

OPERATION SAFE HOME RESOURCE SUMMARY

New resources

- Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Grant funding has been increased \$90 million in FY '94, to \$265 million.
- HUD has requested \$265 million in FY '95 for Community Partnerships Against Crime (COMPAC), the successor program to the Drug Elimination Grant Program.
- Tenant Opportunity Program (TOP) funding has been increased \$20 million in FY '94, to \$25 million. HUD has proposed a further, \$60 million increase -- to \$85 million -- in FY '95.
- Family Investment Centers, a new initiative, was funded at \$75 million in FY '94.

Redirected resources

- Housing authorities currently have \$320 million in FY '94 modernization funding and \$155 million in 'FY 94 revitalization funding which can be used for public safety needs. HUD will enable housing authorities to redirect these funds in support of Operation Safe Home. FY '94 Drug Elimination Grant funds (\$265 million) and Youth Sports Program funds (\$13.25 million) may be redirected to support Operation Safe Home as well.
- HUD-sponsored anticrime technical assistance and training funding of \$5.275 million for 'FY 94 will be channeled to Operation Safe Home.
- HUD will set aside \$5 million from existing Section 8 funding to pay for relocation of public housing residents who come forward to assist in criminal investigations and prosecutions in public housing.
- Incentives in the form of free rent and free utilities will be offered to encourage police officers to live in public housing. No additional federal funding will be required for this initiative.

Operation Safe Home

Executive Summary

**White House Briefing
February 4, 1994**

**Vice President Albert Gore
HUD Secretary Henry G. Cisneros
Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen
Attorney General Janet Reno
ONDCP Director Dr. Lee Brown**

A number of these initiatives involve new funding; all of them involve better coordinated, more creative and smarter use of federal resources. In the final analysis, broad-based coordination, innovation and flexibility will be key to Operation Safe Home's success.

COMBATting VIOLENT CRIME

Public and assisted housing communities must be safe and drug-free. Residents of public and assisted housing long for safe homes and streets just as much, and deserve them just as much, as their fellow Americans.

Yet residents of public housing and surrounding areas daily run a ferocious gantlet of crime unthinkable to other people. The rate of reported violent crime in public housing and nearby neighborhoods far outstrips the violent crime rate in greater metropolitan areas.

For example, in Los Angeles between 1986 and 1989, reported violent crimes occurred at an average annual rate of 67 per 1,000 people in public housing developments, compared to 22 per 1,000 citywide. In Washington, DC during the same period, the average annual violent crime rate was 41 per 1,000 in public housing and 19 per 1,000 citywide. A substantial percentage of the violent crime in the nation's capital occurs within six blocks of HUD-owned housing.

Public housing residents are victims, not perpetrators of crime. The executive director of the New Haven, Connecticut Housing Authority reports, for example, that while 10 percent of the city's residents live in public housing, 85 percent of those arrested on housing authority property do not live there. And the police in Cincinnati, Ohio report that 77 percent of the people arrested on public housing authority property there are non-residents.

This reign of terror in public and assisted housing must end. It is destroying whole generations of young people and ultimately threatens to destroy the very fabric of our society. Operation Safe Home will address this critical threat through a series of measures:

- Coordinated Law Enforcement and Crime Prevention Operations at Targeted Sites
 - HUD, the Department of Justice, the Treasury Department and ATF will target a number of public and assisted housing sites for law enforcement and crime prevention operations. Site selection will be based on Urban Revitalization Demonstration designations, and ongoing federal, state and local law enforcement operations.

Funding for this program will be increased \$60 million, to \$85 million, in fiscal 1995. Funding for the resident-management program, on which this initiative builds, has already been increased from \$5 million to \$25 million for FY '94.

In addition to these initiatives, HUD will:

- Encourage public housing authorities to work with private groups and business to foster gun-buy programs.
- Prohibit gun dealers from operating in public housing. HUD regulations currently allow "legal profit-making enterprises" to operate in public housing. Regulations will be amended to except gun dealers from this provision and public housing authorities will be required to implement this prohibition by including it in their leases.
- Set aside \$5 million from its Headquarters fund to support relocation programs for public housing residents who come forward to assist in criminal investigations and prosecutions in public housing.
- Encourage law enforcement personnel to live in public and assisted housing and in surrounding communities, through such incentives as rent-free apartments, utility subsidies.
- Help public housing authorities reach agreements with local police agencies for the delivery of effective law enforcement services to public housing residents, through the development of a model contract.
- Require public housing authorities to develop strategies for coordinating with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, as a condition for receiving drug elimination grants. Drug elimination grant applicants in Weed and Seed locations will receive additional preference.
- Give special consideration to Family Investment Center grant applicants in DOJ Weed and Seed locations. Family Investment Centers provide education and employment training for families in public housing.
- Give public housing authorities the flexibility to redirect existing funds so that they can quickly implement new crime-prevention strategies arising from Operation Safe Home, according to local needs.

HUD, the Department of Justice are committed to developing an effective strategy for prosecuting cases in which private owners of FHA-insured multifamily projects have illegally diverted project resources. Misuse or diversion of project assets and income -- "equity skimming" -- contributes to defaults on FHA-insured multifamily mortgages, results in substandard living conditions for low-income families, increases the demand on HUD for further financial assistance and results in losses to HUD through the sale of devalued, foreclosed properties.

Losses to taxpayers from equity skimming are significant. OIG audits over the last three years -- covering less than 1 percent of HUD's \$43 billion insured portfolio -- have uncovered almost \$22 million in equity skimming.

The HUD-DOJ effort to combat equity skimming will strongly support the goals of DOJ's Affirmative Civil Enforcement Program, and is expected to utilize double damages remedies provided by the HUD Reform Act of 1990.

TREASURY



NEWS

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February 4, 1994

REMARKS OF TREASURY SECRETARY LLOYD BENTSEN
PRESS CONFERENCE TO ANNOUNCE OPERATION SAFE HOME
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Last year, I must have done two dozen speeches talking about housing numbers.

Housing starts. New home sales. Lower interest rates so Americans could buy a home or refinance a mortgage. The housing industry helped lift the economy -- got it growing again.

Today, I have housing numbers of a different nature. Since 1990, ATF and the New York City Housing Authority have gone into housing projects in East and Central Harlem to try to get the firearms out.

The number of robberies in those housing projects, down 47%. Number of felonies reported, down 13 percent. Number of felony arrests, up 34 percent.

We can make a difference -- if we work at it, if we have the resources, if we pool our best talents.

That's why I'm here -- to commit Treasury's enforcement activities to the goal Henry Cisneros, Janet Reno, and I share: a safe home.

What we see in housing projects is a lot of crime committed not by people who live there, but by outsiders. They come in, often with handguns, and hire kids living there to do their dirty drug work for them.

Out of Treasury, we'll fight this by doing some things you haven't seen before.

Nobody does protective duty like the Secret Service. They're the experts. I've asked them to apply some of their expertise to housing projects. They'll go in -- look at lighting, look at routes, look at fences -- and recommend how to make the places safer. They did this in Chicago, and they'll be doing more of this.

And I've asked ATF to strengthen its work in housing projects. We call what we do in Harlem "Project Uptown." We look at how violent criminals involved in narcotics-related offenses in the projects are using firearms. It's very dangerous work -- you just don't go bust the door in and run -- much of it's undercover. But if you do it right, the results are there. Last year, we started doing similar work in Baltimore.

The Achilles program of ATF is another one. Here we're going after the shooters -- the armed career criminals in the highest crime precincts in the country. So far we've locked up over a thousand criminals, who if they were on the streets, would commit on average three violent felonies a week.

There are too many gangs in the projects. ATF agents are instructing local officers how to go into schools and teach kids that drugs and gangs are bad. We pick schools near housing projects.

One last thing: ATF has made tracing guns recovered on school property a top priority. We want to know who is supplying the guns to the kids. Are they coming from licensed dealers? The black market? And if it's on the black market, did they originate with some particular dealers who have a license? We started this two months ago, and so far have traced several hundred guns.

So, at Treasury, we're doing what we can, and we'll be cooperating with HUD and Justice to make homes safer.



U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Washington, D.C. 20410-4000

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Operation Safe Home
Press Briefing
The White House
February 4, 1994
Secretary Henry G. Cisneros

PUBLIC HOUSING: THE PROMISE AND THE REALITY

I'd like to thank you all for coming here this morning. Attorney General Reno, Secretary Bentsen, Director Brown and I want to tell you about a broad-based, interdepartmental initiative -- Operation Safe Home -- which we are undertaking to reduce violent crime in public and assisted housing, and to crack down on white collar crime in public housing and FHA-insured housing.

Public housing and publicly assisted housing should be engines of transition: from welfare to work; from dependence to self-sufficiency; from tenancy to homeownership. They must be places where people can pull their lives together, consolidate their gains, build a stake and move on.

Above all else -- and before all else -- they must be safe environments; places where people can walk the streets without fear, where children can go to and from school and play outside without jeopardy. Residents of public and assisted housing want to live in secure, safe communities as much as anyone else in America.

But public housing communities are not safe today. In Los Angeles between 1986 and 1989, for example, reported violent crimes occurred at an average annual rate of 67 per 1,000 people in public housing developments, compared to 22 per 1,000 citywide. The murder rate in public housing in Chicago was three times that of the city as a whole in 1988. A substantial percentage of all of the violent crime here in our nation's capital occurs within six blocks of HUD-owned housing.

Crime statistics show that public housing residents are not to blame for this reign of terror. The executive director of the New Haven, Connecticut Housing Authority reports, for example, that while 10 percent of the city's residents live in public housing, 85 percent of those arrested on housing authority property do not live there. And the police in Cincinnati, Ohio report that 77 percent of the people arrested on public housing authority property there are non-residents.

Public housing residents literally live under the gun. Gangs control the stairwells of their buildings; they have to put their

children to bed in bathtubs at night to protect them from stray bullets, keep them inside during the day for fear they'll be caught in somebody's crossfire. They live in places where the police themselves won't even go.

No one in America should have to live in such conditions, which are absolutely unacceptable in any housing subsidized by federal dollars.

OPERATION SAFE HOME: A COORDINATED APPROACH

Operation Safe Home will bring the law enforcement resources of the federal government, in cooperation with state and local authorities, to bear on violent crime in public and assisted housing.

Operation Safe Home complements President Clinton's efforts to combat crime in American communities. The President has been briefed on this initiative and strongly supports it.

At the federal level, this effort cuts across departmental and agency lines, involving HUD, the Department of Justice, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the ATF, the FBI, the Secret Service and U.S. attorneys.

I want to express my appreciation and thanks to Attorney General Reno, Secretary Bentsen, HUD Inspector General Susan Gaffney and to all of the other dedicated people at HUD, Justice and Treasury who have worked long hours to put this initiative together.

Attorney General Reno and Secretary Bentsen will speak to you about the roles their departments are playing in this vital effort, and Director Brown will explain how the Administration's new National Drug Control Strategy dovetails with our work.

First, I would like to briefly outline what HUD is doing to combat violent crime and white collar crime in public and assisted housing.

COMBATTING VIOLENT CRIME

We're working with Justice and Treasury to mount law enforcement and crime prevention operations at selected public housing and assisted housing sites.

We will also sponsor conferences on violent crime at each site. Members of Congress, tenants, property owners and managers, local businesses, community groups and federal, state and local law enforcement authorities will be invited.

A violent-crime steering committee will be established at each site to recommend preventive measures and oversee efforts to prevent crime.

We're undertaking new initiatives to support law enforcement and crime prevention in public and assisted housing.

Our new Community Partnerships Against Crime (COMPAC), will give public housing authorities increased resources and flexibility to combat gang activity and youth violence, as well as drug crime, through prevention and enforcement.

Our Tenant Opportunity Program (TOP) will expand existing training programs for public housing residents to include training in business ownership and management, child care, youth programs, tenant security patrols and other activities that will generate opportunity, give people a stake in their communities and prevent crime.

We're implementing policies to both enhance crime enforcement and prevention. We're barring gun dealers from operating in public housing; helping housing authorities relocate residents who come forward to testify about criminal activities; giving public housing authorities more flexibility to redirect funds, so they can quickly implement new crime-prevention strategies, according to local needs.

COMBATTING WHITE COLLAR CRIME

The damage violent crime does to people and communities is obvious. But there is another category of criminal behavior which is just as damaging in the long run: white collar crime.

Fraud leads to the literal physical deterioration of public and assisted housing, which is a valuable, taxpayer-supported public asset, and it erodes public support for public and assisted housing, and thereby our ability to give people the chance to lift themselves economically.

Taxpayers who depend on us to maintain the value of their investment in public and assisted housing will not tolerate this behavior, and we will not tolerate it. We will not let residents be victimized by the fraudulent activities of a few public housing officials and landlords.

The HUD Office of Inspector General (OIG) and the FBI are cracking down on public housing fraud. We are undertaking a joint effort to target, investigate and prosecute cases involving substantial fraud in public housing administrations throughout the country.

Meanwhile, HUD OIG auditors and investigators will conduct a series of probes to uncover additional instances of corruption -- probes which we expect will result in another wave of cases for OIG/FBI action.

We are also cracking down on another fraudulent activity, "equity skimming" in HUD-insured, privately owned multifamily housing.

Equity skimming -- in which property owners illegally divert resources from their projects -- results in substandard living conditions for residents and huge losses for taxpayers.

HUD's OIG, the Department of Justice and U.S. attorneys are working together to develop an effective strategy for prosecuting these cases.

SENDING A CLEAR MESSAGE

Our message to those who would defraud taxpayers and prey on public and assisted housing residents for illegal private gain is straightforward and simple: Don't even think about it.

Our message to gangs, drug dealers and other criminals is equally clear: There is no safe harbor for you in HUD-financed housing.

And, finally, for the residents of public and assisted housing -- the people who get up every day and send their children to school, the people who support their families by working long hours at hard, low-paying jobs, the people who desperately want to work and pay their own way, and who so desperately need a decent, wholesome, **safe**, environment -- our message is this:

We will not write off your communities as unsalvageable war zones. We will no longer consign you to lives of round-the-clock fear. We will not look the other way while your children are lost to violence and drugs.

We understand your desire and need for a decent, **SAFE**, place to live -- a desire which you share with all Americans -- and with the help of all Americans, from local communities, to state capitols, to Capitol Hill, we are going to work with you to make your homes, your neighborhoods, and your communities, safe at last.

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OPERATION SAFE HOME OVERVIEW

Public housing and publicly assisted housing are valuable, critical social assets. For millions of low-income Americans, they can and should be engines of transition: from welfare to work; from dependence to self-sufficiency; from tenancy to homeownership. Most public and assisted housing plays this role today.

But public and assisted housing cannot live up to its promise if it is wracked by crime, drugs and violence and undermined by fraud and abuse. Operation Safe Home will bring the coordinated resources and expertise of the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Justice and Treasury, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) -- in cooperation with state and local law enforcement agencies and public housing authorities -- to bear on violent crime and white collar crime in public and assisted housing.

President Clinton is already committed to an aggressive assault on crime in American communities -- through the addition of 100,000 officers to the nation's police forces, community policing, increased fees for gun-dealer licenses and a ban on assault weapons. Operation Safe Home will complement the president's efforts by concentrating resources in areas where crime is most serious and delivering law-enforcement services to low-income individuals and families who are crime's first and most frequent victims.

Operation Safe Home will combat violent crime in public and assisted housing through:

- Tightly coordinated law enforcement and crime prevention operations at targeted sites.
- Federal initiatives and policies to strengthen law enforcement and crime and drug prevention in public and assisted housing.
- Improved consultation and coordination between HUD and federal law enforcement agencies and ONDCP on design and implementation of HUD crime-prevention initiatives.

White collar crime will be fought and deterred through:

- An assault on bribery, embezzlement and bid rigging in public housing.
- Prosecution of owners of private, HUD-insured multifamily housing who illegally divert project resources.

A number of these initiatives involve new funding; all of them involve better coordinated, more creative and smarter use of federal resources. In the final analysis, broad-based coordination, innovation and flexibility will be key to Operation Safe Home's success.

COMBATTING VIOLENT CRIME

Public and assisted housing communities must be safe and drug-free. Residents of public and assisted housing long for safe homes and streets just as much, and deserve them just as much, as their fellow Americans.

Yet residents of public housing and surrounding areas daily run a ferocious gantlet of crime unthinkable to other people. The rate of reported violent crime in public housing and nearby neighborhoods far outstrips the violent crime rate in greater metropolitan areas.

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Public housing residents are victims, not perpetrators of crime. The executive director of the New Haven, Connecticut Housing Authority reports, for example, that while 10 percent of the city's residents live in public housing, 85 percent of those arrested on housing authority property do not live there. And the police in Cincinnati, Ohio report that 77 percent of the people arrested on public housing authority property there are non-residents.

This reign of terror in public and assisted housing must end. It is destroying whole generations of young people and ultimately threatens to destroy the very fabric of our society. Operation Safe Home will address this critical threat through a series of measures:

- Coordinated Law Enforcement and Crime Prevention Operations at Targeted Sites
 - HUD, the Department of Justice, the Treasury Department and ATF will target a number of public and assisted housing sites for law enforcement and crime prevention operations. Site selection will be based on Urban Revitalization Demonstration designations, and ongoing federal, state and local law enforcement operations.

- The Department of Justice, working with ATF, Secret Service and the HUD Office of Inspector General (OIG), will coordinate law enforcement work and reach out to state and local police and prosecutors at these sites. They will analyze violent crime and drug-related problems in light of ongoing enforcement efforts and develop plans for expanded enforcement as necessary. While HUD OIG assumes responsibility for coordinating these efforts, leadership and operations will be decided separately by each group.
- A HUD-sponsored conference on violent crime and drug crime will be convened at each site. Members of Congress, tenants, owners, management, local businesses, community groups, state and local officials and law enforcement agencies will be invited to participate.
- A violent-crime steering committee will be established at each site. The committees will be chaired by the executive director of the public housing authority (or equivalent), and will include representatives of tenants, owners, management, local businesses, community groups, and law enforcement. The committees will undertake an on-going assessment of the violent crime problem at each site; make recommendations on crime and drug prevention efforts; and oversee prevention programs.
- New federal policies and initiatives to support law enforcement and crime prevention in public and assisted housing
 - Community Partnerships Against Crime (COMPAC), currently pending before Congress, will give public housing authorities increased flexibility to address gang activity, drug use, youth violence and other forms of crime through both enforcement and prevention.

COMPAC will build on HUD's Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Grant Program, which specifically targets drug-related crime. Funding for this program was increased \$90 million, to \$265 million in FY '94.
 - The Tenant Opportunity Program (TOP) will permit resident groups, in cooperation with local housing authorities, to extend the scope of HUD's existing Resident Management Program beyond training for property management to training for business ownership and operation, child care, youth programs, tenant patrols and other activities that help prevent crime.

Funding for this program will be increased \$60 million, to \$85 million, in fiscal 1995. Funding for the resident-management program, on which this initiative builds, has already been increased from \$5 million to \$25 million for FY '94.

In addition to these initiatives, HUD will:

- Encourage public housing authorities to work with private groups and business to foster gun-buy programs.
- Prohibit gun dealers from operating in public housing. HUD regulations currently allow "legal profit-making enterprises" to operate in public housing. Regulations will be amended to except gun dealers from this provision and public housing authorities will be required to implement this prohibition by including it in their leases.
- Set aside \$5 million from its Headquarters fund to support relocation programs for public housing residents who come forward to assist in criminal investigations and prosecutions in public housing.
- Encourage law enforcement personnel to live in public and assisted housing and in surrounding communities, through such incentives as rent-free apartments, utility subsidies.
- Help public housing authorities reach agreements with local police agencies for the delivery of effective law enforcement services to public housing residents, through the development of a model contract.
- Require public housing authorities to develop strategies for coordinating with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, as a condition for receiving drug elimination grants. Drug elimination grant applicants in Weed and Seed locations will receive additional preference.
- Give special consideration to Family Investment Center grant applicants in DOJ Weed and Seed locations. Family Investment Centers provide education and employment training for families in public housing.
- Give public housing authorities the flexibility to redirect existing funds so that they can quickly implement new crime-prevention strategies arising from Operation Safe Home, according to local needs.

The Department of Justice, the Treasury Department, HUD and ONDCP will work together to enhance the capabilities of housing authority police officers. HUD, DOJ and Treasury will identify training opportunities for officers, including the prestigious training facilities at the FBI Academy and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

The Department of Justice and HUD will collaborate to identify ways to help public housing authorities screening out and/or evict undesirable tenants and will coordinate with ongoing Weed and Seed efforts.

- Better targeting of HUD's existing crime- and drug-prevention programs

As part of its national crime- and drug-prevention efforts, HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing sponsors technical assistance and training in areas such as community policing, resident patrols, crime- and drug-prevention through environmental design, risk-focused violence prevention, and establishment of youth councils. Henceforth, HUD will consult with the Department of Justice and the Department of the Treasury and ONDCP on the design and implementation of these programs, thus ensuring that the programs benefit from the extensive expertise and experience of Federal law enforcement.

COMBATting WHITE COLLAR CRIME

Fraudulent activity leads to the literal physical deterioration of public and assisted housing and erodes public support for public and assisted housing programs.

Taxpayers depend on HUD to maintain the value of their investment in public and assisted housing, and residents depend on HUD to protect them from being victimized by the fraudulent activities of a few public housing officials and landlords.

HUD's OIG and the Department of Justice will undertake a joint effort to target, investigate and prosecute cases involving substantial fraud (such as bribery, embezzlement, and bid-rigging) in public housing administrations throughout the country. Cases in this area are often the result of information provided by public housing officials and concerned residents.

Meanwhile, during the first half of calendar 1994, HUD OIG auditors and investigators will be conducting a series of limited probes to uncover additional instances of fraud, with the expectation that these probes will generate another wave of cases for FBI/OIG investigation and federal prosecution.

HUD, the Department of Justice are committed to developing an effective strategy for prosecuting cases in which private owners of FHA-insured multifamily projects have illegally diverted project resources. Misuse or diversion of project assets and income -- "equity skimming" -- contributes to defaults on FHA-insured multifamily mortgages, results in substandard living conditions for low-income families, increases the demand on HUD for further financial assistance and results in losses to HUD through the sale of devalued, foreclosed properties.

Losses to taxpayers from equity skimming are significant. OIG audits over the last three years -- covering less than 1 percent of HUD's \$43 billion insured portfolio -- have uncovered almost \$22 million in equity skimming.

The HUD-DOJ effort to combat equity skimming will strongly support the goals of DOJ's Affirmative Civil Enforcement Program, and is expected to utilize double damages remedies provided by the HUD Reform Act of 1990.

OPERATION SAFE HOME: A TOP PRIORITY

- Thank you for asking me to join you today.
- Operation Safe Home is a top priority for the entire Clinton Administration.
- Operation Safe Home is President Clinton's way of combining the resources of the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Treasury, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy with the resources of state and local law enforcement agencies to attack conditions that reduce public housing's quality of life.
- It's importance to the Administration was underscored February 4 when Vice President Gore unveiled it at The White House.
- We have formed a partnership for Safe Home at the highest levels of the federal government.

WHAT SAFE HOME IS ALL ABOUT

- Through Operation Safe Home, we want to empower public housing communities to reduce violent crime.
- Public housing is home to some of America's hardest working people -- law abiding people who deserve to live in safe communities.
- And we also want to make sure that our country's investment in communities is not impeded by criminals who reach into the public coffers and put that money into their own pockets.
- Whether the criminal is carrying a gun or a briefcase, we're out to put them out of business with Operation Safe Home.

OPERATION SAFE HOME AND ITS RESULTS

- I am honored to be here to discuss Operation Safe Home's results and successes.
- Last month, we launched an aggressive campaign -- Operation Safe Home -- to combat crime and violence in public housing, as well as fraud in public and assisted housing programs. Now, I pleased to inform you that **Operation Safe Home is working.**

- The violent crime initiative has led to 24 arrests, 14 indictments, and the recovery of more than 25 weapons, and nearly \$300,000 in drugs and cash.
- The White Collar effort has yielded six indictments and a guilty plea. The multifamily equity skimming effort has led to four civil settlements requires \$9.9 million in repayments to multifamily projects and \$2.1 million to HUD, a double damages judgment of \$1.6 million, and one guilty plea.
- **Family Investment Centers:** A part of Operation Safe Home, HUD has made available \$75 million for Family Investment Centers (FIC) in FY 1993 and FY 1994. FICS will provide families living in Public and Indian Housing with better access to educational and employment opportunities.
- **Drug Elimination Program.** HUD is announcing the availability of \$232 million under Public Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP). Since FY 89, 1,762 grants totalling \$533 million have been awarded to housing authorities nationwide under this program. HUD grants these awards to Public and Indian Housing authorities to control and prevent drug use, drug trafficking and drug-related crime in these communities.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S BROADER STRATEGY

- Operation Safe Home is part of the President's broader strategy to make public housing communities and other low-income communities more liveable.
- The President's \$6 billion anti-crime initiative will make public housing safer and healthier.
- Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities, the National Service program, the Brady Act handgun law, and Reemployment and Worker Training will bring still more hope and opportunity in places that need it.
- Operation Safe Home is part of this comprehensive framework that will change the way public housing residents live, so that their communities are safer.
- I am proud that we at HUD are a part of this tremendous, far-reaching and effective effort. Thank you.

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PROJECT UPTOWN

ATF HAS TWO CONGRESSIONALLY MANDATED FIELD OFFICES THAT ARE AGGRESSIVELY TARGETING AND PURSUING VIOLENT CRIME WITHIN PUBLIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS IN NEW YORK CITY AND BALTIMORE.

THE NEW YORK PROJECT UPTOWN WAS STARTED IN MARCH 1990 WHEN ATF JOINED FORCES WITH NEW YORK HOUSING AUTHORITY POLICE TO WORK IN AREAS OF EAST AND CENTRAL HARLEM.

PROJECT UPTOWN'S METHODOLOGY IS STRAIGHTFORWARD:

INTELLIGENCE IS GATHERED RELATIVE TO NARCOTICS OPERATIONS ON HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTY; UNDERCOVER PURCHASES OF NARCOTICS ARE MADE TO DETERMINE THE SIZE AND TYPE OF THE OPERATION, AND IF FIREARMS ARE BEING USED. IF THE OPERATION APPEARS SUSCEPTIBLE TO PROSECUTION UNDER 18 U.S.C. § 924(C), A WARRANT IS SECURED AND THE PREMISES ARE RAIDED.

RESULTS OBTAINED THROUGH NEW YORK'S PROJECT UPTOWN HAVE BEEN SIGNIFICANT. FOR THE PERIOD OF MARCH 1990 TO NOVEMBER 1993 WE HAVE SERVED 263 SEARCH WARRANTS, MADE 525 SEARCH WARRANT-RELATED ARRESTS, 807 STREET ARRESTS, SEIZED 100 FIREARMS, OVER 60 LBS OF NARCOTICS (PACKAGED FOR STREET SALES), SEIZED 12 VEHICLES, AND \$276,403 IN U.S. CURRENCY HAS BEEN RECOVERED. AT ONE POINT, INCIDENTS OF CRIME DECREASED ALMOST 16 PERCENT WHILE

ARRESTS ROSE 14 PERCENT. ROBBERIES DROPPED OVER 46 PERCENT AND BURGLARIES WERE DOWN 22 PERCENT.

THE TASK FORCE IS CURRENTLY COMPRISED OF 7 ATF AGENTS AND 25 NEW YORK HOUSING AUTHORITY POLICE.

BALTIMORE'S PROJECT UPTOWN WAS INITIATED IN AUGUST OF 1993 AND BECAME OPERATIONAL IN NOVEMBER OF 1993. THUS FAR THE TASK FORCE HAS INITIATED 25 INVESTIGATIONS, EXECUTED 38 STATE AND FEDERAL SEARCH WARRANTS, ARRESTED 40 PERSONS ON STATE AND FEDERAL CHARGES, SEIZED/PURCHASED 25 FIREARMS, AND SEIZED/PURCHASED OVER 940 INDIVIDUAL QUANTITIES OF COCAINE AND HEROIN.

BALTIMORE'S PROJECT UPTOWN IS COMPRISED OF 6 ATF AGENTS 1 HUD, 1 USSS, 1 BALTIMORE HOUSING OFFICER, AND THE BALTIMORE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT (1).

SECRETARY BENTSEN'S CRIME INITIATIVES INCLUDE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FORMAL PUBLIC HOUSING (UPTOWN PROJECTS) IN CHICAGO AND NEW ORLEANS DURING FY94, TO BE FOLLOWED BY ATLANTA, BOSTON, DETROIT, DENVER, AND NEWARK IN FY95. WE HAVE RECENTLY RECEIVED NOTICE THE BJA HAS \$200,000 IN GRANT MONEY FROM HUD TO BE USED IN CHICAGO. CURRENTLY OUR PLANS CALL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN UPTOWN PROJECT IN CHICAGO THAT WILL

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USE A PORTION OF THIS GRANT TO FINANCE THE PLACEMENT OF
BULLETPROOF EQUIPMENT IN CHICAGO. YOU WILL HEAR MORE
ABOUT BULLETPROOF DURING YOUR BRIEFING ON ATF'S
CEASEFIRE PROGRAM.

Jose Cerda
Room 224 OEOB

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 4, 1994

PRESS BRIEFING

BY

THE VICE PRESIDENT,

SECRETARY HENRY CISNEROS, SECRETARY LLOYD BENTSEN,

ATTORNEY GENERAL JANET RENO AND DIRECTOR OF DRUG POLICY LEE BROWN

The Briefing Room

10:14 A.M. EST

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you all very much for coming. There's no more important issue to President Clinton and to all of us than crime. The entire administration is working on this matter, and just about all of us who are working on it full-time are here today. I'm going to speak first, but then turn it over to Secretary Cisneros and Secretary Bentsen and Attorney General Reno and Director Lee Brown.

I simply want to affirm this administration's determination to make our community safe and to say how happy we are that this concerted and coordinated campaign to reduce crime in public housing is now underway. This announcement today of Operation Safe Home represents the coordination of activities throughout the administration to address this problem.

It is not right that we ask poor people to live in public housing so dangerous that the police will not even patrol there. It is not right that we ask children to come home from school to hallways and stairwells where they are completely at the whim of drug pushers with Uzi machine guns. It is not right that vacant housing units which should be prepared for families in need of housing are taken over by drug lords and used as bases for drug sales that infect entire neighborhoods. It is not right that housing funds and repair materials are siphoned off by white-collar hustlers when Americans in need of housing are sleeping on sidewalks and park benches.

We intend to do something about it. This interagency, administration-wide approach is designed to make housing safe in this country.

I was in Chicago yesterday, on a day when the newspapers were filled with the reports of 19 children being found living in squalor, eating food from bowls that dogs were using on the floor of the apartment. The adults were not taking responsibility, obviously, and were allegedly involved with the drug pushers who were on the doorsteps and in the neighborhood.

Last week I went to a high school less than two miles from the White House where gunshots rang out and kids in chemistry class had to duck under the desks when the window was broken by a bullet. I also saw another school yesterday in Chicago, just blocks from the place where those children were found living in squalor, the Flower Vocational School. And this school demonstrated the hope that we can fight crime successfully.

The problem is enormous and we have to understand how serious and how difficult the challenge is. We've all talked about

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how much pride we take in the administration's economic successes with all of the new improvements in jobs and the low interest rates and recovering consumer confidence, and it's been a good year. But in the same year that we talk about all these favorable statistics, more than 23,000 Americans were murdered; more than 100,000 women were raped, nearly two million were victims of assault.

In that same year, the statistics tell us that 160,000 children stayed home each day from school because they're scared that they would be hurt at school. And in our public housing throughout this country, we see a crime rate and murder rate and incidents of violence that is much larger than in the community as a whole. And today what we're saying is we're going to do something about it.

We're taking a holistic approach. We're taking an approach that coordinates the activities of every department and agency, and we're determined to be successful. This fits in with the President's larger efforts to put 100,000 more community police officers on the streets, to ban assault weapons, to make it tougher for juveniles to get any kind of gun, to put the repeat offenders away and to take the other steps that are necessary to fight crime. And in this Operation Safe Home approach, we're going to zero in on a particular part of the crime problem that is very serious, that we're going to do something about.

So that's the reason we're here. And I want to make just two points briefly before turning it over to Secretary Cisneros. First, not all crime is violent crime. The fraud and abuse in the small number of HUD operations, the equity skimming and multifamily insured housing taints everyone unfairly. And we're going to root out both kinds.

Second, the old ways of fighting crime are not enough. The thrust of our National Performance Review Report was that for some problems, government has to develop programs that cut across department and agency lines. And for the problem of crime we're doing just that and this program is an example.

Now, finally, the overwhelming majority of people in public housing are good people who work hard and are trying to hold their families together. They deserve the right and the opportunity to walk the streets in front of their housing units without getting mugged; the right to ride the elevator to their floor without worry; to sit in their homes without having bullets crash through the window. And they are the people that we thought about the most in devising this program. They are the ones that we most want to help.

And now it's my pleasure to step back and let Secretary Cisneros describe in some more detail how this program will work and he will then, in turn, recognize Secretary Bentsen who will pass it along to the other members of the Cabinet who are here. Secretary Cisneros.

SECRETARY CISNEROS: Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President.

This effort stems from a pilot initiative that we worked together on in October of this last year, when HUD, together with the Justice Department, United States attorneys and Drug Enforcement Administration in the Boston area, raided and netted 18 major drug dealers operating out of public housing -- a group that was known in the Charleston area of Boston as the Irish mafia. And when we were able to root out that problem in public housing, it had a major effect in an entire section of Boston.

So, while we address ourselves to public housing as a base of operations, in many cases, we're really talking about an entire area of cities -- entire neighborhoods. And so it is

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completely in concert with the President's commitment to address crime on the streets of America's cities and communities.

We have a special obligation, obviously, to persons who live in public housing settings because they live in housing that is federally assisted, and we have an obligation to try to make that housing, which we are part of, which we help support, safe. Many public housing communities, simply stated, are not safe today.

In Los Angeles, for example, between 1986 and 1989, it's reported that even though the citywide rate of crime is 22 per 1,000 citywide; violent crime incidents, 22 per 1,000; in the public housing developments of Los Angeles it is 67 per 1,000, or three times the rate. And in 1988 it was documented that the murder rate in public housing in Chicago was three times the citywide average.

Crime statistics also show that public housing residents are not to blame for the reign of terror. The executive director for the New Haven, Connecticut Housing Authority reports, for example, that while 10 percent of the city's residents live in public housing, 85 percent of those arrested on public housing authority property do not live there. And the police in Cincinnati, Ohio, report that 77 percent of the people arrested in public housing authority crime are nonresidents.

Clearly, no one in America should live in conditions where they live in constant fear. Operation Safe Home will bring the law enforcement resources of the federal government, in cooperation with state and local authorities, to bear on violent crime in public and assisted housing. And that means the Department of Justice, the Department of Treasury, the Office of the Drug Administrator.

First I'd like to briefly outline what HUD is doing for its part as an element of this initiative to address violent crime and white-collar crime. There are three elements to our initiative: first, to combat violent crime in public housing; second, to deal with white-collar crime -- that is to say the siphoning off of contracts and repairs and money that ought to be going to keep housing units in good shape; and finally, nonpublic housing but other assisted housing equity skimming and so forth.

We are proposing to the Congress a new initiative we call COMPAC -- Community Partnership Against Crime -- for the specific purpose of focusing new resources in these settings. We're implementing policies to bar gun dealers from operating in public housing; to help housing authorities relocate residents who come forward to testify about criminal activities with the cooperation of the FBI; giving public housing authorities more flexibility to redirect funds so they can quickly implement new crime-fighting strategies -- all of these directed to the problem of violent crime in public housing.

To combat some of the white-collar crime issues, the fraud that leads to physical deterioration of housing, which is a valuable, taxpayer-supported effort, we're working to identify in a concerted way the crackdown on public housing fraud -- undertaking a joint effort to target, investigate and prosecute case involving substantial fraud in public housing administrations; conducting a series of probes now to uncover additional instances of cooperation. And in this, the Inspector General at HUD and the FBI are cooperating.

Equity skimming, I mentioned ago, where property owners illegally divert resources from their projects, results in substandard living conditions for residents and potentially huge losses for taxpayers. Activities where people front and set up sham organizations to provide housing and then skim the money off for private gain.

Today we are attempting to, in one area of our responsibilities as a federal government-assisted and public housing, to send a clear message that is in concert with the President's larger message to the American people about crime.

Our message to those who would defraud taxpayers and prey on public housing residents for illegal gain is straightforward and simple: Don't even think about it. Our message to gains and drug dealers and other criminals is equally clear: There is no safe harbor for you in federally-financed housing.

And finally, for the residents of public and assisted housing, the people who get up every day and send their children to school, who so desperately need a safe and decent and wholesome environment, our message is: We will not write off your communities as unsalvageable war zones. We will not look the other way while your children are lost to violence and drugs. We're going to work with you to make your homes, your neighborhoods and your communities safe homes.

It is my pleasure to introduce the Secretary of the Treasury, the honorable Lloyd Bentsen, who has participated in some of the pilot initiatives that have given force to this operation. This is an effort to take things that are working and have worked in specific locals, a new kind of cooperation across federal departments, and take it to the country in a major assault on crime based in publicly supported housing.

Secretary Bentsen.

SECRETARY BENTSEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. I suppose last year I must have made two dozen speeches about home starts and about low interest rates. Different type of speech this time -- talking about safe homes and what we can do about it. And as the Secretary was stating, we've done some test-tube things, we've done some test marketing, we've done some laboratories, in effect, to see what works and what doesn't work. And we saw a situation where we brought the ATF together with the New York Housing Authority and we did that in East and Central Harlem to get the firearms out.

The number of robberies in those housing projects, down 47 percent. Number of felonies reported, down 13 percent. Number of felony arrests, up 34 percent. We can make a difference if we work at it, if we have the resources, if we pool our best talents, working more cooperatively together. Something that may be a fringe bit of information for us may be very basic and essential to the Justice Department, or vice versa. So working together I think we can do a much more effective job.

And that's why I'm here -- to commit Treasury's enforcement activities to the goal that Secretary Cisneros, that Attorney General Janet Reno, that Dr. Brown, these things that we share -- a safe home.

What we see in housing projects is a lot of crime that's committed not by people who live there, but by outsiders. They come in often with handguns and they hire kids to do their dirty work for them. Out of Treasury we'll fight this by doing some of the things that you have not seen before. Insofar as the Secret Service, I don't know anyone that does a better job in protective services; they're experts. So what we'll do in that regard, what I've asked them to do is to apply that expertise to the housing projects. They'll go in and they'll look at the lighting, they'll look at the fences, they'll look at the exits. They'll recommend how to make those places safer. They did this in Chicago and it worked; and they'll be doing more of this.

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I've asked the ATF to strengthen its work in housing projects. We call what we do in Harlem Project Uptown. We look at how violent criminals involved in narcotics -- what they do in these projects and how they're related to firearms. It's very dangerous work. You don't just go in and bust a door down and enter. There's a lot of undercover work that's also done in that regard. And if you do that right, the results are there. Last year we started doing some similar work in Baltimore, carried it on over there.

The Achilles Program of ATF is another one. Here we go after the shooters, the armed career criminals in the highest crime precincts in the country. So far we've locked up over 1,000 criminals who, if they were on the streets, would be committing on the average three violent felonies a week.

There are too many gangs in the projects. ATF agents are instructing local officers how to go into the schools, teach the kids that drugs and gangs are bad. We pick schools near housing projects to work on. And one last thing: ATF has made tracing guns recovered on school property a top priority. We want to know who is supplying the guns to the kids. Are they coming from licensed dealers? Are they coming from a black market? And if it's on the black market, did they originate with some particular dealers who do have a license? We started this two months ago, and so far, we've traced several hundred. So, at Treasury, we are doing what we can, and we'll be cooperating with HUD and Justice to make homes safer.

Now, it's my privilege to introduce the Attorney General of the United States Janet Reno, who has taken a strong leadership role in this regard. Thank you.

ATTORNEY GENERAL: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Thanks to the Vice President's leadership and to your efforts in the Department of Treasury, we have an unparalleled spirit of cooperation between federal law enforcement agencies. I just commend Secretary Cisneros' efforts in focusing on public housing in terms of how we use administration resources in the wisest way possible to focus on violent crime. As the Secretary of Treasury has pointed out, we can make a difference. Working together with local law enforcement in a true partnership between federal agencies and local law enforcement, we can make more of a difference.

We have got to focus on these violent criminals -- make sure that people are willing to testify against them. And as part of this effort, Secretary Cisneros is taking steps to make sure that HUD participates in witness protection programs, which I think is absolutely essential. But we can do more in terms of making sure the United States Attorney, ATF, the FBI and the housing inspectors are working together to ensure a focus that can make a difference within communities.

At the same time, I think it is imperative that we not forget white-collar fraud. We get caught up with violence and we forget how people are getting ripped off, how the taxpayers are getting ripped off by those people who think they can thumb their nose at us while they cheat us. We're going after them both in terms of criminal and civil efforts to recover funds for the taxpayers to try make people whole and to try to make public housing a safe place.

I have seen public housing projects around this country where citizens come together with HUD leadership, with local police, with federal agencies. And when everybody is working together, when we have involved the citizens of public housing, then we can truly make a difference.

Mr. Secretary, I commend you for this effort. And I'd like now to introduce Dr. Lee Brown, Director.

DR. BROWN: As the President stated in his State of the Union address, much of the violent crime that has terrorized our cities is the result of drug use and drug trafficking. Our new National Drug Control Strategy, which we will release next week, will focus on breaking the cycle of chronic and hard-core drug use that is responsible for much of that crime, particularly in many of our disadvantaged neighborhoods and around public housing and assisted housing communities.

That is why Operation Safe House is integral to our national strategy, and why it is so badly needed. And I, too, commend Secretary Cisneros for taking the leadership in bringing forth this very muchly needed program.

For my more than 30 years in law enforcement I have seen time and time again ordinary citizens can gain the upper hand against drugs and violence when they come together, work together in close cooperation with local police and other law enforcement agencies. Operation Safe Home will give public housing residents some powerful new allies in their struggle to secure themselves that will give them what all Americans want -- a decent place to live, a healthy environment in which to raise their children.

And so I pledge to the Secretary my best efforts, along with those of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, to work with him, the Attorney General, and Secretary Bentsen, and other federal agency heads to ensure that Operation Safe Home is indeed a success. And it must succeed because every citizen, including those in public housing, have the right to be safe and secure in their home and in their neighborhood.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I'm going to leave and then let them take the questions on Operation Safe Home.

Q Have you figured out a way yet to pay for the proposals in the President's -- in the crime bill, the President's proposals, given the budget constraints?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes, we have made room in the budget. Now, I'm not going to get into a detailed discussion of the budget because it's not going to be released until next week. But I will say this: We have --

Q For all intents and purposes, it's been made public through various newspapers.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Nice try, but I'm not going to get into a discussion based on the assumption that it's out.

Q Well, given the constraints, how --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will answer your question. The budget makes room explicitly for the crime bill that we're pushing in the Congress. We expect the toughest, most effective crime bill in the history of the United States of America to be passed in this session of Congress. And the budget explicitly carves out room to pay for it.

Q If you're going to cut, as reported today in The Washington Post, eliminate 115 programs to save \$3.5 billion, out of \$1.5 trillion budget, isn't that relatively small potatoes compared to what you could cut?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, the number of programs eliminated, as you will see when the budget is released, is impressive. What's even more impressive is that the budget deficit, which had been projected for next year to be \$300 billion, will be

down 40 percent -- \$120 billion lower than what the projections were when we took over.

And President Clinton said 12 months ago that if the Congress would pass our economic plan, we would begin to see more jobs, less unemployment, more economic progress and we would begin to see news stories reporting surprises on the positive side. After 12 years in which the national debt quadrupled, after 12 years in which we had regular stories telling the American people each morning, "Surprise, the budget deficit is much larger than you were told last year or last month or last week," now, we have stories on a regular basis, "Surprise, things are better than you were told they were going to be because the country is moving in the right direction."

The budget deficit is coming down at the same time economics growth is going up. We're not attempting to borrow short-term prosperity at the expense of terrible economic problems down the road; the country has had enough of that. Instead, we're handling fiscal policy and monetary policy and the management of the federal government in a coordinated responsible way. And we're beginning to see the results, and you will see when the budget comes out and reflection of that progress.

I'm just going to take one more and then I'm going to turn it over to --

Q On today's announcement --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Pardon me?

Q On today's announcement --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes. What a novel idea, thank you.

Q Well, all of the cooperation among the different law enforcement agencies is something that's been talked about for years, something that you've been claiming to do for a long time. Most Americans expect that HUD and the Justice Department are supposed to keep public housing safe, that they're supposed to go after those who are committing fraud. Why do you have to make a big announcement to say you're going to do what people already think you're supposed to do anyway?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Because they know it's not being done. They know that it hasn't been done in the past. We have been doing it. We've been concentrating on these pilot projects and the experiments on what works and what doesn't work. And you have heard from these four members of the Cabinet the positive results which now justify a nationwide program which we're calling Operation Safe Home.

The fact is that most Americans ought to be able to assume that Cabinet departments and agencies work together smoothly and that any administration in charge of our government has the ability to focus on a priority and then go after it aggressively and in a coordinated way.

The practical reality has been in the past that the boundary lines between departments and agencies have prevented easy and smooth coordination. We are changing that. In the --

Q Why don't you just do it without making a big announcement about it?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Let me just finish the point briefly. In the National Performance Review announced last year, one of the major themes that we focused on was how to eliminate the barriers to cooperation that have impeded it in the past. Let me just give you one example. When you say, why make a big deal about

it an announce it, A, because it's new; B, because an enormous amount of work has gone into coming up with very creative approaches to having these agencies and departments work together. And C, because we recognize the severity of the problem. We're making it a priority and we're going to do something about it.

Just to take one example -- what Secretary Bentsen said about applying the expertise of the Secret Service in looking at the environment in which residents of public housing units have to live is in one sense a small thing, but it can make a tremendous difference, especially when added to the efforts of Dr. Brown and the Attorney General and Secretary Cisneros all in a coordinated way, focusing on how to address these high crime areas where the residents of public housing are victims.

And it is unacceptable for this kind of situation to continue in America. I mean, this is -- it's not some public relations game where we come and announce something for the sake of announcing it. This is a problem that is life and death for the residents of public housing units. And we're not just announcing something -- we are setting in motion a nationwide program to do something about it.

And one final point before I leave -- these members of the Cabinet not just in this announcement, not just in this program but across the board, have demonstrated an ability to work together smoothly without worrying who gets the credit, without worrying which bureaucracy gets the FTEs or the budget allocation. All of those things are talked about, but put in perspective. They have managed to work out a team relationship that is absolutely extraordinary -- I believe unprecedented -- and this is an example of the kind of cooperative projects that you're seeing underway.

I'm going to turn it over to Secretary Cisneros and the others.

Q Mr. Gore, can I just follow up on that one point? I mean, when they reach a moment when perhaps they don't agree --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q -- who makes the call?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Purely a hypothetical question.
(Laughter.)

Q No, but seriously, I mean, is there -- I mean, does the President get involved?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Of course, of course. This has been the smoothest operating Cabinet that I have ever seen -- really and truly. And they work together on projects like this with selfless dedication. And that's a good line to leave on.
(Laughter.)

Q Secretary Cisneros, on this issue of teamwork -- you set in motion this series of programs, but the people who are really responsible for administering these changes are the local governments. I mean, are you going to put pressure on these people? And they're also responsible for some of the problems.

SECRETARY CISNEROS: One of the reasons that it's important to announce something like this is because we must communicate to people across the country, especially those who work in local government and who are local law enforcement officials, that we're really doing something in a concerted way that's different.

There are 3,400 housing authorities across the country. So a pilot program here and there really won't touch them unless we're able to say, on this day the Vice President, the Cabinet officers together rolled out a new initiative and we want you to be involved in it. So there's a dimension of trying to reach out across the country to get the word out and that's part of the answer to the question of why would you announce this as a new beginning.

Yes, of course, there will have to be involvement from local police and local housing authorities. We find that when they see that the federal government is making a federal commitment, when they hear, for example, that the FBI or the ATF is involved in their communities, that we get a heightened level of participation.

As I said to you at the outset, I became convinced that this kind of coordinated effort had to be expanded to housing authorities everywhere after I saw what was done collaboratively on a pilot basis in Boston, where the U.S. Attorney in the lead with housing inspectors from HUD and DEA agents was so successful in acting on that Charlestown case. But that was a unique case, and we need to take that all across the country to housing authorities all across America.

Q Do you folks have the resources to take on these added responsibilities?

SECRETARY CISNEROS: Yes, in some cases, it is taking existing resources and pointing them in a targeted way. In other instances, it is asking in the budgets for new funds. In the HUD case, we are looking at some \$800 million or so dedicated to this initiative. About \$480 million of that is taking existing funds and more clearly putting an anticrime dimension targeting on the use of existing funds.

For example, we spent over a billion dollars in what's called Hope Six Urban Revitalization Demonstration grants to remake big public housing authorities this last year. Well, with this focus, we'll put more emphasis on the security aspects on redevelopment, including security both hardware as well as anticrime and prevention measures. An additional \$340 million of new funding is being provided for in the budget that you will see on Monday for these purposes.

Q Secretary Bentsen, while we have you, can I ask you the same question I asked Vice President Gore? In terms of the new budget, you are going to eliminate 115 programs. That sounds impressive, but that's only going to save \$3.5 billion, which is a tiny percentage of a budget that is going to be \$1.5 trillion. So where are the huge savings? Where is the painful cut?

SECRETARY BENTSEN: If you look at what we did on the budget before to be able to bring it down to the extent we have, we have sure had the painful cuts, and I have listened to them. I must also say, you haven't been here as long as I have, but I still think \$3.5 billion is a lot of money. (Laughter.) And when you have cut as much as you have, the incremental cuts become even more difficult to accomplish. And I think we're making remarkable progress in that regard.

Q And on that, Secretary Bentsen, you were in Congress for 12 years. What makes you think -- what makes the administration think that it will be able to achieve any of these cuts since the last 12 years?

SECRETARY BENTSEN: I thought you decided the other 10 years didn't count. (Laughter.)

Q The Reagan years and the Bush years. In those years, Congress blocked almost all their efforts to cut the budget.

SECRETARY BENTSEN: Yeah, but we did it. What we did in '93 proves that we can call on the Congress to do some extraordinary things in the way of cutting back on the deficit and accomplishing that one. And what you've seen in this one is the most major deficit cuts that I've seen in those 22 years and you've seen the results of it in the long-term interest rates -- the lowest they've been in 25 years. And what you're seeing in this economy is a gradual, steady build-up and a reduction in unemployment, and what you've seen is a major increase in capital investment by business to increase productivity; and even though wages went up, labor unit costs stayed constant. And I'm telling you, we're world-competitive.

Q General Reno, could you give us a sense of where we are in the Justice Department in releasing the information on the Vince Foster suicide that the department promised that it would release?

ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: We're trying to work with the special counsel to make sure that it's done consistent with his efforts.

Q Secretary Cisneros, there are the sweeps in housing projects like Chicago, which have locked them down, put up fences, I.D. cards for residents to keep out the nonresidents. Is this the kind of program that you're talking about initiating? Some civil libertarians think that this is too restrictive on the rights of the residents.

SECRETARY CISNEROS: Those kinds of initiatives are started at the local level. In this case, the Chicago Housing Authority decided that the best device available to it were these sweeps. We're not going to stipulate that a housing authority police force or a local police force ought to use a particular technique. We're not going to stipulate that a housing authority police force or a local police force ought to use any particular technique. But, obviously, those have worked in that case. Where we can be supportive, we will be within constitutional limits -- trying to safeguard the constitutional rights of everyone involved. Those have been upheld.

There are other matters that will have to be addressed in the weeks and months ahead. For example, one of the subjects that I think will come from this effort is a consideration banning guns in public housing settings. Whether that is permissive -- that is to say, we allow on leases housing authorities to ban guns -- or mandatory -- that the federal government would say any federally supported lease for public housing ought to include a ban on guns. These are the kinds of constitutionally-related questions that have to be further explored, but will come from the deliberations that this cooperation makes possible.

Q Attorney General Reno, the Park Police have suggested -- the Park Police have suggested that the White House -- White House Counsel Bernie Nussbaum somehow hampered their investigation into the Vince Foster suicide. Do you have any independent judgment on that?

ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: I would not comment on it, again, because I want to make sure that we work with the special counsel so as to ensure his independence and to make sure that nothing we said or did would conflict with his efforts.

Q Have you seen the Park Police report?

Q Could I ask somebody about -- could I hear some more concrete specifics on what you're talking about with this Safe Home program? I hear you talking about goals. I hear you talking about intelligence sharing back and forth and cooperation among agencies. What are people who live in housing projects, however, going to see? Sending the Secret Service to assess the security of a place, you're not going to wind up having agents standing post at the housing projects.

SECRETARY CISNEROS: Let me give you a few specifics and then let me turn it over to the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury and others -- and also Dr. Brown -- to highlight some of the specifics.

Specifics in the case of HUD, additional funding for neighborhood patrols, for resident involvement in anticrime efforts, for physical security as an aspect of the reconstruction and modernization and redevelopment of buildings. Drug elimination assistance, in other words, grants to housing authorities to work specifically on drug-related problems; cooperation with DEA in anti-drug efforts, with the FBI. You heard the Attorney General speak to the witness protection program.

The FBI Director came to us and said, "We're having real problem when there are murders in public housing. People do not feel safe. They think the murderers control the places. Therefore, they will not testify. We cannot nail anybody in public housing settings. You have to help us make units available so we can move people who are willing to testify either in that city, a large system, or to another city so that they'd be willing to testify and we could begin to get a handle on the people who actually are doing the murders.

A couple of successful cases like that expanded beyond the few places that they have worked and make -- and encouraging for housing authorities to participate, you'll see a real change in what residents actually feel. The Attorney General would like to pursue this.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I would really like to address this, because I have seen it in Miami and I have seen projects such as the Secretary describes. If you involve residents, and if you empower them to participate in the judgments affecting their residence, their development, if you go to local police and form a partnership with local police and the federal agencies with ATF and the FBI working together as, thanks to the Secretary, we've been able to do, figuring out who does what best -- ATF can go after the career criminal and can go after the weapons. The FBI and the DEA can join together to go after the violent traffickers. Local police can focus on juvenile crime. They can do it as a partnership.

But what is so successful is when you involve local residents. That's one of the reasons it's important we get this crime bill passed. But even without the crime bill, if we can form that partnership, if we can involve residents, you see so many actions that benefit the whole development taking place and that is what I am very hopeful will happen here thanks to the Secretary's leadership.

SECRETARY CISNEROS: Let me just say also, if you would look, I think you have a packet. In that packet is a handout that is maybe three or four pages of specifics in each of these three areas that we've described: violent crime, white collar in public housing settings and assisted housing, and many of the specific are laid out there of the things that we'll be undertaking.

Q Mr. Secretary, could you address how this money is going distributed? How are you going to pick the housing projects? Are you going to reimburse cities that have already put patrols in

the housing projects? I mean, what is the system that is going to be used to distribute the aid? Obviously, you can't --

SECRETARY CISNEROS: Yes, there are several programs that we have where housing authority apply for assistance as they would for any other public housing program. Presently, we have several which are on a formula basis, dependant upon the size of the authority and the level of need. So both of those, two different methods of delivery will continue to exist.

But we really want to reward places that are making the best effort, doing the most sophisticated job, have the biggest problem, so we really tilt toward reviewing applications and trying to get funding out that way.

Q Is there an overall price tag --

SECRETARY CISNEROS: I'll be happy to visit with you individually. I'll stay for a moment, but I do believe we need to break up the formal session.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

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10:55 A.M. EST