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GANG VIOLENCE REDUCTION PROJECT

FIRST EVALUATION REPORT

November 1976 - September 1977

AUGUST 1978

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

DEPARTMENT OF THE YOUTH AUTHORITY

148530

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### SUMMARY

The Gang Violence Reduction Project, which was funded by the Office of Criminal Justice Planning and operated under the auspices of the California Youth Authority, was started with the objective of reducing gang-related violent and non-violent crimes by 10% in one year in the East Los Angeles unincorporated area. Its first period of operation, November 1, 1976 to September 30, 1977, is the subject of this report.

The basic strategies used by the Gang Violence Reduction Project to reach its objectives of reducing gang-related crimes were: 1) the mitigation of gang feuds and 2) the providing of positive activities in which gang members could become involved. These were accomplished through hiring ten leaders from seven gangs as consultants to work with Youth Authority staff in developing resolutions for the gang antagonisms. (At one point there were eleven consultants from eight gangs working with the project.) The gang consultants, along with other gang members, have comprised a forum, which has served as a communication vehicle through which gang conflicts could be resolved or lessened. By September 1977, each of the seven gangs (barrios) working with the project had, with the aid of project staff, begun to form barrio associations whose purpose was to involve gang members in positive activities. Recreational activities have been used as a way of making the project and its goals known to gang members and bringing about positive interactions between gangs. The major accomplishment of this period was the

resolution of one major feud and the achieving of two additional peace agreements between feuding barrios.

The outcome evaluation analyzed the homicide and overall violent crime rates among gangs in the area, and between those gangs and non-gang members. The findings to date are mixed. Results indicate that during the first eleven months of the project's operation, there was a related reduction of 15% in gang-related homicides, which had been rising for three years, and a reduction of 60% in between-gang homicides. However, the number of gang-related violent incidents continued to increase slightly. Non-violent crimes were not examined because adequate data were not available. Analysis of incident data for additional time periods will aid in determining trends which may parallel the Gang Violence Reduction Project's activities and its impact on the target area.

## I. PROJECT GOALS AND APPROACH

The Gang Violence Reduction Project is a project developed with a goal of reducing gang-related crimes in the East Los Angeles unincorporated area. It was funded by the Office of Criminal Justice Planning for a period which began November 1, 1976, and ended September 30, 1977. In this report, this is called the first contract period. It was anticipated that it would be funded for approximately two additional years.

The East Los Angeles unincorporated area which is the target area for the project has approximately eighteen<sup>1</sup> youth street gangs. These gangs are feuding with one another and commit crimes which are a major problem for the community. Their activities often result in deaths. For example, homicides involving these gangs numbered 14 in 1975 and 15 in 1976.

The project objectives as stated in the first year proposal were:

1. Reduce acts of gang-related violent crime by gang members including CYA wards and non-wards in the target area by 10% in one year.
2. A secondary objective is to reduce gang member involvement in non-violent criminal activities by 10% in one year.

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<sup>1</sup>Any count of the number of gangs or barrios in the area is always problematic. This is because they are always in a state of flux. Some die out as they cease to be active. Others are in the early stages of development and only occasionally engage in illegal activities. The project proposal mentioned 14 gangs because this number had been fairly active. For the purposes of the evaluation, 18 gangs were included in order to be consistent with the number of gangs known to have contributed to the Sheriff's Department incident statistics.

The project is using a unique approach in that its emphasis is on working with the social groups rather than individuals. Instead of the gangs being broken up, the attempt is being made to change their nature so that they will work to accomplish positive goals rather than engage in negative activities. The project was modeled after the Federación de Barrios Unidos (Federation) which came into existence around June 1972 and ended about September 1973.<sup>2</sup> At the time, those involved felt that the Federation had been successful in mitigating gang feuds.

The overall plan of the project was to hire gang leaders as consultants from the gangs to work with project staff in community organizing, crisis intervention, and conflict resolution. Their function was to promote the project's goal of peace in their barrios (gangs) and to organize barrio associations to work for positive goals in the community. Also, the plan of the project was, through the consultants, to bring together leaders from each gang neighborhood as representatives to a forum where feuds could be discussed and mitigated. Recreational activities would be provided for individual gang members or entire gangs. Community involvement projects were to be started as part of the project which would provide learning experiences and activities in which the gang members could be involved. It was intended that the community projects be such that they could continue beyond the time span of the project.

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<sup>2</sup>This information was acquired from several people who were involved in forming the Federation, including the Gang Violence Reduction Project director.

## II. EVALUATION DESIGN

### Overview

The evaluation of the Gang Violence Reduction Project has been designed with the nature of the project in mind. Both "hard" and "soft" data have been gathered and analyzed. The major objectives of the evaluation are: 1) to document and analyze the process by which the project is implemented, and 2) to measure the outcome of the project in order to determine whether or not it has succeeded in reaching its objective of reducing gang-related crimes by 10% in a year's time. A secondary objective is to explain what has occurred.

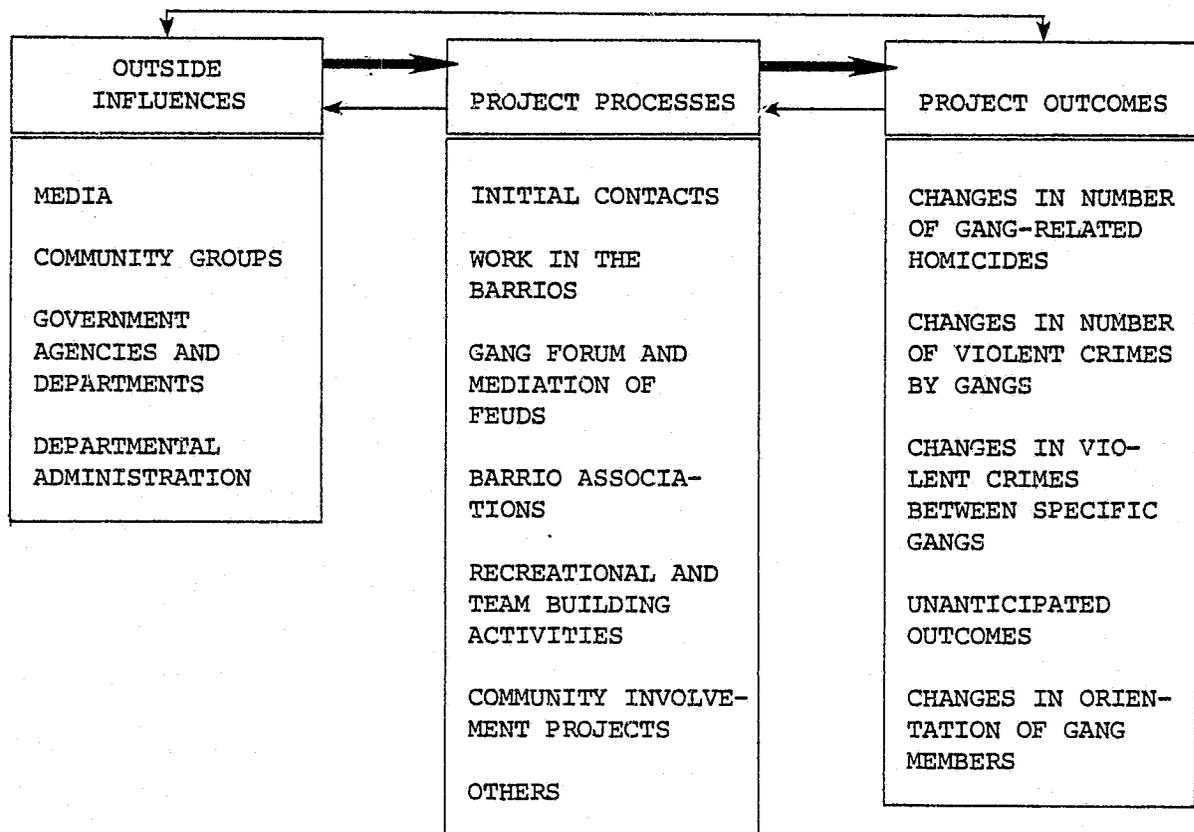
The basic research question is to determine the effect of the Gang Violence Reduction Project as an intervention technique. The research design which was developed has used the project proposal as its basis but was not limited to it. The intention was to leave the design open enough so that unanticipated findings would be possible.

The evaluation of the intervention effort is being conceptualized as shown in Figure 1. There are three major subdivisions which are interrelated: Outside Influences, Project Processes, and Project Outcomes. Outside forces from the environment are seen as influencing the project's operations or processes. And the project processes are seen as bringing about particular outcomes. This direction of influence--from outside the project, to the project, to its outcomes--is the major concern of the analysis and is represented by the dark arrows in the chart.

The other possible directions of influence are of secondary concern and are

represented by the light arrows. As is shown by these light arrows, the project outcomes may feed back into the project and have an effect on the major project processes, and the project activities may influence social entities outside of the project, which are labeled "Outside Influences." Also, the project's outcomes may independently influence people or organizations outside the project, and those outside the project may independently influence what is labeled "Project Outcomes."

FIGURE 1  
EVALUATION DESIGN



Process Design and Methodology

The activities of the project are seen as a process -- ongoing, developing occurrences in which certain steps or major events can be discerned.

The analysis of the process was structured beforehand by defining the major activities as stated in the project's proposal. A number of questions were asked about each of the project's activities:

1. What happened?

(This question refers primarily to the history of each activity.)

2. Which techniques worked; which ones did not; and why or why not?

(By techniques is meant the consciously applied strategies used by the project staff as well as those inferred by the researcher.)

3. Which influences, other than specific techniques, contributed to the success or failure of the various project activities?

(The influences referred to here could include outside influences as well as anything which happens within the project itself.)

4. In what way do the project activities appear to relate the outcomes attributed to them?

(This question is necessary because it cannot be assumed that project processes are automatically responsible for particular outcomes. Therefore, it will be necessary to provide evidence which shows that the project processes are related to the outcomes and/or evidence which shows that the outcomes were the result of some influence not related to the project.)

5. What generalizations can be made from the specific occurrences?

(These generalizations can be used for planning similar projects or can be considered hypotheses for future studies.)

6. What other issues are of significance?

(Any other issue which emerges during the project's implementation and which seems important for the analysis will be considered.)

In order to answer the questions listed above, a detailed, dated log of everything that happened which was relevant to the project was kept. It included descriptions of all activities, problems which arose, and solutions

which were used. This information was taken from the researcher's experiences and from reports of others who were involved. The following information was collected for each major aspect of the project processes:

1. Making initial contacts and establishing rapport: a record was kept of the techniques used and their relative degree of success or failure.
2. Gang meetings: a record was kept of the meetings including the reasons for meeting, issues discussed, and resolutions.
3. Forum or federation of gangs: historical records of its development were kept including how it came about, when and where meetings took place, which gangs were present at each meeting and an approximation of the number present from each gang; and a description of the conflict resolution processes which occurred at the meetings was made.
4. Community involvement projects: the history of each project was recorded including a description of the project, the planning that was involved, and its degree of success or failure.
5. Recreational and team building activities: a record was kept of the gangs and the number of members participating in each activity; and a record was kept of its planning, and problems which arose.
6. Staff and training meetings: a record was kept of the meetings including discussions of project activities, strategies, and gang related events.
7. Outside influences: a general description of the setting or environment in which the project operates was made; instances in which outside influences have had an effect on the project's processes were recorded; and an indication of attitudes toward gangs was obtained from the media and from statements made by community people.

The methods used to gather data on the process were primarily those which are used for qualitative research. This type of research has been developed and employed by many social scientists, with the approach described by Schatzman and Strauss similar to the one being used here.<sup>3</sup> This approach is one in which the perspective of the participants is used as a way of understanding a social situation. A specific method by which this understanding can be achieved is that of the participant observer. The participant observer learns through taking part in the process activities and reflecting upon them. Among the problems he or she faces are those of establishing rapport and explaining his/her role. The techniques he or she uses are generally field notes, unstructured interviews, and to some extent semistructured interviews.

As a participant observer in the Gang Violence Reduction Project, the researcher was often involved in dealing with very delicate situations which were unfamiliar to her. Therefore, it was necessary to be sensitive to situations in order not to do anything which might be unacceptable. The researcher was present at most of the project activities which took place after December 1976. During the first three months, no notes were taken in the field or during any activity involving gang members. Instead, events were recorded as soon as possible after an activity. Reflections on the events were recorded as a preliminary type of analysis. Note taking was begun at rather formal meetings during which no sensitive issues were being discussed. It was discontinued any time someone seemed uncomfortable because of it. After several months, it seemed possible to take notes at all except emotionally charged meetings.

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<sup>3</sup>Schatzman, Leöhard and Anselm L. Strauss, Field Research, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1973. Similar methodologies are described in John Loftland, Analyzing Social Settings, Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1971 and in Robert Gobdan and Steven J. Taylor, Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1975.

Notes have never been taken while talking to people in the field. Loosely structured interviews have been conducted with gang consultants who work for the project.

In addition, reports from those attending have been solicited for any activity which the researcher missed. Staff members have been free in sharing their perspectives and insights on gangs and the project activities.<sup>4</sup>

#### Outcome Design and Methodology

The first-year proposal stated that the project's objectives were to reduce violent and non-violent gang-related crimes by 10% in one year's time. However, the outcome evaluation design has been modified to focus on violent crime.

Non-violent crimes have not been gathered and analyzed because the statistics available are not reliable indicators of gang involvement nor are they reliable indicators of changes over time. Non-violent crimes are often not reported. The number of non-violent crimes reported is also more susceptible than violent crimes to artificial change resulting from changes in police activity or reporting procedures. Also, when non-violent crimes are reported in East Los Angeles, the reports often do not indicate whether the crimes were gang-related.

Thus, the focus of the outcome evaluation was to determine whether violent

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<sup>4</sup>The project director, Charles Pineda Jr., in particular, has aided the study considerably by his sharing his knowledge of East Los Angeles gangs with the researcher. However, the interpretation and analysis of the information in the report is the researcher's.

gang-related crime in the project target area had been reduced by 10%. While the proposal objective was to bring about this reduction in a year's time, the first contract period was 11 months (November 1976 to September 1977) and the period of full intervention, when the project was staffed with gang consultants, was eight months in duration (February - September 1977).

The data used for the analysis of gang-related violent crimes have been taken from records kept by the East Los Angeles Sheriff's gang unit.<sup>5</sup> These data have been used because they are the most reliable source of data available on gang-related crimes in the project target area.

Data have been kept on gang-related homicides since 1971 and on gang-related violence since 1975. Although homicides are almost always reported, there may have been an increase in the number defined as gang-related. Homicide data consist of a brief report on the circumstances surrounding each death. More complete information is contained in the reports in more recent years.

Because the same individual has been in charge of the records since 1975, there is good continuity in the records. However, there have been some changes in the procedures for reporting the gang-related incidents to him. In 1975, only the most significant events were reported by the deputies in the field. As a result, many incidents were not included in the data. In 1976, the procedure was changed so that all incidents involving gangs were reported to the

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<sup>5</sup>Lieutenant Hayden Findley and Deputy Wes McBride of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Substation in East Los Angeles have been very generous in allowing the researcher to use their data. Without it, this part of the analysis would not have been possible.

officer in charge of the data. But, as others were still responsible for making the reports, no doubt some gang incidents were missed. Since 1977, he has reviewed all incident reports and has pulled out the gang-related ones. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that some of the increase in crimes between 1975 and 1976 and between 1976 and 1977 may be due to the changes in reporting procedures.

Sheriff's gang data are kept in the form of incident reports, which include a brief description of each incident. The information given is based on the field deputies' report and may have been updated with information acquired later. Some types of information are not uniformly included in all incident reports. For example, in one incident report, the degree of injury may be specified while in another no mention may be made about whether or not injuries occurred. Also, while in most of the incidents analyzed both the suspect's and victim's gangs were known, in 10% of the incidents the victim's gang was unknown.

The definition of gang incident used in this analysis was based on the Sheriff's Department operating definition: one or more illegal activities occurring at about the same time and place involving gang members. However, each death counted as one incident. If several individuals were seriously injured, each serious injury was also reported as a separate incident. In addition, occasionally a long, complicated event was separated into several simpler incident reports of different crimes.

As indicated earlier, only incidents involving violent crimes were selected for the analysis. These were defined as crimes in which physical force was used or in which there was a threat of injury. Incidents in which the only violence reported occurred during the arrest procedure were not included.

Only incidents involving crimes by or between gangs in the unincorporated part of East Los Angeles were chosen for the analysis. Therefore, incidents in which either the suspects or victims were from gangs outside the area were excluded.

Also excluded are the few incidents in which the crime was committed by a gang member but was of a highly individualized "non-gang type," such as a crime committed without co-offenders and by someone who appeared to be psychotic.

Fewer than one percent of the reported gang incidents were dropped from the analysis because of lack of information regarding the crime committed or which gang, if any, was involved. For example, if there was a report that someone had heard shooting and when the Sheriff's deputies arrived, they could find no evidence of who did the shooting or who or what was being shot at, the incident was excluded from this analysis.

The likelihood of a crime being reported as well as its being investigated in detail increases with the seriousness of the crime. Many incidents are not reported. For example, Sheriff's personnel estimate that only one in four or five of the instances of shooting at houses is reported. The assumption being made here is that the rate of reporting for the various crimes being analyzed has not changed over time.

The evaluator and, later in the year, a student assistant coded information consistently for each incident for keypunching and tabulation. A maximum of two suspect gangs and a maximum of two victim gangs could be coded for each incident. If several crimes were reported in an incident, the most serious one was coded. The crimes were subdivided into general categories

relevant to gang activities rather than into those used by law enforcement. For example, all types of beatings were coded into one category except those in which a stabbing also took place; then coding the stabbing took precedence over coding the beating. In addition, every incident was coded as either robbery-related or not robbery-related.

This report analyzes data on homicides separately from other violent crimes. Data on homicides are more accurate and are available back to 1971. Robbery-related and non-robbery-related crimes are analyzed separately, and other characteristics of gang-related violent crimes are also reported.

The analysis examines changes between the first contract period of the project's operation (November 1976 to September 1977) and the same eleven months of the previous year. It also looks separately at the period of full project intervention (February - September 1977).

The first-year proposal indicated that CII rap sheets would be used as a measure of gang activity. But, as the research design was developed, this was not found useful. In order to use rap sheets to reliably analyze gang-related crimes, it would be necessary to know the names of all of the gang members in the project's target area. This is not possible for a number of reasons: gang membership is quite fluid; often members of a particular gang do not know all of their members; and, because gangs are secretive by nature, they are not likely to share membership information with outsiders.

III. NATURE OF THE PROBLEM:

THE COMMUNITY AND THE GANGS

The Community

The setting in which the Gang Violence Reduction Project operates consists of the community of East Los Angeles unincorporated area and the gangs within the community. The unincorporated area which is the target area for the project is approximately eight square miles and is surrounded by the City of Los Angeles and four small municipalities. Its population, based on the 1970 census, was 104,648, of which 88% were Spanish-surnamed.

The socio-economic characteristics of the area are no doubt related to its problems. The average years of school completed by those 25 years of age and older is 8.8 as compared to the Los Angeles County average of 12.4 (1970 census). In a survey done in the area, it was found that 23% of the households had incomes below the poverty level<sup>6</sup> and that the unemployment rate in the area was 17%.<sup>7</sup> According to the 1970 census, less than 15% of the workers were in professional, technical, managerial, and sales categories. On the other hand, over 65% of the workers in the East Los Angeles unincor-

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<sup>6</sup>The East Los Angeles Community Union (TELACU) and Community Planning and Development Corporation (CPDC). Unincorporated East Los Angeles Social and Community Environment Assessment Program, Volume II Preferences and Issues Sub-Program, October 1976, p. 46.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 51. The same method used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics was used for analyzing employment and unemployment.

porated area were in the clerical, craftsmen, foremen, and operations-non-transport categories. Thus, it can be seen that the socio-economic level of the area is low. The relationship between gangs and areas with low socio-economic status have been noted by social scientists, including Albert Cohen and Walter B. Miller.<sup>8</sup> It may be that the environment in such areas generates conditions favorable for the development of gangs and gang delinquency.

Whatever the cause, it is true that in the East Los Angeles community gangs are of major concern. When asked to rate several problems or issues, 45% of a representative sample of residents chose juvenile delinquency as the most urgent problem.<sup>9</sup> Thirty-one percent of residents felt that there was a serious youth problem in their own neighborhood.<sup>10</sup> However, informal discussions with community residents indicate that there is a large gap between the average resident and gang members. The residents expressed a lack of understanding of the gang phenomenon. Their usual interactions with gang members were negative ones.

### Gangs

The gang phenomenon has a long tradition in East Los Angeles. Not very much is known about their origins, but people in the community state that they began in the 1920's. Some of the gangs in existence today began in the 1920's or 1930's. Others are relatively recent, beginning within the last ten years.

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<sup>8</sup> Albert Cohen, Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang, (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955), and Walter B. Miller, "Lower Class Culture as a Generating Mileau of Gang Delinquency," Journal of Social Issues, 14 (Summer 1958), pp. 5-19.

<sup>9</sup> TELAC and CPDC, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

And, according to reports from the Sheriff's office, a number of new gangs are emerging at the present.

One of the first facts learned when speaking with gang members is that the word "gang" is never used by the members. It is used only by outsiders with a negative connotation. Members speak of their barrio. A barrio is a territory claimed by a gang, as well as the members who live in that territory taken as a whole.<sup>11</sup> The English equivalent of barrio is neighborhood, and the two terms are used interchangeably. Whereas "gang" has a negative meaning, the word "barrio" denotes tremendous pride, loyalty and camaraderie. Both terms will be used here depending on the perspective taken.

The territories of the approximately 18 gangs or barrios in the project's target area vary considerably. While some cover only a few square blocks, the larger ones are about one square mile in size and the largest one spreads across parts of Los Angeles, East Los Angeles, and Montebello. The map of East Los Angeles shows how the area is divided up by barrios (Figure 2).

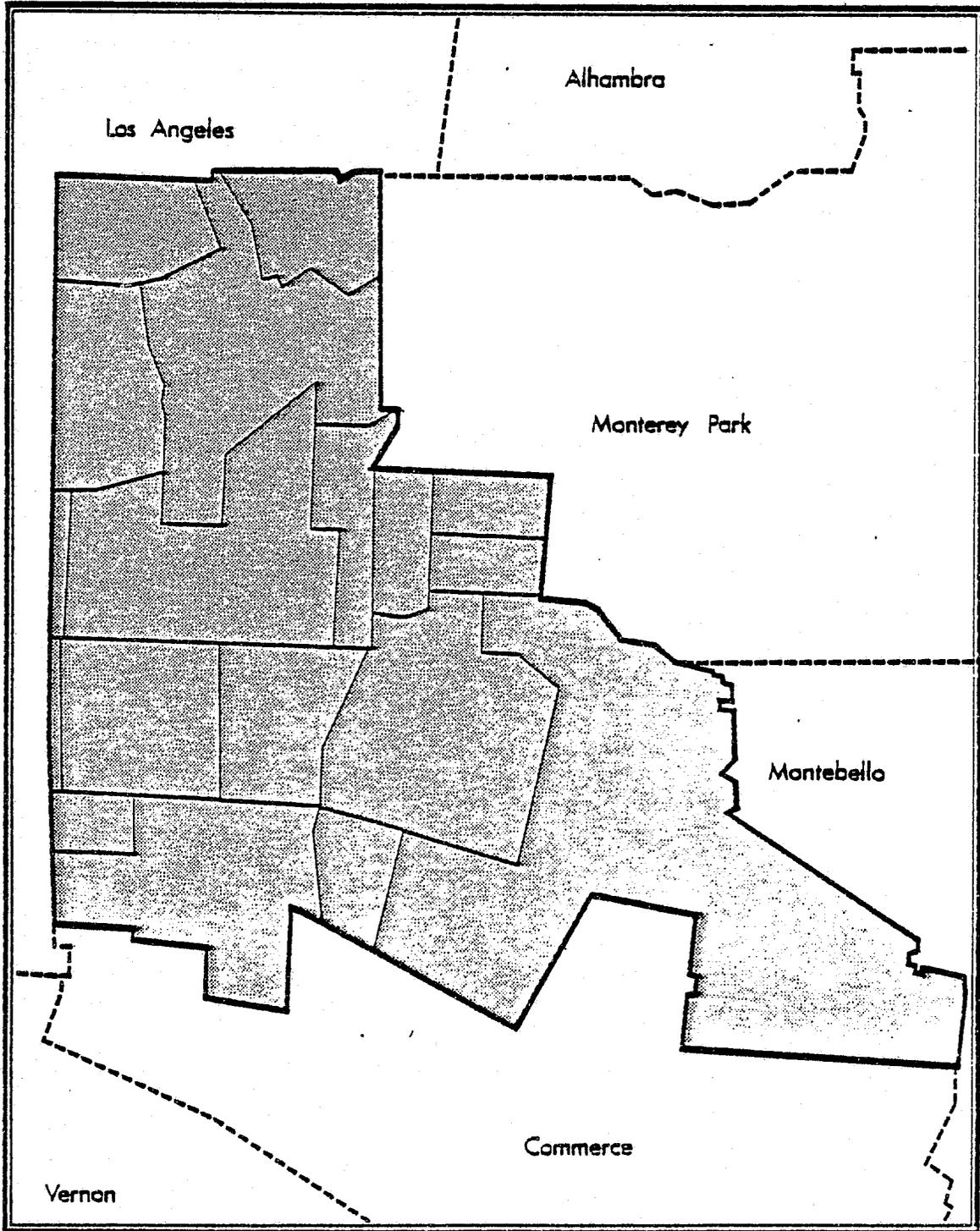
The membership of the barrios varies as well, but it is difficult to get accurate estimates. The smallest may have no more than 30 members. The larger ones claim to have 300-350 members, and the largest one claims to have as many as 1,000. These counts no doubt include those who are active as well as many who are not very active.

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<sup>11</sup>Barrio as used by gang members is different from its general use, which refers to an entire Mexican-American community or neighborhood. The gang members are referring only to their membership and the territory claimed by them.

FIGURE 2

BARRIO BOUNDARIES WITHIN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF  
EAST LOS ANGELES\*



\*These are approximate boundaries, most of which are based on a Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department map. Some of the boundaries extend into the surrounding incorporated areas. Several smaller barrios do not have defined boundaries, and some areas are not claimed by any barrio.

The relation of the barrios to the community and its formal organizations is one of a high degree of alienation. The typical attitude of community residents toward gangs is dismay. They dislike gangs, gang members, and their activities. However, these same residents may be unaware that individual "young kids" whom they know are gang members. The residents usually do not know the names nor the territorial boundaries of the gangs.

Service agencies in the community usually do not work with what are called "hard core" gang members. Many work with youngsters who are not affiliated or marginally affiliated, hoping thereby to prevent them from joining gangs or becoming more active in them. This hesitancy to work with gang members may be explained by the findings of a study recently published:

"Because of pressure from funding agencies, clients' success becomes a primary determinant of an agency's evaluation... It was observed that some agencies have a tendency to service a high proportion of clients who possess the characteristics of success, e.g., clients not entering or reentering the juvenile justice system. This condition leads to a major gap in services to hard-core gang members or those youths with less likelihood of success."<sup>12</sup>

The situation in the junior high and senior high schools is not much better. Many school personnel seem unaware either of the existence or the significance of gangs. Although no figures on school attendance of gang members are available, this research provides some general indications. Because gang members often fight with rival gangs, the members of particular gangs are often excluded from particular schools. School personnel explained that this is done for their safety as they might be assaulted. The usual

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<sup>12</sup>The East Los Angeles Community Union (TELACU) and Community Planning and Development (CPDC) Corporation. Unincorporated East Los Angeles Social and Community Environment Assessment Program, Volume III, Human Services Sub-Program, September 1976, p. 80.

procedure for exclusion is that the school recommends that a student attend a different school where it is hoped he will not have any problems. After a student attempts to go to several schools and gets into fights at each one, he may stop attending school or he may decide he does not like to travel a long distance on a bus to an area which is strange to him. The recommendation may be made that the student attend a "continuation school", which is a special school for students who have problems in attending regular classes. Some gang members attend these schools while others prefer not to go to what they consider to be inferior schools.

Additional problems which gang members have in schools can lead to their dropping out or being suspended. Many are not capable of competing with other students scholastically and some report having had negative experiences with school personnel. To the extent that these problems lead to alienation from the school, they may contribute to further involvement in gang activities. And, high degree of involvement in the gang will, in turn, make it difficult for a student to keep up with school assignments and maintain regular attendance.

As a result of these various problems, many gang members do not attend any school. However, those who are not highly active in a gang may attend school unnoticed, and the gang or gangs which "rule" the school may also attend without many problems. Therefore, it seems that some gangs or barrios have a higher percentage of their members attending school than others.

Community facilities such as parks and other recreational centers are also often closed off to gang members. They have been chased out of facilities by the authorities because it is feared that their presence might scare off other community people. In some specific cases, gang members have vandalized facilities or harassed people on the premises.

Statements made by barrio members indicate that, in such cases, they justify their behavior on the basis of their being excluded. It seems that

their exclusion leads to their harboring antagonistic feelings toward anyone associated with the facility and that they resent those who are allowed to use it. The result of the actions by each side--by the authorities and by the barrio members--is that a negative cycle of interactions tends to be maintained.

In general, gang members' relations with law enforcement are also negative. Statements made by some officers indicate that they see gang members as bad individuals who are constantly breaking the law. The most active ones are seen as incapable of reform. In turn, gang members see law enforcement as constraining them in all their normal activities. They complain of being harassed and physically assaulted by officers. They feel that law enforcement, as a whole, does not care about them but is only concerned with putting them in jail. Exceptions are individual officers who are respected by gang members because they are considered to be fair and honest.

To a large extent, gang members feel excluded from the society around them. Although they seem to remain apart by choice, the indications of this research are that they feel hurt by the fact that they usually cannot use facilities or get the benefits others can. Thus, because of their actions and the actions of others, gangs or barrios remain apart from the rest of the community. They form a sub-society of their own which seems to exist just beneath that of the dominant society.

This distinctiveness of barrio life is further demonstrated by the fact that the barrios have a language of their own which can be considered a dialect of Spanish and English. Although all barrio members can speak standard English and many can converse in standard Spanish, they often prefer to communicate in their own idiom. It is derived from Pachuco, which was spoken

by the Pachuco gangs of the 1940's and is a version of Calo, which is the language spoken throughout the barrios of the Southwest.<sup>13</sup>

When a barrio is viewed from within, it is seen as good. The barrio members feel an identity with their territory which is not unlike the identity a citizen feels toward his country. And, as has been stated before, there is a great deal of pride involved.

Socially, barrios are loosely organized, with most barrios being made up of a number of groups of members who interact or "hang out" together. Generally, they have grown up together, lived by one another, and are friends. These groups are called clicas, which can be translated as cliques. The clicas are formalized to the extent that they have names and the members of a barrio are known as members of a particular clica. The larger the barrio, the less likely it is that the members of each clica know the members of all the other clicas. The clicas tend to follow age groupings. The youngest are made up of those 12 to 15 years old and are often called the "young guys" or "kids." The oldest clicas are made up of young men in their late 20's and are called veteranos, which means veterans. And, each barrio has a few members who are over thirty.

The members of the barrios are called vatos locos. A translation of vato loco might be "crazy dude." "Home boy" is the term used to refer to

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<sup>13</sup> Words which are distinctive to Calo have been compiled into The Barrio Language Dictionary by Dagoberto Fuentes and Jose A. Lopez (Los Angeles, California: Southland Press, Inc., 1974). It includes words that are used throughout the Southwest, but many of the words are regional. A word used in Texas is not necessarily used in New Mexico or California.

someone from a member's own barrio, but it can be applied to members from other barrios if the individuals are on friendly terms. Although most barrios have female members called "home girls", they are almost always peripheral members. They may have their own clicas and may occasionally become involved in the feuding.

The barrio is maintained by the recruiting of new members and by the development of young clicas. If new members are not recruited and young clicas do not form, the barrio dies out. Usually one member is responsible for starting a clica, and he becomes what could be called its founding father. The recruiting depends on young people wanting to join. From the perspective of the members, it seems that someone joins a barrio because it exists and because it is seen as a positive social entity. It is possible that the individual sees no other alternative for him. The barrio provides friendship and activities and enables a member to feel that he belongs to something and that something belongs to him. One member was quoted as saying, "No one can take it away from me." The individual is accepted as he is by the barrio, and as long as he is a member, he has others who will support him. He in turn is expected to abide by the mores of the group.

However, the view held by many community residents that youngsters are forced to join or join for protection has not been supported by this research. Once a youngster begins associating with barrio members or identifying with them through his dress or actions, they may pressure him to join. But it seems that those who do not associate with barrio members are left alone. The majority of youngsters in the area are not gang members. When a young person joins a barrio, he or she usually breaks with family ties, takes on a barrio name, and adopts the barrio dress. The typical initiation "ceremony"

involves being beaten up. This break with the past, followed by an initiation, probably explains how it is possible for an individual to take part in activities which are not approved by his family. Parents often complain that they are no longer able to control their children who are barrio members.

When a new clica starts, it tries to establish its reputation through "bad" acts. Its members are at first involved in many minor activities which are often illegal. Eventually some of its members may become involved in serious criminal activities. Many of them get arrested and do time in various institutions.

Some major changes seem to occur in the most active barrio members between the time they first become involved in barrio activities as "kids" under 18 and the time they become "Veteranos" in their twenties. These changes can be inferred from observing the differences between the younger members and the older veteranos.

The younger ones have not generally been incarcerated for more than a few days. Their behavior is quite childish and they are naive in their orientation apparently unaware of the consequences which could result from their activities. They appear to be seeking an identity and seem to have joined the barrio because it provides one.

The older members who have been involved in dangerous situations, who have been injured and have injured others, and who have served several years at a time in penal institutions generally appear more mature and constrained. At the same time, they seem tough or hardened. This is evident in the way they are often able to deal with tragic situations without exhibiting the degree of emotion or disorientation with which others might respond. However, if they feel

that an injustice has been done, they become extremely angry and are capable of highly aggressive behavior toward the perceived offender(s).

Their impression of the effect of imprisonment can be surmised from the few occasions in which they speak of it. They usually speak of it as a difficult time in which many adjustments had to be made. They speak of having had to learn to protect themselves from others who would take advantage of them and of the importance of not showing any sign of weakness.

Other members who are relatively inexperienced tend to look up, with admiration and respect, to these older members who have had difficult experiences and who have become strong from having surmounted them.

The respect which is given to barrio members is based on their having developed qualities which are valued in the barrios. Among the valued qualities are: honesty and trustworthiness; loyalty to the barrio and the "home boys"; the courage not to back down in a dangerous situation; the ability to fight well with the fists or to shoot well; the ability to speak well; and the intelligence to make a good decision. Members are also respected for excellence in areas not related to barrio life, such as doing well in college, writing their ideas well or acquiring success in the outside world.

Some members who have many of the valued qualities are highly respected. They are called palabras and are said to have a lot of palabra, or "word." "Word" seems to signify that their words can be trusted and that when they speak, others listen. Although outsiders often say that someone with a lot of palabra is a leader, he is not an institutionalized leader. Rather he is what can be called a situational leader. He may be followed in one type of situation or for a period of time but not in another situation or not at another time. It

seems that for each occasion, a barrio group must be convinced that a particular course of action is the right one. Also, a leader tends to lose his palabra as he gets older and his clica which granted him respect begins to die out.

Clicas die out as the members start getting into their 20's. Some may be serving long prison terms, but most begin dropping out of barrio activities as they get married and take up family life which conflicts with the barrio life style. Many get jobs and some go on to higher education. Members in their late 20's or early 30's who are still active in the barrio seem to be the ones who have not found something to do which is more important to them. Once barrio members drop out of the barrio life, they no longer engage in barrio-type activities but they may continue to consider themselves members.

The activities that the barrios engage in are primarily social in nature. They get together, drink, and take drugs. While under the influence of the intoxicants, they often act "crazy," or locos. Since activities such as loitering, drinking under age, the taking of or the possession of drugs, and disturbing the peace are illegal activities, they are subject to arrest. Although some members work, the most active usually do not have any apparent means of support. Therefore, they may engage in illegal and sometime violent activities to acquire money. However, these illegal activities are not the reason for the existence of the barrio or gang.

Within any barrio, members do not engage equally in all activities. Most are involved in the relatively minor illegal activities and only a minority are engaged in the most serious crimes. In any barrio, there is a central core which is highly active in all activities. Around this core there are

those who are involved occasionally. Those furthest from the center are seldom involved. There are some on the periphery who are not members but who are sometimes called associates.

The barrios also vary in their involvement in crimes. If arrests are used as a measure of crimes, the statistics show that for some barrios, months go by without anyone getting arrested. On the other hand, the three or four most active barrios have had at least one member arrested every month for the last two years and in some months they have had as many as seven arrests.

All indications are that substance abuse is very widespread in all the barrios. According to statistics based on substance abuse in general from the Sheriff's Drug Unit, beer and wine are the most prevalent, marijuana is next, and PCP is third. From this research, it seems that in the barrios the use of reds, or barbiturates, is also common and that each barrio has a number of heroin addicts.

The activity of feuding can be distinguished from other activities. Quite often feuding seems to be the major activity and concern of a barrio. At such times, the barrio is very much concerned with protecting its honor and maintaining or expanding its territory. These activities are crimes as they involve the damaging of property and the harming of others. Although the intent is usually to attack an enemy, innocent parties frequently get hurt. These feuds are also related to crimes because it is necessary to procure weapons and often to carry them concealed. Therefore, guns may be stolen and thefts or robberies may be committed to provide money for weapons.

The feuds can best be understood if the barrios are thought of as miniature countries. Some are feuding or warring with one another. Others are on friendly

terms, and others are neutral. The territories are marked off through the writing of placas on the walls. The placa, which can include the entire name or merely the initials of a barrio, is written in barrio script, which is difficult for non-members to understand. The placa is equivalent to the flag of a country. When an enemy barrio crosses out the placa of a barrio and replaces it with its own, it is equivalent to taking down a flag and putting up a different one. Such an action can lead to war.

The nature of the feuds varies. Some of the barrios have a long tradition of feuding. The characteristic of these feuds is that they flare up and then subside somewhat. Other feuds are of recent origin. One barrio which had not been feuding had a "home boy" killed by another barrio. This started a very active feud between the two which resulted in another killing and many injuries. A feud between another two barrios is supposed to have started when one section of one barrio deserted and joined the adjacent barrio. A personal disagreement between one member of a barrio and a member of another barrio can escalate to involve all members to the two barrios. Feuds seem to be slow in dying out. They may subside when both sides see the injury as being equalized or the score as even. But because the hatred runs deep and the memories of people being hurt or killed by the enemy remains, a relatively small incident can set it off again.

Typical attacks include: hitting with the fists or blunt objects, cutting with a knife or other sharp object, shooting at an unoccupied car or at a home, and shooting at a group or at a specific individual. The severity of attack is controlled. If a barrio merely wants to warn or scare off another barrio, they may shoot at a car known to belong to someone in that barrio or at a home which is a known hangout for members. When someone from one barrio is killed, the members may go out with a specific intent of killing someone from the offend-

ing barrio in retaliation. It is said that attacks are usually made when individuals are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. This may be because it is not easy for members to make an attack and therefore a group gets together and builds up its courage for an attack through the use of alcohol and other drugs.

Overall, the picture of barrio life which has emerged is one with many aspects to it and one which has various contradictions. It is a life in which there is much enjoyment and warmth arising from being in the company of friends, and a life in which there is the excitement of being involved in daring and dangerous activities. But there is also much sadness and anger arising from the instances in which a beloved "home boy" has been killed by another barrio. This life, which members call the vida loca, meaning the "crazy life," contains many frustrations. Among the causes of frustrations are the lack of money and the unavailability of jobs, not having much to do, and not being accepted nor helped by others. These frustrations help feed the anger and hatred that is characteristic of the barrio. It takes anger and hatred to keep the feuds going, and these feelings make it easier for individuals to commit robberies and assaults. Frustrations also cause psychological pain and it may be that drugs are used to help alleviate this pain.

#### IV. PROJECT PROCESSES

##### Project Background

The Gang Violence Reduction Project (GVRP) set for itself the task of intervening in the ongoing social patterns of the East Los Angeles community. As many of the patterns are based on long-standing traditions and attitudes, this intervention was an extraordinary undertaking.

As was stated in Chapter I above, the project was modeled after the Federación de Barrios Unidos, or the Federation as it came to be called. The Federation developed naturally in the community as three individuals, including the present director of GVRP, worked with barrio members. It began with several barrios deciding to form formal associations which became involved in a number of activities, including boxing. Representatives from these associations, along with representatives from other barrios in the area, held meetings at which feuds were discussed and peace agreements reached. Although the organizing began in 1970, the Federation did not come into existence until 1972, and it lasted through most of 1973. Based on what those involved have said, it seems that internal dissension was the main reason for its dissolution. An advisory group from community agencies had been appointed by the Federation. Apparently individual members of the group created factions as they attempted to influence the barrios to back up their particular interests or activities.

The significance of the Federation for the Gang Violence Reduction Project was that it set a precedent which could be followed. It provided learnings

which could be drawn upon, and it allowed the GVRP director to come to know many individuals in the barrios.

The Gang Violence Reduction Project's plan which was outlined in its first year proposal listed the major activities that the project would carry out:

- 1) Local agencies would be contacted so that they would become acquainted with the program and so that their assistance and cooperation could be requested.
- 2) Gang members and gang leaders would be identified in the community and Youth Authority institutions and the objectives of the project would be outlined to them. Their suggestions and cooperation would be sought and gang leaders would be offered employment as consultants in developing methods of solving gang conflict.
- 3) Training would be conducted for staff and gang members in community organization, crisis intervention, and conflict resolution.
- 4) A gang forum would be established where leaders could meet and discuss areas of conflict and develop tentative resolutions and solutions of the conflict in order to reduce gang violence. Strategies developed in the gang forums would then be implemented.
- 5) Individual gang members would be involved in recreational activities and gang members or entire gangs would be encouraged to take part in community projects. These projects would be designed to benefit the community and would allow gang members to offer constructive rather than destructive service to the community. Gang members would be offered assistance from the project to enable them to achieve education and vocational goals through education and training facilities within the community.

### Staff and Project Structure

For most of the first project period, the staff consisted of five regular Youth Authority employees who came to be called the "professional staff", one CETA position, and as many as eleven gang consultants. In addition, one person who was employed by the County of Los Angeles worked closely with the project.

The five professional staff consisted of the director, who was a Parole Agent II, a Parole Agent I who served as assistant director, a Parole Aid whose job was to work in the field and coordinate activities, an office secretary who was a Clerk Typist II, and a Research Assistant III, who was in charge of the evaluation research. A student assistant hired after the end of the first period aided in compiling the data.

All the professional staff had been hired by the beginning of December 1976, the gang consultants by the end of February 1977, and the CETA worker by the end of March 1977. An additional Parole Agent I was hired in September 1977, the last month of the first contract period.

The characteristics of project staff no doubt contributed to their ability to work with barrio members in the area. The director, who was of Mexican descent, had an intimate knowledge of the project target area, as he had grown up in the area and was continuing to live there. He was fluent in Spanish and in the barrio (gang) idiom. The other Youth Authority staff were also of Mexican background, had some familiarity with the target area, and spoke Spanish.

The role of each staff member, although originally defined, developed further during the progress of the project. The role of the director, who had designed the project, was that of overseeing the staff and the project activities in order to keep it directed toward its goals. Initially he was involved

in explaining the project goals to staff and gang members, and he spent a great deal of time in the field contacting barrio members. However, by the end of the first contract period he was acting more as the project manager and was less directly involved in the actual intervention efforts.

The role of the Parole Agent I was that of the assistant director in the absence of the director and that of the supervisor of one-half (5 to 6) of the gang consultants. He also helped the director with the paperwork of the project. The role of the Parole Aid was that of supervising the remaining gang consultants.

Supervising the consultants involved a number of different activities, such as working with them in establishing the barrio associations and in planning and coordinating recreational activities. It also involved training the consultants to meet the formal requirements of their job. Since the supervisors had to work in the field with the consultants, they had to come to know the barrios with which they were working, which included the clicas, the leaders, and the most active members of the barrios.

The role of the Parole Aid Trainee developed into an intermediary role between the gang consultants and the staff. He also worked with and helped supervise the gang consultant in the barrio of which he was a member.

The role of the County gang worker must be also considered as part of the project because he was a significant addition to it. His background included involvement in organizing the previous federation and working with barrio members for several years prior to the project's operation. Several months after the project was in operation, his supervisor instructed him to work closely with it. Thereafter, he spent about half of his time working

directly with the project staff and in the field with gang consultants and other gang members. He also helped make County resources such as bus transportation available for project activities.

The role of the office secretary was quite varied. She served as receptionist, did project typing, filed project documents and kept attendance records. Her role as a receptionist was important because it involved her maintaining positive relations with barrio members.

The primary role of the research evaluator has been defined in the "Evaluation Design" above. In the project, she was seen as the "researcher" whose job it was to document the activities of the project and to keep track of the statistics. She also gave input to the project's activities through sharing her observations with project staff and administrators.

The gang consultant's role will be discussed in detail below. Their primary role was that of an intermediary between project staff and other barrio members for purposes of crisis intervention and community organization. They provided the insights which only they had and helped project staff develop strategies which could be successful.

The project operation required some flexibility in its structure. Although the project office was required to remain open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., it was necessary that there be some flexibility in the hours that the staff worked. This is because many of the most important barrio events occurred at night or on weekends.

#### Monthly Highlights

A synopsis of some of the major events which occurred during the first contract period of the Gang Violence Reduction Project is presented below.

November 1976

Staff was hired. Two small offices were prepared for use and secondhand furniture was secured.

December 1976

Staff training on the project goals was carried on. There was an intensive effort made to identify gang leaders in the barrios with the intention of finding individuals who could work for the project.

January 1977

Identification of gang leaders continued, including a visit to the Youth Training School (YTS) in Chino. A meeting was set up with the Los Angeles County supervisor representing the East Los Angeles district and representatives of community agencies to discuss gang violence.

February 1977

The first contingent of ten gang consultants was hired and their training began. A training session with a psychologist, the staff, and the newly-hired gang consultants was held.

March 1977

Intervention in the barrios by the consultants intensified. Two barrio associations began meeting. The project staff met with staff from YTS to inform them about the project and to coordinate efforts in working with gang members. A meeting was held at the state college with individuals knowledgeable about business. A meeting was held with a captain and other law enforcement personnel regarding the relations of project staff and consultants with law enforcement.

April 1977

Contacts with community organizations continued. The work and training of consultants also continued.

May 1977

A national television program featured gangs, and one consultant from GVRP appeared. Efforts to develop a business continued. The project moved to a new large office building.

June 1977

A team building session with an outside consultant was held for three days at a camp in the mountains. Gang consultants began meeting regularly on their own.

July 1977

Barrio handball playoffs were held, culminating in a handball tournament involving the seven barrios in the project.

August 1977

A series of meetings began with the County supervisor regarding the building of handball courts at Obregon Park. These were attended by a barrio neighborhood association and GVRP staff. Other meetings were held with Parks and Recreation personnel. Two interbarrio peace agreements were reached.

September 1977

A banquet giving out trophies for participants in the handball tournament was held. An additional staff member, a Parole Agent I, began work. Planning for football games between the barrios began.

Making Initial Contacts in the Barrios

The first step in the Gang Violence Reduction Project's intervention effort--the development of contacts in the barrios--was a very crucial step. Without the development of contacts or without gang members being convinced that the idea of the project was a good one, the project could not have gotten off the ground. The primary purpose of these initial contacts was to locate individuals who would make good gang consultants.

As the barrios are essentially closed societies, breaking into them is very difficult for an outsider. Four approaches were attempted:

1. Contacting anyone known in the group. The project director knew many barrio members as a result of his work in the Federation and his work as a parole agent in the area. He was able to contact an acquaintance in six out of the ten barrios with which the project initially communicated.
2. Being introduced by a friend or acquaintance. The director knew people who were able to introduce him directly or were able to provide him with names of individuals who might make good gang consultants. Of the 11 initial gang consultants, six were acquired this way.
3. Using an indirect approach. An example of this approach was the director's letting people know that he was looking for gang consultants.

As the word got out, some gang members came into the office to inquire about the jobs. One gang consultant was acquired this way, and two city gangs who were ineligible to be a part of the project showed an interest in working with it.

4. Walking in cold. This method was tried but failed. The director was occasionally able to establish positive relations with a stranger; but this was always because he was able to make references to a person or persons whom the other knew. No gang consultant was acquired in this manner.

Once an individual was contacted, it became necessary to sell him on the project or the basic ideas behind the project. The person or persons who were doing the selling had, at the same time, the task of selling themselves. This meant that the individuals being contacted had to come to believe and trust the person telling about the project. Three basic techniques were used:

1. Finding some common ground as the basis for communication. This technique includes bringing up experiences and references to people who are known in common. The GVRP director made many references to the barrio experience. He was able to name individuals whom the gang members he was contacting knew or knew of.
2. Appealing to something which is known to interest the other person or group. The project director constantly referred to the importance of being able to walk the streets safely and being able to go into any neighborhood without looking over one's shoulder. He also spoke of developing a business and providing jobs. All of these things appealed to the barrio members.
3. Speaking in a language which is meaningful to the person or group.  
The project director spoke to the gang members in the dialect which they

use. This prevented the barrier from developing which would have developed had he spoken to them only in "straight" (standard) English.

In summary, to make a successful initial contact in the barrios requires someone with an intimate knowledge of the barrio style of life and experience with, or at least considerable familiarity with, the Federation concept.

#### Gang Consultants

Recruiting. Once initial contacts were made in the barrios, it became necessary to find individuals who could be hired as consultants. The characteristics which were sought in these individuals were those which would make them good workers for the project. Therefore, they had to be committed to the project's goals and had to have the ability to work toward them. Because the major figures, or those who had palabra, would be the most capable of influencing others, the project attempted to hire them as gang consultants.

The characteristics which were not wanted in gang consultants were those which would make it difficult for them to carry on the work of the project. Therefore, the project attempted to avoid hiring anyone who had a serious drinking problem or anyone who was hooked on heroin. Those hired were hired with the understanding that they would not come into contact with law enforcement through any fault of their own. Individuals were also screened in order not to hire anyone who might have any connection with organized crime.

Because of the nature of the situation, a number of problems have arisen in recruiting gang consultants. Some difficulties arose in recruiting major figures, or those who had palabra. Project staff did not always know who had or did not have palabra, particularly in the barrios with which the staff was

unfamiliar. Two techniques were used to determine whether a potential gang consultant had palabra. One involved asking several barrio members about a single individual in order to get a sense of his influence in the barrio. Another technique was to observe an individual among a group of his "home boys", noting how much respect they paid to him. Ideally, he was observed on several occasions because his palabra might not be readily apparent to an outsider. However, this was not always possible.

Once a major figure was known it was necessary to contact him and persuade him to work for the project. Contacting barrio members with palabra involved the same technique as other members, but it was often more difficult. Most of the influential barrio members who were contacted seemed to have become convinced that the project goals were worthwhile. However, several had jobs that they were not willing to give up in order to become gang consultants. One individual did not want to work for the project when first contacted because his barrio was involved in a feud and he felt the need to support it. He later changed his mind and became instrumental in bringing about a peace.

When someone with palabra could not be found to work for the project, the strategy used to hire someone who was available and to attempt through him to come to know and be known by the influential members of the barrio. This strategy seemed to work to some degree. It did help in allowing others to become aware of the project. However, it did not generally help in the hiring of more influential consultants, because once someone was hired, the tendency was to keep him under contract unless he committed some serious act.

Hiring. The first group of consultants was hired during February 1977. The project budget limited the number of gang consultant positions available

and the number of project staff available to supervise them. Therefore, it was necessary to limit the project's efforts to the barrios which were contributing the most to the Sheriff's Department gang incident statistics. The larger barrios needed two consultants. Initially, eleven consultants were hired representing eight barrios. As gang consultant openings occurred, other gang members were hired to replace them. When an opening occurred in one barrio in June, an adequate replacement could not be found promptly and the barrio was dropped from the project. The position was later filled with a consultant hired from a large barrio from which the project had had only one consultant. Thereafter, seven barrios were represented in the project.

The gang consultants who were hired were primarily from the older groups of gang members, the veteranos. The ages of the 19 consultants who had worked for the project by the end of the first contract period ranged from 21 to 32, with the median age being 24.5.

All but two had served some time in a penal institution. Three were on parole and four were on probation when they were hired. Seven were former Youth Authority parolees and three were formerly on probation. These characteristics seem typical of the central core of the influential members in any barrio.

Most of the consultants hired had the characteristics which were desired, but some did not. The majority working for the project at any one time seemed to be major figures in their barrios. All indications are that those who were hired believed in the idea of peace in the barrios. But it does seem that some have worked harder for that goal than others.

Terminations. In general, consultants were terminated when it was decided

that they were unable to provide the services which the project required. Some of the basic questions which had to be considered were: When should a person be given a second chance? When should a person be kept on the project and helped with his problem, and when are his problems so severe as to jeopardize the project? Before a consultant was terminated, the situation was discussed by the staff. When staff did not agree on what action should be taken, the director made the decision.

Different from other job situations, one type of problem which arose in regard to the terminations was derived from the fact that the consultants were representatives of barrios. A gang consultant who was terminated and felt that he was treated badly might return to his barrio and speak negatively about the project and its staff. This, in turn, could put staff members in physical danger. Therefore, each case had to be handled carefully so that everyone involved understood the rationale behind the termination and felt that the action was just. Firmness along with an adequate explanation seemed to be the best strategy. In spite of the care taken, on several occasions there were hard feelings regarding terminations. Fortunately, none of these hard feelings were permanent.

Reasons for consultants being terminated included excessive drinking or the use of drugs. If an individual's problem was resolved through treatment, he was not terminated. Several consultants were terminated as a result of arrests for which they had to serve time or which indicated in some way that they could not be effective workers.

For these various reasons, the turnover rate among gang consultants was quite high, particularly in one barrio. However, of the 11 gang consultants

working for the project at the end of September, seven were from the original 11 hired in February.

Duties. As there was no precedent for it, the gang consultant position was not fully developed until the end of January 1977. The gang members were hired as consultants because that is the way in which a person for whom there is no civil service position available can be hired to perform a service for the State of California. Formal contracts, including a definition of duties, had to be drawn up. The nine gang consultant duties as they were approved and written into the contracts are presented in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3

GANG CONSULTANT DUTIES  
AS STATED IN THE CONTRACT

Services provided by Contactor (i.e., gang consultant) shall include but not be limited to:

1. Establish positive relationships with other gang members to gain their confidence and cooperation in order to involve them in setting up community neighborhood associations.
2. Assist GVRP staff in identifying power figures in gang groups in the project's target area and convince them to cease hostilities.
3. Contact and convince gang groups to get involved in Federation of United Neighborhoods in order to establish a communications vehicle to mitigate gang violence between antagonistic/feuding gangs in the project's target area.
4. Assist GVRP staff in organizing gang groups into grass roots community neighborhood associations in their respective areas.

FIGURE 3 (Con't)

5. Assist GVRP staff in the implementation of self-help community project.
6. Assist in communicating the project's goals and activities to gang groups, gang members in the community, California Youth Authority institutions, CDC facilities and probation facilities in order to get them involved in the project.
7. Assist GVRP staff in the transportation of gang members to various sites in and out of target area.
8. Assist research assistant in collecting information about gang group behavior patterns.

These duties describe the activities that the gang consultants were engaged in, but they do not fully describe the extent of their work. Establishing barrio associations (numbers 1 and 4) was emphasized more during the last half of the first period. Number 2, relating to reducing gang hostilities, was emphasized most among consultants of barrios which were feuding and at the times when incidents between barrios occurred. The development of a federation (number 3) was promoted throughout the period, but the actual development did not begin until the end of the period. Number 5, regarding the development of a community project, was emphasized most among the consultants in the barrio which started an activity, but all the consultants were involved to some extent with the planning of a business venture, a self-help community project. Communicating the project's goals (number 6) was emphasized most when the project began. Number 7, providing transportation, was the duty emphasized least.

The activities of the gang consultants were consistent with the duties defined to them verbally by project staff and in the contract. However, each consultant further defined his role in the project by drawing upon his unique knowledge of the barrio and his barrio's members. From their action it is

apparent that the gang consultants have seen peace as their major goal and they have generally carried out their activities with that goal in mind.

Although the gang consultants were often capable of independent action, they were dependent upon the project for structure and support. The professional staff often worked along with them in the barrios, guided them and occasionally counseled them.

Their activities which will be summarized here will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.

The consultants have used several types of strategies for peace. One type of strategy involved directly dealing with the problems of bringing about or maintaining peace through direct intervention into interbarrio feuds. The types of activities associated with this strategy included associating with the barrio members to keep abreast of barrio activities, intervening to prevent incidents when possible (crisis intervention) conferring with other consultants to try to resolve incidents (conflict resolution), and attempting to convince barrio members that peace is the best course.

A second type of strategy which was used can be called diversionary. It involved activities such as trying to get barrio members jobs or back into school. Consultants transported barrio members to agencies which help in placing individuals in jobs or which do job training as well as to actual job sites. Consultants, along with staff members, occasionally attempted to get gang members who were not attending school back into school. They visited the schools and spoke as advocates with school personnel. The efforts to get gang members jobs or back into school were sometimes successful but were often unsuccessful.

A third type of strategy related to organizing the barrios behind the project's goals. One aspect of this strategy was the planning of recreational activities, which included deciding upon a place for the event, finding out who was going, getting the food and supplies needed, and arranging for transportation. The planning of association meetings also involved some of the same types of activities, but for the association meetings it was also necessary to convince the barrio members that they should attend.

Problems. A number of problems have arisen in relation to the gang consultant's jobs. One problem related to working hours. It became necessary that they specify particular hours when they would be officially on the job and hours when they would not. Even so, if they were socializing with other barrio members and an incident occurred, they might find themselves working during their "off" hours. It also became necessary to specify that consultants would work no more than 40 hours per week because their contracts had been written up on that basis. Otherwise, project funds would have been expended before the end of the grant period.

Another problem was the difficulty in adequately supervising the consultant's work as there were only two supervisors and each supervised 5 to 6 consultants in 3 or 4 barrios made up of hundreds of members. This problem was alleviated in September when another parole agent was hired to supervise some of the consultants.

As a way of keeping track of gang consultant activities each consultant was required to turn in a weekly report of activities. Some consultants had difficulty in writing and needed help in filling out the form which project

staff had devised.<sup>14</sup> In addition to the written reports to the supervisors, the consultants were also reporting orally to the researcher on their activities.

Other problems were related to the characteristics of the consultants as opposed to the requirements of the job. The most influential members in the barrios were the ones who were most capable of bringing about peace, and yet they were often the ones who had the most difficulty abiding by administrative regulations such as turning in time sheets on a specific day and appearing regularly and on time at meetings. Other consultants who were not as successful in working in the barrios were often the ones who had no difficulty in abiding by the rules. Eventually all those who remained with the project for a period of time became better at fulfilling the formal obligations of the job, but the problem was not completely solved by the end of the first period.

#### Conflict Resolution

The most significant aspect of the project intervention has been its work in conflict resolution. For the purposes of this report, this work has been divided into the development of a gang forum, the mediation of feuds, and peace negotiations.

Gang Forum. The project's first major accomplishment was the semiweekly forum, or meetings held at the project office and attended by all professional staff and gang consultants, and occasionally other barrio members. The mere fact that members of eight major barrios in the Gang Violence Reduction Project's

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<sup>14</sup>Although not formally tested by the project, consultants' performance gave the impression they have had a considerable range of reading and writing skills. Some had a great deal of trouble with any reading or writing while others operated at about beginning college level. The average seems to have been about half way between the two extremes.

target area were able to come together under one roof for meetings was extraordinary. This is illustrated by an event which occurred at one of the first meetings. One of the gang consultants stated that prior to the project's existence he could not have sat in the same room with a consultant from one of the other barrios. By this, he meant that he would have had to attack him on sight. It was evident that, even then, he had difficulty keeping himself under control. Therefore, the first step in the developing relations among gang consultants was their learning to tolerate one another.

During the initial forum meetings, there were a number of confrontations at which consultants from feuding barrios exchanged accusations. Not only did the barrios charge one another with having committed acts resulting in injuries or deaths, but they also charged one another with breaking the barrio code, such as hurting women and children. The turning point in these confrontations seems to have occurred when the director stated that it was best to put the past aside and begin with the present. There seemed to be general agreement with that statement.

After these first forum meetings, it seemed to the researcher that the consultants were getting along well. However, when the gang consultants provided transportation for one another, generally only those from friendly barrios rode together.

An incident occurred in which a "home boy" of one of the consultants threatened another consultant with a weapon. It seems that immediately after the incident relations among the consultants became rather tense. They were very distrustful of members of other gangs who came to the office, since they feared someone else might be set up.

The fact that the consultants were aware of the problem was evident as they brought up their need to develop trust in one another at several staff meetings. They began insisting that some activity be planned which would allow them to come to know one another better.

Several weeks later, in the middle of June, the project held a three-day off-site training session. The gang consultants went to the training session with the understanding that it would provide them with opportunity to build the trust they needed. When they arrived, they found that the trainer's formal, carefully organized plan did not meet their needs. The consultants immediately reacted negatively to her plan. But this negative reaction had an unanticipated positive result. Because they found her a common opponent, they were better able to unite. In order to achieve their goals, the gang consultants met on their own at night. They drew up a series of points upon which they all could agree (Figure 4). They presented these points to the entire staff the following day.

FIGURE 4

GANG VIOLENCE REDUCTION PROJECT  
GANG CONSULTANT PROGRAM GOALS

June 16, 1977

1. If two neighborhoods are fighting, we are going to get the consultants from the two neighborhoods together to discuss it. The other consultants will make sure this come about.
2. When we bring dudes from our neighborhood down to the office, we are going to be responsible for their actions.
3. We are going to have meetings 3 times a week: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 12:00 p.m. In this way, we can take care of things right away instead of waiting until it's too late.
4. We will have a sergeant-at-arms to conduct the meetings. A different one will be appointed each time. The staff will be welcome at anytime except when there is something heavy being discussed. We want a secretary to be at the meetings to help keep notes and to type them up.
5. We need more involvement between the neighborhoods.
6. We need to start working more in the community. In that way we can get more exposure and get backing and funding when we need it. This can be done with or without the Y.A.
7. Sports. We are going to set up tournaments for handball with each consultant bringing 5 members fro his barrio. In the near future, each neighborhood will have a baseball league and everything that goes with it, such as uniforms. We will set up a committee to make up the schedules.
8. We are thinking of getting a recreation room.
9. We plan to work closer with the businessmen in the community.
10. We want to be able to pass on who we hire as gang consultants. And, we need to have a probation period for them.
11. We need to know from the staff about the program. We need to know about future projects in enough time so that we can work on them before the deadlines arrive.
12. We are going to turn in progress reports for each other and \_\_\_ is going to show us how. If one of us gets out of line, the others will get on his case.
13. We should not leave the girls out. We should make plans to hire some girls who can communicate with them.

FIGURE 4 (Con't)

14. We need a little more recreation, such as field trips, putting together guys from different neighborhoods so they can communicate. This will be done with only 5 dudes at a time because two of us can control 5 dudes. This way their getting together will become visible to others.
15. We want to start visiting institutions as soon as possible--beginning with Paso Robles.
16. If the staff is having trouble getting the paperwork done, they should train us so that we can take it over when someone is not there.
17. As the project gets going, we should build up enough credibility so that we do not need the jura.\* We should get to the point that we can provide our own security and stop violence in that way.
18. Our job is to sell the project to the home boys. Otherwise it won't work. We the consultants have a strong commitment, and our attitude is and will remain positive!!

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\*Police.

The points are essentially a plan of action, demonstrating that the gang consultants had internalized the goals of the project and had in addition developed some specific strategies for achieving the goals. They also expressed their dissatisfaction with the way some things had been done in the project and demanded some specific changes.

In addition, drawing up the plan of action showed that the gang consultants had become a cohesive group that planned to stick together. Out of it came the understanding that they would protect one another from danger even if it involved protecting each other from their own "home boys." The overall result of the session was that the gang consultants developed the trust that had been lacking. After that, the gang consultants were no longer fearful that one of them might do something that could result in harm to another.

Although not all the points in their plan of action have been adhered to from June through September 1977, they have nevertheless served as a basis for action. The points involving interbarrio communication (points 2, 5, and 7) have been followed quite closely. The major plan for improving communications which was carried out was the handball tournament, discussed later in this report (see page 59). As an additional way of improving communication, plans were made to visit each other's neighborhoods, or barrios. Some consultants did take several other consultants to visit their neighborhoods, and they introduced them to their "home boys."

The gang consultants meetings (point 3) have continued to be held on a semiregular basis. Their frequency was changed from three to two times a week, with a general staff meeting held once a week. Point four, having a rotating sergeant-at-arms or chairman, has been almost completely ignored. One or two individuals have become the natural leaders of the group and have conducted

almost all the meetings. When these individuals have not been present, formal meetings have not been held.

Mediation of Feuds.<sup>15</sup> Feuds have been mitigated in a number of ways. Among the ways that gang consultants sometimes used was stopping someone who was intending to make an attack and promoting among barrio members of the idea of remaining in their own neighborhood rather than going out into other neighborhoods to make attacks. The consultants usually explained to their barrio's members, "We'll stay in our neighborhood, and as long as the other barrios stay in their neighborhoods, we'll leave them alone." But this was only the first step in bringing about a more permanent peace between barrios.

Another way the gang consultants and professional staff have mediated interbarrio incidents was to trace down the specific details of an incident, such as finding out who was responsible and why the action was taken. This information was then taken back to the opposing barrios. The results of this type of investigation have often made it possible to explain away an incident so that the barrio which was attacked no longer felt it necessary to retaliate.

An example of this was an interbarrio shooting incident in which the individual who did the shooting was found to be acting on his own because of a personal grievance he felt against a member of the other barrio. Since he

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<sup>15</sup>The researcher has become aware of many instances of mediation which took place. But it is possible that many instances never became known to her. A great deal of secrecy generally surrounds any mediation attempt. The details are often guarded carefully because of the fear that a retaliation may take place before an agreement is reached or that information will leak out resulting in someone getting arrested. In some instances it was possible for the researcher to learn most of the relevant details while in others only some of the details were known. There is no reason to believe that the instances for which the details were known were atypical.

was found not to be acting on behalf of the barrio, the barrio of the victim agreed to forget about the incident. However, the understanding was that the guilty party would be dealt with by his own barrio. It is possible that, without this mediation having taken place, the feud between the two barrios could have flared up with tragic results. As it was, the feud remained rather cool.

Another technique, which not only helped resolve specific incidents but which brought about some peace agreements, was to bring together all parties involved in an incident or all major figures from two feuding barrios. In this mediation process it seemed that each side could present its perspective on the events and the two sides could arrive at a common perspective which in many cases resolved the disagreement so that no further action was necessary.

In some cases someone who had been harmed felt that justice had yet to be done. As a result, on occasion, the barrio members felt that the only way to resolve the issue was through a "fair fight." A fair fight is defined as a fight supervised by others and fought with the fists without the use of any weapons. These fights seem to be stopped by the observers once a winner is evident and before anyone is seriously hurt. The understanding held for these fights is that once the fight is over, the incident is to be forgotten regardless of who wins. And, as far as the researcher knows, this has always been what has happened. The project has not condoned this type of solution, but it seems that it has been used by members because it is a traditional barrio way of settling disagreements.

Peace Negotiations. The term "peace negotiation", as it is used here, refers to the process through which two barrios that had been fighting arrive at some type of agreement to end their feud. During the Gang Violence Project's first

contract period, three formal or semi-formal agreements were reached. In addition, two informal agreements were made to "cool it." These amounted to de-escalation of feuds.

The nature of the negotiation process has varied depending on how "hot" or serious the feud was when the project began working on it. Nevertheless, all of the peace negotiations have included a number of basic steps. These have been divided for this analysis into three parts: prenegotiation activities, the negotiations, and post negotiation activities.

The prenegotiation activities were very important. In the first step leading up to the negotiations, the professional staff and gang consultants have talked to members of each barrio about the possibility of establishing peace among the barrios. Barrio members who heard have then helped to disseminate the idea among other barrio members. As the idea of peace was often initially rejected by the members of feuding barrios, the gang consultants and other barrio members have had to work to keep it alive. The result has been a slight change in attitude, reflected in statements such as: "We would be willing to stop the fighting, but they (the other barrio's members) keep on; they don't want to stop the fighting."

The next step has followed almost immediately and has often been verbalized in this manner: "We would be willing to stop the fighting if they would stop." It seemed necessary for each side to have reached this step before serious negotiations could begin.

However, getting each side to the point that it is willing to end a feud can take a long time. This is seen in the example below, which indicates that there is no point in trying to rush an agreement until both sides are ready to

consider ending the feud. It is also important that all the major figures, or palabras, in each barrio are willing to go along with the idea of peace. Stories are told about peace treaties which failed because some clica was not willing to take part in the negotiations.

When both sides are ready, the negotiations can be set up. A peace negotiation meeting has to be set up carefully so that no one is killed or injured. The experiences of the project show that each side has to establish some trust in the other before any meeting so it can be reasonably confident that the negotiations are not a set up. In every case this trust has pivoted on the "word", or palabra, of respected individuals. Project staff have played the role of mediators in negotiations and have helped in establishing trust. Also, consultants and other respected individuals from one barrio have convinced the consultants and other opposing barrio members that they were sincere in their desire to negotiate peace. If some incident had ensued, the consultants would have probably lost the respect of their "home boys." Yet, in spite of all precautions taken, it seems that barrio negotiations always have a strong element of danger.

Negotiations resulting in peace agreements have progressed through five basic steps. For some of the peace negotiations most of the steps were accomplished in a prenegotiation session, but generally more than one session was required to progress through all the steps. The first step involved each side bringing out into the open all of the other side's major past offenses. Angry accusations were made during this step. In the second step both sides became aware that each side had hurt the other and that both had suffered injuries and deaths. Each side, in effect, admitted some responsibility. It seems that both barrios must verbalize their awareness of the injuries suffered by each side. In the third step statements were made that it was not fruitful to continue to state

what had happened in the past. Rather, it was necessary to forget the past and to start from the present. Step four consisted of the decision being made that if anyone had a grievance he wished to settle with the opposing barrio, he must handle it individually and must not involve the entire barrio. The fifth step was the peace agreement. After each side's questions were answered by the other side, an agreement was made that the fighting or the feud would end. In at least one of the negotiations, ways of handling any possible breaking of the peace were discussed. The incident would be investigated by representatives--primarily the consultants--from the other barrio. The agreement was then sealed by the two barrios shaking hands.

The peace agreement's significance was demonstrated in the postnegotiation activities. A number of events typically followed a peace agreement. First, after peace agreements, there have been reports of members of the two barrios passing on the street and not challenging one another as they would have in the past. Occasionally, they have greeted one another and shaken hands. Second, there have been some occasions when someone was suspected of having broken the peace. Even though the actual incident may have been minor, it was treated as major, because it brought the other side's sincerity into question. The feeling was that perhaps the other side's word could not be trusted. Third, when an incident has occurred, the victim barrio has confronted a gang consultant from the offending barrio or another staff member from the project. This indicated that the peace agreement had resulted in open communications. In most of these confrontations the incident was resolved either because it was case of mistaken identity or because the offending barrio agreed to deal with the individual or individuals involved. In one instance it was explained to the victim barrio that the individual had acted on his own rather than on

behalf of the barrio. Prior to the agreement, the barrio would have stood behind a member regardless of whether or not he was acting on his own. A fourth type of event which has occurred after an agreement has been the partial resumption of the feud. This occurred with one of the peace agreements and required additional negotiations.

The major peace agreement accomplished by the efforts of the project will be summarized here. The feud had begun when the member of one barrio was accidentally shot by a second barrio. It was an accident because the victim was thought to have been a member of a third barrio with whom the second barrio was feuding. When the project began, it was a very hot feud. Many attacks were being made each week, with many of them resulting in injuries. While the project was in progress, a member of the original offending barrio was killed by the other barrio. Thus, the score could be seen as even by the members, but the feud continued.

The project hired consultants from both barrios. Less than a month after they had been hired, some meetings were attempted between the two barrios. These meetings did not seem to have been very fruitful. In one, two representatives and the consultant from one barrio met with the two consultants from the other barrio in the project office. In another, the two consultants from the second barrio went into the territory of the other barrio for a meeting. A third attempt at a meeting failed; it would have involved representatives from the two barrios at the project office. The reason given for its failure was misunderstanding about the time set for the meeting. However, fear or a lack of willingness to negotiate seemed to have played a part in the meetings not having come about. One of the consultants had managed to talk several important

individuals from his barrio into coming to a meeting, but when they found that the meeting would not take place for another two hours, they left rather than wait. After this failure, the consultant whose barrio showed up was not willing to involve himself in setting up meetings, because he felt that his "home boys" would no longer be able to trust him. He felt that if he were to ask them to come to a meeting with the other barrio, they would remind him about what had happened on the previous occasion.

After a few months, the feud seemed to cool somewhat. There was at least one other attempt at a meeting. A group of veteranos, or older members, from the two barrios met and agreed that there should be peace. But a "youngster", or younger member, who happened to be passing by interfered and an injury almost occurred.

During the first project period, one of the two barrios had a large turnover in gang consultants. It seemed that none of them were able to bring the barrio together behind the idea of peace. This was either because they were older than the members who were doing most of the fighting or because they did not have sufficient influence over them. Toward the end of September, a younger consultant who had a great deal of influence over his barrio was hired. About the same time another consultant who was very enthusiastic and a good speaker was hired. The combination and the time seemed right. They were able to get their "home boys" to agree that peace would be a good idea.

The barrio had several association meetings and then decided to invite members from all the other barrios in the project to come to one of their meetings. Two other barrios showed up, but the one with whom they were feuding most heavily did not. It may have been that they were afraid to come.

The rest of the Gang Violence staff was also present. The consultant from one of the relatively neutral barrios which was present served the role as mediator. He went into the missing barrio's neighborhood and brought back two members to the meeting. He continued to serve the mediatory role as the two feuding barrios hurled charges at one another. (This is the first step of the negotiating process as described above.) Each side expressed a willingness to call a stop to the feuding. The two members of the outside barrio said that they were willing to go back to their neighborhood and talk to their "home boys" about it. They were then escorted out by a large contingent of the host barrio to insure their safety.

A second meeting involving several barrios was set up to continue to discuss peace before the final major meeting occurred. As a result, a large meeting was planned at a facility in the second barrio's territory. In this way, each side would have served as the host for one of the meetings.

The events leading to this final meeting indicate that a considerable amount of distrust still existed between the two barrios. Rumors circulated that each of the opposing sides was not sincere and that someone might do some shooting. A decision had to be made either to cancel the meeting or to proceed. The project director decided to proceed based on assurances from both sides that they did not intend to start any trouble. But one side almost pulled out at the last moment. Therefore, the tensions were high as the meeting began.

Present at the meeting were: about 25 members of the visiting barrio; about 40 members of the host barrio; about 8 to 15 members from each of four other barrios in the project; several community people, including clergy from the Catholic church; and most of the Gang Violence Reduction Project staff.

The meeting was held in a gym and the feuding barrios were seated on opposite sides. Two tables were set on the floor of the gym so that the representatives from each barrio could sit facing one another. The meeting progressed through the five negotiation steps above. The progression was natural; no one planned that it should follow certain steps. The first step, in which the offenses of each barrio are stated by the other was barely touched upon. This was probably because the offenses had been stated at the previous meetings. One barrio had written down a series of conditions for the peace agreement, including that a number of one-to-one grievances had yet to be settled. It symbolically presented the other side with a tape of bullets which could have killed or injured someone. Its barrio members also stood to show that everyone present from that barrio was behind the agreement. Then the other side was asked to stand to show that it also agreed that there should be peace. The gesture of standing seemed to have helped in insuring commitment. Some present might not have been sure they wanted peace. But, once they stood, they had committed themselves.

After the agreement was made, the two barrios went to the center and began shaking hands. Within a few minutes, it seemed that everyone from the two sides were intermingling, making it hard to believe that up until then, they had been mortal enemies.

The effect of the peace agreements cannot be determined for the first contract period because they took place late in the period. Two of the agreements were reached in the middle part of August and the major one was reached October 6, six days after the end of the project's first period. The second report will analyze their effect on violent activities. However, the mere accomplishment of the agreements can be seen as a significant accomplishment of the project.

Handball: A major strategy for peace. A handball tournament was a major event in the progress of the project. Up to this time only the consultants and one or two of their "home boys" had interacted. A tournament meant bringing together many "guys" or "vatos" from feuding barrios for one event. Although staff and consultants cooperated in bringing about the tournament, the consultants, along with the Parole Aide trainee, were responsible for most of the careful planning of the strategies which made it possible.

Originally, it was decided to involve only six members from each neighborhood because each consultant felt capable of handling that many. The consultants were to explain the purpose of the tournament to the participants in order to prevent problems, and any individual who might create a problem was not to be allowed to attend the tournament. Because the gang consultants were fearful that suddenly bringing together large numbers of strangers from the seven barrios might result in confrontations with injuries, the gang consultants decided to begin with a series of preliminary games. The purpose of these games, according to the consultants, was to allow the various barrio members to become gradually familiar with one another. The strategy involved beginning with games between two barrios which could get along with each other, then adding one which did not get along very well with one of them, and then adding one or two more at a time until all the barrios were involved in a final preliminary game. It took about one month for the preliminary games to be played. The final game involved all the barrios.

Most preliminary games had been held at a school without their having any special permission to play there. It was decided to have the tournament at a park outside the East Los Angeles area. Permission to use the handball courts there were requested and granted. And, as a barrio claimed the park area

as their territory, it was necessary to ask their permission as well. Some of the consultants knew members of that barrio and permission was granted. As a goodwill gesture, they were invited to the tournament as observers.

However, a few days prior to the scheduled tournament, an incident occurred between one of the project barrios and the barrio claiming the park. Project staff feared that an incident could erupt at the tournament. To prevent this, both sides were contacted and they agreed not to create any problems. Nonetheless, many of those attending the tournament felt some apprehension. Members of the two barrios stayed on opposite sides of the field.

In spite of the apprehensions, the tournament was a festive event. The original plan had been altered to allow six or eight observers from each barrio to attend in addition to the six players. Wives, girlfriends and children attended. Over 100 people representing eight barrios were present without any serious problems. Mothers from the community provided food and guitarists provided music. One television station covered the event, and featured the handball tournament in its evening news.

The most serious problem seems to have been a slight disturbance created by an individual who came drunk. Staff members spoke to him about the importance about keeping the peace and he was then taken home by his own barrio. Members of the feuding barrios were observed speaking to one another and the first steps toward a peace agreement between two barrios were taken that day.

The handball games themselves were not entirely successful. Not all the barrios were able to play in the tournament because some of them arrived late and therefore, had to forfeit their games. A less rigid time schedule might have prevented this from occurring. The consultants in charge of the schedule

felt it necessary to start more or less on time because the courts had been reserved for particular hours, and they were afraid that all the games might not be completed on time. The other less-than-desirable outcome of the games was that the teams from one barrio won the first, second, and third place trophies. That barrio had handball courts in its neighborhood and had a great deal of previous experience playing handball.

An overall analysis of the tournament reveals that its success as the first interbarrio event was due to its being carefully planned and controlled by the gang consultants who understood the situation in the barrios.

#### Barrio Associations

Another major part of the Gang Violence Reduction Project's plan was the development of barrio associations. Barrios have always had meetings at which the members get together to exchange ideas and socialize. By developing associations the project has attempted to transform the barrio meetings into formal meetings. The project intended that this transformation would involve a change from the discussion of barrio activities to a discussion of broader issues and that it also would involve a "change in life styles."

The nature of the meetings which were held, in fact, varied along a continuum, with typical barrio meetings at one extreme and semi-formal meetings at the other.<sup>16</sup> The barrio-type meetings consisted of groups assembled either

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<sup>16</sup>The basis for this analysis is information acquired by the researcher while attending a number of these meetings and by her talking to those who have attended the other meetings.

in homes or out-of-doors for rap sessions. The semi-formal meetings have been meetings held in reserved rooms with either chairmen or groups which can be called boards or councils sitting at the front conducting the meetings.

However, even the semi-formal meetings have had some of the quality of barrio meetings. They often tended to get loud with many people talking at once. On occasion, one person dominated a meeting with his particular concern, making it difficult for others to conduct business.

The number of members attending the meetings varied from about 9 or 10 to 80. The average seems to be between 20 and 30.

Topics discussed at the meetings varied, but a core of topics reoccurred. Among these was the Gang Violence Reduction Project and its activities such as outings, sports, and other recreational events. The feuds and the need for peace also were continual topics for discussion. Occasionally some job opportunities were mentioned. Many of the meetings were dominated by complaints. Complaints about the lack of jobs were the most frequent, along with the feelings that community agencies were not willing to give jobs to barrio members. There were complaints that barrio members were not being allowed to attend local schools, that they were not being allowed to use park or other community facilities, and that they had been mistreated by law enforcement.

Consultants who have tried to develop associations had problems in getting barrio members to come to regularly scheduled meetings. During the initial meetings, many consultants found it necessary to go from one home or barrio hang out to another persuading members to attend the meeting. Once a regular pattern of meetings was established, it seemed that gathering up the membership this way was not as necessary. All indications are that the barrios

which had had previous experience in forming associations had fewer problems in getting started than those which had never had an association. Those with previous experience were generally enthused about the prospect of meeting. Those with no previous experience had problems in understanding what an association was and what should be done at the meetings.

Problems in the meeting mechanics included finding a room in which to meet. Not many public facilities will readily allow a group of gang members to use a room. Therefore, special efforts have had to be expended in that direction by project staff. These efforts included speaking with directors of community facilities and assuring them that all precautions would be taken. On the other side, it was necessary to make barrio members aware that they might lose the facility's use if they were to drink in it or write on its walls. Efforts made to use public facilities will be dealt with further in the chapter on outside influences.

Overall, the progress of the barrio associations was sporadic. Although the gang consultants were not encouraged to start association meetings during the first few months of their work with the project, two barrios had begun meetings by April 1977. By September, all the barrios had had at least one association-type meeting. Three had been having weekly meetings for over three months. One barrio had been having successful association meetings for several months; but when there was a change in consultants the meetings became progressively less regular until they were discontinued. They were not resumed until the last part of September when a new consultant was hired. One reason more of the barrios did not have regular meetings was that there was an insufficient number of staff members to cover the seven barrios well. Also, not

all staff had experience in community organizing. Therefore, some staff had difficulty in guiding the formation of the associations.

### Recreational Activities

In addition to the interbarrio handball tournaments discussed above (see page 59), the project sponsored a number of single barrio recreational activities during the first contract period. These consisted of three picnics--each involving a different barrio, a weekend trip by another barrio, and a week in the mountains by another barrio. Participation at these activities has varied from about 11 to 30 barrio members and their families. Thus, by the end of the first period, five barrios had been involved in recreational activities.

The chief benefits of the recreational activities which involved one barrio at a time seemed to have been in helping the barrios organize and become aware of the existence of the project. It also provided the participants with an experience they would not have had otherwise. While activities did not seem to be directly related to the projects' goal of bringing about peace, they probably prevented some incidents as they diverted the attention of some of the members away from the feuds for a while.

Several problems arose in relation to the recreational activities. One was the problem of organizing them. Most consultants had not had experience organizing these types of events. There were also problems in developing the specific procedures for getting the money for these events. Checks often were slow in arriving either because they had not been requested soon enough or because of delays in their being sent out. However, the

process for getting the money for the events seemed to have become smoother as more events were held.

Additional problems stemmed from the nature of barrios and of barrio activities. Some barrio members are accustomed to drinking or taking drugs at barrio events, but such activities cannot be sanctioned at a project-sponsored event. The need for more careful control of these types of situations became apparent as well as the need for more careful planning which would anticipate problems and take steps to prevent their occurrence. At the same time, it seems that there is a need for some degree of leniency required for the success of these events. While the project was attempting to bring about a change in life styles, it does not seem that this could be accomplished in the initial stages by extremely rigid standards.

#### Federation

The Gang Violence Reduction Project's goal of developing a federation was partially accomplished during the first contract period. The concept of a federation was discussed at meetings throughout the period so that it could become known to many barrio members.

The large meeting held to negotiate a peace agreement between the two barrios discussed above was considered to be a federation meeting. It was given a name at one project meeting, but the name has not been used very much. The name voted on the "Federation of Barrios Unidos." It was also often discussed in conjunction with the project's starting a federation business.

#### Community Projects

Community involvement projects, a general concept in the Gang Violence

Reduction Project's original proposal, came to be defined primarily in terms of developing a self-help business which the barrios could run and eventually own. One additional community project emerged in one barrio.

Business Venture. A considerable amount of time was spent discussing, researching, and planning a business during the project's first contract period. This effort provided a thrust for the project's activities. The idea of a business was appealing to the barrio members and no doubt many of them became interested in the project because of it. From their perspective, they saw the business as something which could belong to them in a world in which nothing belongs to them, and they saw it as providing jobs for themselves and their "home boys."

The negative side to spending time on planning a business in the project's early stages was that considerable effort was necessary to organize the barrios and mitigate feuds. Thus, time and energies might have been better spent on those overriding concerns. The best time to introduce a business would seem to be after the barrio feuds are almost completely under control.

The numerous activities related to developing a business will be briefly summarized here. Two major types of business were considered. The first was a hydroponics operation, which would have involved growing plants without soil in a greenhouse. Several individuals who knew about plants or hydroponics were consulted. Building regulations were checked and possible sites were found. A brief concept paper was written. The project finally decided to abandon the idea because Youth Authority administration did not encourage it and because a hydroponics operation would not employ very many individuals.

Project staff explored other ideas. Meetings were set up with several businessmen. Project staff had several meetings with representatives of an

aeronautics corporation to see if some type of partnership could be established whereby a company could be set up to make parts which the aeronautics corporation needed. At the final meeting, it became clear that the only way the corporation would be able to help with the business venture would be to give advice, provide direction or contact others who might be able to help.

By the time of the large meeting between the corporation and Youth Authority administration, the proposed type of business had been narrowed down to a screening operation which might be eventually expanded to include insulation. A concept paper and budget for the screening business was drawn up. An analyst from the corporation, the attorney who had been recommended, and a local businessman who had owned a screening operation prior to his retiring were largely responsible for developing of the budget. Plans were begun to incorporate a federation of the barrios in the project so that it could elect a board to help run the business. It was apparent that the business would require a great deal of effort to handle successfully, because workers who would not know how to install screening would need to be trained. To accomplish this, the project would need a full-time staff member to work on the self-help projects.

At the end of the first contract period, the fate of the business was undecided. Because the project failed to get a business started at the end of a three-month extension period which had been granted for that purpose, the project did not receive grant funds which had been allocated for the self-help business. It seems that developing and implementing a business was more than the project could have been reasonably expected to accomplish in the eleven-month project period, given the limited amount of staff and other tasks of the project.

Barrio Project. A different sort of community project was initiated at

an association meeting of one barrio. During the course of the meeting, the members complained that they did not have handball courts in their neighborhood and that many of their members would like to play handball. Under the guidance of the project director, they decided to contact Los Angeles County about the possibility of its building courts. The barrio members present stated that they would be willing to provide the labor if someone would provide the materials. A meeting was set up between members of the barrio and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chairman, with the project staff in attendance. The chairman said that he was impressed with the barrio's offer to do the labor and that he would see to it that money was budgeted for the handball courts. He instructed the Director of Parks and Recreation to proceed with the necessary planning. A few weeks later a meeting was held at the park with barrio members, project staff, and personnel from the Department of Parks and Recreation to decide where the courts would be built. At the end of the first contract period, the plans had not yet been finalized.

#### Summary of Project Processes

The Gang Violence Reduction Project's processes can be summarized by saying that the project encountered many problems as it broke new ground but that it progressed in spite of them. Although it operated with a limited number of staff, headway was made in each area which had been planned in the project proposal.

Its most significant achievement was the acquisition of gang consultants and their subsequent development into a forum which could operate to mitigate feuds and help negotiate peace agreements. The major thrust of the project throughout this first contract period was to bring about peace among the barrios.

Other activities helped with this peace effort. The barrio associations, which were in the early stages of development, and the recreational activities allowed the barrios to engage in positive activities. The work toward the establishment of a business helped provide a focus, but the indications of this research are that it would have been best to delay that work until a later stage of the project.

## V. OUTSIDE INFLUENCES

In the research design the outside influences were seen as affecting the project's processes and outcomes. The outside influences were in turn seen as being affected by the project's processes and outcomes. Outside influences are defined as any social entity which relates to the Gang Violence Reduction Project or the gangs in the target area but which is not an integral part of the project processes. For purposes of the analysis, these influences have been divided into three major areas: 1) the communication media; 2) the formal and informal organizations in the community, and 3) Youth Authority administration and institutions.

Media. During the first contract period, the project staff, gang consultants or activities were covered a number of times by the communications media. Except for some newspaper reports of project activities, media coverage tended to play down or leave out altogether the gangs' positive activities while emphasizing the violent aspects of the gangs.

One can only speculate upon media coverage effects on people outside the project. The major media event was the appearance of one gang consultant and two other gang members from outside the project target area on a national television program. The gang consultant spoke favorably of the project and its peace efforts, but one of the gang members from outside the project area stated that he would kill someone for his barrio. Perhaps because of this gang member's statements, many community people felt that the program made it appear

that all Mexican-American people in East Los Angeles were killing one another. Therefore, there were negative reactions to the image that the program conveyed of the community.

The several factual articles in local newspapers may have helped community people become more aware of the project. The entire Southern California area was able to view the coverage of the handball tournament by a network-affiliated television channel on its evening news. The coverage was favorable but interpreted the tournament as recreational rather than as a strategy for peace.

Another television channel had a three-day series dealing with gangs on its evening news. One gang consultant spoke on the series. It focused on problems and left out the solutions which had been recommended by the consultant.

With the exception discussed below, the overall influence of the media coverage on the project's processes seems to have been minimal. There was some pride felt in being newsworthy, some dissatisfaction expressed over the type of coverage, and some jealousy felt over those who got coverage.

#### Community Organizations or Agencies

The unincorporated part of East Los Angeles has many organizations or agencies which interact or which might interact with gang members. These include governmental agencies such as law enforcement, schools and parks, and funded social service agencies and informal community groups. There is no evidence of any major change in the nature of the number of these agencies during the Gang Violence Reduction Project's first contract period. But there is some evidence that the project's intervention influenced the nature of the interaction between some of the agencies and gang members.

Each type of agency will be discussed here in terms of how it has related to gang members and to the project and in terms of changes which have taken place in the relationship during the first period during which the project was in operation.

Initially, the nature of the relationship of the Gang Violence Reduction Project with community agencies was such that although it made contact with the agencies and informed them of its existence, it tended to work independently. This seemed necessary as the orientation of the project was quite different from that of the other agencies. It was not a service agency in the usual sense. Also staff was limited in number and all its energies were needed to work with the feuding barrios.

However, by the end of the first contract period, the project had begun to establish relationships with agencies which dealt to some extent with gang members. These relationships were developed primarily through meetings in which there was an information exchange. As an agency became familiar with the project's work, the project staff, including gang consultants, became familiar with the agency's services. Ways in which these agencies and the project could work together were discussed, but these types of combined efforts were not highly developed during the first contract period.

Among the agencies which GVRP staff became aware of, one dealing with drug problems included gang members among its clients. Another agency which provided schooling and training in job seeking also included some gang members among its clients. But both were limited in the number they could handle. One large and one small agency serviced youth in two different gang areas. Their services were primarily recreational and were limited to the gang in their area or to other gangs which were friendly with that gang.

Many of the local agencies in the target area received slots from the

Federal government for summer youth employment. These came through County-Federal revenue-sharing or through CETA funds. The largest number of openings became available through a beautification program in which youth were employed to paint buildings and to clean yards or empty lots in their neighborhoods. In the past, according to gang members, they generally have not been employed by summer employment programs. However, as a result of efforts by those associated with the project, particularly the County gang worker and the gang consultants, a number of gang members were employed during the summer of 1977. In one barrio 19 were hired. They were recruited by the gang consultants from that barrio who also coordinated the processing of their employment papers. In another barrio, gang consultants were involved in hiring and supervising about six youths.

Opinions held by informal community groups were important to the project's image in the community. Several parents' groups, made up primarily of mothers, are organized in the area. One had been in existence for several years and had worked to increase communication among the parents of the members of different gangs. Therefore, they wanted to work with the project, particularly the gang consultants. Some of the mothers attended one of the first staff meetings and became engaged in a mild confrontation with the consultants. The consultants seemed to feel that the mothers did not understand the barrio situation and could not communicate with gang members. Although they did not state it, the consultants seemed to fear the mothers' involvement might result in their taking over, which would be detrimental to the mediation efforts of the consultants. A compromise was reached in which the consultants agreed to attend some of the mothers' meetings and agreed to communicate with them about specific problems in the barrios. They indicated that the mothers could best help them through supporting their activities, such as their attending handball games and

perhaps providing food and refreshments. Both sides lived up to their end of the agreement, and the relationship between the mothers and the consultants seemed to improve as time went on.

The Gang Violence Reduction Project's contact with the public schools was minimal, consisting primarily of a few instances of gang consultants or other staff trying to get a gang member who was not attending school back into school. Most of these efforts were unsuccessful. In one instance, a young man chose not to continue attending school. In the other instances, school personnel presented reasons why the individual could not return to the school in his neighborhood.

A meeting was held in May in which the project was described to staff of a local junior high school. The purpose of the meeting was to open communications between the school and the project regarding gang-related incidents. The project goals were explained, but the reactions of the school staff can best be described as cool.

In summary, there appeared to be no evidence of a change in public schools' relation to gang members or to the project during the first period of the project's operation.

A local church had a school for high school dropouts from public schools. They were able to handle no more than 20 students but they did include gang members among their students. They reported that they were successful with some students who attended regularly but were unsuccessful with others.

The relation of gang members and the personnel from the Department of Parks and Recreation has not been generally positive. It has varied from

park to park, with gang members being kept out of some parks entirely and tolerated to a certain extent in others.

Several changes were brought about as a result of project intervention. In one park the gang from the immediate neighborhood had been kept out for the most part. After project personnel spoke with the supervisor of the park patrol and his superiors, they agreed that they did not have the right to keep gang members out because of the way they looked. The project director then spoke to the gang members about their responsibilities to the park, including not writing on the walls and not bothering community members, including senior citizens, using the park.

The officer in charge of the park had not known any of the gang members personally. After talking with project staff, he made it a point to become acquainted with the gang consultants and other barrio members. After the initial attempts to bridge the gap between the gang members and the park personnel, there were a number of incidents which had to be investigated by the gang consultants and the project staff. Some of these incidents involved accusations against gang members creating problems in the park and others involved accusations of intimidation by the park patrol. It seems that after these incidents were resolved, the relations improved considerably. This improvement was evident in statements made, such as gang members saying, "Yeah, they're letting us use the park now as long as we don't mess up," and people from the park patrol saying, "The guys from \_\_\_\_\_ aren't causing any trouble." Another indication of the improved relations was that at the request of the gang consultants, gang members were allowed to use the swimming pool for the first time in four years. The consultants were present at the pool in case any problems arose, but apparently there were none.

Getting permission to use rooms in community facilities for gang or barrio association meetings was a problem. For example, only after project staff met with supervisory personnel from the Department of Parks and Recreation and after the district's county supervisor suggested that the Department work with the project was permission granted to use a gymnasium for one association's weekly meetings. The use of the gym was granted only with many stipulations, including project responsibility for any problems that occurred. The facility was to be used on a trial basis, and if nothing went wrong another association might be allowed to use another facility on a trial basis.

It was apparent that staff in charge of the facilities expected many problems. However, up through the end of the first project period, no problems had been reported regarding the barrio association's use of the gym. This lack of problems can be attributed in large part to the parole aid and the gang consultant working with that barrio, who explained the conditions for the building's use to the members. The members attending the meetings apparently took very seriously their promise not to write on the walls and not to take alcohol onto the premises. In one or two cases when someone appeared with an alcoholic beverage, the others present asked him to leave.

Not all public facilities refused to allow barrio associations to use rooms for meetings. The director of one county center permitted the use of a room immediately upon request. When problems arose, he contacted the project director in order to settle them rather than immediately cancelling the use of the room. The problems were worked out and the room continued to be used.

Law enforcement relationships with the project will be discussed next. In the early stages of the project's operation, some of the gang consultants

complained about harassment and brutality by law enforcement officers. Project staff and representatives from the Sheriff's Department, including the captain, met and discussed these incidents. The captain explained the procedures for lodging complaints against officers. When a project staff member said that nothing was done about complaints, the captain assured the group that action was taken against officers found guilty of offenses.

During additional meetings, officers and gang consultants exchanged accusations, but the result was increased understanding between them. The gang consultants became aware of procedures for lodging complaints against officers and learned ways of dealing with officers to reduce their chances of getting arrested. The ways mentioned included answering in a polite manner instead of a defiant one and directing inquiries to an officer not directly involved in the arrest instead of interfering with an arresting officer.

Some of the officers felt that an inadequate screening process was being used in hiring gang consultants and that the project stood behind the gang consultants even if they got into trouble with the law. These meetings helped clarify for the officers that qualities needed to be a gang consultant were different from qualities required for other jobs. The discussion helped them understand that it was not always possible to predict which consultants would work out and that some consultants had been fired because of some offense or because they were not performing adequately. Relationships with some law enforcement officers seemed to have temporarily deteriorated after one of the gang consultants received recognition by appearing on national television. However, this situation improved in the latter part of the first project period.

Toward the end of the first project period, two sheriff's officers were

assigned to work with gangs and to work closely with project staff. They attended some project staff meetings in which they explained to the consultants that they would be wearing street clothes and that their primary duty would be gathering information to avert incidents rather than making arrests. Several times they brought information to gang consultants about incidents, and the consultants were able to use this information to squelch further incidents. However, by the end of the first period, apparently the gang consultants had not developed enough trust in the officers to feel comfortable in sharing information with them. But it was evident that relations had improved from the period when the consultants had first begun to work for the project.

#### Departmental Administration

Project funds were granted to the Youth Authority by the Office of Criminal Justice Planning. Organizationally, the project was under the auspices of Region III (Los Angeles County) of the Youth Authority's Parole Services Branch. The project director also dealt with support services for personnel transactions, equipment, personal services contracts, budgets, and other administrative matters. Problems arose because the project was breaking new ground and procedures had to be established within the department for dealing with a project of this type. In addition, some problems were due to project staff's lack of knowledge of and experience in administrative procedures. As time went on, these problems diminished.

#### Summary

The project initially met with opposition in the community because of its nature; it was different from other groups in its approach, and it was dealing with individuals and groups who were not generally liked by the community.

Through its interaction with the organizations or groups in the community, the project began bringing about improved relations between gang members and others in the community. It appears that this is a first step in breaking down the alienation or separation of the gangs from the community in general. It is this alienation which seems to stimulate the negative actions of many gang members. The project was particularly helped in its efforts by the County Department of Community Development, which allowed its worker in the area to unite his work in the barrios with that of the project.

Coverage by the communications media did not seem to help the efforts of the project. Instead, it seemed to have had the effect of increasing the distance between the public and gang members.

The difficulties encountered in establishing the procedures for running the project were a hindrance, but they became less of a problem as time went on.

## VI. PROJECT OUTCOMES

To evaluate the project's objective of reducing gang-related violent crime by 10% in the East Los Angeles unincorporated area, the research analyst obtained gang-related incidents from the East Los Angeles Sheriff's Substation and coded and tabulated them. A gang-related violent incident was defined as one or more crimes occurring about the same time and place in the target area in which physical force or threat of injury occurred and where the suspects were identified as members of an East Los Angeles street gang and victims were either members of an area street gang or non-gang members. (See Chapter II, Evaluation Design, for a more complete description.)

### Evaluation Findings

The Gang Violence Reduction Project's first contract period was 11 months long--November 1, 1976 to September 30, 1977. The period between November 1976 and February 1977 was used for hiring staff, setting up the office, and making contacts in the barrios. Gang consultants were hired in February and a period of more intensive involvement in the barrios began. Because of this difference in emphasis, the data for the total contract period (November 1976 to September 1977) and for the period of full intervention (February to September 1977) have been analyzed separately.

The time periods used for comparison were the same months in the previous year or years. They were chosen because they seemed to provide the most reasonable comparisons, although the data yield no evidence of seasonal cycles for the incidents. The period of full intervention (February through September 1977) is short, and any conclusions drawn from changes occurring from that period must be tentative.

#### Gang-Related Homicides

The data on gang-related homicides will be looked at first. As can be seen in Table 1, the totals for the November through September periods exhibit an interesting trend. The 1971-72 period began at 7; there was a sharp drop to 1 in the 1972-73 period followed by a rise after that period; and then there was a gradual rise for the following three periods. This upward trend was broken by a slight drop in the 1976-77 period during which the Gang Violence Reduction Project was in operation. It may be much more than a coincidence that the first drop in the trend occurred during the 1972-73 period, when the Federation was in existence. The number of homicides during the project's first contract period, decreased by two from the previous equivalent period-- a 15% decrease. (The project's goal was 10%.)

When the non-robbery-related homicides are analyzed separately from the totals, the total homicides decreased from 12 to 8 during the first contract period, as compared to the previous period, a decrease of 33%. Robbery-related homicides rose from one to three. However, as none of the suspects were from barrios with which the project is working, it would not seem that the project's existence was related to the increase.

TABLE 1

GANG-RELATED HOMICIDES  
INVOLVING GANGS IN THE PROJECT TARGET AREA  
NOVEMBER-SEPTEMBER (1971-1977)

|   | Time Period            |                        |                        |                        |                        |                         | % Change<br>Between<br>Nov'75-Sept'76<br>and<br>Nov'76-Sept'77 |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
|   | Nov 1971-<br>Sept 1972 | Nov 1972-<br>Sept 1973 | Nov 1973-<br>Sept 1974 | Nov 1974-<br>Sept 1975 | Nov 1975-<br>Sept 1976 | Nov 1976-<br>Sept 1977* |  |
| Total Gang-<br>Related Homi-<br>cides ..... | 7                      | 1                      | 10                     | 11                     | 13                     | 11                      | -15%   |
| Not Robbery-<br>Related .....               | 7                      | 1                      | 9                      | 9                      | 12                     | 8                       | -33%   |
| Robbery-<br>Related .....                   | -                      | -                      | 1                      | 2                      | 1                      | 3                       | **   |

\*First project period.

\*\*Too few to percentage.

If only the period of full intervention--February through September 1977-- is compared to the same period of time in previous years the trend is somewhat similar. These figures are presented in Table 2. The trend shows a drop in 1973, a rise for two years to a peak of 11 in 1975, a drop in 1976, and another drop in 1977. During the period of the project's full intervention, homicides decreased by 2, from 9 to 7. With the non-robbery-related homicides analyzed separately, the number decreased from 8 to 4, a 50% decrease. Robbery-related homicides increased from 1 to 3.

TABLE 2

GANG-RELATED HOMICIDES  
INVOLVING GANGS IN THE PROJECT TARGET AREA  
FEBRUARY-SEPTEMBER (1972-1977)

|   | Time Period            |                        |                        |                        |                        |                         | % Change<br>Between<br>Feb '76-Sept '76<br>and<br>Feb '77-Sept '77 |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
|   | Feb 1972-<br>Sept 1972 | Feb 1973-<br>Sept 1973 | Feb 1974-<br>Sept 1974 | Feb 1975-<br>Sept 1975 | Feb 1976-<br>Sept 1976 | Feb 1977-<br>Sept 1977* |  |
| Total Gang-<br>Related Homi-<br>cides ..... | 4                      | 1                      | 7                      | 11                     | 9                      | 7                       | -22%   |
| Not Robbery-<br>Related .....               | 4                      | 1                      | 6                      | 9                      | 8                      | 4                       | -50%   |
| Robbery-<br>Related .....                   | -                      | -                      | 1                      | 2                      | 1                      | 3                       | **   |

\*First project period--full intervention.

\*\*Too few to percentage.

Tables 3 and 4 present the data classified on the basis of whether the homicides were between gangs (therefore, probably relating to feuds), within a gang, (relating to the internal problems of a gang), or involving a gang versus an outsider. In comparing the period of full intervention with the previous equivalent periods, it was found that there was a decrease of two in between-gang homicides during the project's first contract year. The decrease during the period of full intervention (February-September) totaled three (Table 4).

There were no within-gang homicides reported over the years except the one which occurred in the November 1976-September 1977 period. There was a decrease of one in homicides involving an outsider as the victim for the first contract period taken as a whole (Table 3), but an increase of one during the period of full intervention (Table 4).

TABLE 3

GANG-RELATED HOMICIDES  
 BETWEEN GANGS, WITHIN A GANG, AND AGAINST OUTSIDERS  
 NOVEMBER-SEPTEMBER (1971-1977)

|   | Time Period            |                        |                        |                        |                        |                        | % Change<br>Between<br>Nov '75-Sept '76<br>and<br>Nov '76-Sept '77 |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|
|   | Nov 1971-<br>Sept 1972 | Nov 1972-<br>Sept 1973 | Nov 1973-<br>Sept 1974 | Nov 1974-<br>Sept 1975 | Nov 1975-<br>Sept 1976 | Nov 1976-<br>Sept 1977 |  |
| Total Gang-<br>Related Homi-<br>cides ..... | 7                      | 1                      | 10                     | 11                     | 13                     | 11                     | -15%   |
| Between Gangs .                             | *                      | 1                      | 7                      | 8                      | 7                      | 5                      | -29%   |
| Within a<br>Gang .....                      | *                      | -                      | -                      | -                      | -                      | 1                      | -  |
| Against Out-<br>siders .....                | *                      | -                      | 2                      | 3                      | 5                      | 4                      | -20%   |
| Others*** .....                             | *                      | -                      | 1                      | -                      | 1                      | 1                      | **   |

\*Meaningful figures cannot be determined for this period because in 3 out of 7 homicides the report did not indicate whether the victim was a gang member.

\*\*Too few to percentage.

\*\*\*Includes homicides where the victim's or suspect's gang was unknown or which did not fit under the other categories.

TABLE 4

GANG-RELATED HOMICIDES  
BETWEEN GANGS, WITHIN A GANG, AND AGAINST OUTSIDERS  
FEBRUARY-SEPTEMBER (1972-1977)

|   | Time Period            |                        |                        |                        |                        |                        | % Change<br>Between<br>Feb '76-Sept '76<br>and<br>Feb '77-Sept '77 |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|
|   | Feb 1972-<br>Sept 1972 | Feb 1973-<br>Sept 1973 | Feb 1974-<br>Sept 1974 | Feb 1975-<br>Sept 1975 | Feb 1976-<br>Sept 1976 | Feb 1977-<br>Sept 1977 |  |
| Total Gang-<br>Related Homi-<br>cides ..... | 4                      | 1                      | 7                      | 11                     | 9                      | 7                      | -22%   |
| Between Gangs .                             | *                      | 1                      | 4                      | 8                      | 5                      | 2                      | -60%   |
| Within a<br>Gang .....                      | *                      | -                      | -                      | -                      | -                      | -                      | -  |
| Against Out-<br>siders .....                | *                      | -                      | 2                      | 3                      | 3                      | 4                      | +33%   |
| Others .....                                | *                      | -                      | 1                      | -                      | 1                      | 1                      | **   |

\*Meaningful figures cannot be determined for this period because in 3 out of the 4 homicides the report did not indicate whether the victim was a gang member.

\*\*Too few to percentage.

In summary, the total number of homicides did decrease during the project's first contract period (November 1976 to September 1977). Further, this rate of decrease was greater for the period of full intervention (February to September 1977) than it was for the total project period. It is interesting to note that the increase would have been greater had there not been three deaths of outsiders during robberies, which is to say that this number was not directed against gang members.

Gang related homicides for all of Los Angeles County under the Sheriff's Department's jurisdiction were studied. Since over 90% of the gang-related homicides which occurred in this jurisdiction during 1976 and 1977 involved Chicano gangs, these homicides comprise a relevant comparison group. The

comparison of county gang related homicides with project gang selected homicides is as follows:

TABLE 5  
PROJECT VERSUS COUNTY GANG-RELATED HOMICIDES  
NOVEMBER-SEPTEMBER (1974-1977)

|  | Time Period            |                        |                        |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
|  | Nov 1974-<br>Sept 1975 | Nov 1975-<br>Sept 1976 | Nov 1976-<br>Sept 1977 |
| Project Target Area .....                            | 11                     | 13                     | 11                     |
| County under Sheriff's Department jurisdiction ..... | 29                     | 34                     | 47                     |

As shown in Table 5, county-wide gang-related homicides have shown a steady increase while in the project's target area, gang-related homicides have decreased by 2 during the project's first contract period.

Gang-Related Violent Incidents

The figures for the gang-related violent incidents as a whole present a different picture. As shown in Table 6, when the total for the Gang Violence Reduction Project's first contract period was compared to the total for the previous equivalent period, a 16% increase in the number of incidents was found. The increase was greater among non-robbery-related violent incidents than among those which were robbery-related. For the period of the project's full intervention the increase in violent incidents was not as great--nine percent (Table 7).

TABLE 6

GANG-RELATED VIOLENT INCIDENTS  
INVOLVING GANGS IN THE PROJECT TARGET AREA  
NOVEMBER-SEPTEMBER (1975-1977)

|  | Time Period            |                        | Percent Change |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
|  | Nov 1975-<br>Sept 1976 | Nov 1976-<br>Sept 1977 |                |
| Total Gang-Related Violent Incidents ..... | 303                    | 352                    | +16%           |
| Non-Robbery-Related .....                  | 237                    | 280                    | +18%           |
| Robbery-Related .....                      | 66                     | 72                     | +9%            |

TABLE 7

GANG-RELATED VIOLENT INCIDENTS  
INVOLVING GANGS IN THE PROJECT TARGET AREA  
FEBRUARY-SEPTEMBER (1976-1977)

|  | Time Period            |                        | Percent Change |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
|  | Feb 1976-<br>Sept 1976 | Feb 1977-<br>Sept 1977 |                |
| Total Gang-Related Violent Incidents ..... | 242                    | 263                    | +9%            |
| Non-Robbery-Related .....                  | 189                    | 207                    | +9%            |
| Robbery-Related .....                      | 53                     | 56                     | +6%            |

The breakdown of gang-related incidents into between gangs, within a gang, and against outsiders which is presented in Table 8 provides some insights into the changes in the number of incidents. Incidents between gangs increased from 139

to 176 from the pre-contract period to the first contract period--an increase of 27%. Incidents within a gang increased form 4 to 19--375%. Gang incidents toward outsiders declined slightly. Findings were similar where the period of full intervention was compared with the equivalent pre-period (Table 9).

TABLE 8

GANG-RELATED VIOLENT INCIDENTS  
BETWEEN GANGS, WITHIN A GANG, AND AGAINST OUTSIDERS  
NOVEMBER-SEPTEMBER (1975-1977)

|  | Time Period            |                        | Percent Change |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
|  | Nov 1975-<br>Sept 1976 | Nov 1976-<br>Sept 1977 |                |
| Total Gang-Related Violent Incidents ..... | 303                    | 352                    | +16%           |
| Between Gangs .....                        | 139                    | 176                    | +27%           |
| Within A Gang .....                        | 4                      | 19                     | +375%          |
| Against Outsiders .....                    | 160                    | 157                    | -2%            |

TABLE 9

GANG-RELATED VIOLENT INCIDENTS  
BETWEEN GANGS, WITHIN A GANG, AND AGAINST OUTSIDERS  
FEBRUARY-SEPTEMBER (1976-1977)

|  | Time Period            |                        | Percent Change |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
|  | Feb 1976-<br>Sept 1976 | Feb 1977-<br>Sept 1977 |                |
| Total Gang-Related Violent Incidents ..... | 242                    | 263                    | +9%            |
| Between Gangs .....                        | 112                    | 124                    | +11%           |
| Within A Gang .....                        | 2                      | 14                     | +600%          |
| Against Outsiders .....                    | 128                    | 125                    | -2%            |

General Findings

A summary of the general findings on the nature of violent crimes by or between gangs in the East Los Angeles unincorporated area is presented below. These findings are based on the gang-related violent incidents occurring in the 33 months between January 1975 and September 1977.

Table 10 shows that two of the barrios were identified as suspects in nearly one third of the violent incidents and that four of the barrios were suspected in over half of the violent incidents.

As with many types of crime, the evening hours were when gang-related incidents most frequently occurred. About half of the incidents occurred in the six hours between 8:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. (Table 11).

TABLE 10

BARRIOS INVOLVED AS SUSPECTS IN GANG-RELATED VIOLENT INCIDENTS  
JANUARY 1975-SEPTEMBER 1977

| Barrio   | Total | Percent | Primary Barrio Involved* | Secondary Barrio Involved |
|--|-------|---------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Total instances of barrio involvement .....    | 853   | 100.0   | 821                      | 32                        |
| Barrio involved known .....                    | 693   | 81.0    | 665                      | 28                        |
| Barrio involved unknown .....                  | 160   | 19.0    | 156                      | 4                         |
| Total instances barrio involvement known ..... | 693   | 100.0   | 665                      | 28                        |
| Barrio: A .....                                | 125   | 18.0    | 123                      | 2                         |
| B .....  | 99    | 14.3    | 94                       | 5                         |
| C .....  | 76    | 11.0    | 73                       | 3                         |
| D .....  | 75    | 10.8    | 70                       | 5                         |
| E .....  | 65    | 9.4     | 65                       | 0                         |
| F .....  | 38    | 5.5     | 35                       | 3                         |
| G .....  | 37    | 5.3     | 33                       | 4                         |
| H .....  | 32    | 4.6     | 30                       | 2                         |
| I .....  | 30    | 4.3     | 27                       | 3                         |
| J .....  | 30    | 4.3     | 29                       | 1                         |
| K .....  | 20    | 2.9     | 20                       | 0                         |
| L .....  | 19    | 2.7     | 19                       | 0                         |
| M .....  | 14    | 2.0     | 14                       | 0                         |
| N .....  | 14    | 2.0     | 14                       | 0                         |
| O .....  | 6     | 0.9     | 6                        | 0                         |
| P .....  | 6     | 0.9     | 6                        | 0                         |
| Q .....  | 3     | 0.5     | 3                        | 0                         |
| R .....  | 2     | 0.3     | 2                        | 0                         |
| Other .....                                    | 2     | 0.3     | 2                        | 0                         |

\*Each incident was coded for the primary barrio involved and for the secondary barrio involved, if applicable. Total instances is greater than total incidents because two barrios may have been involved as suspects in one incident.

TABLE 11

TIME OF DAY WHEN GANG-RELATED VIOLENT INCIDENTS OCCURRED  
JANUARY 1975-SEPTEMBER 1977

| Time of Day   | Frequency | Percent |
|---|-----------|---------|
| TOTAL INCIDENTS .....                                 | 757       | 100.0   |
| Early morning*(4 hrs.)<br>6:00 a.m. - 9:59 a.m. ....  | 14        | 1.8     |
| Late morning (3 hrs.)<br>10:00 a.m. - 12:59 p.m. .... | 37        | 4.9     |
| Afternoon (4 hrs.)<br>1:00 p.m. - 4:59 p.m. ....      | 94        | 12.4    |
| Early evening (3 hrs.)<br>5:00 p.m. - 7:59 p.m. ....  | 103       | 13.6    |
| Late evening (3 hrs.)<br>8:00 p.m. - 10:59 p.m. ....  | 171       | 22.6    |
| Night (3 hrs.)<br>11:00 p.m. - 1:59 a.m. ....         | 208       | 27.5    |
| Late night (4 hrs.)<br>2:00 a.m. - 5:59 a.m. ....     | 130       | 17.2    |

Data in Table 12 show that gang-related violence is directed both at rival gangs (Between Gang incidents and Gang Fights, 51%) and at outsiders (45%). Only a small proportion of the gang-related violent incidents known to the Sheriff's Department is within a gang.

TABLE 12  
TYPES OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS INVOLVING GANGS  
JANUARY 1975-SEPTEMBER 1977

| Type of Incident                          | Frequency | Percent |
|---|-----------|---------|
| TOTAL INCIDENTS .....                     | 824       | 100.0   |
| Total: Between gangs and gang fight ..... | 424       | 51.0    |
| Between gangs .....                       | 391       | 47.0    |
| Gang fight .....                          | 33        | 4.0     |
| Within a gang .....                       | 30        | 4.0     |
| Gang vs. outsider .....                   | 370       | 45.0    |

Table 13 reveals that of the gang-related violent incidents where the degree of injury was known, nearly half resulted in no injury. (The reader should note that threat of injury was included in the definition of violent incidents.) However, death resulted in 39 of the incidents, averaging slightly more than one a month during this period.

TABLE 13

DEGREE OF INJURY IN GANG-RELATED VIOLENT INCIDENTS  
JANUARY 1975-SEPTEMBER 1977

| Degree of Injury               | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| TOTAL INCIDENTS .....          | 824       | 100.0   |
| Degree of injury known .....   | 680       | 82.5    |
| Degree of injury unknown ..... | 144       | 17.5    |
| <hr/>                          |           |         |
| Degree of injury known .....   | 680       | 100.0   |
| Death .....                    | 39        | 5.7     |
| Critical .....                 | 19        | 2.8     |
| Serious .....                  | 122       | 17.9    |
| Minor/Moderate .....           | 199       | 29.3    |
| None .....                     | 301       | 44.3    |

Among the most serious crimes reported (Table 14), assaults and shooting with injury resulting were the most frequent.

TABLE 14

MOST SERIOUS REPORTED CRIME IN GANG-RELATED VIOLENT INCIDENTS\*  
 JANUARY 1975-SEPTEMBER 1977

| Most Serious Crime Reported in Incident   | Frequency | Percent |
|---|-----------|---------|
| TOTAL INCIDENTS .....                     | 824       | 100.0   |
| Rape .....                                | 21        | 2.5     |
| Shooting with injury resulting .....      | 159       | 19.3    |
| Stabbing .....                            | 88        | 10.7    |
| Assault .....                             | 238       | 28.9    |
| Vehicle Assault .....                     | 16        | 1.9     |
| Robbery** .....                           | 82        | 10.0    |
| Shooting at people with no injury .....   | 67        | 8.1     |
| Shooting at property with no injury ..... | 82        | 10.0    |
| Attack on property .....                  | 43        | 5.2     |
| Threat .....                              | 20        | 2.4     |
| Other .....                               | 8         | 1.0     |

\*Only the most serious crime which was reported for an incident was coded.

\*\*Robberies were also coded separately and were found to have occurred in 20% of the incidents.

Data on weapon use in Table 15 can only be used as an indicator. In 17% of the incident reports, no mention was made of whether or not a weapon was used, and for the analysis here, only the weapon inflicting the greatest harm was coded for each incident. Weapons such as guns, knives, blunt instruments, cars, and firebombs were reported to have been used in 75% of the violent incidents. Violent incidents without a weapon had to have involved body contact or,

in a few cases, the use of a simulated weapon. Firearms were reported to have been used in 57% of the incidents where a weapon was used.

TABLE 15  
WEAPONS USED IN GANG-RELATED VIOLENT INCIDENTS  
JANUARY 1975-SEPTEMBER 1977

| Weapons Used   | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| TOTAL INCIDENTS .....  | 824       | 100.0   |
| Report stated whether or not a weapon was used .....         | 686       | 83.0    |
| Weapon used not reported .....                               | 138       | 17.0    |
| Total number reports stating whether a weapon was used ..... | 686       | 100.0   |
| Weapon used .....  | 621       | 90.5    |
| No weapon used .....   | 65        | 9.5     |
| <hr/>  |           |         |
| Total incidents where weapon used: .....                     | 621       | 100.0   |
| Firearm .....  | 355       | 57.0    |
| Sharp object .....   | 135       | 22.0    |
| Blunt instrument .....                                       | 64        | 10.0    |
| Vehicle .....  | 19        | 3.0     |
| Fire device .....  | 13        | 2.0     |
| Other .....  | 35        | 6.0     |

Summary

The outcome findings to date are mixed. A comparison of the number of gang-involved homicides during the period of the project's operation with this prior comparable period shows that homicides decreased. On the other hand, for the same comparable period this number of gang-related violent incidents increased slightly.

## VII. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

### Discussion

In the preceding chapters, the three major subdivisions of the evaluation design for the Gang Violence Reduction Project as set forth in Figure I have been examined. These were the project processes, the outside influences and the project outcomes. The relationships among the three subdivisions which have emerged during the first 11 months of the project's operation are not as clearly defined as was expected when the design was composed.

The relationship between the Gang Violence Reduction Project as a process and the outside influences emerged as an interactive one rather than as consisting of distinct one-directional effects. Therefore, any outcomes which may have been generated were the result of the interaction of the project with groups outside the project. These outcomes have been in the direction of improved relations between some community groups and gang members and increased opportunities for gang members.

The relationships between the project processes and the outcome data must be inferred from the information which is available. The period of time on which the data are based is not sufficient to come to any other than the most tentative conclusions.

The changes which occurred during the first contract period included a lower gang-related homicide rate involving the gangs in the target area. The

overall rate for the entire 11-month period was 15% below that of the previous equivalent period. The number of homicides had been rising for several years and continued to rise in the portion of Los Angeles County under the Sheriff's jurisdiction. When only between-gang homicides for the eight-month period during which the project was fully operational are looked at, homicides for the target area had decreased by two from the equivalent previous period.

The change in all types of gang-related violent incidents consisted of a leveling off in the sharp rate of increase which had occurred during the period prior to the project's operation. These incidents continued to increase but at a much lower rate than they had been increasing.

The inference that the operation of the Gang Violence Reduction Project was related to these changes is based on the project's primary emphasis throughout the first period of bringing about peace and preventing violent incidents. On many occasions, professional staff and consultants were engaged in activities which directly helped to resolve antagonistic feelings based on incidents. Without the project's intervention, it would have been expected that the incidents would have led to an escalation of gang feuds. The full impact of peace agreements reached late in the first contract period is likely to be more evident in the second contract period.

Other project activities may have had an indirect effect on reducing violent incidents through their diverting the gang members' involvement away from feuding.

The independent effect of community organizations or other groups on the changes in gang-related homicides and violent incidents rates would seem to be minimal. This observation is based on a lack of evidence of any major changes

in activities relating to gangs by the community groups during the project's first contract period as compared to the period prior to the project's existence. Therefore, their activities can be considered a constant. All the evidence points to the conclusion that except for law enforcement, no other community organization was devoted to impacting upon "hard core" gang members.

Other than unanticipated outcomes relating to the project's interaction with outside influences, no significant unanticipated outcomes were apparent during the first period.

No systematic study of changes in the orientation of gang members was undertaken. However, informal observations noted no significant changes in their orientation except that many gang members adopted peace as a value.

#### Conclusions

It is still much too early in the project's history to determine its impact on gang-related violence. The project is fulfilling its plan for operation by implementing intergang, gang and community activities which were set down in its proposal. Furthermore, homicides are down even if the overall incidence of gang-related violence is not.