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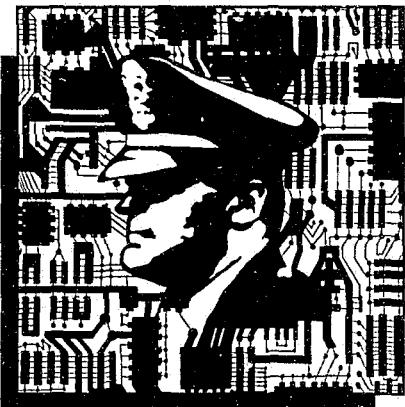
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**The Cover:** Voyager symbolizes one example of the advantages and absolute necessity of planning for the future. The Editor wishes to thank the FBI's Office of Planning, Evaluation and Audits and the Behavioral Science Instruction/Research Unit for helping to prepare this issue.

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**Art Director**—John E. Ott  
**Assistant Editor**—Alice S. Cole  
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# Tomorrow's America

## Law Enforcement's Coming Challenge



**P**owerful economic and social indicators point to stiff challenges for law enforcement policymakers. During the next decade, law enforcement officials will be forced to wrestle with disruptive social, demographic, and technological changes. And struggles to confront many of the troublesome trends facing the Nation will be played out against a backdrop of financial cutbacks from Federal, State, and local governments.

Many analysts point to difficult issues and conflicting trends: While cost-cutting throughout government is forcing cutbacks in

services, public pressure for more effective service is growing. Jobs increasingly require skilled personnel; yet, the pool of qualified young workers is shrinking, especially the pool supplying law enforcement's traditional recruits—young, white males. Information about economic and demographic trends is available, but useful interpretation is complicated by the widely varying ways national trends play out in diverse geographic areas.

Looming challenges and expected cutbacks are certain to force more reliance on information and information technologies. The Con-

gressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) reports that information technologies will reshape virtually every product, service, and job in the United States during the next decade. Effective law enforcement may hinge, to a large degree, on effective use of information technologies, and successful law enforcement will certainly demand accurate anticipation of local and national emerging trends and issues.

With the challenge of foresight in mind, this article briefly outlines a number of significant demographic and economic trends and their probable implications for law enforcement.

By  
ROB McCORD, M.B.A.  
and  
ELAINE WICKER

## Focus on NCIC

corporate business interests. In recognition of these circumstances, the law enforcement community should seek to engage in closer and more effective working relationships with the major corporations in order to better understand each other's values, motivations, and roles. Only through greater understanding and mutual trust will essential law enforcement relationships with corporate America be built.

### Conclusion

What exactly will the working environment of the FBI and law enforcement be in the year 2000? No one can be sure; however, each member of the law enforcement community must carefully contemplate its evolving role and responsibilities. Accordingly, each must initiate a comprehensive plan for the expected future. Such a plan must address several factors, including the development of a clear understanding of the community to be served, the potential for change over time, and the projection of the future crime trends. Additionally, any plan for the future must face the likelihood of dwindling budgets, expanding international relationships, and increased police privatization. While the future for neither the FBI nor any law enforcement agency can be certain, it can be planned for responsibly by men and women with courage and vision.

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*Deputy Assistant Director  
Richard C. Sonnichsen, Unit  
Chief/Special Agent Gail O. Burton,  
and Special Agent Thomas Lyons are  
assigned to the FBI's Office of Plan-  
ning, Evaluation and Audits at FBI/  
Headquarters in Washington, DC.*

A decade ago, the FBI realized that direct technical support was needed for complex investigations and related operations. It also became evident that the challenges of the FBI's technical services would far outstrip conventional computing capabilities.

To meet these challenges, the FBI adopted a long-range automation strategy, highlighting future exploitation of artificial intelligence (AI) techniques and other advanced technologies. This strategy, which aims for integrated information systems within a distributed environment, tied AI initiatives to ongoing and projected systems containing investigative information.

Today, with the aid of artificial intelligence, the FBI is bringing the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) System to the year 2000. NCIC currently holds 19.5 million criminal data and missing person records, provides access to 60,000 criminal justice users, and averages about 900,000 inquiries daily.

The advanced NCIC 2000 concepts call for the sophistication of AI to process and analyze the massive amounts of data with the rapid response needed by the law enforcement officer. AI techniques will catch errors and detect unusual activities (such as unauthorized access) or actions that could impinge on civil, constitutional, and privacy rights. More importantly, NCIC 2000 will pro-

vide more accurate information to the officer on the street, thereby enhancing officer safety.

Two AI advances will aid greatly in locating fugitives and recovering property. Intelligence name-searching techniques will abolish missed matches, while automated delayed inquiry will notify criminal justice agencies when an inquiry is made about a subject within 3 days prior to record entry.

Another AI technique will spot patterns and reveal interstate crime trends. This "pattern recognition" will assist investigations where several agencies enter data on related crimes, but where investigators are unaware of the connections among the widely dispersed parties.

The most visible change, however, will be the ability to transmit and receive images, such as photographs and fingerprints, at a fixed or mobile location to positively identify the individual. This will help ensure proper arrests and reduce the likelihood of civil suits.

NCIC 2000 is an opportunity for the criminal justice community to take a proven system, incorporate its best features into a new one, and expand its capabilities. It also stands as an example of how extensive planning, interagency cooperation, and research and analysis, along with conducted technology forecasts, can assess existing programs and arrive at a prediction of needs for the future.

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## Trends

The U.S. population is aging. In 1996 the first wave of "baby boomers" will turn 50, marking the start of a "senior boom" in the United States. By 2010 one in every four Americans will be 55 or older.<sup>1</sup>

The age difference in population composition is especially evident when comparing 1950 to the year 2000. In 1950 there were 12.3 million people aged 65 and older, or 8.2 percent of a population of 150.7 million. By the year 2000, an estimated 34.9 million elderly will constitute 13 percent of the population, and by the year 2015, Americans aged over 65 will make up fully 20 percent of the U.S. population.<sup>2</sup>

Over the next decade, more than 90 percent of new entrants into the workforce will be women, minorities, and immigrants, but almost two-thirds will be women. In 1960 only 11 percent of women with children under the age of 6 were employed; today, 52 percent work outside the home.<sup>3</sup>

The minority population is increasing rapidly, and by 1990, 20 percent of American children will be black or Asian. By the year 2000, this figure will grow to 21 percent and then increase to 23 percent by 2010. When projections for white Hispanic children are added, the figures increase dramatically to 31 percent, 34 percent, and 38 percent, respectively. By 2010, 25 percent of the children in 19 States will be black, Hispanic, Asian, or some other minority. In the District of Columbia and six States, more than 50 percent of children will be minority group members. Minorities will constitute the majority of children in New Mexico

(77 percent), California (57 percent), Texas (57 percent), New York (53 percent), Florida (53 percent), and Louisiana (50 percent).<sup>4</sup>

Immigrants account for an ever-increasing share of the U.S. population and workforce. Legal immigration during the 1980s has accounted for an average of 570,000 people per year, which is 30 percent higher than the average for the 1970s and significantly more than in any year from 1924 to 1978.<sup>5</sup>

The 10 metropolitan areas with the highest number of immigrants in rank order are New

66  
*...effective policing in  
the future is closely  
tied to strategic policy  
choices made by  
today's law  
enforcement officials.*  
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York, Los Angeles-Long Beach, Chicago, Miami-Hialeah, San Francisco, Washington, DC (including the Maryland and Virginia suburbs), Anaheim-Santa Ana, San Jose, Oakland, and San Diego. These cities and 28 others all receive approximately 2,000 immigrants each year from 16 or more different countries.

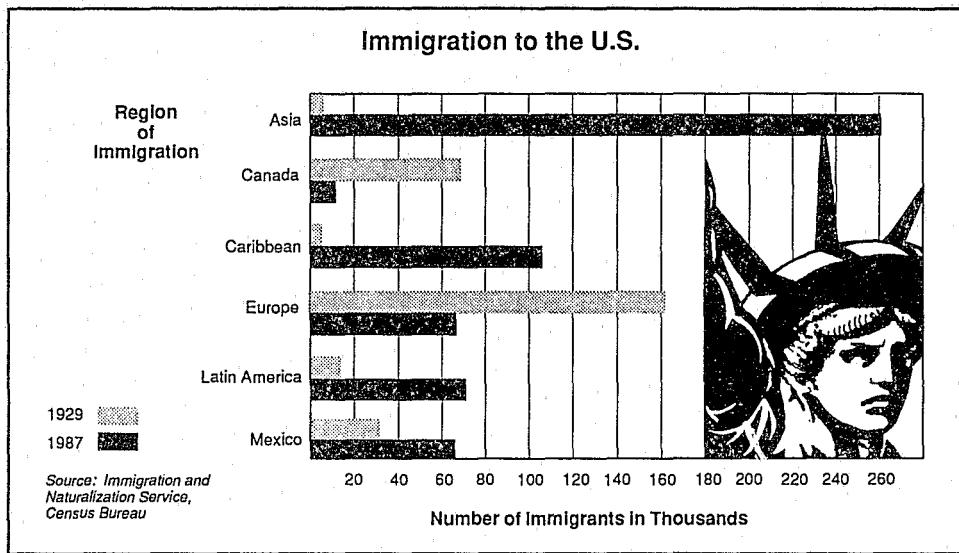
In 1980 there were somewhere between 2.5 and 3.5 million illegal aliens in the United States. One estimate holds that illegal aliens are growing in number at a rate of 100,000 to 300,000 a year, while several hundred aliens with nonimmigrant status also live illegally in the United States.<sup>6</sup>

The labor force growth is slowing, and the number of "entry-level" workers is decreasing. Between 1986 and the year 2000, the overall growth of the labor force is projected to be 1.2 percent—the slowest rate since the 1930s and about one-half the rate of U.S. labor force growth experienced between 1972 and 1986. And in the 1990s the number of traditional entry-level workers—those aged 16-34—will actually shrink.<sup>7</sup>

The number of single parent households is likely to increase. More than 25 million women head their own households, or 28 percent of the Nation's 91 million households. Seven percent of these are female-headed, single-parent families with children under the age of 18. Women who live alone account for 52 percent of female-headed households; over one-half of these women are 65 years of age or older.<sup>8</sup>

In terms of race and ethnic origin, dramatic differences emerge. Two-thirds of black and Hispanic households are headed by women, as compared with 36 percent of white households headed by females. By the year 2000, women will head 29 percent of households.<sup>9</sup> And if present trends continue, one-half of the marriages that take place today will end in divorce a decade from now.

Jobs that are declining in number are those that could be filled by those with fewer skills. The fastest-growing jobs are those that require more language, math, and reasoning skills. For the next decade, 9 out of 10 new jobs will be in the service sector, in fields that generally require high levels of education and skill. Ten years ago, 77 percent of



jobs required some type of generating, processing, retrieving, or distributing information. By the year 2000, heavily computerized information processing will encompass 95 percent of the jobs.<sup>10</sup> Some projections about employment trends suggest that by the 1990s, anyone who reads below a 12th-grade level will be excluded from employment possibilities.

Statistics indicate the United States is becoming a bifurcated society with more wealth, more poverty, and a shrinking middle class. The gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" is widening. The percentage of the population earning middle-class wages, between \$15,000 and \$49,000 per year, has dropped over the past decade.<sup>11</sup> More than 32 million of the Nation's approximately 240 million citizens have incomes below the poverty level. At the same time, the number of households headed by persons in the 35-50 age group

with incomes of \$50,000 or more is expected to almost triple by 2000.<sup>12</sup>

An underclass of Americans—those who are chronically poor and live outside society's rules—is growing. Data of the Urban Institute show that between 1970 and 1980, the underclass tripled. In 1980, 29 million Americans lived in poverty and about 1.1 million of them lived as members of the underclass. The Urban Institute identified 880 underclass neighborhoods in the United States in 1980, and those neighborhoods tended to be disproportionately populated by minorities.<sup>13</sup>

### Implications

For most law enforcement officials, troublesome trends and economic constraints are all too familiar. Throughout the next decade, law enforcement officials will continue to face conservative policies that translate into "cutback

management" and continued attempts to do more with less. Public demands for effectiveness and accountability appear likely to force law enforcement leaders to try innovative solutions to long-existing problems.

Successful policing may well depend on efficient and effective use of information. An obviously effective use of demographic data in efforts to conserve operating expenses lies in the task of assigning patrol officers. A geographic area with residents who are predominately middle income, high-rise condominium dwellers, aged 65 and older, can be policed in a different fashion and with fewer officers than an area with a large number of residents aged 10 to 18 years old.

In the future, law enforcement forces will almost certainly reflect changes in America's demographic profile and in its social and cultural values. Dramatic changes in labor force composition will force equally

dramatic responses in hiring and administration for law enforcement, a traditionally young, white, male-dominated profession. Shifts toward older workers, fewer entry-level workers, and more women, minorities and immigrants in the population will lead law enforcement and private industry to become more flexible in order to compete for qualified applicants. Law enforcement agencies must devise new strategies to attract 21-35 year olds. This age group will be at a premium over the next 10 years, and the trend will continue well into the middle of the next century.

By the year 2000, an estimated 75 percent of all workers currently in the workforce will need retraining, and population shifts away from dominance by white males of European heritage to racial and ethnic diversity will bring changes in training as well as hiring practices. Law enforcement agencies will have to train existing personnel, both sworn and nonsworn, and a major thrust will likely be toward communication with non-English-speaking communities, perhaps with incentives for bilingualism.

If law enforcement fails to look beyond high school graduates as a principal source of candidates, police departments will likely face worker shortages. Law enforcement agencies will also face fierce competition from the private sector and from the military for entry-level employees, such as carpenters, electricians, plumbers, masons, construction workers, and others in the trade industries who have historically employed marginally educated young males. A severe disadvantage facing law enforcement recruiters will be wage packages;

law enforcement will most likely never be competitive with most youth-oriented private sector employees. Historically, the view that public service is a privilege helped to offset the disparity between public and private sector pay. Yet, this perspective seems to be in decline.

Family and lifestyle concerns are increasingly affecting the law enforcement workplace. America has become a society in which women with young children have become an important part of the workforce. The high divorce rate and increase in female-headed households contribute to the emphasis on family issues. If law enforcement is to attract and keep qualified workers, benefits and workplace accommodations, such as daycare, flexible hours, and paid maternity leave, must become a part of law enforcement's benefits package. The private sector has been moving in this direction with incentives and fringe benefit packages for over a decade.

employees to move to other jobs and locations. Costs of training will continue to escalate. Some estimates hold that it takes 3 to 5 years for a police officer to move from raw recruit to novice investigator. Many law enforcement agencies already find themselves in the position of constantly training personnel to replace those who take other jobs.

A rapidly changing economy will create instability for many workers and set the stage for an upsurge in crime. Prospects for unskilled workers are bleak. Analysts warn that opportunities for workers with limited education and training will diminish considerably in the next two decades. The number of jobs typically filled by people who have not finished high school declined by 40 percent. This changing workplace has been a major factor in the growth of the underclass, since about two-thirds of the residents of underclass areas lack even basic workplace skills. The Urban Institute contends that the underclass has to be understood, in part,

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*By the year 2000, an estimated 75 percent of all workers currently in the workforce will need retraining....*

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In an era of budget constraints, adapting new policies and practices to hold competent workers becomes critical. As occupational mobility increases, not only will law enforcement's pool of "home grown" candidates shrink, but also the erosion of traditional social and psychological dependence on "place" will make it easier for

as a response to economic realities. Crime is an important source of income for the underclass, and financial incentives seem to be rising as a result of a flourishing drug trade.

### An Explosive Mix

A wide variety of polls suggest an increasing number of Americans believe drug abuse is out of control.

According to a recent World Peace Foundation Conference report on drugs, "The cocaine problem has become an object of near hysteria in the United States." Closely linked to that contention is the growing notion that the drug epidemic is essentially a black urban problem. Blacks constitute only 12 percent of the Nation's population, but they account for 50 percent of the heroin, 55 percent of the cocaine, and 60 percent of PCP hospital emergency care.<sup>14</sup> Yet, evidence shows that the \$110 billion per year that is lining the pockets of drug lords is not being generated only by poor, inner-city blacks. The vast majority of that money is coming from the 76 percent of the illegal drug users—white yuppies.<sup>15</sup>

The Urban Institute warns that increasing public concern about the most visible elements of the underclass threatens to exacerbate racial tensions and strengthen prejudices. The perceived lack of equity for the disenfranchised casts government as the "bad guy," and many of the underclass see police as the ultimate symbol of oppression.

A compelling number of experts support the contention that urban unrest and civil disorder are likely possibilities. The potential for massive urban unrest and civil disturbances reminiscent of the riots of the mid-1960s and 1970s clearly exists.

### Conclusion

Economic and demographic trends portray a Nation and its institutions struggling to respond to rapid social and economic evolution. Throughout the next decade, a complex array of interdependent and competing demographic and economic forces will prompt policymakers to seek innovative,

nontraditional approaches to hiring, training, and administration.

In large part, effective policing in the future is closely tied to strategic policy choices made by today's law enforcement officials. The long-term risks of ignoring critical shifts in the population and the economy pose a serious threat to the internal security of the Nation. To reduce that threat, voters and politicians alike may need to recalculate America's traditional national security equation—shifting scarce public dollars from defense spending to domestic law enforcement. **LEB**

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Anita Manning and David Proctor, "Senior Boom: The Future's New Wrinkle," *USA Today*, January 31, 1989, 1D.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> *The Future World of Work: Looking Toward the Year 2000*, The United Way, 1988, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Joe Schwartz and Thomas Exter, "All Our Children," *American Demographics*, May 1988, pp. 42-43.

<sup>5</sup> James P. Allen and Eugene J. Turner, "Where to Find the New Immigrants," *American Demographics*, September 1988, pp. 22-27.

<sup>6</sup> James C. Raymondo, "How to Count Illegals, State by State," *American Demographics*, September 1988, pp. 42-43.

<sup>7</sup> Martha F. Richie, "America's New Workers," *American Demographics*, February 1988, pp. 34-41.

<sup>8</sup> Diane Crispell, "Women in Charge," *American Demographics*, September 1989, pp. 26-29.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Marvin J. Cetron, "Class of 2000: The Good News and the Bad News," *The Futurist*, November-December, 1988, pp. 9-15.

<sup>11</sup> *What Lies Ahead: Looking Toward the '90s*, The United Way, 1987, p. 41.

<sup>12</sup> Isabel V. Sawhill, "The Underclass: An Overview," *The Public Interest*, Summer 1988, pp. 3-15.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> David R. Gergen, "Drugs in White America," *U.S. News and World Report*, September 19, 1989.

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*Executive Director Rob McCord and Elaine Wicker are with the Congressional Clearinghouse on the Future, U.S. Congress, Washington, DC.*

## Focus on Identification

(Continued from page 12)

Dynamic increases in the use of fingerprint identification are due to a compounding effect. Needs are increasing rapidly, leading to the development of better technological capabilities. Better capabilities permit application to previously unfilled needs. Wider use leads to even better technological capabilities. This compounding effect extends to areas where the need has long existed but could not be feasibly fulfilled--border control, prohibition of firearms

sales to convicted felons, near instantaneous identification in support of the officer on the street.

Technological capabilities now and even greater capabilities in the future will efficiently address far more needs than in the past. Early recognition of this compounding effect on the growth of fingerprint identification services will enable planners at all levels to avoid delays in bringing those capabilities to bear on crime.

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