torn apart Hammond's house.

Frustrated by the police department's indifference, Hammond turned to Edward Johnson, a neighbor and friend for 20 years, who offered to fix her shattered front door. As he and another neighbor worked, Johnson says he came to a realization. Fairlawn, which had once been a quiet, working-class neighborhood, was disintegrating. "We let these people stand on the corner and no one called the police until something happened. We were just

PART GODFATHER, PART HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, HERMAN WRICE KEEPS HIS LITTLE PATCH OF PHILADELPHIA RUNNING SMOOTHLY. BUT MOST OF ALL, HE KEEPS IT ORGANIZED.

as responsible as the police for letting these kids hang around the corner." Johnson decided to organize his neighbors to reclaim the area from thieves and drug dealers. Within days, Edward Johnson founded the Fairlawn Coalition.

CANDID CAMERA

Some of the most vigorous drug sales took place around the corner from Johnson's house, at the intersection of 17th and R Streets Southeast. It was here that the new group focused its initial efforts. Wearing safety orange baseball hats to distinguish themselves, the group spent its first evening standing among drug dealers on the corner. It didn't take long for the dealers to become confused and uncomfortable. After directing a few mildly hostile gestures at the marchers, they left. For the Orange Hats, as the group was soon dubbed, it was a victory. The next night, without protection or encouragement from the police, the marchers returned to their patrol. With few exceptions, they have been back every night since.

Within a short time, most of the drug dealers at the intersection of 17th and R moved on. Encouraged by their success, the Orange Hats bought two-way radios, gave themselves silly on-air handles such as "Big Foot," "Knee Cap," and "Papa Smurf," and organized regular

meetings at Garden Memorial Presbyterian Church on Minnesota Avenue. The group also purchased a video recorder.

Orange Hats began placing the video camera on a tripod across the street from an open-air drug market. The effect was immediate. Drug dealers evaporated. Buyers avoided the corner. Reginald Jones, a former Washington crack dealer, says the group's electronic equipment made him so nervous he left the area when they arrived. "I didn't want to be anywhere near the Orange Hats. They just added to my paranoia." Another crack user seconds Jones's assessment: "I don't want to be near them because they've got radios and videocams."

James Foreman, one of the founders of the Orange Hats, agrees that the video camera, as well as the group's habit of recording the license numbers of suspicious cars in the area, scare drug dealers. What does the group do with the video tape and tag numbers? "Pretty much nothing," he says. Sometimes the cameras the group carries contain no film, only flash bulbs. "Sometimes we tape over the tape." Happily, many crack users and dealers have a different perception. According to Foreman, "they believe it's going to every intelligence agency in the world."

Even crack users who realize that members of the Fairlawn Coalition are not in constant contact with Interpol seek to avoid the group. Tony, a regular crack user who has run into the group more than once, explains. The Orange Hats, he says, "are trouble makers. You're on a mission. You want to get your stuff, get back into the house and get high. But you see them and they'll ruin your day. So you go around them." Tony admits that the marchers are not very intimidating. Most are "old women." Still, he says, "they're capable of ruining your day."

In fact, the marchers, nearly all of whom are retired and grandparents, must be among the least imposing citizens on the street in Anacostia at night. But, video recorders or not, the Orange Hats do wield one weapon even addicts fear—shame.

The fact that the Orange Hats are middle-aged and church-going works to their advantage. To teen-age crack dealers, watching the group march up to the corner on a Saturday night with bright hats and walkie-talkies is like having parents show up at a beer party in junior-high school; it spoils the mood. And in this case, the profits. The Orange Hats realize what the police often do not: Even drug dealers—especially drug dealers—have appearances to keep up.

MORAL POWER

Many neighbors believe that Fairlawn is, thanks to the Orange Hats, a safer place to live in than it was six years ago. Steve Kang works the cash register at the New Seven Market, a 24-hour grocery on the corner of 14th Street and Good Hope Road that his parents have owned nearly 10 years. Kang says the open drug markets that used to flourish outside his door have disappeared, and he credits the Fairlawn Coalition for the change. "Just by them being there, the drug dealers don't come out, or go somewhere else." Kang says he feels safer when he walks to his car at night.

Mary Carr, 77, who lives close to Steve Kang's market, agrees that the Orange Hats have helped. Carr has lived on the street for 15 years, but several years ago was afraid to go outside. Now, the neighborhood "is safer than it was when I came here. Yes, indeed," Jasmine Nance, Mary Carr's neighbor says she is happy that the crowds of young men on the corner have gone. She often sees the Orange Hats on her way back from choir rehearsal, she says. "I think it really has helped."

J. Arthur Brown, an accountant who has owned a business on Good Hope Road since 1970, remembers well the drug dealers who once crowded the street outside his storefront. He contends the Orange Hats have made Fairlawn safer with moral force alone. "Even if the dealers

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were willing to face down the Orange Hats," Brown says, "their customers wouldn't want to face upstanding citizens."

Like the marchers in Taylor and Marion, and Herman Wrice's group in Mantua, the Orange Hats have not changed the essential behavior of the drug dealers and users in their city. The dealers still sell crack, and the users continue to buy it. Yet, the group has changed the way drugs are sold and consumed in Fairlawn. Its presence has forced the drug trade underground, where it has less opportunity to harm those who choose to stay away from it. The neighborhood has become safer for ordinary citizens as a result. A member of the Orange Hats puts it this way: "You can use all you want in your own home," he says. "But don't terrorize somebody else's neighborhood." Such was the goal of the Fairlawn Coalition when it was founded, and by that measure it has succeeded.

NEIGHBORS ALWAYS WIN

Not all crack houses crumble under the same type of pressure. And not all neighborhood groups are capable of bringing the same pressures to bear on crack houses. It is as hard to imagine the elderly members of the Fairlawn Coalition using Herman Wrice's strong-arm tactics as it is to imagine Herman Wrice patiently waiting in civil court to evict crack dealers. Yet every successful citizens' group has at least one thing in common—a willingness to assume responsibility for the safety of its own neighborhood. When drug dealers collide with en-

raged neighbors, the enraged neighbors nearly always win. Which makes sense—the neighbors have more to lose.

Citizens hoping to drive crack houses from their neighborhoods can follow either example—taking landlords to court under civil law or marching in front of suspected crack houses—or both. The response a group adopts will depend both on its membership and the neighborhood in which it works. Either way, before taking on a crack house, neighbors must first organize into a distinct body. Some groups may wish to coalesce around existing forms of local government, such as block committees. Others may choose to form separate anti-drug organizations, like Mantua Against Drugs. Once formed, a group of citizens should contact its local police precinct. Collaboration with the police is not a requirement for success; the Orange Hats thrive in a city whose department is barely able to keep its squad cars running, much less spare time for a citizen's group. When it is possible, however, having police actively involved in can only help a citizens' organization fight crack houses.

Even the most responsive police departments may need pressure from citizens to help close down crack houses. Nothing brings such pressure more quickly than exposure in the media. By 1989, the neighborhood surrounding Othello Park in Seattle had become a thriving crack market. Though there was a station house less than a mile away, local police did little to stop dealers from selling drugs openly. A neighbor describes the activity in front of one crack house, which was run by members of the Crips gang, as "like the drive up window at Jack-in-the-Box." Prostitutes brazenly solicited customers in the park. There were drive-by shootings, and at least one gun battle with automatic weapons.

One Saturday night that year, Mike Siegel, a Seattle talk show host, drove to Othello Park to see the drug dealing. Siegel and several friends went to the home of Ken and Donna Williams, next-door neighbors to the areas most notorious crack house. Hiding behind a curtain in a upstairs bedroom, Siegel observed the crack house in operation. He spoke into a microphone as he watched, recording his observations.

Siegel described deals taking place on the sidewalk, addicts carrying televisions and VCRs to barter for drugs, drivers stopping out front just long enough to exchange bills for vials of crack.

On Monday, Siegel played the tape on his radio show. He also gave the address of the crack house. Within a day, the Seattle police raided the house. Buoyed by police involvement, neighbors organized to clean up the area. Nearly six years later, there is little open drug dealing in the neighborhood around Othello Park.

Baltimore lawyer Michael Sarbanes, who has seen some communities successfully expel drug dealers and others sink deeper into chaos, says it is easy to tell which neighborhoods will recover. "If there are five people who will stick together," he says, "it's just a matter of time before that block is clean."





*Sometimes "fixing broken windows" does more
to reduce crime than conventional "incident-oriented" policing*

MAKING NEIGHBORHOODS SAFE

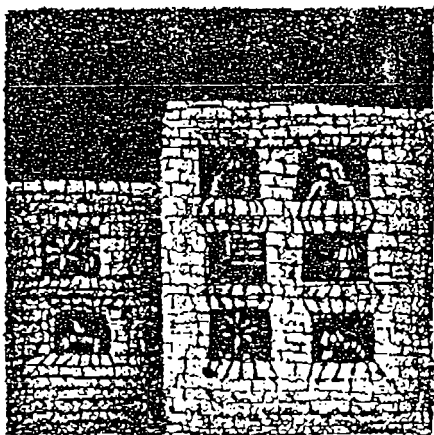
BY JAMES Q. WILSON AND GEORGE L. KELLING

NEW BRIARFIELD APARTMENTS IS AN OLD, RUN-down collection of wooden buildings constructed in 1942 as temporary housing for shipyard workers in Newport News, Virginia. By the mid-1980s it was widely regarded as the worst housing project in the city. Many of its vacant units provided hiding places for drug users. It had the highest burglary rate in Newport News; nearly a quarter of its apartments were broken into at least once a year.

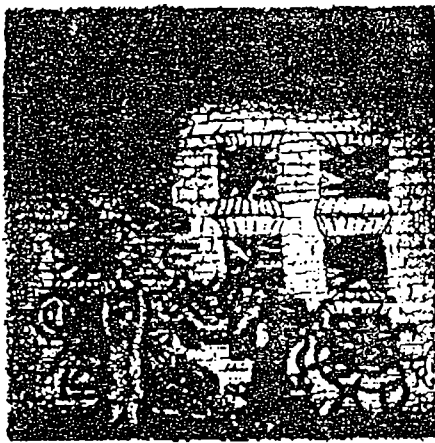
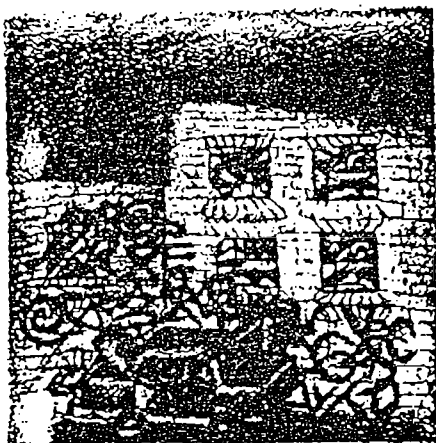
For decades the police had wearily answered calls for assistance and had investigated crimes in New Briarfield. Not much came of this police attentiveness—the buildings went on deteriorating, the burglaries went on occurring, the residents went on living in terror. Then, in 1984, Detective Tony Duke, assigned to a newly created police task force, decided to interview the residents of New

Briarfield about their problems. Not surprisingly, he found that they were worried about the burglaries—but they were just as concerned about the physical deterioration of the project. Rather than investigating only the burglaries, Duke spent some of his time investigating the *buildings*. Soon he learned that many city agencies—the fire department, the public-works department, the housing department—regarded New Briarfield as a major headache. He also discovered that its owners were in default on a federal loan and that foreclosure was imminent.

The report he wrote to Darrel Stephens, then the police chief, led Stephens to recommend to the city manager that New Briarfield be demolished and its tenants relocated. The city manager agreed. Meanwhile, Barry Haddix, the patrol officer assigned to the area, began working with members of other city agencies to fix up the project, pend-



THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY



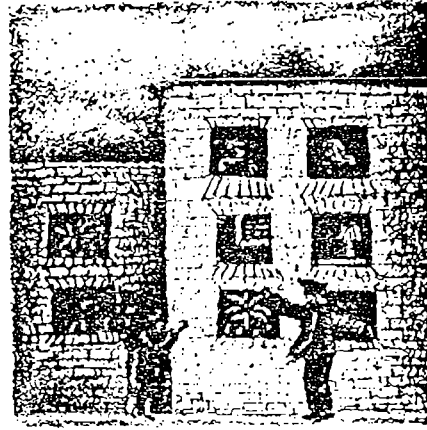
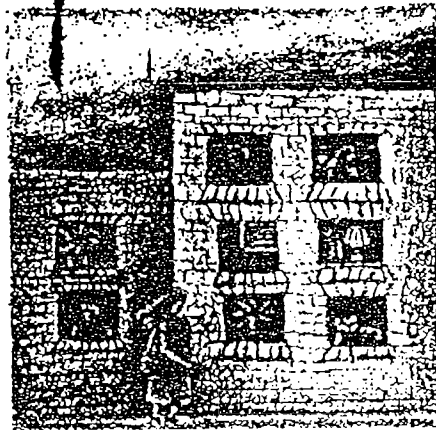
ing its eventual replacement. Trash was carted away, abandoned cars were removed, potholes were filled in, the streets were swept. According to a study recently done by John E. Eck and William Spelman, of the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), the burglary rate dropped by 35 percent after Duke and Haddix began their work.

Stephens, now the executive director of PERF, tells the story of the New Briarfield project as an example of "problem-oriented policing," a concept developed by Professor Herman Goldstein, of the University of Wisconsin Law School, and sometimes also called community-oriented policing. The conventional police strategy is "incident-oriented"—a citizen calls to report an incident, such as a burglary, and the police respond by recording information relevant to the crime and then trying to solve it. Obviously, when a crime occurs, the victim is entitled to a rapid, effective police response. But if responding to incidents is all that the police do, the community problems that cause or explain many of these incidents will never be addressed, and so the incidents will continue and their number will perhaps increase.

This will happen for two reasons. One is that a lot of serious crime is adventitious, not the result of inexorable social forces or personal failings. A rash of burglaries may occur because drug users have found a back alley or an abandoned building in which to hang out. In their spare time, and in order to get money to buy drugs, they steal

from their neighbors. If the back alleys are cleaned up and the abandoned buildings torn down, the drug users will go away. They may even use fewer drugs, because they will have difficulty finding convenient dealers and soft burglary targets. By the same token, a neglected neighborhood may become the turf of a youth gang, whose members commit more crimes together in a group than they would if they were acting alone. If the gang is broken up, former members will still commit some crimes but probably not as many as before.

Most crime in most neighborhoods is local: the offenders live near their victims. Because of this, one should not assume that changing the environmental conditions conducive to crime in one area will displace the crime to other areas. For example, when the New York City police commissioner, Ben Ward, ordered Operation Pressure Point, a crackdown on drug dealing on the Lower East Side, dealing and the criminality associated with it were reduced in that neighborhood and apparently did not immediately reappear in other, contiguous neighborhoods. Suburban customers of the local drug dealers were frightened away by the sight of dozens of police officers on the streets where these customers had once shopped openly for drugs. They could not—at least not right away—find another neighborhood in which to buy drugs as easily as they once had on the Lower East Side. At the same time, the local population included some people who were willing to



THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

aid and abet the drug dealers. When the police presence made drug dealing unattractive, the dealers could not—again, at least not for the time being—find another neighborhood that provided an equivalent social infrastructure.

The second reason that incident-oriented police work fails to discourage neighborhood crime is that law-abiding citizens who are afraid to go out onto streets filled with graffiti, winos, and loitering youths yield control of these streets to people who are not frightened by these signs of urban decay. Those not frightened turn out to be the same people who created the problem in the first place. Law-abiding citizens, already fearful, see things occurring that make them even more fearful. A vicious cycle begins of fear-induced behavior increasing the sources of that fear.

A Los Angeles police sergeant put it this way: "When people in this district see that a gang has spray-painted its initials on all the stop signs, they decide that the gang, not the people or the police, controls the streets. When they discover that the Department of Transportation needs three months to replace the stop signs, they decide that the city isn't as powerful as the gang. These people want us to help them take back the streets." Painting gang symbols on a stop sign or a storefront is not, by itself, a serious crime. As an incident, it is trivial. But as the symptom of a problem, it is very serious.



IN AN EARLIER ARTICLE IN THE ATLANTIC (MARCH, 1982) we called this the problem of "broken windows": If the first broken window in a building is not repaired, then people who like breaking windows will assume that no one cares about the building and more windows will be broken. Soon the building will have no windows. Likewise, when disorderly behavior—say, rude remarks by loitering youths—is left unchallenged, the signal given is that no one cares. The disorder escalates, possibly to serious crime.

The sort of police work practiced in Newport News is an effort to fix the broken windows. Similar projects are under way in cities all over America. This pattern constitutes the beginnings of the most significant redefinition of police work in the past half century. For example:

- When a gunfight occurred at Garden Village, a low-income housing project near Baltimore, the Baltimore County police responded by investigating both the shooting and the housing project. Chief Cornelius Behan directed the officers in his Community Oriented Police Enforcement (COPE) unit to find out what could be done to

alleviate the fears of the project residents and the gang tensions that led to the shooting. COPE officers worked with members of other agencies to upgrade street lighting in the area, trim shrubbery, install door locks, repair the roads and alleys, and get money to build a playground. With police guidance, the tenants organized. At the same time, high-visibility patrols were started and gang members were questioned. When both a suspect in the shooting and a particularly troublesome parole violator were arrested, gang tensions eased. Crime rates dropped. In bringing about this change, the police dealt with eleven different public agencies.

- When local merchants in a New York City neighborhood complained to the police about homeless persons who created a mess on the streets and whose presence frightened away customers, the officer who responded did not roust the vagrants but instead suggested that the merchants hire them to clean the streets in front of their stores every morning. The merchants agreed, and now the streets are clean all day and the customers find the stores more attractive.

- When people in a Los Angeles neighborhood complained to the police about graffiti on walls and gang symbols on stop signs, officers assigned to the Community Mobilization Project in the Wilshire station did more than just try to catch the gang youths who were wielding the spray cans; they also organized citizens' groups and Boy Scouts to paint over the graffiti as fast as they were put up.

- When residents of a Houston neighborhood became fearful about crime in their area, the police not only redoubled their efforts to solve the burglaries and thefts but also assigned some officers to talk with the citizens in their homes. During a nine-month period the officers visited more than a third of all the dwelling units in the area, introduced themselves, asked about any neighborhood problems, and left their business cards. When Antony Fatic and Mary Ann Wycoff, researchers at the Police Foundation, evaluated the project, they found that the people in this area, unlike others living in a similar area where no citizen-contact project occurred, felt that social disorder had decreased and that the neighborhood had become a better place to live. Moreover, and quite unexpectedly, the amount of property crime was noticeably reduced.

These are all examples of community-oriented policing, whose current popularity among police chiefs is as great as the ambiguity of the idea. In a sense, the police have always been community-oriented. Every police officer knows that most crimes don't get solved if victims and witnesses do not cooperate. One way to encourage that cooperation is to cultivate the good will of both victims and witnesses. Similarly, police-citizen tensions, over racial incidents or allegations of brutality or hostility, can often be allayed, and sometimes prevented, if police officers stay in close touch with community groups. Accordingly, most departments have at least one community-relations officer,

who arranges meetings between officers and citizens' groups in church basements and other neutral locales.

But these commonplace features of police work are additions, and rarely alter the traditional work of most patrol officers and detectives: responding to radio calls about specific incidents. The focus on incidents works against a focus on problems. If Detective Tony Duke had focused only on incidents in New Briarfield, he would still be investigating burglaries in that housing project; meanwhile, the community-relations officer would be telling outraged residents that the police were doing all they could and urging people to call in any useful leads. If a tenant at one of those meetings had complained about stopped-up drains, rotting floorboards, and abandoned refrigerators, the community-relations officer would have patiently explained that these were not "police matters."

And of course, they are not. They are the responsibility of the landlord, the tenants themselves, and city agencies other than the police. But landlords are sometimes indifferent, tenants rarely have the resources to make needed repairs, and other city agencies do not have a twenty-four-hour emergency service. Like it or not, the police are about the only city agency that makes house calls around the clock. And like it or not, the public defines broadly what it thinks of as public order, and holds the police responsible for maintaining order.

Community-oriented policing means changing the daily work of the police to include investigating problems as well as incidents. It means defining as a problem whatever a significant body of public opinion regards as a threat to community order. It means working with the good guys, and not just against the bad guys.

The link between incidents and problems can sometimes be measured. The police know from experience what research by Glenn Pierce, in Boston, and Lawrence Sherman, in Minneapolis, has established: fewer than 10 percent of the addresses from which the police receive calls account for more than 60 percent of those calls. Many of the calls involve domestic disputes. If each call is treated as a separate incident with neither a history nor a future, then each dispute will be handled by police officers anxious to pacify the complainants and get back on patrol as quickly as possible. All too often, however, the disputants move beyond shouting insults or throwing crockery at each other. A knife or a gun may be produced, and somebody may die.

A very large proportion of all killings occur in these domestic settings. A study of domestic homicides in Kansas City showed that in eight out of ten cases the police had been called to the incident address at least once before; in half the cases they had been called *five times* or more. The police are familiar with this pattern, and they have learned how best to respond to it. An experiment in Minneapolis, conducted by the Police Foundation, showed that men who were arrested after assaulting their spouses were much less likely to commit new assaults than those who were merely pacified or asked to leave the house for a few

hours. Research is now under way in other cities to test this finding. Arrest may prove always to be the best disposition, or we may learn that some kind of intervention by a social agency also helps. What is indisputable is that a domestic fight—like many other events to which the police respond—is less an "incident" than a problem likely to have serious, long-term consequences.

Another such problem, familiar to New Yorkers, is graffiti on subway cars. What to some aesthetes is folk art is to most people a sign that an important public place is no longer under public control. If graffiti painters can attack cars with impunity, then muggers may feel they can attack the people in those cars with equal impunity. When we first wrote in these pages about the problem of broken windows, we dwelt on the graffiti problem as an example of a minor crime creating a major crisis.

The police seemed powerless to do much about it. They could arrest youths with cans of spray paint, but for every one arrested ten more went undetected, and of those arrested, few were punished. The New York Transit Authority, led by its chairman, Robert Kiley, and its president, David Gunn, decided that graffiti-free cars were a major management goal. New, easier-to-clean cars were bought. More important, key people in the Authority were held accountable for cleaning the cars and keeping them clean. Whereas in the early 1980s two out of every three cars were covered with graffiti, today fewer than one in six is. The Transit Police have played their part by arresting those who paint the cars, but they have been more successful at keeping cars from being defaced in the first place than they were at chasing people who were spraying already defaced ones.



WHILE THE PHRASE "COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICING" comes easily to the lips of police administrators, redefining the police mission is more difficult. To help the police become accustomed to fixing broken windows as well as arresting window-breakers requires doing things that are very hard for many administrators to do.

Authority over at least some patrol officers must be decentralized, so that they have a good deal of freedom to manage their time (including their paid overtime). This implies freeing them at least partly from the tyranny of the radio call. It means giving them a broad range of responsibilities: to find and understand the problems that create disorder and crime, and to deal with other public and private agencies that can help cope with these problems. It

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means assigning them to a neighborhood and leaving them there for an extended period of time. It means backing them up with department support and resources.

The reason these are not easy things for police chiefs to do is not simply that chiefs are slaves to tradition, though some impatient advocates of community-oriented policing like to say so. Consider for a moment how all these changes might sound to an experienced and intelligent police executive who must defend his department against media criticisms of officer misconduct, political pressure to cut budgets, and interest-group demands for more police protection everywhere. With decentralized authority, no one will know precisely how patrol officers spend their time. Moreover, decentralized authority means that patrol officers will spend time on things like schmoozing with citizens, instead of on quantifiable tasks like issuing tickets, making arrests, and clearing cases.

Making the community-oriented officers generalists means letting them deal with other city agencies, a responsibility for which few officers are well trained and which cuts across sensitive questions of turf and public expectations.

If officers are left in a neighborhood, some of them may start taking money from the dope dealers and after-hours joints. To prevent that, officers are frequently moved

around. Moreover, the best people are usually kept in the detective squad that handles the really big cases. Few police executives want their best people settling into a neighborhood, walking around the bus stops and shopping malls.

The enthusiasts for community-oriented policing have answers for all these concerns, but sometimes in their zeal they forget that they are contending with more than mere bureaucratic foot-dragging—that the problems are real and require thoughtful solutions. Many police executives get in trouble not because the crime rate goes up but because cops are accused of graft, brutality, laziness, incivility, or indifference.

In short, police management is driven more by the constraints on the job than by the goals of the job. You cannot cope with those constraints without understanding them. This may be why some of the biggest changes toward community-oriented policing have occurred in cities where a new chief has come in from the outside with a mandate to shake up a moribund department. Lee Brown brought a community orientation to the Houston Police Department under precisely those circumstances—the reputation of the department was so bad that almost any change would have been regarded as an improvement.

What can we say to the worried police chief who is al-

SAVING MEMORY

Summer nights we put pennies on the track.
Even the station was quiet enough for crickets.
Mountains surrounded us, middling high and purple.
No matter where we stood they protected us
with perspective. People call them gentle mountains
but you can die in there; they're thick
with creeper and laurel. Like voodoo,
I drew pictures with a sparkler. A curved line
arced across the night. Rooted in its slope,
one laurel tree big as the mountain holding it.

You can hear the train in the rails.
They're round, not flat, as you'd expect,
and slick. We'd walk the sound, one step, two,
slip, on purpose, in the ballast, hopscotch
and waltz on the ties, watching the big round eye
enter the curve and grow like God out of the purple,
the tracks turning mean, molten silver blazing
dead at us. We'd hula. Tango. And the first
white plume would shoot up screaming long, lonely,
vain as Mamma shooting starlings from her latticed pics.

Sing Mickey Mouse, the second scream rising long, again,
up and up. Stick our right hip out, the third
wailing. Give it a hot-cha wiggle, the fourth
surrounding us. And bidding each other fond adieux,
we'd count to three, turn our backs, flash it a moon,
and materialize, fantastic, run over with light,
the train shrieking to pieces, scared, meaning it,
short, short, short, short, pushing a noise
bigger than the valley. It sent us flying,
flattened, light as ideas, back on the platform,
the Y6B Mallet compound rolling through
southbound, steamborne, out of Roanoke.

It wasn't to make the train jump the track
but to hold the breath-edged piece of copper
grown hot with dying, thin with birth,
wiped smooth of origin and homilies.
To hold such power. As big as the eye
of the train, as big as the moon burning
like the sun. All the perspective
curved and gone.

—Mary Stewart Hammond

ready running a pretty good department? Start with corruption: For decades police executives and reformers have believed that in order to prevent corruption, you have to centralize control over personnel and discourage intimacy between police officers and citizens. Maybe. But the price one pays for this is very high. For example, many neighborhoods are being destroyed by drug dealers, who hang out on every street corner. The best way to sweep them off the streets is to have patrol officers arrest them for selling drugs and intimidate their customers by parking police cars right next to suspected drug outlets. But some police chiefs forbid their patrol officers to work drug cases, for fear they will be corrupted. When the citizens in these cities see police cars drive past scenes of open drug dealing, they assume the police have been paid off. Efforts to prevent corruption have produced the appearance of corruption.

Police Commissioner Ben Ward, in New York, decided that the price of this kind of anti-corruption strategy was too high. His Operation Pressure Point put scores of police officers on the streets to break up the drug-dealing bazaar. Police corruption is no laughing matter, especially in New York, but some chiefs now believe that it will have to be fought in ways that do not require police officers to avoid contact with people.

Consider the problem of getting police resources and managing political pressures: resources can be justified with statistics, but statistics often become ends in themselves. One police captain we interviewed said that his department was preoccupied with "stacking widgets and counting beans." He asked his superior for permission to take officers out of radio cars and have them work on community problems. The superior agreed but warned that he would be watching to see what happened to "the stats." In the short run the stats—for example, calls answered, average response time—were likely to get worse, but if community problems were solved, they would get better as citizens had fewer incidents to report. The captain worried, however, that he would not be given enough time to achieve this and that the bean counters would cut off his program.

A better way to justify getting resources from the city is to stimulate popular demand for resources devoted to problem-solving. Properly handled, community-oriented policing does generate support for the department. When Newark police officers, under orders from Hubert Williams, then the police director, began stopping city buses and boarding them to enforce city ordinances against smoking, drinking, gambling, and playing loud music, the bus patrons often applauded. When Los Angeles police officers supervised the hauling away of abandoned cars, onlookers applauded. Later, when some of the officers had their time available for problem-solving work cut back, several hundred citizens attended a meeting to complain.

In Flint, Michigan, patrol officers were taken out of their cars and assigned to foot beats. Robert Trojanowicz,

a professor at Michigan State University, analyzed the results and found big increases in citizen satisfaction and officer morale, and even a significant drop in crime (an earlier foot-patrol project in Newark had produced equivalent reductions in fear but no reductions in crime). Citizen support was not confined to statements made to pollsters, however. Voters in referenda twice approved tax increases to maintain the foot-patrol system, the second time by a two-to-one margin. New Briarfield tenants unquestionably found satisfaction in the role the police played in getting temporary improvements made on their housing project and getting a commitment for its ultimate replacement. Indeed, when a department experiments with a community-oriented project in one precinct, people in other precincts usually want one too.



POLITICIANS, LIKE POLICE CHIEFS, HEAR THESE VIEWS and respond. But they hear other views as well. One widespread political mandate is to keep the tax rate down. Many police departments are already stretched thin by sharp reductions in spending that occurred in the lean years of the 1970s. Putting *one* additional patrol car on the streets around the clock can cost a quarter of a million dollars or more a year.

Change may seem easier when resources are abundant. Ben Ward could start Operation Pressure Point because he had at his disposal a large number of new officers who could be thrown into a crackdown on street-level drug dealing. Things look a bit different in Los Angeles, where no big increases in personnel are on the horizon. As a result, only eight officers are assigned to the problem-solving Community Mobilization Project in the Wilshire district—an economically and ethnically diverse area of nearly 300,000 residents.

But change does not necessarily require more resources, and the availability of new resources is no guarantee that change will be attempted. One temptation is to try to sell the public on the need for more policemen and decide later how to use them. Usually when that script is followed, either the public turns down the spending increase or the extra personnel are dumped into what one LAPD captain calls the "black hole" of existing commitments, leaving no trace and producing no effects.

What may have an effect is how the police are deployed and managed. An experiment jointly conducted by the Washington, D.C., Police Department and the Police Foundation showed that if a few experienced officers con-

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concentrate on known repeat offenders, the number of serious offenders taken off the streets grows substantially. The Flint and Newark experiences suggest that foot patrols in certain kinds of communities (but not all) can reduce fear. In Houston problem-oriented tactics seem clearly to have heightened a sense of citizen security.

The problem of interagency cooperation may, in the long run, be the most difficult of all. The police can bring problems to the attention of other city agencies, but the system is not always organized to respond. In his book *Neighborhood Services*, John Mudd calls it the "rat problem": "If a rat is found in an apartment, it is a housing inspection responsibility; if it runs into a restaurant, the health department has jurisdiction; if it goes outside and dies in an alley, public works takes over." A police officer who takes public complaints about rats seriously will go crazy trying to figure out what agency in the city has responsibility for rat control and then inducing it to kill the rats.

Matters are almost as bad if the public is complaining about abandoned houses or school-age children who are not in school. The housing department may prefer to concentrate on enforcing the housing code rather than go through the costly and time-consuming process of getting an abandoned house torn down. The school department may have expelled the truant children for making life miserable for the teachers and the other students; the last thing it wants is for the police to tell the school to take the kids back.

All city and county agencies have their own priorities and face their own pressures. Forcing them to cooperate by knocking heads together at the top rarely works; what department heads promise the mayor they will do may bear little relationship to what their rank-and-file employees actually do. From his experiences in New York City government Mudd discovered that if you want agencies to cooperate in solving neighborhood problems, you have to get the neighborhood-level supervisors from each agency together in a "district cabinet" that meets regularly and addresses common concerns. This is not an easy task (for one thing, police district lines often do not match the district boundaries of the school, housing, traffic, and public-works departments), but where it has been tried it has made solving the "rat problem" a lot easier. For example, Mudd reports, such interagency issues as park safety and refuse-laden vacant lots got handled more effectively when the field supervisors met to talk about them than when memos went up the chain of command of one agency and then down the chain of command of another.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ALONG THE LINES OF Neighborhood Watch programs may help reduce crime, but we cannot be certain. In particular, we do not know what kinds of communities are most likely to benefit from such programs. A Police Foundation study in Minneapolis found that getting effective community orga-

nizations started in the most troubled neighborhoods was very difficult. The costs and benefits of having patrol officers and sergeants influence the delivery of services from other city agencies has never been fully assessed. No way of wresting control of a neighborhood from a street gang has yet been proved effective.

And even if these questions are answered, a police department may still have difficulty accommodating two very different working cultures: the patrol officers and detectives who handle major crimes (murders, rapes, and robberies) and the cops who work on community problems and the seemingly minor incidents they generate. In every department we visited, some of the incident-oriented officers spoke disparagingly of the problem-oriented officers as "social workers," and some of the latter responded by calling the former "ghetto blasters." If a community-service officer seems to get too close to the community, he or she may be accused of "going native." The tension between the two cultures is heightened by the fact that in many departments becoming a detective is regarded as a major promotion, and detectives are often selected from among those officers who have the best record in making major arrests—in other words, from the ranks of the incident-oriented. But this pattern need not be permanent. Promotion tracks can be changed so that a patrol officer, especially one working on community problems, is no longer regarded as somebody who "hasn't made detective." Moreover, some police executives now believe that splitting the patrol force into two units—one oriented to incidents, the other to problems—is unwise. They are searching for ways to give all patrol officers the time and resources for problem-solving activities.

Because of the gaps in our knowledge about both the results and the difficulties of community-oriented policing, no chief should be urged to accept, uncritically, the community-oriented model. But the traditional model of police professionalism—devoting resources to quick radio-car response to calls about specific crime incidents—makes little sense at a time when the principal threats to public order and safety come from *collective*, not individual, sources, and from *problems*, not incidents: from well-organized gangs and drug traffickers, from uncared-for legions of the homeless, from boisterous teenagers taking advantage of their newfound freedom and affluence in congested urban settings.

Even if community-oriented policing does not produce the dramatic gains that some of its more ardent advocates expect, it has indisputably produced one that the officers who have been involved in it immediately acknowledge: it has changed their perceptions of the community. Officer Robin Kirk, of the Houston Police Department, had to be talked into becoming part of a neighborhood fear-reduction project. Once in it, he was converted. In his words, "Traditionally, police officers after about three years get to thinking that everybody's a loser. That's the only people you're dealing with. In community policing you're dealing with the good citizens, helping them solve problems." □



*Sometimes "fixing broken windows" does more
to reduce crime than conventional "incident-oriented" policing*

MAKING NEIGHBORHOODS SAFE

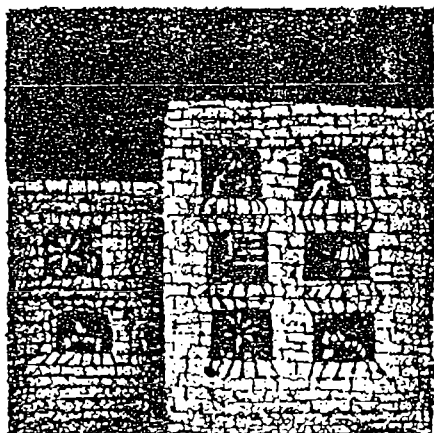
BY JAMES Q. WILSON AND GEORGE L. KELLING

NEW BRIARFIELD APARTMENTS IS AN OLD, RUN-down collection of wooden buildings constructed in 1942 as temporary housing for shipyard workers in Newport News, Virginia. By the mid-1980s it was widely regarded as the worst housing project in the city. Many of its vacant units provided hiding places for drug users. It had the highest burglary rate in Newport News; nearly a quarter of its apartments were broken into at least once a year.

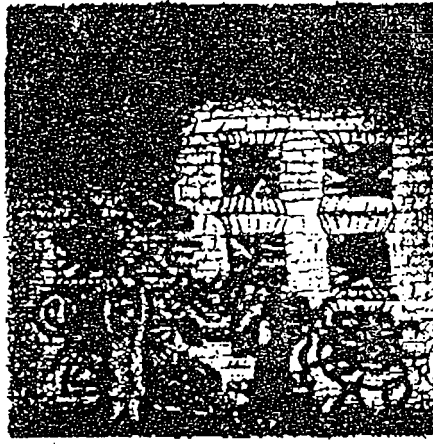
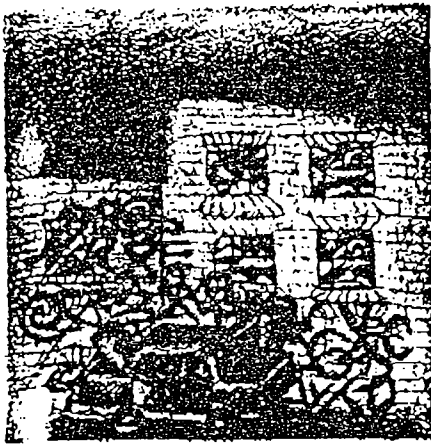
For decades the police had wearily answered calls for assistance and had investigated crimes in New Briarfield. Not much came of this police attentiveness—the buildings went on deteriorating, the burglaries went on occurring, the residents went on living in terror. Then, in 1984, Detective Tony Duke, assigned to a newly created police task force, decided to interview the residents of New

Briarfield about their problems. Not surprisingly, he found that they were worried about the burglaries—but they were just as concerned about the physical deterioration of the project. Rather than investigating only the burglaries, Duke spent some of his time investigating the *buildings*. Soon he learned that many city agencies—the fire department, the public-works department, the housing department—regarded New Briarfield as a major headache. He also discovered that its owners were in default on a federal loan and that foreclosure was imminent.

The report he wrote to Darrel Stephens, then the police chief, led Stephens to recommend to the city manager that New Briarfield be demolished and its tenants relocated. The city manager agreed. Meanwhile, Barry Haddix, the patrol officer assigned to the area, began working with members of other city agencies to fix up the project, pend-



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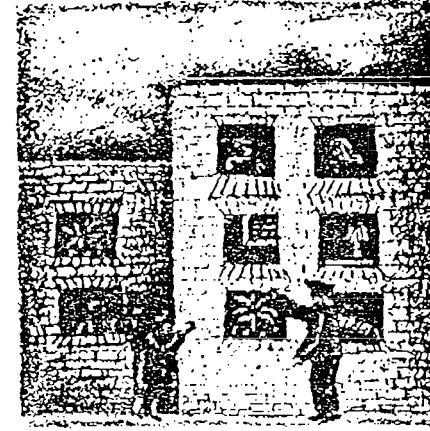
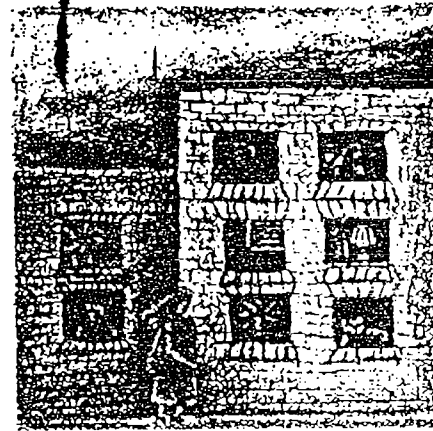
ing its eventual replacement. Trash was carted away, abandoned cars were removed, potholes were filled in, the streets were swept. According to a study recently done by John E. Eck and William Spelman, of the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), the burglary rate dropped by 35 percent after Duke and Haddix began their work.

Stephens, now the executive director of PERF, tells the story of the New Briarfield project as an example of "problem-oriented policing," a concept developed by Professor Herman Goldstein, of the University of Wisconsin Law School, and sometimes also called community-oriented policing. The conventional police strategy is "incident-oriented"—a citizen calls to report an incident, such as a burglary, and the police respond by recording information relevant to the crime and then trying to solve it. Obviously, when a crime occurs, the victim is entitled to a rapid, effective police response. But if responding to incidents is all that the police do, the community problems that cause or explain many of these incidents will never be addressed, and so the incidents will continue and their number will perhaps increase.

This will happen for two reasons. One is that a lot of serious crime is adventitious, not the result of inexorable social forces or personal failings. A rash of burglaries may occur because drug users have found a back alley or an abandoned building in which to hang out. In their spare time, and in order to get money to buy drugs, they steal

from their neighbors. If the back alleys are cleaned up and the abandoned buildings torn down, the drug users will go away. They may even use fewer drugs, because they will have difficulty finding convenient dealers and soft burglary targets. By the same token, a neglected neighborhood may become the turf of a youth gang, whose members commit more crimes together in a group than they would if they were acting alone. If the gang is broken up, former members will still commit some crimes but probably not as many as before.

Most crime in most neighborhoods is local: the offenders live near their victims. Because of this, one should not assume that changing the environmental conditions conducive to crime in one area will displace the crime to other areas. For example, when the New York City police commissioner, Ben Ward, ordered Operation Pressure Point, a crackdown on drug dealing on the Lower East Side, dealing and the criminality associated with it were reduced in that neighborhood and apparently did not immediately reappear in other, contiguous neighborhoods. Suburban customers of the local drug dealers were frightened away by the sight of dozens of police officers on the streets where these customers had once shopped openly for drugs. They could not—at least not right away—find another neighborhood in which to buy drugs as easily as they once had on the Lower East Side. At the same time, the local population included some people who were willing to



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aid and abet the drug dealers. When the police presence made drug dealing unattractive, the dealers could not—again, at least not for the time being—find another neighborhood that provided an equivalent social infrastructure.

The second reason that incident-oriented police work fails to discourage neighborhood crime is that law-abiding citizens who are afraid to go out onto streets filled with graffiti, winos, and loitering youths yield control of these streets to people who are not frightened by these signs of urban decay. Those not frightened turn out to be the same people who created the problem in the first place. Law-abiding citizens, already fearful, see things occurring that make them even more fearful. A vicious cycle begins of fear-induced behavior increasing the sources of that fear.

A Los Angeles police sergeant put it this way: "When people in this district see that a gang has spray-painted its initials on all the stop signs, they decide that the gang, not the people or the police, controls the streets. When they discover that the Department of Transportation needs three months to replace the stop signs, they decide that the city isn't as powerful as the gang. These people want us to help them take back the streets." Painting gang symbols on a stop sign or a storefront is not, by itself, a serious crime. As an incident, it is trivial. But as the symptom of a problem, it is very serious.



IN AN EARLIER ARTICLE IN THE ATLANTIC (MARCH, 1982) we called this the problem of "broken windows": If the first broken window in a building is not repaired, then people who like breaking windows will assume that no one cares about the building and more windows will be broken. Soon the building will have no windows. Likewise, when disorderly behavior—say, rude remarks by loitering youths—is left unchallenged, the signal given is that no one cares. The disorder escalates, possibly to serious crime.

The sort of police work practiced in Newport News is an effort to fix the broken windows. Similar projects are under way in cities all over America. This pattern constitutes the beginnings of the most significant redefinition of police work in the past half century. For example:

- When a gunfight occurred at Garden Village, a low-income housing project near Baltimore, the Baltimore County police responded by investigating both the shooting and the housing project. Chief Cornelius Behan directed the officers in his Community Oriented Police Enforcement (COPE) unit to find out what could be done to

alleviate the fears of the project residents and the gang tensions that led to the shooting. COPE officers worked with members of other agencies to upgrade street lighting in the area, trim shrubbery, install door locks, repair the roads and alleys, and get money to build a playground. With police guidance, the tenants organized. At the same time, high-visibility patrols were started and gang members were questioned. When both a suspect in the shooting and a particularly troublesome parole violator were arrested, gang tensions eased. Crime rates dropped. In bringing about this change, the police dealt with eleven different public agencies.

- When local merchants in a New York City neighborhood complained to the police about homeless persons who created a mess on the streets and whose presence frightened away customers, the officer who responded did not roust the vagrants but instead suggested that the merchants hire them to clean the streets in front of their stores every morning. The merchants agreed, and now the streets are clean all day and the customers find the stores more attractive.

- When people in a Los Angeles neighborhood complained to the police about graffiti on walls and gang symbols on stop signs, officers assigned to the Community Mobilization Project in the Wilshire station did more than just try to catch the gang youths who were wielding the spray cans; they also organized citizens' groups and Boy Scouts to paint over the graffiti as fast as they were put up.

- When residents of a Houston neighborhood became fearful about crime in their area, the police not only redoubled their efforts to solve the burglaries and thefts but also assigned some officers to talk with the citizens in their homes. During a nine-month period the officers visited more than a third of all the dwelling units in the area, introduced themselves, asked about any neighborhood problems, and left their business cards. When Antony Pate and Mary Ann Wycoff, researchers at the Police Foundation, evaluated the project, they found that the people in this area, unlike others living in a similar area where no citizen-contact project occurred, felt that social disorder had decreased and that the neighborhood had become a better place to live. Moreover, and quite unexpectedly, the amount of property crime was noticeably reduced.

These are all examples of community-oriented policing, whose current popularity among police chiefs is as great as the ambiguity of the idea. In a sense, the police have always been community-oriented. Every police officer knows that most crimes don't get solved if victims and witnesses do not cooperate. One way to encourage that cooperation is to cultivate the good will of both victims and witnesses. Similarly, police-citizen tensions, over racial incidents or allegations of brutality or hostility, can often be allayed, and sometimes prevented, if police officers stay in close touch with community groups. Accordingly, most departments have at least one community-relations officer.

who arranges meetings between officers and citizens' groups in church basements and other neutral locales.

But these commonplace features of police work are additions, and rarely alter the traditional work of most patrol officers and detectives: responding to radio calls about specific incidents. The focus on incidents works against a focus on problems. If Detective Tony Duke had focused only on incidents in New Briarfield, he would still be investigating burglaries in that housing project; meanwhile, the community-relations officer would be telling outraged residents that the police were doing all they could and urging people to call in any useful leads. If a tenant at one of those meetings had complained about stopped-up drains, rotting floorboards, and abandoned refrigerators, the community-relations officer would have patiently explained that these were not "police matters."

And of course, they are not. They are the responsibility of the landlord, the tenants themselves, and city agencies other than the police. But landlords are sometimes indifferent, tenants rarely have the resources to make needed repairs, and other city agencies do not have a twenty-four-hour emergency service. Like it or not, the police are about the only city agency that makes house calls around the clock. And like it or not, the public defines broadly what it thinks of as public order, and holds the police responsible for maintaining order.

Community-oriented policing means changing the daily work of the police to include investigating problems as well as incidents. It means defining as a problem whatever a significant body of public opinion regards as a threat to community order. It means working with the good guys, and not just against the bad guys.

The link between incidents and problems can sometimes be measured. The police know from experience what research by Glenn Pierce, in Boston, and Lawrence Sherman, in Minneapolis, has established: fewer than 10 percent of the addresses from which the police receive calls account for more than 60 percent of those calls. Many of the calls involve domestic disputes. If each call is treated as a separate incident with neither a history nor a future, then each dispute will be handled by police officers anxious to pacify the complainants and get back on patrol as quickly as possible. All too often, however, the disputants move beyond shouting insults or throwing crockery at each other. A knife or a gun may be produced, and somebody may die.

A very large proportion of all killings occur in these domestic settings. A study of domestic homicides in Kansas City showed that in eight out of ten cases the police had been called to the incident address at least once before; in half the cases they had been called *five times* or more. The police are familiar with this pattern, and they have learned how best to respond to it. An experiment in Minneapolis, conducted by the Police Foundation, showed that men who were arrested after assaulting their spouses were much less likely to commit new assaults than those who were merely pacified or asked to leave the house for a few

hours. Research is now under way in other cities to test this finding. Arrest may prove always to be the best disposition, or we may learn that some kind of intervention by a social agency also helps. What is indisputable is that a domestic fight—like many other events to which the police respond—is less an "incident" than a problem likely to have serious, long-term consequences.

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Authority over at least some patrol officers must be decentralized, so that they have a good deal of freedom to manage their time (including their paid overtime). This implies freeing them at least partly from the tyranny of the radio call. It means giving them a broad range of responsibilities: to find and understand the problems that create disorder and crime, and to deal with other public and private agencies that can help cope with these problems. It

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In short, police management is driven more by the constraints on the job than by the goals of the job. You cannot cope with those constraints without understanding them. This may be why some of the biggest changes toward community-oriented policing have occurred in cities where a new chief has come in from the outside with a mandate to shake up a moribund department. Lee Brown brought a community orientation to the Houston Police Department under precisely those circumstances—the reputation of the department was so bad that almost any change would have been regarded as an improvement.

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No matter where we stood they protected us
with perspective. People call them gentle mountains
but you can die in there; they're thick
with creeper and laurel. Like voodoo,
I drew pictures with a sparkler. A curved line
arced across the night. Rooted in its slope,
one laurel tree big as the mountain holding it.

You can hear the train in the rails.
They're round, not flat, as you'd expect,
and slick. We'd walk the sound, one step, two,
slip, on purpose, in the ballast, hopscotch
and waltz on the ties, watching the big round eye
enter the curve and grow like God out of the purple,
the tracks turning mean, molten silver blazing
dead at us. We'd hula. Tango. And the first
white plume would shoot up screaming long, lonely,
vain as Mamma shooing starlings from her latticed pews.

Sing Mickey Mouse, the second scream rising long, again,
up and up. Stick our right hip out, the third
wailing. Give it a hot-cha wiggle, the fourth
surrounding us. And bidding each other fond adieux,
we'd count to three, turn our backs, flash it a moon,
and materialize, fantastic, run over with light,
the train shrieking to pieces, scared, meaning it,
short, short, short, short, pushing a noise
bigger than the valley. It sent us flying,
flattened, light as ideas, back on the platform,
the Y6B Mallet compound rolling through
southbound, steamborne, out of Roanoke.

It wasn't to make the train jump the track
but to hold the breath-edged piece of copper
grown hot with dying, thin with birth,
wiped smooth of origin and homilies.
To hold such power. As big as the eye
of the train, as big as the moon burning
like the sun. All the perspective
curved and gone.

—Mary Stewart Hammond

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

ready running a pretty good department? Start with corruption: For decades police executives and reformers have believed that in order to prevent corruption, you have to centralize control over personnel and discourage intimacy between police officers and citizens. Maybe. But the price one pays for this is very high. For example, many neighborhoods are being destroyed by drug dealers, who hang out on every street corner. The best way to sweep them off the streets is to have patrol officers arrest them for selling drugs and intimidate their customers by parking police cars right next to suspected drug outlets. But some police chiefs forbid their patrol officers to work drug cases, for fear they will be corrupted. When the citizens in these cities see police cars drive past scenes of open drug dealing, they assume the police have been paid off. Efforts to prevent corruption have produced the appearance of corruption.

Police Commissioner Ben Ward, in New York, decided that the price of this kind of anti-corruption strategy was too high. His Operation Pressure Point put scores of police officers on the streets to break up the drug-dealing bazaar. Police corruption is no laughing matter, especially in New York, but some chiefs now believe that it will have to be fought in ways that do not require police officers to avoid contact with people.

Consider the problem of getting police resources and managing political pressures: resources can be justified with statistics, but statistics often become ends in themselves. One police captain we interviewed said that his department was preoccupied with "stacking widgets and counting beans." He asked his superior for permission to take officers out of radio cars and have them work on community problems. The superior agreed but warned that he would be watching to see what happened to "the stats." In the short run the stats—for example, calls answered, average response time—were likely to get worse, but if community problems were solved, they would get better as citizens had fewer incidents to report. The captain worried, however, that he would not be given enough time to achieve this and that the bean counters would cut off his program.

A better way to justify getting resources from the city is to stimulate popular demand for resources devoted to problem-solving. Properly handled, community-oriented policing does generate support for the department. When Newark police officers, under orders from Hubert Williams, then the police director, began stopping city buses and boarding them to enforce city ordinances against smoking, drinking, gambling, and playing loud music, the bus patrons often applauded. When Los Angeles police officers supervised the hauling away of abandoned cars, onlookers applauded. Later, when some of the officers had their time available for problem-solving work cut back, several hundred citizens attended a meeting to complain.

In Flint, Michigan, patrol officers were taken out of their cars and assigned to foot beats. Robert Trojanowicz,

a professor at Michigan State University, analyzed the results and found big increases in citizen satisfaction and officer morale, and even a significant drop in crime (an earlier foot-patrol project in Newark had produced equivalent reductions in fear but no reductions in crime). Citizen support was not confined to statements made to pollsters, however. Voters in referenda twice approved tax increases to maintain the foot-patrol system, the second time by a two-to-one margin. New Briarfield tenants unquestionably found satisfaction in the role the police played in getting temporary improvements made on their housing project and getting a commitment for its ultimate replacement. Indeed, when a department experiments with a community-oriented project in one precinct, people in other precincts usually want one too.



POLITICIANS, LIKE POLICE CHIEFS, HEAR THESE VIEWS and respond. But they hear other views as well. One widespread political mandate is to keep the tax rate down. Many police departments are already stretched thin by sharp reductions in spending that occurred in the lean years of the 1970s. Putting one additional patrol car on the streets around the clock can cost a quarter of a million dollars or more a year.

Change may seem easier when resources are abundant. Ben Ward could start Operation Pressure Point because he had at his disposal a large number of new officers who could be thrown into a crackdown on street-level drug dealing. Things look a bit different in Los Angeles, where no big increases in personnel are on the horizon. As a result, only eight officers are assigned to the problem-solving Community Mobilization Project in the Wilshire district—an economically and ethnically diverse area of nearly 300,000 residents.

But change does not necessarily require more resources, and the availability of new resources is no guarantee that change will be attempted. One temptation is to try to sell the public on the need for more policemen and decide later how to use them. Usually when that script is followed, either the public turns down the spending increase or the extra personnel are dumped into what one LAPD captain calls the "black hole" of existing commitments, leaving no trace and producing no effects.

What may have an effect is how the police are deployed and managed. An experiment jointly conducted by the Washington, D.C., Police Department and the Police Foundation showed that if a few experienced officers con-

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concentrate on known repeat offenders, the number of serious offenders taken off the streets grows substantially. The Flint and Newark experiences suggest that foot patrols in certain kinds of communities (but not all) can reduce fear. In Houston problem-oriented tactics seem clearly to have heightened a sense of citizen security.

The problem of interagency cooperation may, in the long run, be the most difficult of all. The police can bring problems to the attention of other city agencies, but the system is not always organized to respond. In his book *Neighborhood Services*, John Mudd calls it the "rat problem": "If a rat is found in an apartment, it is a housing inspection responsibility; if it runs into a restaurant, the health department has jurisdiction; if it goes outside and dies in an alley, public works takes over." A police officer who takes public complaints about rats seriously will go crazy trying to figure out what agency in the city has responsibility for rat control and then inducing it to kill the rats.

Matters are almost as bad if the public is complaining about abandoned houses or school-age children who are not in school. The housing department may prefer to concentrate on enforcing the housing code rather than go through the costly and time-consuming process of getting an abandoned house torn down. The school department may have expelled the truant children for making life miserable for the teachers and the other students; the last thing it wants is for the police to tell the school to take the kids back.

All city and county agencies have their own priorities and face their own pressures. Forcing them to cooperate by knocking heads together at the top rarely works; what department heads promise the mayor they will do may bear little relationship to what their rank-and-file employees actually do. From his experiences in New York City government Mudd discovered that if you want agencies to cooperate in solving neighborhood problems, you have to get the neighborhood-level supervisors from each agency together in a "district cabinet" that meets regularly and addresses common concerns. This is not an easy task (for one thing, police district lines often do not match the district boundaries of the school, housing, traffic, and public-works departments), but where it has been tried it has made solving the "rat problem" a lot easier. For example, Mudd reports, such interagency issues as park safety and refuse-laden vacant lots got handled more effectively when the field supervisors met to talk about them than when memos went up the chain of command of one agency and then down the chain of command of another.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ALONG THE LINES OF Neighborhood Watch programs may help reduce crime, but we cannot be certain. In particular, we do not know what kinds of communities are most likely to benefit from such programs. A Police Foundation study in Minneapolis found that getting effective community orga-

nizations started in the most troubled neighborhoods was very difficult. The costs and benefits of having patrol officers and sergeants influence the delivery of services from other city agencies has never been fully assessed. No way of wresting control of a neighborhood from a street gang has yet been proved effective.

And even if these questions are answered, a police department may still have difficulty accommodating two very different working cultures: the patrol officers and detectives who handle major crimes (murders, rapes, and robberies) and the cops who work on community problems and the seemingly minor incidents they generate. In every department we visited, some of the incident-oriented officers spoke disparagingly of the problem-oriented officers as "social workers," and some of the latter responded by calling the former "ghetto blasters." If a community-service officer seems to get too close to the community, he or she may be accused of "going native." The tension between the two cultures is heightened by the fact that in many departments becoming a detective is regarded as a major promotion, and detectives are often selected from among those officers who have the best record in making major arrests—in other words, from the ranks of the incident-oriented. But this pattern need not be permanent. Promotion tracks can be changed so that a patrol officer, especially one working on community problems, is no longer regarded as somebody who "hasn't made detective." Moreover, some police executives now believe that splitting the patrol force into two units—one oriented to incidents, the other to problems—is unwise. They are searching for ways to give all patrol officers the time and resources for problem-solving activities.

Because of the gaps in our knowledge about both the results and the difficulties of community-oriented policing, no chief should be urged to accept, uncritically, the community-oriented model. But the traditional model of police professionalism—devoting resources to quick radio-car response to calls about specific crime incidents—makes little sense at a time when the principal threats to public order and safety come from *collective*, not individual, sources, and from *problems*, not incidents: from well-organized gangs and drug traffickers, from uncared-for legions of the homeless, from boisterous teenagers taking advantage of their newfound freedom and affluence in congested urban settings.

Even if community-oriented policing does not produce the dramatic gains that some of its more ardent advocates expect, it has indisputably produced one that the officers who have been involved in it immediately acknowledge: it has changed their perceptions of the community. Officer Robin Kirk, of the Houston Police Department, had to be talked into becoming part of a neighborhood fear-reduction project. Once in it, he was converted. In his words, "Traditionally, police officers after about three years get to thinking that everybody's a loser. That's the only people you're dealing with. In community policing you're dealing with the good citizens, helping them solve problems." □

The Class of '43

Remarks of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan

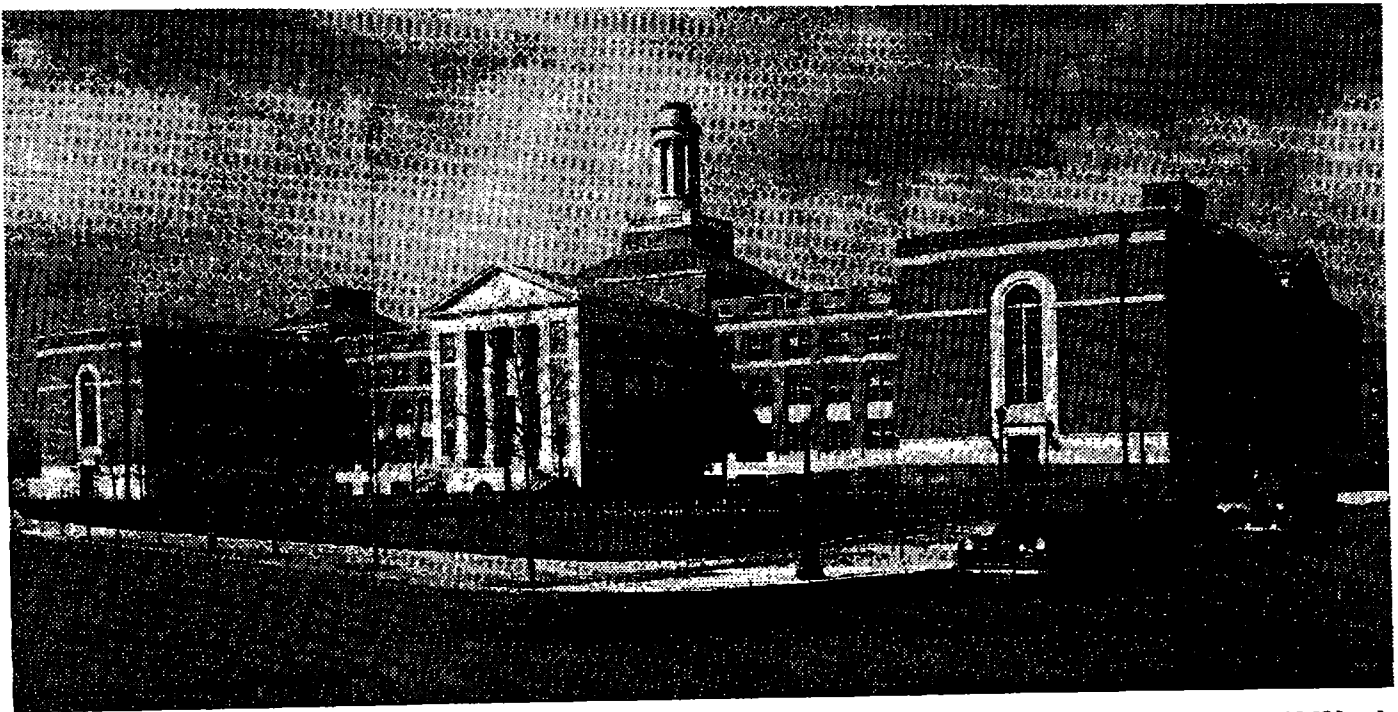
Association for a Better New York

Sheraton New York Hotel

April 15, 1993

It will be 50 years ago this June that I graduated from Benjamin Franklin High School in East Harlem, in the company of State Senator Joe Galiber, and any number of prominent New Yorkers. I find myself at this half-century mark asking: "How much more difficult a city we have now." And wondering where so much went wrong. We were a city of the same size, about 150,000 more persons then than now. The depression lingered. Still, the city was wonderfully able to respond to opportunity when it came.

We had had half a million people on relief in 1935. By 1943, this was down to 73,000 persons, of which the city reported only 93 were employable. (We have one million on welfare today, more than attend public schools in the city.) Mayor LaGuardia got FDR to get the Brooklyn Navy Yard going. In an instant we were building Iowa class battleships and thousands of people were at work. In time, the city began that ascent to the incomparable heights that followed just after the war. We were a city that had a social structure, an infrastructure, the best subway system in the world, the finest housing stock in the world, the best urban school system in the world, and in many ways the best behaved citizens.



The new Benjamin Franklin High School, opened in February 1942. The principal was Dr. Leonard Covello. In our 1963 book *Beyond the Melting Pot*, Nathan Glazer and I referred to Dr. Covello as "one of the great educators of New York City." Dr. Covello came to the U.S. at the age of 9 from the Southern Italian town of Avigliano. He received a Pulitzer Scholarship to attend Columbia University and began teaching Spanish and French in 1913. He successfully lobbied the Board of Education to add Italian to the high school curriculum in 1922, and later convinced Mayor LaGuardia that East Harlem needed an academic high school rather than a proposed industrial school. Dr. Covello served as principal until 1956 when he returned to Italy, where he worked with Danilo Dolci, the Italian social reformer. He died in 1982.

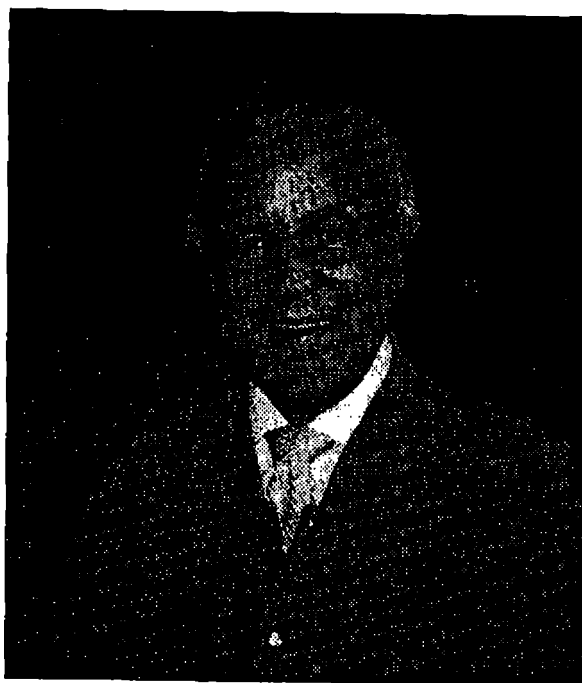
Over on the West Side, we made a thing about living in Hell's Kitchen and belonging to a kind of street warrior caste, but in truth the neighborhood was a peaceable kingdom. Monsignor McCaffrey maintained said peace. In 1943, there were exactly 44 homicides by gunshot in all of the City of New York. Forty-four. Last year there were 1,499.

Mayor LaGuardia was concerned about the condition of youth. He visited us. I interviewed him for the school paper. His message was simple: "You must take your lessons seriously, but never forget how to have fun." I suppose he told that to every school newspaper reporter he ever saw, but he also told it to me. Mind, he didn't mean too much fun. On January 4, 1943, in one of his weekly radio talks, he told of a police officer, a patrolman he described as "a fellow-worker of mine," who had called in from the Yorkville section of the city and told him about young people who were hanging out in "cider stubes," drinking soft drinks. The Mayor thought that we had had enough of that. He directed that they be closed down.

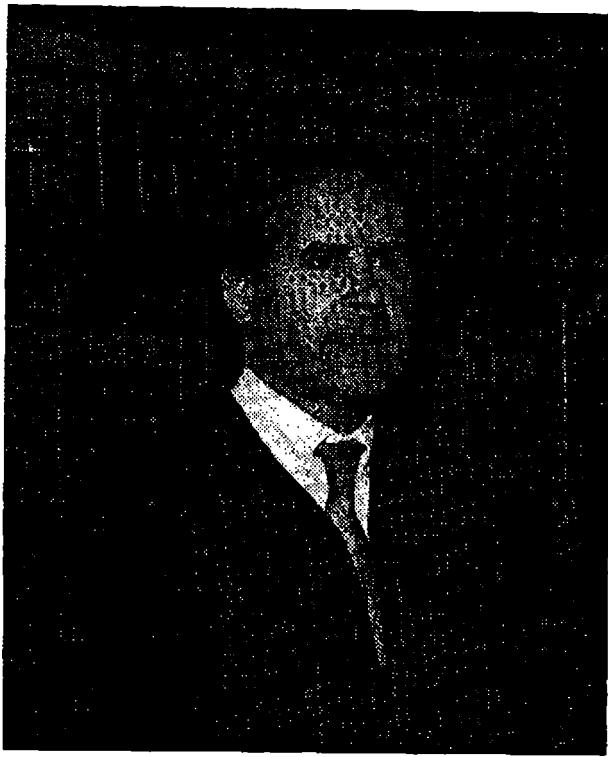
There were problems. The number of abandoned children seemed to have a sharp increase. A headline in *The New York Times* reported: "Abandoned Babies Increasing In City -- 74 Brought Into Foundling Hospital This Year." Seventy-four. (Visit the maternity ward of any city hospital today. See the boarder babies. Not just abandoned, but often deathly ill.)

The decline in our social institutions is really without equivalent. Most importantly, and absolutely essential is the decline of family. The small platoons without which a society this large just cannot function. In 1943, the illegitimacy rate in New York City was 3 percent. Last year, it was 45 percent. School Chancellor Joseph Fernandez estimates that two school children in three come from single parent households. (As did I in my days at Franklin. It's not fatal, but it's no help.) There are parts of the city today which are overwhelmed by the social chaos that comes in the aftermath of the inability to socialize young males. It grows worse by the year.

I have been having a correspondence with Justice Edwin Torres, who is a Justice of the Supreme Court in New York State, Twelfth Judicial District. He was raised in the *barrio*, the neighborhood where Benjamin Franklin was first located, on 108th Street. We have reason to believe we might have crossed paths in a pool room called *Los Muchachos*. I was struck by his account of the court system. Here are his words: "The slaughter of the innocent marches unabated: subway riders, *bodega* owners, cab drivers, babies; in laundromats, in cash machines, on elevators, in hallways." He decries a civic acceptance of this, of persons in his courtroom, victims who will say something to the effect that: "I suppose I shouldn't have been out at that hour of the night."



State Senator Joseph L. Galiber of the Bronx: Benjamin Franklin High School Class of 1943, C.C.N.Y. 1950. A friend of 53 years! First elected to the Senate in 1968, he is now the Assistant Minority Leader for Policy and Administration.



State Supreme Court Justice Edwin Torres: Stuyvesant High School Class of 1948, C.C.N.Y. 1955. "A society that loses its sense of outrage is doomed to extinction."

Here is a sentence from a letter he sent me a while back: "This numbness, this near narcoleptic state can diminish the human condition to the level of combat infantrymen, who, in protracted campaigns, can eat their battlefield rations seated on the bodies of the fallen, friend and foe alike. A society that loses its sense of outrage is doomed to extinction." That letter is from a Supreme Court Justice. "A society that loses its sense of outrage...."

Last winter in *The American Scholar*, I published an article entitled "Defining Deviancy Down." It seems there is always a certain amount of crime in a society. You need to know what is deviant in order to know what is not. But when you get too much, you can start to say that that's not really so bad. Pretty soon, you are getting used to behavior that's not good for you at all.

This subject came to me the morning after the Democratic National Convention. We were driving upstate; Liz was driving and I was reading. We were up around Morningside Heights and I'm at about Page B14 of *The Times*. We learn there has been another

drug execution. This was not noteworthy in itself -- there's an execution every night. But in this case -- the male and the female and the teenager laid down, shot in the back of the head -- the woman had a baby that she had shoved under a bed. And when in the course of events the stink of human flesh began to make its way into the hallway and the police arrived they found the little child dehydrated but alive. A new twist.

I settled down to work on *The American Scholar* article. I remembered the St. Valentine's Day Massacre. I have a World Book Encyclopedia, a wonderful thing. I looked it up. The St. Valentine's Day Massacre in 1929 in Chicago has two entries in the World Book Encyclopedia. Two. Along with the Battle of Thermopylae and things like that. The country was outraged. Al Capone had sent four of his men dressed as police. They rubbed out seven of Bugs Moran's men. All adults; they knew what they were up to and in for. But it shocked the country. We changed the Constitution. We said this was not acceptable behavior.

This last St. Valentine's Day in our city we too had a St. Valentine's Day Massacre. Six persons were laid down on a floor and shot in the back of the head. But that was only six, not enough to meet the quota, as if we were in a competition. And so the following day, a seventh, a possible witness, was murdered in the Bronx County Courthouse. That is civilization slipping away. George Will recently observed (not, of course, just about New York): "We are experiencing in America today something without precedent in urban history: broad-scale social regression in the midst of rising prosperity."

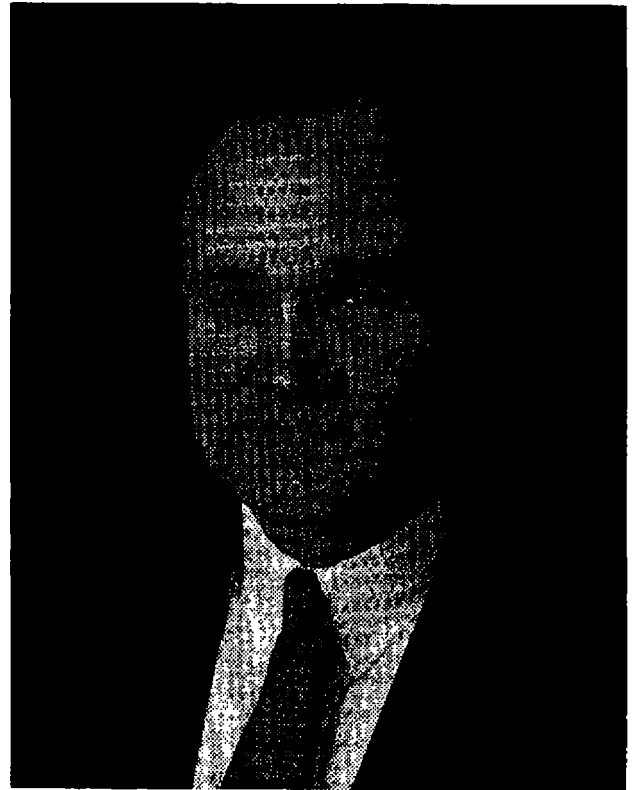
Ours was a much poorer city 50 years ago, but a much more stable one. One that prepared you for the uses of prosperity when it came. I learned about Pearl Harbor from a man whose shoes I was shining on Central Park West, next to the Planetarium. On Sundays, you shined uptown, around the Museum of Natural History where people were. Saturdays were downtown. Five years later, I was an officer in the United States Navy. Benjamin Franklin High School did that for me. (With an assist from a year in City College.) They thought it was routine. And it was. Joe Galiber went on to become what he is today. And others. Is that all behind us?

We had the finest urban housing stock in the world. Look what has happened. We could do things in no time at all. We could build the George Washington Bridge in four years and one month. And think far enough ahead to make it structurally capable of carrying a second deck when the traffic grew, with a capacity for yet a third. Things happened quickly, easily.

One day Mayor LaGuardia was flying in from Chicago, where the Mayors' headquarters were, and expecting to land at Floyd Bennett Field. It was fogged in so he landed in Newark. He took out his ticket and said: "Mine says Floyd Bennett Field; what am I doing in a place called New Jersey?" Whereupon what we now know as LaGuardia Airport was built. In two years and one month. Today we are the only major city in the world that does not have a rail link to its major airport. Just can't seem to get it done.

But we can still steady ourselves. I was hugely encouraged by an address Police Commissioner Kelly gave to the Second Annual FBI National Symposium on Addressing Violent Crime through Community Involvement. He called it: "Toward A New Intolerance." An intolerance of violence, an intolerance to the acceptance of violence. An intolerance of what Justice Torres describes as a "narcoleptic state" of acceptance. I'll just quote Commissioner Kelly and this will be the end of my task:

There is an expectation of crime in our lives. We are in danger of becoming captive to that expectation, and to the new tolerance to criminal behavior, not only in regard to violent crime. A number of years ago there began to appear in the windows of automobiles parked on the streets of American cities signs which read: "No Radio." Rather than express outrage, or even annoyance at the possibility of a car break-in, people tried to communicate with the potential thief in conciliatory terms. The translation of "No Radio" is: "Please break into someone else's car, there's nothing in mine." These "No Radio" signs are flags of urban surrender. They are hand-written capitulations. Instead of "No Radio," we need new signs that say "No Surrender."



NYC Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly: "We need to 'do something' to develop a new intolerance to crime and violence."

Rm 222

Defining Deviancy Down

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN

IN ONE OF THE FOUNDING TEXTS OF SOCIOLOGY, *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895), Emile Durkheim set it down that "crime is normal." "It is," he wrote, "completely impossible for any society entirely free of it to exist." By defining what is deviant, we are enabled to know what is not, and hence to live by shared standards. This aperçu appears in the chapter entitled "Rules for the Distinction of the Normal from the Pathological." Durkheim writes.

From this viewpoint the fundamental facts of criminology appear to us in an entirely new light. . . . [T]he criminal no longer appears as an utterly unsociable creature, a sort of parasitic element, a foreign, insusceptible body introduced into the bosom of society. He plays a normal role in social life. For its part, crime must no longer be conceived of as an evil which cannot be circumscribed closely enough. Far from there being cause for congratulation when it drops too noticeably below the normal level, this apparent progress assuredly coincides with and is linked to some social disturbance.

Durkheim suggests, for example, that "in times of scarcity" crimes of assault drop off. He does not imply that we ought to approve of crime—"[p]ain has likewise nothing desirable about it"—but we need to understand its function. He saw religion, in the sociologist Randall Collins's terms, as "fundamentally a set of ceremonial actions, assembling the group, heightening its emotions, and focusing its members on symbols of their common belongingness." In this context "a punishment ceremony creates social solidarity."

The matter was pretty much left at that until seventy years later when, in 1965, Kai T. Erikson published *Wayward Puritans*, a study of "crime rates" in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The plan behind the book, as Erikson put it, was "to test [Durkheim's] notion that the number of deviant offenders a community can afford to recognize is likely to remain stable over time." The notion proved out very well indeed.

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Despite occasional crime waves, as when itinerant Quakers refused to take off their hats in the presence of magistrates, the amount of deviance in this corner of seventeenth-century New England fitted nicely with the supply of stocks and whipping posts. Erikson remarks:

It is one of the arguments of the . . . study that the amount of deviation a community encounters is apt to remain fairly constant over time. To start at the beginning, it is a simple logistic fact that the number of deviancies which come to a community's attention are limited by the kinds of equipment it uses to detect and handle them, and to that extent the rate of deviation found in a community is at least in part a function of the size and complexity of its social control apparatus. A community's capacity for handling deviance, let us say, can be roughly estimated by counting its prison cells and hospital beds, its policemen and psychiatrists, its courts and clinics. Most communities, it would seem, operate with the expectation that a relatively constant number of control agents is necessary to cope with a relatively constant number of offenders. The amount of men, money, and material assigned by society to "do something" about deviant behavior does not vary appreciably over time, and the implicit logic which governs the community's efforts to man a police force or maintain suitable facilities for the mentally ill seems to be that there is a fairly stable quota of trouble which should be anticipated.

In this sense, the agencies of control often seem to define their job as that of keeping deviance within bounds rather than that of obliterating it altogether. Many judges, for example, assume that severe punishments are a greater deterrent to crime than moderate ones, and so it is important to note that many of them are apt to impose harder penalties when crime seems to be on the increase and more lenient ones when it does not, almost as if the power of the bench were being used to keep the crime rate from getting out of hand.

Erikson was taking issue with what he described as "a dominant strain in sociological thinking" that took for granted that a well-structured society "is somehow designed to prevent deviant behavior from occurring." In both authors, Durkheim and Erikson, there is an undertone that suggests that, with deviancy, as with most social goods, there is the continuing problem of demand exceeding supply. Durkheim invites us to

imagine a society of saints, a perfect cloister of exemplary individuals. Crimes, properly so called, will there be unknown; but faults which appear venial to the layman will create there the same scandal that the ordinary offense does in ordinary consciousness. If, then, this society has the power to judge and punish, it will define these acts as criminal and will treat them as such.

Recall Durkheim's comment that there need be no cause for congratulations should the amount of crime drop "too noticeably below the normal level." It would not appear that Durkheim anywhere contem-

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plates the possibility of too much crime. Clearly his theory would have required him to deplore such a development, but the possibility seems never to have occurred to him.

Erikson, writing much later in the twentieth century, contemplates both possibilities. "Deviant persons can be said to supply needed services to society." There is no doubt a tendency for the supply of any needed thing to run short. But he is consistent. There can, he believes, be too much of a good thing. Hence "the number of deviant offenders a community can afford to recognize is likely to remain stable over time." [My emphasis]

Social scientists are said to be on the lookout for poor fellows getting a bum rap. But here is a theory that clearly implies that there are circumstances in which society will choose not to notice behavior that would be otherwise controlled, or disapproved, or even punished.

It appears to me that this is in fact what we in the United States have been doing of late. I proffer the thesis that, over the past generation, since the time Erikson wrote, the amount of deviant behavior in American society has increased beyond the levels the community can "afford to recognize" and that, accordingly, we have been re-defining deviancy so as to exempt much conduct previously stigmatized, and also quietly raising the "normal" level in categories where behavior is now abnormal by any earlier standard. This redefining has evoked fierce resistance from defenders of "old" standards, and accounts for much of the present "cultural war" such as proclaimed by many at the 1992 Republican National Convention.

Let me, then, offer three categories of redefinition in these regards: the *altruistic*, the *opportunistic*, and the *normalizing*.

The first category, the *altruistic*, may be illustrated by the deinstitutionalization movement within the mental health profession that appeared in the 1950s. The second category, the *opportunistic*, is seen in the interest group rewards derived from the acceptance of "alternative" family structures. The third category, the *normalizing*, is to be observed in the growing acceptance of unprecedented levels of violent crime.

II

It happens that I was present at the beginning of the deinstitutionalization movement. Early in 1955 Averell Harriman, then the new governor of New York, met with his new commissioner of mental hygiene, Dr. Paul Hoch, who described the development, at one of the state mental hospitals, of a tranquilizer derived from rauwolfia. The medication had been clinically tested and appeared to be an effective treatment for many severely psychotic patients, thus increasing the

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percentage of patients discharged. Dr. Hoch recommended that it be used systemwide; Harriman found the money. That same year Congress created a Joint Commission on Mental Health and Illness whose mission was to formulate "comprehensive and realistic recommendations" in this area, which was then a matter of considerable public concern. Year after year, the population of mental institutions grew. Year after year, new facilities had to be built. Never mind the complexities: population growth and such like matters. There was a general unease. Durkheim's constant continued to be exceeded. (In *Spanning the Century: The Life of W. Averell Harriman*, Rudy Abramson writes: "New York's mental hospitals in 1955 were overflowing warehouses, and new patients were being admitted faster than space could be found for them. When he was inaugurated, 94,000 New Yorkers were confined to state hospitals. Admissions were running at more than 2,500 a year and rising, making the Department of Mental Hygiene the fastest-growing, most-expensive, most-hopeless department of state government.")

The discovery of tranquilizers was adventitious. Physicians were seeking cures for disorders that were just beginning to be understood. Even a limited success made it possible to believe that the incidence of this particular range of disorders, which had seemingly required persons to be confined against their will or even awareness, could be greatly reduced. The Congressional Commission submitted its report in 1961; it proposed a nationwide program of deinstitutionalization.

Late in 1961, President Kennedy appointed an interagency committee to prepare legislative recommendations based upon the report. I represented Secretary of Labor Arthur J. Goldberg on this committee and drafted its final submission. This included the recommendation of the National Institute of Mental Health that 2,000 community mental health centers (one per 100,000 of population) be built by 1980. A buoyant Presidential Message to Congress followed early in 1963. "If we apply our medical knowledge and social insights fully," President Kennedy pronounced, "all but a small portion of the mentally ill can eventually achieve a wholesome and a constructive social adjustment." A "concerted national attack on mental disorders [was] now possible and practical." The President signed the Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act on October 31, 1963, his last public bill-signing ceremony. He gave me a pen.

The mental hospitals emptied out. At the time Governor Harriman met with Dr. Hoch in 1955, there were 93,314 adult residents of mental institutions maintained by New York State. As of August 1992, there were 11,363. This occurred across the nation. However, the number of community mental health centers never came near the goal of the 2,000 proposed community centers. Only some 482 received federal construc-

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tion funds between 1963 and 1980. The next year, 1981, the program was folded into the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse block grant and disappeared from view. Even when centers were built, the results were hardly as hoped for. David F. Musto of Yale writes that the planners had bet on improving national mental health "by improving the quality of general community life through expert knowledge, not merely by more effective treatment of the already ill." There was no such knowledge.

However, worse luck, the belief that there *was* such knowledge took hold within sectors of the profession that saw institutionalization as an unacceptable mode of social control. These activists subscribed to a re-defining mode of their own. Mental patients were said to have been "labeled," and were not to be drugged. Musto says of the battles that followed that they were "so intense and dramatic precisely because both sides shared the fantasy of an omnipotent and omniscient mental health technology which could thoroughly reform society; the prize seemed eminently worth fighting for."

But even as the federal government turned to other matters, the mental institutions continued to release inmates. Professor Fred Siegel of Cooper Union observes: "In the great wave of moral deregulation that began in the mid-1960s, the poor and the insane were freed from the fetters of middle-class mores." They might henceforth sleep in doorways as often as they chose. The problem of the homeless appeared, characteristically defined as persons who lacked "affordable housing."

The *altruistic* mode of redefinition is just that. There is no reason to believe that there was any real increase in mental illness at the time deinstitutionalization began. Yet there was such a perception, and this enabled good people to try to do good, however unavailing in the end.

III

Our second, or *opportunistic* mode of re-definition, reveals at most a nominal intent to do good. The true object is to do well, a long-established motivation among mortals. In this pattern, a growth in deviancy makes possible a transfer of resources, including prestige, to those who control the deviant population. This control would be jeopardized if any serious effort were made to reduce the deviancy in question. This leads to assorted strategies for re-defining the behavior in question as not all that deviant, really.

In the years from 1963 to 1965, the Policy Planning Staff of the U.S. Department of Labor picked up the first tremors of what Samuel H. Preston, in the 1984 Presidential Address to the Population Association of America, would call "the earthquake that shuddered through the

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American family in the past twenty years." *The New York Times* recently provided a succinct accounting of Preston's point:

Thirty years ago, 1 in every 40 white children was born to an unmarried mother; today it is 1 in 5, according to Federal data. Among blacks, 2 of 3 children are born to an unmarried mother; 30 years ago the figure was 1 in 5.

In 1991, Paul Offner and I published longitudinal data showing that, of children born in the years 1967-69, some 22.1 percent were dependent on welfare—that is to say, Aid to Families with Dependent Children—before reaching age 18. This broke down as 15.7 percent for white children, 72.3 percent for black children. Projections for children born in 1980 gave rates of 22.2 percent and 82.9 percent respectively. A year later, a *New York Times* series on welfare and poverty called this a "startling finding . . . a symptom of vast social calamity."

And yet there is little evidence that these facts are regarded as a calamity in municipal government. To the contrary, there is general acceptance of the situation as normal. Political candidates raise the subject, often to the point of dwelling on it. But while there is a good deal of demand for symbolic change, there is none of the marshaling of resources that is associated with significant social action. Nor is there any lack of evidence that there is a serious social problem here.

Richard T. Gill writes of "an accumulation of data showing that intact biological parent families offer children very large advantages compared to any other family or non-family structure one can imagine." Correspondingly, the disadvantages associated with single-parent families spill over into other areas of social policy that now attract great public concern. Leroy L. Schwartz, M.D., and Mark W. Stanton argue that the real quest regarding a government-run health system such as that of Canada or Germany is whether it would work "in a country that has social problems that countries like Canada and Germany don't share to the same extent." Health problems reflect ways of living. The way of life associated with "such social pathologies as the breakdown of the family structure" lead to medical pathologies. Schwartz and Stanton conclude: "The United States is paying dearly for its social and behavioral problems," for they have now become medical problems as well.

To cite another example, there is at present no more vexing problem of social policy in the United States than that posed by education. A generation of ever-more ambitious statutes and reforms have produced weak responses at best and a fair amount of what could more simply be called dishonesty. ("Everyone knows that Head Start works." By the year 2000, American students will "be first in the world in science and mathematics.") None of this should surprise us. The 1986 report *Equal-*

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ity of Educational Opportunity by James S. Coleman and his associates established that the family background of students played a much stronger role in student achievement relative to variations in the ten (and still standard) measures of school quality.

In a 1992 study entitled *America's Smallest School: The Family*, Paul Barton came up with the elegant and persuasive concept of the parent-pupil ratio as a measure of school quality. Barton, who was on the policy planning staff in the Department of Labor in 1965, noted the great increase in the proportion of children living in single-parent families since then. He further noted that the proportion "varies widely among the states" and is related to "variation in achievement" among them. The correlation between the percentage of eighth graders living in two-parent families and average mathematics proficiency is a solid .74. North Dakota, highest on the math test, is second highest on the family compositions scale—that is, it is second in the percentage of kids coming from two-parent homes. The District of Columbia, lowest on the family scale, is second lowest in the test score.

A few months before Barton's study appeared, I published an article showing that the correlation between eighth-grade math scores and distance of state capitals from the Canadian border was .522, a respectable showing. By contrast, the correlation with per pupil expenditure was a derisory .203. I offered the policy proposal that states wishing to improve their schools should move closer to Canada. This would be difficult, of course, but so would it be to change the parent-pupil ratio. Indeed, the 1990 Census found that for the District of Columbia, apart from Ward 3 west of Rock Creek Park, the percentage of children living in single-parent families in the seven remaining wards ranged from a low of 63.6 percent to a high of 75.7. This being a one-time measurement, over time the proportions become asymptotic. And this in the nation's capital. No demand for change comes from that community—or as near to no demand as makes no matter. *For there is good money to be made out of bad schools.* This is a statement that will no doubt please many a hard heart, and displease many genuinely concerned to bring about change. To the latter, a group in which I would like to include myself, I would only say that we are obliged to ask why things do not change.

For a period there was some speculation that, if family structure got bad enough, this mode of deviancy would have less punishing effects on children. In 1991 Deborah A. Dawson, of the National Institutes of Health, examined the thesis that "the psychological effects of divorce and single parenthood on children were strongly influenced by a sense of shame in being 'different' from the norm." If this were so, the effect should have fallen off in the 1980s, when being from a single-parent home became much more common. It did not. "The problems associated

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with task overload among single parents are more constant in nature," Dawson wrote, adding that since the adverse effects had not diminished, they were "not based on stigmatization but rather on inherent problems in alternative family structures"—*alternative* here meaning other than two-parent families. We should take note of such candor. Writing in the *Journal of Marriage and the Family* in 1989, Sam McLanahan and Karen Booth noted: "Whereas a decade ago the prevailing view was that single motherhood had no harmful effects on children, recent research is less optimistic."

The year 1990 saw more of this lesson. In a paper prepared for the Progressive Policy Institute, Elaine Ciulla Kamarck and William A. Galston wrote that "if the economic effects of family breakdown are clear, the psychological effects are just now coming into focus." They cite Karl Zinsmeister:

There is a mountain of scientific evidence showing that when families disintegrate children often end up with intellectual, physical, and emotional scars that persist for life. . . . We talk about the drug crisis, the education crisis, and the problems of teen pregnancy and juvenile crime. But all these ills trace back predominantly to one source: broken families.

As for juvenile crime, they cite Douglas Smith and C. Roger Jarjoura: "Neighborhoods with larger percentages of youth (those aged 12 to 20) and areas with higher percentages of single-parent households also have higher rates of violent crime." They add: "The relationship is so strong that controlling for family configuration erases the relationship between race and crime and between low income and crime. This conclusion shows up time and time again in the literature; poverty is far from the sole determinant of crime." But the large point is avoided. In a 1992 essay "The Expert's Story of Marriage," Barbara Dafoe Whitehead examined "the story of marriage as it is conveyed in today's high school and college textbooks." Nothing amiss in this tale.

It goes like this:

The life course is full of exciting options. The lifestyle options available to individuals seeking a fulfilling personal relationship include living a heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual single lifestyle; living in a commune; having a group marriage; being a single parent; or living together. Marriage is yet another lifestyle choice. However, before choosing marriage, individuals should weigh its costs and benefits against other lifestyle options and should consider what they want to get out of their intimate relationships. Even within marriage, different people want different things. For example, some people marry for companionship, some marry in order to have children, some marry for emotional and financial security. Though marriage can offer a rewarding path to personal growth, it is important to remember that it cannot provide a secure or permanent

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status. Many people will make the decision between marriage and singlehood many times throughout their life.

Divorce represents part of the normal family life cycle. It should not be viewed as either deviant or tragic, as it has been in the past. Rather, it establishes a process for "uncoupling" and thereby serves as the foundation for individual renewal and "new beginnings."

History commences to be rewritten. In 1992, the Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families of the U.S. House of Representatives held a hearing on "Investing in Families: A Historical Perspective." A fact sheet prepared by committee staff began:

"INVESTING IN FAMILIES: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE"

FACT SHEET

HISTORICAL SHIFTS IN FAMILY COMPOSITION CHALLENGING CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

While in modern times the percentage of children living with one parent has increased, more children lived with just one parent in Colonial America.

The fact sheet proceeded to list program on program for which federal funds were allegedly reduced in the 1980s. We then come to a summary.

Between 1970 and 1991, the value of AFDC [Aid to Families with Dependent Children] benefits decreased by 41%. In spite of proven success of Head Start, only 28% of eligible children are being served. As of 1990, more than \$18 billion in child support went uncollected. At the same time, the poverty rate among single-parent families with children under 18 was 44%. Between 1980 and 1990, the rate of growth in the total Federal budget was four times greater than the rate of growth in children's programs.

In other words, benefits paid to mothers and children have gone down steadily, as indeed they have done. But no proposal is made to restore benefits to an earlier level, or even to maintain their value, as is the case with other "indexed" Social Security programs. Instead we go directly to the subject of education spending.

Nothing new. In 1960, President Nixon proposed a guaranteed income, the Family Assistance Plan. This was described as an "income strategy" as against a "services strategy." It may or may not have been a good idea, but it was a clear one, and the resistance of service providers to it was equally clear. In the end it was defeated, to the huzzahs of the advocates of "welfare rights." What is going on here is simply that a large

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increase in what once was seen as deviancy has provided opportunity to a wide spectrum of interest groups that benefit from re-defining the problem as essentially normal and doing little to reduce it.

IV

Our *normalizing* category most directly corresponds to Erikson's proposition that "the number of deviant offenders a community can afford to recognize is likely to remain stable over time." Here we are dealing with the popular psychological notion of "denial." In 1965, having reached the conclusion that there would be a dramatic increase in single-parent families, I reached the further conclusion that this would in turn lead to a dramatic increase in crime. In an article in *America*, I wrote:

From the wild Irish slums of the 19th century Eastern seaboard to the riot-torn suburbs of Los Angeles, there is one unmistakable lesson in American history: a community that allows a large number of young men to grow up in broken families, dominated by women, never acquiring any stable relationship to male authority, never acquiring any set of rational expectations about the future—that community asks for and gets chaos. Crime, violence, unrest, unrestrained lashing out at the whole social structure—that is not only to be expected; it is very near to inevitable. ✓

The inevitable, as we now know, has come to pass, but here again our response is curiously passive. Crime is a more or less continuous subject of political pronouncement, and from time to time it will be at or near the top of opinion polls as a matter of public concern. But it never gets much further than that. In the words spoken from the bench, Judge Edwin Torres of the New York State Supreme Court, Twelfth Judicial District, described how "the slaughter of the innocent marches unabated: subway riders, bodega owners, cab drivers, babies; in laundromats, at cash machines, on elevators, in hallways." In personal communication, he writes: "This numbness, this near narcoleptic state can diminish the human condition to the level of combat infantrymen, who, in protracted campaigns, can eat their battlefield rations seated on the bodies of the fallen, friend and foe alike. A society that loses its sense of outrage is doomed to extinction." There is no expectation that this will change, nor any efficacious public insistence that it do so. The crime level has been *normalized*.

Consider the St. Valentine's Day Massacre. In 1929 in Chicago during Prohibition, four gangsters killed seven gangsters on February 14. The nation was shocked. The event became legend. It merits not one but two entries in the *World Book Encyclopedia*. I leave it to others to

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judge, but it would appear that the society in the 1920s was simply not willing to put up with this degree of deviancy. In the end, the Constitution was amended, and Prohibition, which lay behind so much gangster violence, ended.

In recent years, again in the context of illegal traffic in controlled substances, this form of murder has returned. But it has done so at a level that induces denial. James Q. Wilson comments that Los Angeles has the equivalent of a St. Valentine's Day Massacre every weekend. Even the most ghastly re-enactments of such human slaughter produce only moderate responses. On the morning after the close of the Democratic National Convention in New York City in July, there was such an account in the second section of the *New York Times*. It was not a big story; bottom of the page, but with a headline that got your attention. "3 Slain in Bronx Apartment, but a Baby is Saved." A subhead continued: "A mother's last act was to hide her little girl under the bed." The article described a drug execution; the now-routine blindfolds made from duct tape; a man and a woman and a teenager involved. "Each had been shot once in the head." The police had found them a day later. They also found, under a bed, a three-month-old baby, dehydrated but alive. A lieutenant remarked of the mother, "In her last dying act she protected her baby. She probably knew she was going to die, so she stuffed the baby where she knew it would be safe." But the matter was left there. The police would do their best. But the event passed quickly; forgotten by the next day, it will never make *World Book*.

Nor is it likely that any great heed will be paid to an uncanny reenactment of the Prohibition drama a few months later, also in the Bronx. The *Times* story, page B3, reported:

9 Men Posing as Police**Are Indicted in 3 Murders****Drug Dealers Were Kidnapped for Ransom**

The *Daily News* story, same day, page 17, made it four murders, adding nice details about torture techniques. The gang members posed as federal Drug Enforcement Administration agents, real hadges and all. The victims were drug dealers, whose families were uneasy about calling the police. Ransom seems generally to have been set in the \$650,000 range. Some paid. Some got it in the back of the head. So it goes.

Yet, violent killings, often random, go on unabated. Peaks continue to attract some notice. But these are peaks above "average" levels that thirty years ago would have been thought epidemic.

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LOS ANGELES, AUG. 24. (Reuters) Twenty-two people were killed in Los Angeles over the weekend, the worst period of violence in the city since it was ravaged by riots earlier this year, the police said today.

Twenty-four others were wounded by gunfire or stabbings, including a 19-year old woman in a wheelchair who was shot in the back when she failed to respond to a motorist who asked for directions in south Los Angeles.

["The guy stuck a gun out of the window and just fired at her," said a police spokesman, Lieut. David Rock. The woman was later described as being in stable condition.

Among those who died was an off-duty officer, shot while investigating reports of a prowler in a neighbor's yard, and a Little League baseball coach who had argued with the father of a boy he was coaching.]

The police said at least nine of the deaths were gang-related, including that of a 14-year old girl killed in a fight between rival gangs.

Fifty-one people were killed in three days of rioting that started April 29 after the acquittal of four police officers in the beating of Rodney C. King.

Los Angeles usually has above-average violence during August, but the police were at a loss to explain the sudden rise. On an average weekend in August, 14 fatalities occur.

Not to be outdone, two days later the poor Bronx came up with a near record, as reported in *New York Newsday*:

Armed with 9-mm. pistols, shotguns and M-16 rifles, a group of masked men and women poured out of two vehicles in the South Bronx early yesterday and sprayed a stretch of Longwood Avenue with a fusillade of bullets, injuring 12 people.

A Kai Erikson of the future will surely need to know that the Department of Justice in 1990 found that Americans reported only about 38 percent of all crimes and 48 percent of violent crimes. This, too, can be seen as a means of *normalizing* crime. In much the same way, the vocabulary of crime reporting can be seen to move toward the normal-seeming. A teacher is shot on her way to class. The *Times* subhead reads: "Struck in the Shoulder in the Year's First Shooting Inside a School." First of the season.

It is too early, however, to know how to regard the arrival of the doctors on the scene declaring crime a "public health emergency." The June 10, 1992, issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* was devoted entirely to papers on the subject of violence, principally violence associated with firearms. An editorial in the issue signed by former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and Dr. George D. Lundberg is entitled: "Violence in America: A Public Health Emergency." Their proposition is admirably succinct.

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Regarding violence in our society as purely a sociological matter, or one of law enforcement, has led to unmitigated failure. It is time to test further whether violence can be amenable to medical/public health interventions.

We believe violence in America to be a public health emergency, largely unresponsive to methods thus far used in its control. The solutions are very complex, but possible.

The authors cited the relative success of epidemiologists in gaining some jurisdiction in the area of motor vehicle casualties by re-defining what had been seen as a law enforcement issue into a public health issue. Again, this process began during the Harriman administration in New York in the 1950s. In the 1960s the morbidity and mortality associated with automobile crashes was, it could be argued, a major public health problem; the public health strategy, it could also be argued, brought the problem under a measure of control. Not in "the 1970s and 1980s," as the *Journal of the American Medical Association* would have us think: the federal legislation involved was signed in 1963. Such a strategy would surely produce insights into the control of violence that elude law enforcement professionals, but whether it would change anything is another question.

For some years now I have had legislation in the Senate that would prohibit the manufacture of .25 and .32 caliber bullets. Those are the two calibers most typically used with the guns known as Saturday Night Specials. "Guns don't kill people," I argue, "bullets do."

Moreover, we have a two-century supply of handguns but only a four-year supply of ammunition. A public health official would immediately see the logic of trying to control the supply of bullets rather than of guns.

Even so, now that the doctor has come, it is important that criminal violence not be defined down by epidemiologists. Doctors Koop and Lundberg note that in 1990 in the state of Texas "deaths from firearms, for the first time in many decades, surpassed deaths from motor vehicles, by 3,443 to 3,309." A good comparison. And yet keep in mind that the number of motor vehicle deaths, having leveled off since the 1960s, is now pretty well accepted as normal at somewhat less than 50,000 a year, which is somewhat less than the level of the 1960s—the "carnage," as it once was thought to be, is now accepted as normal. This is the price we pay for high-speed transportation: there is a benefit associated with it. But there is no benefit associated with homicide, and no good in getting used to it. Epidemiologists have powerful insights that can contribute to lessening the medical trauma, but they must be wary of normalizing the social pathology that leads to such trauma.

V

The hope—if there be such—of this essay has been twofold. It is, first, to suggest that the Durkheim constant, as I put it, is maintained by a

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dynamic process which adjusts upwards and downwards. Liberals have traditionally been alert for upward redefining that does injustice to individuals. Conservatives have been correspondingly sensitive to downward redefining that weakens societal standards. Might it not help if we could all agree that there is a dynamic at work here? It is not revealed truth, nor yet a scientifically derived formula. It is simply a pattern we observe in ourselves. Nor is it rigid. There may once have been an unchanging supply of jail cells which more or less determined the number of prisoners. No longer. We are building new prisons at a prodigious rate. Similarly, the executioner is back. There is something of a competition in Congress to think up new offenses for which the death penalty is seemed the only available deterrent. Possibly also modes of execution, as in "fry the kingpins." Even so, we are getting used to a lot of behavior that is not good for us.

As noted earlier, Durkheim states that there is "nothing desirable" about pain. Surely what he meant was that there is nothing pleasurable. Pain, even so, is an indispensable warning signal. But societies under stress, much like individuals, will turn to pain killers of various kinds that end up concealing real damage. There is surely nothing desirable about this. If our analysis wins general acceptance, if, for example, more of us came to share Judge Torres's genuine alarm at "the trivialization of the lunatic crime rate" in his city (and mine), we might surprise ourselves how well we respond to the manifest decline of the American civic order. Might.

VIOLENCE

Seemingly endless incidents of random shootings and senseless deaths of young people dominated the nation's newspapers and airwaves in 1993, undeniable evidence of the hopelessness that engulfs millions of adolescents and young adults. The degree to which anxiety about violence permeates children's lives was documented powerfully during the year by several nationwide polls, including one released by CDF and *Newsweek* magazine in which nearly three-quarters of the surveyed parents and more than half of the children said their top worry is that a loved one would become a victim of a violent crime.

The increasingly urgent search for remedies took a number of paths, both positive and troubling. Among the positive developments were enactment of the Brady bill imposing a waiting period on handgun purchases and inclusion of nearly \$1 billion for violence prevention programs for youths in the Senate anticrime bill. There also was a surge of community efforts across the country to create safe havens for children, teach children conflict resolution skills, and provide mentors and constructive after-school activities for those living in poor crime- and gang-ridden neighborhoods.

Unfortunately, some states and Congress also considered or passed measures that would have the effect of punishing young people for the nation's failure to address the conditions

that create hopelessness and encourage reckless behavior among the young, including persistent poverty, inadequate schools, lack of job opportunities, and wanton gun proliferation.

Gun Violence With a Child's Face

Although many kinds of violence cast a pall on children's lives, it is gun violence that affects children as never before. An American child dies of gunshot wounds every two hours, and every two days 25 children — the equivalent of a classroomful — lose their lives to guns.

Data released at the beginning of 1994 reveal that 801 children ages one to 14 died from gunshot injuries (homicide, suicide, and unintentional injury) in 1991, accounting for one in

every 20 deaths in that age group. Firearms were the second leading cause of death (after car accidents) for all children ages 10 to 14 as well as for teenagers and young adults. Among teenagers and young adults up to age 25, one in every four deaths was by firearm.

Guns take their highest toll among young African American males. Fully 60 percent of deaths among Black teenage boys 15 to 19 were from firearm injuries in 1991, compared with 26 percent of deaths among White males in that age group. In fact, gun injuries were the *leading* cause of death among Black males between the ages of 15 and 24.

The risk of being murdered by a gun has increased for all young people since the mid-1980s, but especially for young Black males. The gun murder rates for Black 15- to 19-year-olds tripled to 105.3 homicides per 100,000 during 1985-1990, a rate 11 times higher than for White males in that age group (9.7). Not only is the steady rate of increase for young Black men not abating (it increased an average of 20 percent each year between 1985 and 1990), but the rate of increase for White teens is worsening, jumping 24 percent in both 1989 and 1990.

The rate at which juveniles and young adults are committing murder also has skyrocket-

ed. James Alan Fox, dean of Northeastern University's College of Criminal Justice, has calculated that the rate at which 18- to 24-year-olds committed murder increased 62 percent between 1986 and 1991. Perhaps even more alarming, teens are killing at younger and younger ages. During the same six-year period, the offending rate for murder among teens 14 to 17 years old more than doubled, while the rate of homicides committed by adults 25 and older continued to fall.

For every child killed by a gun, several are injured, with estimates ranging between 30 and 67 each day. The costs of these injuries are staggering. The average hospital bill for treating a child wounded by gunfire is \$14,434 — enough to pay for a year of college — according to a study released in 1993 by the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions. And that figure doesn't include physicians' fees or the expense of lifetime rehabilitation for many gunshot victims.

Countless numbers of children who aren't hospitalized from violence have had their lives diminished by it. About 60 percent of the 10- to 17-year-olds surveyed in the *Newsweek*-CDF poll said they know someone who was beaten up or threatened with a knife or gun. A study published in the *Journal of the*

Facts and Figures



- Number of children and teens killed by guns (homicides, suicides, and accidental firearm deaths), 1991 5,356
- Number of children killed by guns each day 13
- Estimated number of children wounded by guns each day At least 30
- Average hospital cost for treating a child injured by a gun \$14,434
- Guns as a leading cause of death:
Among 10- to 24-year-old Black males No. 1
Among all 10- to 14-year-olds No. 2
- Percentage of poll respondents who said they have a gun in their home, 1993 42% (Harvard poll) to 48% (Gallup poll)

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in 1993 reported that one-quarter of children in a midwestern inner-city grade school described at least one violent event — a suicide, accidental death or injury, murder, or intentional injury — that involved the child, a family member, or a friend. Many described two or more events.

The children exposed to violence, the researchers found, were nearly twice as likely as their classmates to show significant signs of depression, including low self-esteem, excessive crying, and worries about dying or being injured. And James Garbarino of the Erikson Institute for Advanced Study in Child Development has found that many inner-city children regularly exposed to violence develop psychological defense mechanisms that inhibit their ability to learn. Many also become aggressive.

Risk Factors for Violent Crime

In 1993 a panel of academic experts convened by the National Research Council published a detailed analysis of the risk factors associated with youth violence. In *Losing Generations: Adolescents in High-Risk Settings*, the panel confirms that the most consistent and

most powerful predictor of criminal activity among youths is economic hardship. Children who grow up in poverty confront myriad barriers to their full and healthy development, running higher risks of inadequate nutrition and developmental delays early in life, generally attending substandard schools, and having little access to cultural, recreational, or educational enrichment opportunities as they grow older (see Family Income chapter for a fuller description of the costs of child poverty). All of these disadvantages contribute to bleak prospects and lack of hope among millions of our young people, leading increasing numbers to lash out in rage and conclude that they have no stake in the values and norms of the larger society, including the regard for human life.

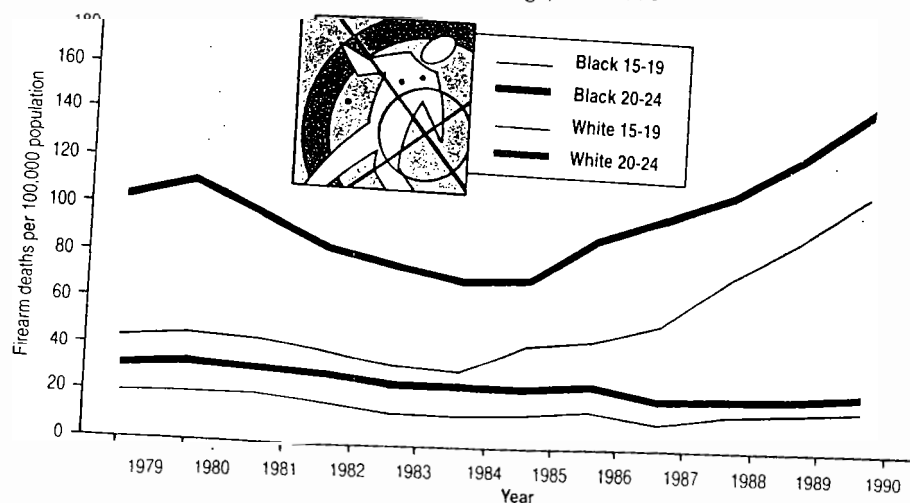
The strong relationship between economic hardship and violent crime helps explain why Black males are disproportionately likely to be perpetrators as well as victims of violence: almost 40 percent of African American children live in sustained poverty, as opposed to 5 percent of White children.

The NRC panel's research also documents that living in a single-parent family, dropping out of school, and being physically or sexually abused or neglected as a child all are correlated with youth violence and crime.

Figure 8.1 **Guns and Youths**

Between 1984 and 1990 the firearm death rate tripled among young Black males ages 15-19, while the White rate increased about 50 percent. These deaths include homicides and suicides.

Trends in Firearm Death Rates Among Adolescent and Young Adult Males, by Race and Age, 1979-1990



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics.

A second panel of academic experts convened by the NRC to examine the broader circumstances of adolescents in America concluded in 1993 that children and youths increasingly do not have the resources, supports, or opportunities that are essential to healthy development and a successful transition to adulthood. This second panel's report, *Understanding and Preventing Violence*, provides further context for understanding the violence that now engulfs millions of our teenagers (see Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Youth Development chapter for details).

Heightened Public Concern and Increasing Access to Guns

Polls taken in 1993 reflected sharpened public anxiety about the threat of violence to children. In the *Newsweek*-CDF poll, just over half of all the parents surveyed and two-thirds of those in urban areas said they believe violent crime is on the increase. Overall, only about one-third of the children and parents said they feel it is very safe for children to walk in their neighborhood after dark.

Earlier in the year, a poll for the Harvard School of Public Health showed that fully 77 percent of the public had come to believe that young people's safety is threatened "by there being so many guns around." And for the first time in a major poll, a majority of Americans (52 percent, with 5 percent undecided) said they favored a federal law banning the ownership of all handguns, except by individuals with court permission.

The poll conducted for Harvard indicated that guns are present in 42 percent of American homes (a 1993 Gallup poll found that 48 percent of homes have guns), and two-thirds of gun-owning households have at least one handgun (25 million households). Forty-four percent of parents of children younger than 18 said they own a gun. Yet among those parents, only 43 percent reported that they keep their gun locked up, a sobering revelation making it less surprising that one in six of the surveyed parents said they know a child who was found playing with a loaded gun.

The Educational Fund to End Handgun Violence (EFEHV) reported differing estimates about where children get guns. School security experts and law enforcement officials, said EFEHV, estimate that 80 percent of the firearms brought to school each day (estimated to be between 100,000 and 135,000) come from home, while students estimate that 40 percent of their peers who bring guns to school buy them on the street.

Whatever the exact figure, it seems clear that adults who keep guns at home for protection are inadvertently placing their own children at greater risk of deadly violence, including suicide, than families owning no guns. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that 55 percent of suicides among youths ages 10 to 14 and 67 percent of those among 15- to 19-year-olds are committed with firearms, while other research shows that individuals who commit suicide are two-and-one-half times more likely to have firearms in their homes than those who don't.

The extreme availability of firearms to young people in violent neighborhoods was confirmed by research released at the end of the year by the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). The study involved selected samples of male inmates in juvenile correctional facilities in California, New Jersey, Louisiana, and Illinois and male students in 10 inner-city public high schools near the correctional institutions surveyed. Researchers found that 83 percent of the surveyed inmates had possessed guns before their incarceration, and 22 percent of the students possessed a firearm at the time of the interview. Most of the inmates and students interviewed thought it would be easy to get a gun, and when asked how they would do it, 45 percent of the inmates and 53 percent of the students said they would "borrow" one from family or friends. Fifty-four percent of the inmates and 37 percent of the students said they would get one "off the street." The main reason given for owning or carrying a gun was self-protection.

Such easy access to guns helps explain why youth violence has become so deadly. Adolescents always have acted rashly, but a generation ago, when feuding teenagers fought with their fists, or even knives, the consequences weren't likely to be lethal. Today the same rash impulses often result in gunshots and death. Teens interviewed after committing killings often are quoted as saying they didn't think about what might happen to them or their victims after they pulled the trigger; they were simply looking for a quick solution to their problem. Technological innovations in handguns also have contributed to the carnage, with greater firepower at lower cost making them ever more deadly.

The Media and Violence

Growing public worry about the effect on children of continuous exposure to simulated violence in the media stimulated new efforts in 1993 to control excessive violence on television and in video games. Thirty years of study by social scientists and public health experts has created a considerable body of evidence — from both the laboratory and real-life studies — that exposure to media violence is associated with increased aggression, desensitiza-

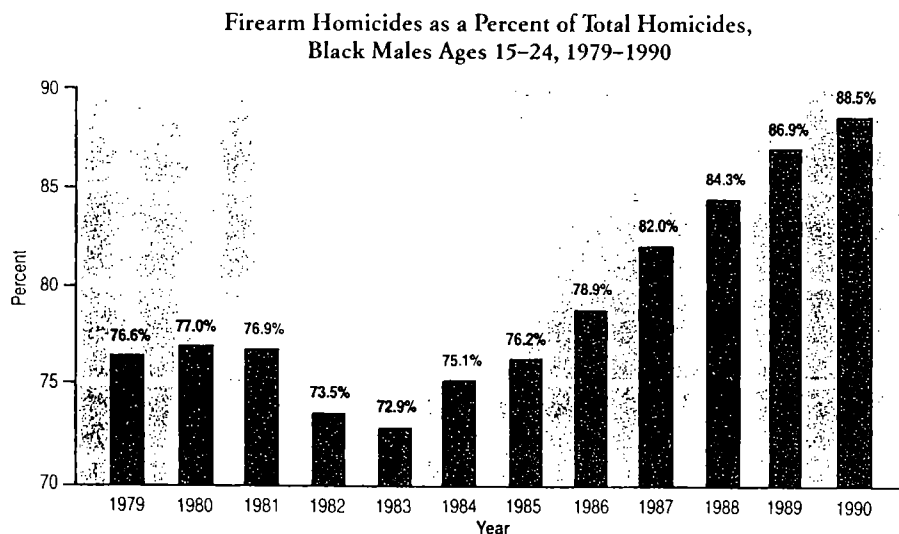
tion to violence, and fear in children. Yet research published by the American Psychological Association shows that in 1990 the average American child typically had witnessed 8,000 simulated murders and more than 100,000 other acts of violence on television by the time he or she reached the seventh grade.

Congress held several rounds of hearings on media violence in 1993, and several lawmakers warned that Congress would consider steps to regulate violent content if the entertainment industry failed to do so. Among the bills introduced was one to require television manufacturers to build sets equipped to allow parents to block violent programs.

In response, four television networks and an industry association for video game producers announced separately that they would institute warning systems for their products. The networks requested and received an extension of an earlier exemption from the anti-trust laws granted to the industry in 1990 to allow them to act in concert to develop a violence rating system. General reaction to the effectiveness of the voluntary rating approach was skeptical, however, and some critics speculated that it might make the problem worse by publicizing particularly violent programming.

Figure 8.2 **Firearms**

During the 1980s the proportion of homicides among young Black males that involved firearms increased substantially.



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

Federal Gun and Crime Control Legislation

Meanwhile, Congress debated and finally approved the Brady bill, widely interpreted as a sign that lawmakers finally are willing to consider gun control as one necessary response to the violence epidemic. The law requires a five-working-day waiting period for handgun purchases to allow state police to conduct background checks on would-be purchasers. States that conduct checks will receive financial assistance from the federal government to computerize their criminal records.

The Senate also passed a broad anticrime bill at the end of 1993, while the House approved several narrower bills. Final legislation is likely to be hammered out in conference committee in early 1994. Although the \$22.3 billion Senate bill contains some worthwhile proposals, including a ban on some types of semiautomatic weapons, money for community policing, and promising prevention initiatives targeted at high-risk youths, the bill also contains provisions that are unnecessarily punitive toward children and ignore the lessons of the past several decades regarding effective approaches to juvenile justice.

On the positive side, the bill would create an Ounce of Prevention Council charged with administering a total of \$900 million over five years to foster healthy child and youth development as a means of preventing crime. Some of the funding would be used for after-school and summer recreation programs, academic enrichment efforts, and substance abuse treatment and prevention programs in areas with high rates of poverty, crime, and gang activity. Other funds would provide for Olympic Youth Development Centers to house sports and recreation programs for children and youths during nonschool hours and for grants to states for youth violence prevention efforts such as conflict resolution programs in schools and juvenile court diversion programs. Such programs are needed in every community to help turn the tide of youth violence. They offer constructive alternatives to street and gang activity and safe environments where children can be children.

The positive provisions in the crime bill, however, are accompanied by many others likely to harm children. One of the most troubling would require juveniles older than 12 automatically to be tried as adults when charged by federal authorities with murder, attempted murder, or commission with a firearm of armed assault, armed robbery, or aggravated sexual assault. This provision deprives prosecutors and judges of any discretion in assessing the maturity of the individual when determining whether a juvenile charged with such crimes should be tried as an adult, a step unworthy of a civilized nation.

Also of concern is a provision that would make it a federal crime for a juvenile to possess a handgun or handgun ammunition. Although it is imperative to keep guns out of children's hands, creating this new status offense for juveniles (criminalizing behavior that is not criminal for adults) and elevating it to a federal offense are not the appropriate means. In effect, this provision would punish children for adult society's unwillingness to curb its wanton gun policies and likely give thousands of juveniles federal criminal records that would undermine their already limited education and employment prospects.

In an effort to encourage alternative sentencing for young first offenders, both the House and Senate approved provisions for grants to states to expand military-style "boot camps." In some contexts — the Job Corps, for example — residential centers offer a positive experience for many youths, and creative alternative sentencing for young offenders is an important goal. Yet the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) issued a report in 1993 suggesting that boot camps, at least as presently constituted, may not be effective in reducing recidivism. Noting that many of the more than 50 boot camps operating in 30 states and 10 localities are too new for a conclusive evaluation, the GAO reported that discouragingly high rates of participants flunk out of these programs and wind up in prison or finish the program — typically three to six months in length — but still become recidivists.

Other bills introduced in Congress in 1993 would limit handgun sales to one per month per individual, tighten regulations on federal gun dealers, increase the tax on certain types of ammunition to as much as 1,000 percent, and double the current excise tax on firearms and earmark the funds for offsetting health care costs associated with gun violence. None of these bills had emerged from committee by the end of the year.

On the executive side, President Clinton appointed an interagency task force in 1993 to study various aspects of violence — including youth violence, firearm violence, and media violence — and recommend prevention strategies. Representatives from the Justice, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Education, Labor, and Agriculture departments and the Office of National Drug Control Policy are members.

During the first week of 1994, Secretary of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen announced a legislative package designed to place firearms dealers under tighter regulatory control. Included was a proposal to increase to \$600 a year the fee for a license to sell firearms, up from \$200 for a new three-year license and \$90 for a three-year renewal enacted as part of the Brady bill. The increase is intended to reduce the number of gun dealers who operate infor-

mally, and who, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF), are believed to be the source of many weapons bought by criminals.

State Gun and Crime Control Activity

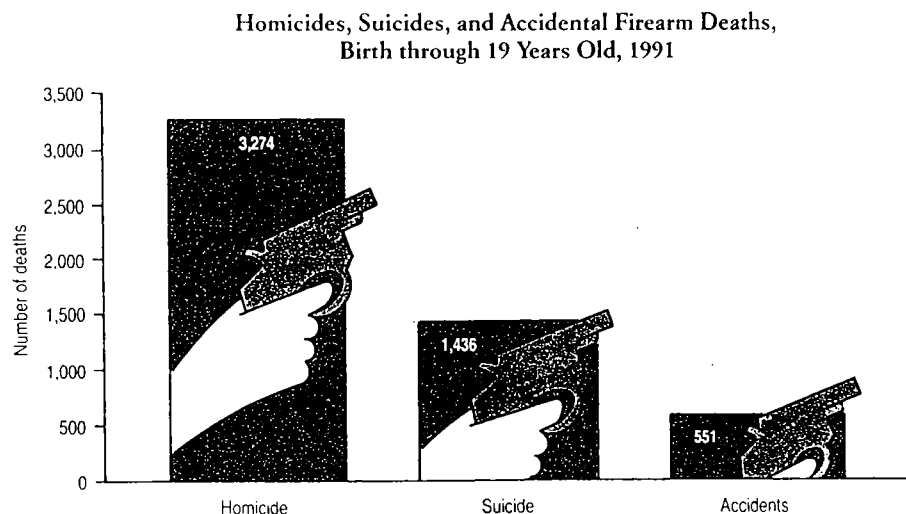
States, too, looked at gun control and other legislative means to reduce violence in 1993. Virginia, a state traditionally opposed to gun control, surprised the nation in January by enacting a law to limit handgun sales to one per month per individual to reduce gun trafficking between Virginia and states with tougher gun control laws.

In New Jersey the state legislature passed a ban on assault weapons, then had second thoughts and tried to repeal the measure. When Gov. Jim Florio vetoed the repeal, the legislature could not muster the votes necessary to override the governor's veto. Despite speculation that the governor's action may have hurt his reelection bid, exit polls suggested that taxes, not the weapons ban, were the major factor in his defeat.

The Florida legislature reacted to an apparent surge in juvenile crime in 1993, including shootings of several tourists, by voting to make it illegal for juveniles to possess firearms. This and comparable measures approved in Colo-

Figure 8.3 **Firearm Deaths**

A total of 5,356 children and teenagers died in 1991 as a result of firearm injuries including homicides, suicides and accidents.



Note: Does not include 93 firearm deaths for which the intention was unknown.

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, unpublished data from the National Vital Statistics System.

rado and proposed in Arizona raised concerns similar to those regarding some of the provisions of the Senate crime bill: they punish children for society's failure to control access to guns.

Provisions in some state bills that hold parents responsible if their juveniles are caught with guns are expected to be challenged on constitutional grounds.

Community Response: Beacons Initiative

While gun and crime control proposals dominated the national news in 1993, many communities around the country continued to develop local activities to help steer children in more positive directions. These local prevention efforts included teaching violence prevention curricula and peer mediation skills training to children through schools, churches and synagogues, and other community organizations; campaigns to get more adults to reach out to and work with youths to avert violence and make their communities safer for children; appeals to gun owners to turn in their weapons voluntarily in exchange for cash, toys, or other consumer goods; and mentoring initiatives that pair children in poor high-crime neighborhoods with caring adults who provide extra support, guidance, and encouragement.

In a comprehensive response to violence at the community level, New York City in 1993 continued to expand its three-year-old Beacons Initiative for children, youths, and families in poor drug- and violence-ridden neighborhoods. By the end of the year, a safe school-based Beacon community center was operating in every school district in the city. Beacons are housed in intermediate or elementary schools and are open seven days a week from early morning until late at night to provide a web of activities and services for children and families. Based on a "youth development" rather than a "youth deficit" approach, the Beacons:

- Increase opportunities for sustained high quality relationships between youths and caring adults, including the youths' parents and other family members.

- Set and maintain high expectations and clear standards for youths' behavior.
- Engage young people in learning about their world and developing the skills to shape it.
- Provide opportunities for community service that strengthens youths' connection to their community and the world of work.

On a typical day at the Beacon in Central Harlem, Beacon staff are at the school early in the morning to help students and parents with problems before school starts and throughout the day. After school, youth workers conduct educational enrichment, sports, and recreation programs for about 200 children. Late in the afternoon, about 30 parents arrive to participate in parent support groups, then they and others share a "family night" dinner with their children in the school cafeteria. After dinner, between 60 and 80 teenagers get together for Youth Leadership activities, 50 or so parents spend two hours in GED preparation classes, and as many as 150 parents and children gather in the gym for African dance classes, aerobics, or martial arts.

Youth Leadership groups are a part of each Beacon. School dropouts, honor students, and former drug dealers and gang members together participate in group discussions, educational projects, and community service, contributing to their communities through such activities as voter registration drives and neighborhood beautification projects. Teens from Beacons in Washington Heights and the South Bronx went door-to-door encouraging parents to have their children immunized at a local health fair. Youths in Central Harlem made a video about gun control designed to appeal to their peers.

At the Staten Island Beacon, which primarily serves a public housing community, Beacon staff organized a basketball program for youths and the housing police, allowing the young people to see police officers in a different role and the police to get to know the teenagers through a shared, positive activity.

Six Beacons have city-funded LEAP initiatives (Local Employment Action Program) operating at their sites. LEAP offers a variety of educational enhancement and internship experiences to encourage at-risk youths to stay in school and learn employment-related skills. At a South Bronx Beacon, LEAP has placed 140 teens in health internships through a local hospital and community clinic.

The staff at the Washington Heights Beacon helped find part-time jobs for 15 young men who were stealing or selling drugs. Twice a week they participate in a peer support group co-sponsored by Mothers Against Violence, and recently the young men started a T-shirt business to develop their entrepreneurial skills.

Beacon centers receive core support through the New York City Department of Youth Services. Each is managed and staffed by a nonprofit community-based organization working collaboratively with the community school board, school principal, and its own advisory board of parents, teachers, youths, religious leaders, and private and city service providers.

Opportunities To Help Children

With intensifying public sentiment for strong actions to stop violence, 1994 offers the best chance in decades to take bold new steps to protect the safety of our children and families. Efforts to control and reverse the senseless proliferation of guns and to counter the hopelessness and despair that engulf far too many of our young people are essential. Advocates can make a difference by:

- **Insisting upon a major focus on prevention in any crime bill approved by Congress this year.** Push lawmakers to support key investments such as the Ounce of Prevention program that get our children off to a strong start in life

and give them alternatives to lives of violence on the streets.

- Promoting tough new restrictions on the manufacture, sale, and possession of assault weapons, handguns, and other nonsporting firearms and ammunition. Call on federal and state policy makers to stand up to the National Rifle Association and the gun manufacturers' lobby in a comprehensive effort to reduce the deadliness of violence in America and to reclaim the streets for our children and families.
- **Creating or supporting conflict resolution and peer mediation programs in public schools in your state or community.** Urge school officials and state and community leaders to start or expand efforts to teach students how to resolve differences without resorting to violence.
- **Opposing punitive measures that discard sensible legal protections for children and threaten to entrap even more of our young people in the criminal justice system without productive result.** It makes no sense automatically to try 13-year-olds as adults for certain crimes. Caution lawmakers against responding to rising public anxiety in ways that will only make matters worse by treating children as hardened adult criminals and thereby producing a self-fulfilling prophecy.
- **Building constructive alternatives and beacons of hope for our poorest and most disadvantaged children and youths.** Work at the federal, state, and local levels to combat child and family poverty and expand opportunities for work and learning among our youths. Remind lawmakers and community leaders that jobs, training, summer and after-school programs, and high quality schools all are less expensive over time than the spiraling prison, health, and human costs of the carnage now rampant on our streets.

INTRODUCTION

Cease Fire! Stopping the Gun War Against Children in the United States

For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

Mark 8:36

Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts.

Zechariah 4:6

Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me: but who ever causes one of these little ones which believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

Matthew 18:5-6

On April 5, 1968 in Cleveland, Ohio, following Dr. King's assassination, Robert F. Kennedy spoke "about the mindless menace of violence in America which again stains our land and every one of our lives. It is not," he said, "the concern of any one race. The victims of the violence are black and white, rich and poor, young and old, famous and unknown. They are most important of all, human beings, who other human beings loved and needed. No one — no matter where he lives or what he does can be certain who will suffer from some senseless action of bloodshed. And yet it goes on and on and on in this country of ours."

Since Robert Kennedy spoke these words, he and 800,000 American men, women, and children have been killed by guns. Another 520,000 Americans have died violent deaths by other means in America's undeclared twentieth century civil war.

Between 1979 and 1991 almost 50,000 American children were killed by guns. More American children died from firearms on the killing fields of America than American soldiers died on the killing fields of Vietnam.

From 1968 through 1991 more than 1.3 million Americans died violently at home — the equivalent of the combined populations of

Cleveland and Memphis — while 31,000 American soldiers died in military conflicts in other countries. Americans were 42 times more likely to kill each other than to be killed by any external enemy.

This quarter-century death toll from the relentless carnage of American against American

— and of Americans who, unable to face life or find love, hope, purpose, or safe haven in their family, community, faith, or democratic civic life, took their own lives — is almost three times the number of reported American battle deaths in all of the wars in the twentieth century, including World War I (53,513), World

Deaths from Guns and from All Unnatural Causes, 1968-1991

From 1968 through 1991:								Total Gun Deaths
Gun Deaths:	Homicide	+	Suicide	=	Violence	+	Accidents	=
Total	320,787		373,118		693,905		46,606	740,511
Male	263,809		313,517		577,326		40,269	617,595
Female	56,978		59,601		116,579		6,337	122,916
White	158,014		346,205		504,219		36,844	541,063
Male	125,433		290,760		416,193		32,142	448,335
Female	32,581		55,445		88,026		4,702	92,728
Black	157,738		22,635		180,373		8,834	189,207
Male	134,373		19,144		153,517		7,340	160,857
Female	23,365		3,491		26,856		1,494	28,350
From 1968 through 1991:								Total Unnatural Deaths
All Deaths:	Homicide	+	Suicide	=	Violence	+	Accidents	=
Total	500,562		657,985		1,158,547		2,456,198	3,614,745
Male	388,337		496,594		884,931		1,699,110	2,584,041
Female	112,225		161,391		273,616		757,088	1,030,704
White	257,871		607,904		865,775		2,084,112	2,949,887
Male	192,261		457,680		649,941		1,430,692	2,080,633
Female	65,610		150,224		215,834		653,420	869,254
Black	232,744		39,276		272,020		323,137	595,157
Male	188,766		31,197		219,963		233,424	453,387
Female	43,978		8,079		52,057		89,713	141,770

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, published and unpublished data. Definitions change slightly among the years. Even if deaths in 1992 and 1993 do not exceed the actual 1991 counts, the total gun deaths will exceed 800,000 and other violent deaths will exceed 520,000 for the 25 years, 1968-1993. All calculations by the Children's Defense Fund

Firearm Deaths Among Children and Youths, 1979-1991

Total, 1979-1991	Age 1-14	Age 1-19	Age 1-24
All Firearm Deaths	9,027	48,904	113,347
White	6,580	32,203	73,579
Male	5,019	26,751	61,963
Female	1,561	5,452	11,634
Black	2,207	15,500	37,084
Male	1,590	13,372	32,329
Female	617	2,128	4,755
Firearm Homicides	4,282	24,552	59,446
White	2,503	11,041	26,704
Male	1,584	8,571	21,563
Female	919	2,470	5,141
Black	1,642	12,972	31,586
Male	1,105	11,172	27,547
Female	537	1,800	4,039
Firearm Suicides	1,576	16,614	41,787
White	1,425	14,782	37,079
Male	1,096	12,448	31,703
Female	329	2,334	5,376
Black	123	1,247	3,463
Male	95	1,059	2,997
Female	28	188	466
Firearm Accidents	3,539	7,257	10,520
White	2,848	5,792	8,344
Male	2,398	5,097	7,359
Female	450	695	985
Black	602	1,268	1,833
Male	471	1,070	1,561
Female	131	198	272

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, unpublished data for 1991. Total includes races other than White and Black, and includes firearm deaths not classified by intention. For 1979-1984, firearm deaths by legal intervention are omitted. All calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

War II (292,131), the Korean War (33,651), the Vietnam War (47,369), and the Persian Gulf War (148).

The national plague of violence transcends racial boundaries and is far more likely to strike at home than on the streets. In 1968 through 1991, approximately half of the gun homicide victims were White (158,738) and half were Black (157,738). Of the gun suicide victims, 93 percent (346,205) were White and 6 percent (22,635) were Black. Where the race of the murderers was known, about 83 percent of the murderers of Whites were White and about 94 percent of the murderers of Blacks were Black. Over 80 percent of gun homicide victims and 87 percent of gun suicide victims were male. Most murders are committed not by strangers but by family members, neighbors, or acquaintances.

The Morally Unthinkable Has Become Normal: The Killing of Innocent Children

The ugly, malignant tumor of violence devouring American communities has spread to younger and younger children. The murder of babies and young children has become routine not only in Bosnia but in Boston and Baltimore. Twenty-five American children — the equivalent of a classroomful — are killed by guns every two days in our spiritually sick nation.

Twice as many American children under 10 were killed by firearms in 1991 as American soldiers were killed in the Persian Gulf and Somalia combined. An American child is 15 times as likely to be killed by gunfire as a child growing up in Northern Ireland.

In 1990, 560 American 10- to 14-year-old children died from guns. This was twice the number of handgun deaths of citizens of all ages in all of Sweden, Switzerland, Japan, Canada, Great Britain, and Australia combined that year. An American child dies from gunshot wounds every two hours; a police officer is killed by a gun every five days and nine hours.

The number of American children killed each year by guns has doubled since 1950. Homicide is now the third leading cause of death among children five to 14 years old, the

second leading cause of death among youths and young adults 10 to 24, and the leading cause of death among Black teen males. More young Black males are killed by guns each year than from all the lynchings throughout American history.

Escalating violence against and by children and youths is no coincidence. It is the cumulative, convergent, and heightened manifestation of a range of serious and too-long neglected problems. Epidemic child and family poverty; increasing economic inequality; racial intolerance and hate crimes; pervasive drug and alcohol abuse and violence in our homes and popular culture; and growing numbers of out-of-wedlock births and divorces have all contributed to the disintegration of the family, community, and spiritual values and supports all children need. Add to these crises easy access to deadlier and deadlier firearms; hordes of lonely and neglected children and youths left to fend for themselves by absentee parents in all race and income groups; gangs of inner-city and minority youths relegated to the cellar of American life without education, jobs, or hope; and political leadership over the 1980s that paid more attention to foreign than domestic enemies and to the rich than the poor, and you face the social and spiritual disintegration of American society that confronts us today.

Where are the family values in the richest nation on earth that let one in five or 14.6 million of its children live in poverty in 1992 — 5 million more than in 1973? How is it just that the top 3 percent of Americans reported higher total earnings than the bottom 41 percent of American workers in 1990? How much concern do we have for the future when young families with children of all races saw their median income plunge nearly one-third between 1973 and 1990? What does national security mean when an estimated 3 million children witness parental violence every year and a child is reported abused or neglected every 13 seconds? How can we expect the 100,000 children who are homeless every night and have no place to call their own to respect the homes and property of others?

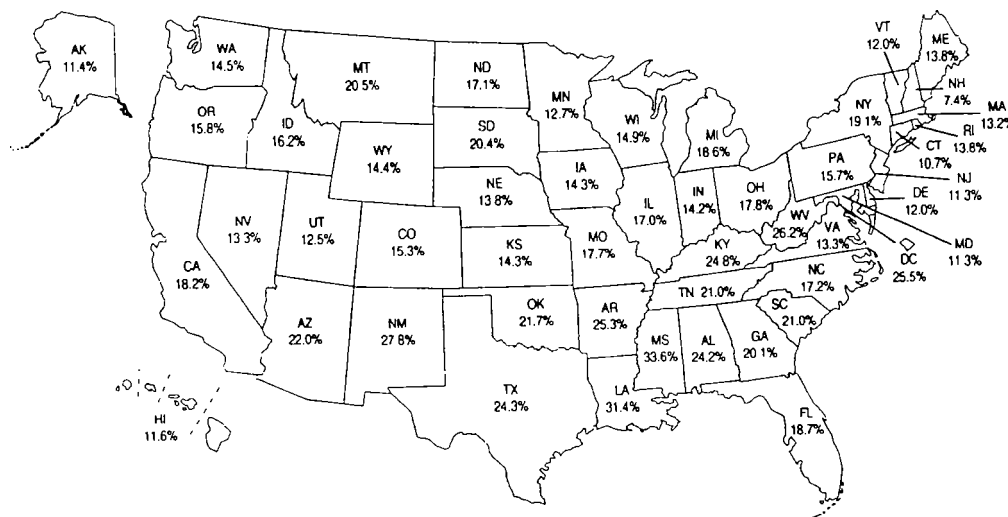
I wonder how many of the 17-year-old murderers today are children who were born without adequate prenatal care and nutrition or were unable to get a quality early childhood experience because our nation said we could not afford to give them a Healthy Start and a Head Start? How many of the 16-year-old teen mothers having babies today entered school not ready to learn or with an undetected hearing problem that made them fall further and further behind in school because they lacked access to health care? How many of the 18-year-old murderers witnessed and suffered abuse and neglect at home from parents who themselves never were nurtured, taught to parent, or enabled to work? How many of the 19-year-old youths abusing and pushing drugs today are children who saw the adults in their lives abusing or pushing drugs and who lacked positive community alternatives to dysfunctional families and dangerous streets after school, on weekends, and during idle summer months?

We have not valued millions of our children's lives and so they do not value ours in a society in which they have no social or economic stake. Countless youths are imprisoned by lack of skills in inner-city neighborhoods where "the future" means surviving the day and living to 18 is a triumph. Their neglect,

abuse, and marginalization by parents, schools, communities, and our nation turned them first to and against each other in gangs and then against a society that would rather imprison than educate them. Our market culture tells them they must have designer sneakers, gold chains, and fancy cars to be somebody while denying them the jobs to buy them legally. So they are easy marks for drug dealers and profit-driven gun manufacturers and sellers in pursuit of new markets for their lethal products.

There is no excuse for youth or adult crime. Perpetrators must be swiftly and fairly punished. But there is also no excuse for the unbridled trafficking in nonsporting handguns, assault weapons, and ammunition. A gun is produced in America every 10 seconds and is available to almost anybody who wants to own or rent one, including children. One ad encouraging parents to buy guns for children asks: "How old is old enough?" and concludes: "Age is not the major yardstick. Some youngsters are ready to start at 10, others at 14. The only real measures are those of maturity and individual responsibility. Does your youngster follow directions well? Is he conscientious and reliable? Would you leave him alone in the house for two or three hours? Would you send him to the grocery store with a list and a \$20 bill? If the

Child Poverty Rates, by State, Based on 1989 Income



Source: 1990 Decennial Census, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

answer to these questions or similar ones are 'yes' then the answer can also be 'yes' when your child asks for his first gun."

In 1993, 48 percent of American households reported owning at least one gun. More than 200 million guns are in the hands of 257 million Americans. According to the Violence Policy Center, there are more gun dealers than gas station owners in America. You often can get a license to sell guns with less hassle than it takes to get a driver's license and can buy a gun as readily as a toaster across the counters of some of our largest chain stores. Although our nation regulates the safety of countless products including children's teddy bears, blankets, toys, and pajamas, it does not regulate the safety of a product that kills and injures tens of thousands of children and other citizens each year.

Violence Run Amok in Child Lives

Violence romps through our children's playgrounds, invades their bedroom slumber parties, terrorizes their Head Start centers and schools, frolics down the streets they walk to and from school, dances through their school buses, waits at the stop light and bus stop, lurks at McDonald's, runs them down on the corner, shoots through their bedroom windows, attacks their front porches and neighborhoods, abuses them or a parent at home every few seconds, and tantalizes them across the television screen every six minutes. It snatches away their parents at work, and steals their aunts, uncles, cousins, brothers, sisters, and friends. It saps their energy and will to learn, and makes them forget about tomorrow. It nags and picks at their minds and spirits day in and day out,

Moments in America for Children

- Every 5 seconds of the school day a student drops out of public school.
- Every 10 seconds a teenager becomes sexually active for the first time.
- Every 26 seconds a baby is born to an unmarried mother.
- Every 30 seconds a baby is born into poverty.
- Every 34 seconds a baby is born to a mother who did not graduate from high school.
- Every 59 seconds a baby is born to a teen mother.
- Every 104 seconds a teenage girl becomes pregnant.
- Every 2 minutes a baby is born at low birthweight.
- Every 2 minutes a baby is born to a mother who had late or no prenatal care.
- Every 4 minutes a baby is born to a teenage mother who already had a previous child.
- Every 4 minutes a child is arrested for an alcohol-related crime.
- Every 5 minutes a child is arrested for a violent crime.
- Every 7 minutes a child is arrested for a drug crime.
- Every 2 hours a child is murdered.
- Every 4 hours a child commits suicide.
- Every 9 hours a child or young adult under 25 dies from HIV.

snuffing out the promise and joy of childhood and of the future which becomes just surviving today.

Inner-city children as young as 10, psychiatrists and social workers report, think about death all the time. They plan their own funerals — what they will wear, the kind of floral arrangements and music they want. Young Black and Brown men speak longingly of hoping to reach the ripe old age of 18 in their bullet-ravaged, job-destitute, politically forsaken neighborhoods. Some speak wistfully of prison with “three hots and a cot” as a safer haven than their dead-end streets and empty, jobless futures in a society that has decreed them expendable. My heart broke recently when I met a handsome, well-mannered, Black high school graduate working as a security guard in a downtown Washington office building. He had done everything we asked him to do, but his life goal was to “make it to 20” in the capital of the free world! How we have failed as parents, religious, community, and political leaders when children’s youthful dreams turn to dust so early.

Thirteen children die daily from guns that injure at least 30 other children every day, adding billions to our out-of-control public health costs. The National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Institutions puts the average child gun injury hospitalization cost at \$14,434. Even a mother’s womb no longer shields babies against violent assault. A Detroit pediatrician wrote: “We have seen 22 pregnant adolescents with gun shot wounds in two small inner-city hospitals in Detroit in 1993.”

Children are not only increasingly being victimized by violence, countless children witness or lose loved ones to it. Chicago psychiatrist Carl Bell found that three of four 10- to 19-year-old students residing in low-income and moderate to extremely high crime areas, had witnessed a robbery, stabbing, shooting, or killing. Almost half had seen more than one violent incident.

Dr. James Garbarino, president of the Erikson Institute and co-author of *Children in Danger: Coping with the Consequences of Community*

Violence, says American inner-city children are exposed to such heavy doses of extreme violence they exhibit symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder like children in war-torn countries such as Mozambique, Cambodia, and Palestine. They become sad, angry, aggressive, and uncaring after exposure to continuous violence, and often have trouble with school work because, having been forced to develop energy-absorbing psychological defenses against their fears, they lack the psychic energy required for learning.

Not only do we send our children out to war without helmets or flak jackets or combat training or adult protection, we leave them to wrestle with their grief and fears and psychic monsters alone, without adequate counseling or mental health treatment to relieve their chronic endangerment. How many schools and neighborhoods in America have developed and implemented safety plans in response to the emergency conditions in which so many children live? How many religious congregations are working to provide safe corridors and havens for children after school, on weekends, and in the summer? How many neighborhood groups are watching out for children who desperately need a friendly face and word and glimmer of hope?

Not Just an Inner-City Problem

Although the threat of violent street crime hovers most heavily over inner-cities, it respects no boundaries as the madmen shootings on the Long Island commuter train, downtown San Francisco office building, and Waco tragedy attest. Gun violence has invaded suburban, rural, small-town, and middle America from Little Rock and Knoxville to Wichita. The body of Michael Jordan’s father was found in a creek in my rural (30,000 population) South Carolina home county.

Parents of all races and incomes recognize the growing scourge. Violence was the top worry of parents and children alike in 1993, according to a *Newsweek*-CDF poll of 10- to 17-year-olds and their parents. Nearly three-quarters of the parents and more than half of the children said they fear that a loved one will be-

Gun Myths and Realities

Myth 1: Guns make you safe.

Reality: ● In fact, guns make you far less safe and endanger your loved ones. According to a recent study, a gun in the home increases the likelihood of homicide threefold. A gun in the home is also 43 times more likely to be used to commit homicide, suicide, or an accidental killing than it is to be used for self-defense.

Myth 2: The Second Amendment protects the rights of citizens to keep and bear arms.

Reality: ● The Second Amendment provides that, "A well regulated *militia*, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." Every court that has interpreted the Second Amendment has found it is infringed only by regulations that curtail the ability to maintain a well-regulated *militia*.

Myth 3: Guns don't kill, people kill.

Reality: ● In fact, according to the FBI, "When assaults by type of weapon are examined, a gun proves to be seven times more deadly than all other weapons combined." In 1990 over 500 children and youths under 20 were killed by guns in accidental shootings.

Myth 4: Controlling gun violence is solely or primarily a law enforcement problem.

Reality: ● While *enforcing* our criminal laws is an important component of any attempt to deal with crime, law enforcement alone will never eradicate the root causes — such as poverty and joblessness — of crime and violence. People who feel they have nothing to lose simply will not be deterred by the threat of criminal punishment. FBI Director Lewis Freeh, Attorney General Janet Reno, and other law enforcement officials have called for greater investment in children in their early years as a key crime prevention strategy.

Myth 5: More prisons will curb gun violence.

Reality: ● During the 1980s, the U.S. prison population nearly tripled, while the violent crime rate continued to rise. Most gun violence occurs in the course of arguments and not other criminal behavior, often is *not* premeditated, and therefore *not* subject to criminal deterrence.

Myth 6: Most violence is racially motivated.

Reality: ● Eighty-three percent of White victims are slain by Whites and 94 percent of Black victims are slain by Blacks. Violence is correlated with poverty, discrimination, poor education, and lack of hope as well as race and ethnicity. Crime victims are disproportionately lower income and minority citizens.

Myth 7: Gun violence is just a young Black male problem.

Reality: ● Over the past quarter century, 504,219 White Americans have died from gun suicides and homicides. While young Black males are *disproportionately* likely to be victims of gun violence, they represent less than half of such victims.

Gun Myths and Realities (continued)

Myth 8: There is a solution to gun violence.

Reality: ● Violence is a complex problem resulting from the sum total of other social ills, including poverty, joblessness, poor schools, disintegrating families and communities, a history of family violence, and easy access to guns. The solution to violence will have to be equally multifaceted and long-term. However, limiting access to guns is one immediate way to curb deadly violence.

Myth 9: Guns already are regulated sufficiently.

Reality: ● Guns are virtually the only *unregulated* consumer product in the United States. While teddy bears, toasters, and trousers are subject to strict safety regulations, guns are not.

Myth 10: Gun control interferes with hunters' rights.

Reality: ● None of the pending gun control measures being considered in Congress would affect hunting firearms or by their terms expressly exclude them. When he signed the Brady bill, President Clinton said he came from "a state where half the folks have hunting and fishing licenses" and recalled as "a little boy putting a can on top of a fencepost and shooting a .22 at it.... This," he said, "is part of the culture of a big part of America. But we have taken this important part of the lives of millions of Americans and turned it into an instrument of maintaining madness. Would I let anybody change that life in America? Not on your life. Has that got anything to do with the Brady bill or assault weapons? Of course not." Or handguns?

Myth 11: Most murders occur in the course of another felony.

Reality: ● Only 22 percent of murders are the result of felonious activity such as rape, robbery, or arson. Almost one-third of all murders result from arguments, which account for the same percentage of firearms murders.

Myth 12: Most gun deaths are homicides.

Reality: ● In 1991 more Americans died from firearm suicides (18,526) than from firearm homicides (17,746). Between 1968 and 1991, 373,118 American gun deaths were suicides.

Myth 13: Violence and crime are just inner-city problems.

Reality: ● Violence and crime have invaded suburban, small town, and rural America. There is no hiding place. Gang violence now occurs in smaller cities traditionally considered safe such as Little Rock, Arkansas; Wichita, Kansas; and Knoxville, Tennessee.

Myth 14: Most murders occur among strangers.

Reality: ● Almost half of the murder victims in 1992 were either related to (12 percent) or acquainted with (35 percent) their assailants.

Myth 15: Gun control laws do not make a difference.

Reality: ● No single gun control law will control crime. However, effective gun control laws promise to reduce the *lethality* of violence. And, like any other laws, the potential effectiveness of gun control laws varies greatly. Some promise to curtail *gun* violence greatly while others promise to have only a minimal impact.

come a victim of violent crime. Although minority and urban children were most threatened, with four in 10 feeling unsafe either in their neighborhoods or at school even in small-town and rural America, only about one-third of the children said they feel "very safe" walking alone in their neighborhood after dark. Between 50 and 60 percent of the teens, whether rich or poor and regardless of where they lived, said they know someone who was beaten up or threatened with a knife or gun. More than one in 10 reported being personally victimized by violent crime.

Children Killing Children

The crisis of children having children has turned into the tragedy of children killing children as our young mimic the adult conduct they see in their home, community, national, and cultural life. While the number of children and youths victimized by violence has soared, so has the number of youthful offenders. The FBI reports "an unprecedented level" of juvenile violence during the 1980s, with the violent crime rate for minors rising by 27 percent. Juveniles now account for a disproportionate percentage of the rapidly growing number of both homicide victims and offenders. In 1991 over 4,300 of 24,578 murder offenders were under 20.

While arrests for murder and non-negligent manslaughter for individuals 18 and older grew 10.5 percent between 1982 and 1991, corresponding juvenile arrests rose 92.7 percent. A 1992 Northeastern University report said arrest rates between 1985 and 1991 for criminal homicide increased among 13- to 14-year-old males by 140 percent, among 15-year-old males by 217 percent, among 16-year-old males by 158 percent, among 17-year-old males by 121 percent, and among 18- to 20-year-old males by 113 percent.

The increased juvenile murder arrest rate appears to be linked inextricably to firearms. Between 1980 and 1990 there was a 79 percent increase in the number of 10- to 17-year-old juveniles who used firearms to commit murder. More than 80 percent of juvenile murders involve firearms.

A Total Breakdown in American Values, Common Sense, and Parent and Community Responsibility To Protect and Nurture Children

Never before has our country seen or permitted the epidemic of gun death and violence that is turning our communities into fearful armed camps and sapping the lives and hopes of our children. Never have we seen such a dangerous domestic arms race.

Never have we seen such irresponsible marketing of guns to private citizens under the false guise of safety or as the solution to legitimate fear of street crime (whose overall rate is *not* increasing and which accounts for a minority of gun deaths). Guns do not increase our own or our family's safety; they endanger it. A *New England Journal of Medicine* study found that a gun in the home is 43 times more likely to be used to kill a family member or friend, to commit suicide, or to cause an accidental death than for justifiable homicide. Suicide victims are two-and-a-half times more likely to have guns at home. Over half of youth and child suicides involved guns.

Whether you are a hunter, an NRA member, gun owner, or not, I hope you will agree that child gun deaths must stop and join in calling for a cease fire and responsible firearms and ammunition control.

But crucial gun control is not enough alone to prevent violence and reestablish peace and mutual respect in our homes, neighborhoods, and society. We must also address the breakdown of spiritual, family, and community norms and just opportunity in America. Whether the focus is on random shootings or the drug epidemic or too-early and out-of-wedlock childbearing, we are drawn back to the limited opportunities that lead too many children and adolescents to conclude that they have nothing to gain and little to lose. When our young lack a stake in our dominant values and norms, both we and they face a perilous road ahead.

Never have we witnessed the threats to family stability and supports for children posed by soaring out-of-wedlock birth rates among Black, Brown, and White, rich and poor alike.

Today, two out of every three Black and one-fifth of all White babies are born to never-married mothers. (And if it's wrong for 13-year-old inner-city girls to have babies without the benefit of marriage, it's wrong for rich celebrities!)

Never has America permitted children to rely on guns and gangs rather than parents and neighbors for protection and love or pushed so many onto the tumultuous sea of life without the life vests of nurturing families and communities, challenged minds, job prospects, and hope.

Never have we exposed children so early and relentlessly to cultural messages glamorizing violence, sex, possessions, alcohol, and tobacco with so few mediating influences from responsible adults. Never have we let children grow up listening to violent rap instead of nursery rhymes, worrying about guns and drugs rather than grades and dates, and dodging bullets rather than balls.

And never have we experienced such a numbing and reckless reliance on violence to resolve problems, feel powerful, or be entertained. A single trip to the movies often results in the witnessing of multiple deaths on a scale that makes them seem irrelevant. *New York Times* movie critic Vincent Canby counted 74 dead in *Total Recall*, 81 in *Robocop 2*, 106 in *Rambo III*, and 264 in *Die Hard II*. While I am sick of record companies profiting from the violent rap they find a ready market for among White suburban and inner-city youths alike, I am just as sick of Rambos and Terminators, and of video games like "Mortal Kombat" and "Night Trap" that portray decapitation, murder, and other violence as fun and entertainment.

In 1990 the average American two- to five-year-old watched more than 27 hours of television a week. This adds up to over eight-and-one-half months of television watched by preschoolers likely to witness thousands of television murders. The lines between make believe and real life blur in rudderless child lives unpeopled by enough caring adults transmitting positive values or helping them interpret what is seen. Is it any wonder that a teenaged boy in Boston responded to the murder of an MIT student with: "What's the big deal ... people die every day." While parents ought to turn

off the television sets and communities ought to provide many more active alternatives to television watching and just hanging around, the reality of family and community life in America today — with millions of children abandoned to their own devices — imposes an independent responsibility on media and cultural leaders to avoid excessive violence in programming. Aren't our writers talented enough to entertain without excessive gore?

Robert Kennedy asked why "we seemingly tolerate a rising level of violence that ignores our common humanity and our claims to civilization alike. We calmly accept," he said, "newspaper reports of civilian slaughter in far-off lands. We glorify killing on movie and television screens and call it entertainment. We make it easy for men of all shades of sanity to acquire whatever weapons and ammunition they desire....Some Americans," he continued, "who preach nonviolence abroad fail to practice it here at home. Some who accuse others of inciting riots have by their own conduct invited them. Some look for scapegoats, others look for conspiracies, but this much is clear: violence breeds violence, repression brings retaliation, and only a cleansing of our whole society can remove this sickness from our soul."

We did not heed him then. Instead, we tolerated the violent deaths of over a million and a quarter fellow citizens in a silent American holocaust. Will we heed him now and give our children back their childhoods, safety, and futures, their sense of security and hope, their ability to trust adults to protect, guide, love, and value them? Will we stop the domestic and global arms race and teach our children that power means character and service and the peaceful rather than violent resolution of conflict? Will we rebuild our families, reinvest in our communities, and give every American child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, and a Safe Start? Will we fundamentally change our personal and national priorities? Will America's dream die on your and my watch?

Between 1968 and 1993 our nation invested \$7.5 trillion — \$29,000 per American —

10 Steps To Stop the War Against Children in America

Millions of American children are besieged on three fronts by pervasive gun, family, community, and cultural violence in the world's leading military power; epidemic poverty and hopelessness in the world's wealthiest power; and parental, educational, and moral neglect in a nation that preaches family values it fails to adequately practice and support.

Every American must work to transform our nation's priorities, give children first call on our personal and collective time, resources, and leadership, and take the following steps:

1. Commit to the movement to Leave No Child Behind and to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, and a Safe Start in life. No violence prevention strategy can overcome our failure to invest in children and their parents in the early years. We know what works. It's time to do it. Write CDF or call 1-800-CDF-1200 about how you can help.

2. In 1994, urge the president, Congress, state, and local officials to ensure children's *physical security* by curbing and regulating guns and ammunition; *health security* by enacting comprehensive health coverage for every American; *economic security* by creating a million new family-supporting jobs for youths and adults through public investments in depressed inner cities and rural areas; and *educational security* by ensuring access to high quality Head Start and child care programs for all children who need them so that they can enter school ready to learn.

3. Work for a cease fire in the violent gun war against children and for strong federal, state, and local legislation and regulation to control the manufacture, sale, and possession of nonsporting firearms and ammunition in private hands. All guns should be treated and regulated as the dangerous products they are.

4. Implement immediately a range of effective safety plans to protect children in, to, and from school and in their neighborhoods. Safe houses, safe corridors, peace zones, and after-school opportunities must be established in every violence-stricken neighborhood and be monitored by citizen, parent, and law enforcement vigils.

5. Mount massive public education campaigns to let parents, youths, and citizens know that guns endanger rather than protect, and work to decrease reliance on violence to resolve conflicts. Protest in every possible way the glamorization of violence in our popular culture and media. Make pariahs of those who push violence whether in the form of guns or fun.

6. Provide children and youths safe and positive alternatives to the streets. Summer, weekend, and after-school programs to keep children safe and connected to caring adults, role models, and mentors should be an immediate priority for every community and for the president, Congress, governors, and mayors. Parents and youths list after-school programs as their first priority. During the summer months, we urge all communities to utilize more fully the Summer Food Serv-

10 Steps To Stop the War Against Children in America (continued)

ice Program that now reaches only a small fraction of the more than 12 million children it could serve. In 1993, 200 Black college students and community groups provided over 2,000 poor children a breakfast, lunch, and snack, academic enrichment, and recreation in "Freedom Schools" that provided jobs and service opportunities. CDF has a handbook to help you implement such local efforts.

7. Create youth jobs and training opportunities to provide legitimate routes to success. It costs a lot less to create a job than a prison cell! No number of prisons can contain youths given no economic or social stake in our society. A public investment strategy to create an additional million jobs for youths and their parents, above and beyond those that will be created in the growing private-sector economy, is the best violence prevention investment the nation could make. Ask the president and Congress why we can afford billions more for prisons but not for jobs. Ask them whether the pentagon needs a new \$5 billion aircraft carrier, \$6 billion Sea Wolf submarine, and \$25 billion F-22 fighter plane more than our youths need jobs, training, education, health care, and child care. CDF supports effective and fair law enforcement measures. But we urge at least an ounce of prevention for every pound of punishment in any crime measures enacted.

8. Implement effective parent education and family support programs that will help parents better protect, nurture, and support their children, as well as teen pregnancy prevention efforts to help young people avoid too-early pregnancy. New federal Family Preservation and Support Services Program funds should be used to expand services in communities that will strengthen families, prevent family violence and alcohol and drug abuse, and get special help to young parents.

9. Vigorously fight racial discrimination and hate crimes that contribute to community violence and division.

10. Stop adult hypocrisy and restore parental, individual, and community responsibility for children. CDF urges religious congregations of all faiths to participate in a massive Children's Sabbath celebration of and Moral Witness for children on October 14-16, 1994. Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Moslem, and African-American religious action materials are available to help conduct study groups, prayer circles, teach-ins, and worship services on violence and to illustrate what can be done. We also have Child Watch anti-violence materials and training available to help local leaders see and understand the conditions in which our children live and what can be done.

to protect our children from perceived external enemies and far less to protect them from the real internal enemies of poverty, drugs, violence, and family breakdown. These perverse priorities persist, says Ruth Sivard in *World Military and Social Expenditures*, who reports "world military spending in 1992 ex-

ceeded \$600 billion (in 1987 dollars). U.S. military spending accounted for nearly half this amount, despite the fact that in the world's sole superpower, one person in seven [and one preschooler in four] lives below the poverty line ... and over 37 million Americans lack any form of health care coverage."

A Watershed Moment for the United States and Humankind

The ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people.

Ashanti Proverb

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies ... a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hope of its children.

Dwight David Eisenhower

American Society of Newspaper Editors (1953)

The truth, of course, is that the Cold War has come to an end ... [t]he long-established justification for the arms trade, however fragile, has now disappeared

In the United States we now see with an especial clarity the highly conditioned insanity of the present military budget. The enemy has gone; the military establishment — the Pentagon and its supplying industries — stands revealed as a power within itself, sufficient to itself. It selects the weapons to be produced; from its authority in the Executive and its control in the Congress it then arranges the wherewithal by which they are purchased. You identify your task; you pay for its performance; what more in the way of power could be needed? In the past and still, there has even been a companionate political attitude. Government and its taxes are a burden where civilian expenditure is involved and notably when it is for the poor. Military expenditure, in contrast, is not a burden; this is a cost which we should gladly, even proudly assume.

John Kenneth Galbraith (1993)

In the countdown to the third millennium — seven years, 84 months, or 365 weeks from January 1, 1994 — our nation faces watershed decisions that will determine our spiritual well-being, physical and economic security, quality of life, and the very survival of democracy at home and abroad. Will we disarm globally and domestically? Will we close the gap between the haves and have nots? Will we act with determination to staunch the growing racial, eth-

nic, class, and religious strife that is poisoning the well of national as well as global progress?

Despite the end of the Cold War, global war-related deaths in 1992 were the highest in 17 years. These global trends are a mirror image of the growing racial and class balkanization at home and the violence that has destabilized states, cities, and rural areas around America. As the Pentagon slowly — very slowly — demobilizes in the aftermath of Communism's de-

mise, American street gangs and drug dealers have mobilized rapidly. Gun-related deaths among American youths in 1992 were the highest ever as our domestic security eroded and disinvestment in family and youth jobs, early education and schools, neighborhood institutions, and our cities and rural areas continued apace.

Every American — led by our president and Congress — must face our troubled reality and ask whether we will be more or less secure at home in the new millennium if current trends persist. Will our children be ready to learn,

earn, compete, and lead, or will they fall further and further behind the children of competitor nations? Will they be prepared to thrive in a nation and world of many colors and cultures and ideologies, or sink under the heavy burden of racial and ethnic strife that spells death as surely for the American experiment as it does for the troubled states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union? Will we remain too spiritually depressed to mount a righteous war against the plague of violence engulfing us, or will we find the personal, collective, and national will to undergo the spiritual

One Year in the Life of American Children

208	children under 10 are killed by firearms.
560	children 10-14 are killed by firearms.
2,243	children and youths under 20 commit suicide.
4,173	children 15-19 are killed by firearms.
4,941	children and youths under 20 are killed by firearms.
73,886	children under 18 are arrested for drug abuse.
112,230	children under 18 are arrested for violent crimes.
124,238	children under 18 are arrested for drinking or drunken driving.
232,093	babies are born to women who received late or no prenatal care.
531,591	babies are born to teen mothers.
613,514	students are corporally punished in public schools.
928,205	babies are born to mothers without high school degrees.
1,047,000	babies are born into poverty.
1,200,000	latchkey children come home to houses where there is a gun.
1,213,769	babies are born to unmarried mothers.
1,939,456	children under 18 are arrested for all offenses.
1,977,862	students are suspended from public schools.
2,695,010	children are reported abused or neglected.

transformation needed to save our national soul?

The answers are awaiting our hard decisions and action right now. The choices and consequences are clear:

- If economic and social trends of the past 20 years persist over this decade, by the year 2001, 17 million children will be poor — 24 percent of all children under 18.
- If the proportion of births to unmarried women continues to climb over the next seven years (now 101,000 a month), as it has for the last seven, more than 40 percent of all babies born in 2001 will go home from the hospital to a single-parent family.
- In 1990, we spent more than \$100 per person on prisons and jails and only \$6.22 on Head Start. If the trends between 1971 to 1990 persist until 2001, we will be spending \$358 per person to lock up our youths, and only \$13 to get them ready to benefit from school and stay out of prison.
- If current national trends persist, 1 million babies will be born into poverty every year, 44,000 teen mothers will give birth every month, and 37,000 children will be arrested every week.

A New Ethos of Commitment for the 1990s: Struggle, Sacrifice, and Service

Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. Even a superficial look at history reveals that no social advance rolls in on the wheels of inevitability. Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

The future will depend on what we do in the present.

Gandhi

This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is sort of a splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

George Bernard Shaw

An old man paying his last respects to Justice Thurgood Marshall lying in state at the U.S. Supreme Court, when asked why he had stood in line so long, replied: "He didn't just witness change. He caused it."

In this post-Cold-War era of unbearable dissonance between promise and performance,

politics and policy, creed and deed, our capacity to prevent and alleviate deprivation and disease, and reality in a world where one in five people lives on less than a dollar a day and one in five children lives in poverty in the richest nation on earth, you and I must also cause change — transforming change — and not just witness it.

• **The first step toward change is to recognize that there is no easy, single, or quick solution to the gun violence, family disintegration, poverty, and racism we have permitted to cumulate, escalate, permeate, and imprison our culture and national life over many years.** But there *are* achievable solutions that will require simultaneous and sustained personal, collective, and private and public sector leadership. America is fighting a potentially fatal sickness whose cure requires the intensive care of every American — president, parent, youth, professional, and citizen alike. Together we must counter the cultural cacophony of racism, greed, selfishness, and gun violence, and rebuild our frayed family, community, and economic life. Business as usual won't do any more than marginal or cosmetic political gestures will.

Saving our children will be the toughest political struggle of our lifetime but we can and must win it together. Frederick Douglass was right: "If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."

The NRA, powerful firearms and ammunition manufacturers and sellers, the military-industrial complex, wealthy corporations and individuals who gained most from the unjust economic priorities of the past 12 years, and their political allies, will not untie the noose from our children's necks and nation's future unless a massive movement swells up from every nook and cranny of America. Parent by parent, youth by youth, religious congregation by congregation, school by school, and neighborhood by neighborhood, we'll see the day come round again when hope and justice breathe life again into our democracy if we are willing to risk our comfort and status today for our children's and nation's tomorrow.

• **The second step is to mobilize yourself, your family, friends, and community to do whatever is necessary to achieve a cease fire against children and to stop the gun deaths of children.** Massive numbers of moral guerrillas must stop the proliferation of nonsporting firearms and ammunition in private hands and encourage federal, state, and local governments to take necessary steps to regulate the manufacture, marketing, and possession of guns and ammunition as the dangerous products they are. Inform yourself and others about the myths used to justify the domestic arms race. Spread the truth that guns endanger rather than protect so that as many child lives as possible can be saved. Make pariahs of those who seek to arm children and people who kill children.

• **Step three is to provide positive alternatives to the streets for children and implement a range of community emergency measures to keep children safe.** Safety plans, safe corridors, safe houses, and peace zones must be established to protect children in, to, and from schools and in neighborhoods monitored by citizen watches, parent vigils, and effective law enforcement strategies. After-school, weekend, and summer programs must be available in neighborhood centers, congregations, and schools all over America. Epidemic drug and alcohol abuse must be confronted and prevented along with domestic violence. The glamorization of violence in popular entertainment should be made taboo and every caring American must oppose those who push violence either in the form of guns or as fun. Any new crime measures must emphasize prevention as strongly as punishment and include effective rather than just politically popular law enforcement strategies. We are the world's leading jailer with 1.1 million inmates, yet youth violence continues to escalate.

• **Step four is to mount a massive moral witness against the violence of guns, poverty, and child neglect in American life.** The religious community has a special responsibility to be the moral locomotive rather than the moral caboose in stopping the war against

American children. I urge religious congregations of all faiths to lift up the needs of children and ask what the Lord requires of us as individuals and congregations of faith during CDF's third annual Children's Sabbath celebration October 14-16, 1994. Shannon Daley,

CDF's Religious Action Coordinator, has prepared materials for Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, African American, and Moslem congregations. We hope the thousands of 1993 participants will be joined by many thousands more in 1994 who will conduct study groups,

America Ranks ...

#1	in arms exports.*
#1	in military expenditures.*
#1	in military technology.*
#1	in military bases worldwide.*
#1	in military training of foreign forces.*
#1	in military aid to foreign countries.*
#1	in naval fleet.*
#1	in combat aircraft.*
#1	in nuclear reactors.*
#1	in nuclear warheads and bombs.*
#3	in armed forces.*
#4	in literacy rate.*
#6	in GNP per capita.*
#9	in public education expenditures per capita.*
#10	in years of life expectancy.*
#11	in public education expenditures per student.*
#11	in public health expenditures per capita.*
#12	in school-age population per teacher.*
#14	in maternal deaths.**
#15	in primary school-age population in schools.*
#15	in percent of population using family planning.*
#19	in death rates of children younger than five.**
#20	in the average number of births per woman.**
#21	in infant mortality rate.*
#21	in the percent of children immunized against measles.**
#22	in population per physician.*
#24	in economic aid given as a percent of GNP.*
#25	in population with sanitation.*
#27	in the difference between the actual and expected national performance for our children.**

* Among 140 countries. Source: Ruth Leger Sivard, *World Military and Social Expenditures*, 15th Edition, 1993.

** Among industrialized countries. Source: UNICEF, *The Progress of Nations*, 1993.

prayer circles, teach-ins, and preach-ins on violence in our society and what can be done. CDF also has designed a special Child Watch violence module to help local religious, political, and community leaders personally see and understand the conditions in which children live and positive ways to respond. Materials and training are available from Child Watch Coordinator Sharon Ladin. If we are to be God's witnesses, as the prophet Isaiah enjoins, we must open our eyes and hearts to the child suffering in our midst.

We must also recognize that we cannot heal our nation alone and ask both God's forgiveness for our shortcomings as parents and leaders and help as we seek to reestablish peace in our homes and communities. The most important thing I believe I do for my three children, and for all children, is to pray for them every day without ceasing. This mountain of violence can be removed from our homes, neighborhoods, culture, and souls with prayer, which Gandhi said, "from the heart can achieve what nothing else can in the world."

• **Step five is for adults to stop our hypocrisy and break the code of silence about the breakdown of spiritual values and parental and community responsibility for children.** Rev. Jesse Jackson has called on Black youths to break the code of silence about drugs and guns in their schools and is providing a strong leadership voice for a victim-led movement to stop violence. I share his belief that youths — particularly Black youths — need to be empowered to speak out and become involved with adults in reclaiming their lives, schools, and communities. But I believe adults have no right to ask children to do what we are not doing or to assume sole or primary responsibility for problems we adults have created. It is adults who have engaged in epidemic neglect and abuse of children and of each other in our homes. It is adults who have taught children to kill and disrespect human life. It is adults who manufacture, market, and profit from the guns that have turned many neighborhoods and schools into war zones. It is adults who have preached moral values we have not practiced. It is adults who have financed, produced, di-

rected, and performed in the movies, television shows, and music that have made graphic violence ubiquitous in our culture. It is adults who have taught our children that hate, racial and gender intolerance, violence, greed, and selfishness are family values. It is adults who have borne children and then left them to raise themselves. It is adults who have left millions of children behind without basic health care, decent child care, education, jobs, or moral guidance. It is adults who have taught children to look for meaning outside rather than inside themselves, teaching them in Dr. King's words "to judge success by the index of our salaries or the size of our automobiles, rather than by the quality of our service and relationship to humanity." And it is adults who have to stand up and be adults and accept our responsibility to morally guide, parent, protect, and invest in the young.

If you are a parent, recognize that is the most important calling you have. What you do every day, what you say, and how you act, will do more to shape the future of America than any other factor. The Ashanti proverb that the ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people means that its success also lies there. What power we parents have for good!

If you are a would-be parent, think about it carefully and don't have children until you are ready to support them emotionally, physically, and economically for a lifetime. And that goes for men as well as women. Children do not make the woman and are not rungs on a ladder of manhood. Too many Americans have sacrificed family bonds and responsibilities to the pursuit of individual ends — including that elusive value of personal happiness. We throw away spouses that no longer excite us. We throw away or neglect elderly parents whose burden can become very heavy. We throw away children when they don't fit or fulfill our expectations or get in the way of our individual needs.

All parents must struggle to value children enough to discipline them, spend time with them, be decent role models for them, and fight for what they need from our community and nation. And don't keep guns under the

bed, in the closet, truck, or car. It's dangerous to your children. Sarah Brady's crusade was sparked not just by her husband's gun injury but by the discovery of a gun accessible to her young son in the vehicle of a playmate's parent. Hug your children and tell them you love them all the time. And boys need as much hugging as girls.

My own father was a mensch who preached and lived his Baptist faith. He did not yell, shout, or lift his voice in the pulpit but led by example. He believed in prayer, hard work, and in empowering and sharing what he had with others. He was not elegant, but he was educated; not rich, but richly read. He didn't care about things, he cared about thinking and thoughtfulness. He didn't care about status, but about service. He and my mother didn't leave their children any funds, but a more lasting legacy of faith. He didn't own guns because he knew goodness was more powerful, was never greedy, and was always grateful for God's amazing grace. He never hid the ugly realities of our segregated and unjust world from us, but he, my mother, and other community elders never left us children to confront that world alone. They tried to right the wrongs and teach us that the ways of the world were not the ways of God or of a purposeful life. They didn't promise us we would win all the battles we would face but insisted we had to try to fight them. So we never lost hope and learned to struggle and take responsibility for ourselves and our communities because adults loved us enough to struggle with us. Today, too many American adults have left children to face the guns, drug dealers, violence, and poverty all alone and without the skills or adult support to fight back. We are reaping the harvest of the child neglect we have sown.

- **The sixth step is to change perverse government and private-sector policies and budget priorities that have shortchanged and undermined families and children's well-being.** While parents bear the first and primary responsibility for protecting and raising children, parents can't do it alone. Their ability is affected negatively or positively by the eco-

nomic, social, and cultural context and influences of their communities and society.

We now have a new president who has pushed for and signed a number of long-overdue laws and investments enacted by the Congress in 1993: the Family and Medical Leave Act, an expanded Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to help low and moderate income families by \$21 billion over the next five years, a \$2 billion Mickey Leland Hunger Relief Act to combat childhood hunger, a \$1 billion family preservation program to prevent child abuse and neglect, and a \$600 million childhood immunization act to improve shamefully low child immunization rates in America. A new program of national and community service has been enacted as has the Brady bill. President Clinton also has proposed full funding for a high quality Head Start program, school improvement, and national health reform measures.

Despite these important beginning steps, however, the federal budget groundrules still are stacked against children, families, and domestic security needs. The fundamental investment priorities of the nation still favor the military and the wealthy. Balanced Budget Amendment mania (led by many who voted to increase the deficit all through the 1980s) if successful, would build in the inequities and priorities of the past 12 years and make it impossible to invest adequately in our families, rural areas, and cities, in jobs, and in the Healthy Start, Head Start, Fair Start, and Safe Start our children so desperately need.

We cannot curb violence without jobs. Yet there is no serious proposal on the table to put our young people or their parents to work. Why? Because it is too expensive, says whispered sophisticated Washington political wisdom. Creating a new job is a lot less expensive than creating a new prison cell.

We cannot stop drugs if we do not give our young people positive alternatives to the streets and legitimate paths out of poverty. Yet the pending crime bills have many more pounds of punishment than ounces of prevention.

We cannot break the cycle of poverty unless we prevent the teenage pregnancy that correlates with

poverty, low basic skills, and poor self-esteem. Yet a systematic and massive effort to prevent and alleviate this problem and the child poverty that traps one in four preschool children is nowhere apparent.

We cannot win the violent war against children if the Pentagon's request to fight a two-front war abroad is deemed more important than fighting the home-front war. More of that money is needed for our children's present and future security against the enemies of poverty and guns killing them at home.

Although the Cold War is over, more than \$285 billion in 1994 will go to the Pentagon, \$32.5 million an hour, \$781 million a day, \$5.5 billion a week, and \$23.8 billion a month. Only \$3.3 billion will go to Head Start and less than \$3 billion to training and summer jobs for youths. Do we need a new aircraft carrier which will cost \$5 billion in 1995 more than we need after-school and weekend and summer programs for children and youths? Do we need the \$6 billion Sea Wolf submarine more than we need jobs to get parents off welfare? Do we need an F-22 fighter plane to the tune of \$25 billion to counter a phantom next-generation Russian fighter more than we need health coverage for 37 million uninsured Americans?

Every American needs to ask our political leaders these questions, demand straight answers, and make them stop the political posturing and partisan one-upsmanship. Tell them whether you want our country to be number one in healthy, educated children or to continue building more extraordinarily costly weapons for which there is no demonstrated need when our current arsenal already can destroy the world many times over.

I am for maintaining a strong national defense. But the Pentagon should be held to the same standards of efficiency, need, and sacrifice as our children and families and citizens struggling for survival.

• **The seventh step is developing a sense of commitment** as did the school teacher in this fictional but instructive story by Elizabeth Silance Ballard.*

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I have not seen Teddy Stallard since he was in my fifth-grade class, fifteen years ago. It was early in my career, and I had only been teaching for two years.

From the first day he stepped into my classroom, I disliked Teddy.... He was dirty. Not just occasionally, but all the time.... He knew I didn't like him, but he didn't know why. Nor did I know — then or now — why I felt such an intense dislike for him. All I know is that he was a little boy no one cared about, and I made no effort in his behalf....

As the Christmas holidays approached, I knew that Teddy would never catch up in time to be promoted to the sixth-grade level. He would be a repeater.

To justify myself, I went to his cumulative folder from time to time. He had very low grades for the first four years, but no grade failure. How he had made it, I didn't know. I closed my mind to the personal remarks:

First grade: "Teddy shows promise by work and attitude, but has poor home situation."

Second grade: "Teddy could do better. Mother terminally ill. He receives little help at home."

Third grade: "Teddy is a pleasant boy. Helpful, but too serious. Slow learner. Mother passed away end of the year."

Fourth grade: "Very slow, but well behaved. Father shows no interest."

Well, they passed him four times, but he will certainly repeat fifth grade! Do him good! I said to myself....

Teachers always get several gifts at Christmas, but mine that year seemed bigger and more and more elaborate than ever.... [Teddy's gift was wrapped in] a brown paper bag and he had colored Christmas trees and red balls all over it. It was stuck together with masking tape.

"For Miss Thompson — From Teddy," it read.

The group was completely silent and for the first time I felt conspicuous, embarrassed because they all stood watching me unwrap that gift.

As I removed the last bit of masking tape, two items fell to my desk. A gaudy rhinestone bracelet with several stones missing and a small bottle of dime-store cologne — half empty.

I could hear the snickers and whispers and I wasn't sure I could look at Teddy.

"Isn't this lovely?" I asked, placing the bracelet on my wrist. "Teddy, would you help me fasten it?"

He smiled shyly as he fixed the clasp and I held up my wrist for all of them to admire.

There were a few hesitant *ooh's* and *aah's* but as I dabbed the cologne behind my ears, all the girls lined up for a dab behind their ears....

"You smell just like Mom," [Teddy] said softly. "Her bracelet looks real pretty on you, too. I'm glad you liked it."

He left quickly and I locked the door, sat down at my desk and wept, resolving to make up to Teddy what I had deliberately deprived him of — a teacher who cared.

Slowly but surely he caught up with the rest of the class. Gradually there was a definite upward curve in his grades.

He did not have to repeat fifth grade. In fact his final averages were among the highest in the class.

I did not hear from Teddy until seven years later, when his first letter appeared in my mailbox.

"Dear Miss Thompson,

I just wanted you to be the first to know. I will be graduating second in

my class next month. Very truly yours,
Teddy Stallard"

Four years later, Teddy's second letter came.

"Dear Miss Thompson,

I wanted you to be the first to know. I was just informed that I'll be graduating first in my class. The university has not been easy, but I liked it. Very truly yours, Teddy Stallard"

And now—today—Teddy's third letter.

"Dear Miss Thompson,

I wanted you to be the first to know. As of today I am Theodore J. Stallard, MD. How about that!??

I'm going to be married in July, the twenty-seventh, to be exact. I wanted to ask if you could come and sit where Mom would sit if she were here. I'll have no family there as Dad died last year. Very truly yours, Ted Stallard"

I'm not sure what kind of gift one sends to a doctor on completion of medical school and state boards. Maybe I'll just wait and take a wedding gift, but my note can't wait.

"Dear Ted,

Congratulations! You made it and you did it yourself! In spite of those like me and not because of us, this day has come for you.

God bless you. I'll be at the wedding with bells on!"

There are millions of Teddy Stallards all over our nation — children we have forgotten, given up on, left behind. How many Teddys will never become doctors, lawyers, teachers, police officers, or engineers because there was no Miss Thompson? No you? How many children will never learn enough now to earn a living later because you and I did not reach out to them, speak up for them, vote, lobby, and struggle for them?

How many times have you pleaded no time when your own child sought your attention? How often did you write off the unruly and unresponsive child in your classroom, agency, or neighborhood because you didn't want to expend the energy or simply decided it wasn't your job or responsibility?

Any one of us can become a Miss Thompson and everyone of us must if we are to feel and heal our children's pain. It takes just one person to change a child's life and to ensure that children like Teddy are not left behind, have a safe haven from the street, a voice at the end of the phone, time with an attentive Big Sister, Brother, or mentor.

The most important step each of us can take to end the violence that is tearing our country apart is to change ourselves, our hearts, our personal priorities, and our neglect of any of God's children, and add our voice to those of others in a new movement that is bigger than our individual efforts to put the social and economic underpinnings under all American children.

Do not be overwhelmed or give up because problems seem so hard or intractable. Abraham Lincoln kept going through depression and war and never gave up. And so the American Union was preserved. Martin Luther King, Jr., did not give up when he was scared and depressed and tired and didn't know what next step to take. And so the walls of racial segrega-

tion crumbled from his labors and that of countless unsung Black and Brown and White citizens. Elizabeth Glaser hasn't stopped fighting despite AIDS and the loss of a child to AIDS. Her dogged and urgent persistence has contributed to greater attention to this killer disease. Sarah and Jim Brady refused to give up despite setback after setback and opposition from the powerful NRA, and the Brady bill was signed into law in 1993. Millions of children are still beating the odds every day and are staying in school and becoming law-abiding citizens despite the violence and poverty and drugs and family decay all around them. And so you and I can keep on keeping on until we change the odds for all American children by making the violence of guns, poverty, preventable disease, and family neglect unAmerican.

Martin Luther, in a sermon "To Merit Heaven and Hell Through One's Children" in 1520 reminded parents — and all of us — that "on the Day of Judgement God will demand of them the children He has given and committed to them." How will we answer?

Marian Wright Edelman

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