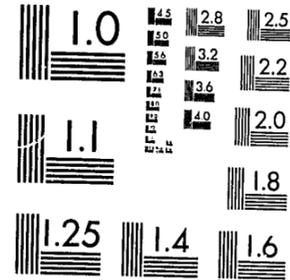


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
 LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20530

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TESTIMONY OF THE
 HONORABLE PATRICK V. MURPHY, ADMINISTRATOR
 BEFORE THE
 NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE CAUSES AND PREVENTION
 OF VIOLENCE
 OCTOBER 30, 1968
 WASHINGTON, D. C.

U.S. Department of Justice
 National Institute of Justice

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I am pleased to appear before this eminent Commission. As you may know, I have just begun a new job -- as Administrator of the new Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. This is the first significant program of Federal financial assistance to law enforcement and criminal justice, providing \$63 million in assistance to state and local governments. It begins at a time when public concern about crime and civil disorder is high, and justifiably so.

I think that it is accurate to conclude that right now our criminal justice system is a failure. We are not preventing enough crime, apprehending enough criminals, or rehabilitating enough offenders.

Look at the evidence. Violent crime, according to the Uniform Crime Reports, has increased enormously since 1960; today there is one such crime every minute. While I am here, 20 or 25 individual violent crimes will be committed -- murder, rape or robbery.

Of these crimes, the one that poses the greatest frustration to law enforcement officials is robbery.

When I was Director of Public Safety in the District of Columbia, during the first 9 1/2 months of this year -- January 1st - October 15th -- there were 70 holdups of

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financial institutions. The response of the Metropolitan Police Department was impressive: Nearly 50 percent of these robberies were closed by an arrest. This is, as you know, an extraordinarily high closure rate, about 20 percent higher than the national average.

We cannot conclude, however, from this remarkable police achievement that these same arrested suspects are no longer plaguing the community. The problem of court congestion today is so serious that suspected felons are commonly not given their day in court for months and sometimes years, and many commit additional felonies while on the street awaiting trial.

This is especially true with respect to armed holdup men. In fiscal year 1968 -- July 1, 1967 - June 30, 1968 -- 130 individuals arrested for robbery in the District of Columbia were released on bail pending trial. Forty-five of these defendants were indicted once again for at least one additional felony. These 45 defendants had a total of 76 indictments placed against them while they were free in the community. That is a recidivism rate, as measured by re-indictment, of 34.6 percent.

I am not here referring to defendants who were only rearrested or who were only charged with misdemeanors.

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The group I am talking about was re-indicted for felonies, in most cases for another robbery.

Many holdup men might be deterred from future criminal action if they believed that our criminal justice system is swift and sure. I don't know anyone who believes that today.

The police officer on the street deserves to be backed up by a modern court system that provides prompt trials.

We cannot expect public confidence to repose in a system which charges a man with robbery, a crime punishable by years of imprisonment, perhaps even life imprisonment, and then is unable to bring his case to a conclusion for years.

A solution to this crisis in courtroom administration will be difficult to achieve. More judges and prosecutors, at best, provide only a partial remedy. We must develop new skills in management and must utilize technological advances so as to provide prompt, fair trials to the accused. Soon, LEAA will begin to assist state and local law enforcement in attacking this difficult problem. Speedier justice can prevent many violent crimes.

In preventing or containing group violence, the police role is very much different than it is when dealing with individual street crimes. The image of a policeman -- a trained, cool, professional confronting a holdup man -- does not fit situations of group violence. In confronting a mob, a policeman is a soldier, part of a larger force, operating not by individual decision, but as part of a team.

The team approach, it must be understood, requires special training and receptivity to orders from superior officers on the lines.

Important decisions are made by command personnel, and they must be familiar with the problems of crowd behavior and control. Mayors, city managers and other officials may participate with police commanders in making such decisions.

As you know, the Department of Justice and the IACP sponsored conferences on civil disorders this year. These conferences were for state and local police commanders, mayors, and city managers. I believe these conferences were of great value and may help account for the fact that police departments, assisted by better informed city officials and community leaders, have been responding more capably to community tension and civil disorder.

It is clear that the increase in street crime and civil disorder over the last five years has imposed additional heavy burdens on law enforcement, and that more is expected of those in police work than ever before. We must not only hold violence to a minimum, but we must do it in a way that is least agitating to those most affected -- the ghetto community. It is in the ghetto, after all, where most of the victims of serious crime reside.

Unfortunately, some policemen stereotype the community into two classes -- the law-abiding and the criminal element. Others in the community see the police as the enemies of liberty and suppressors of lawful, political opposition and dissent. An element of snobbery reinforces this bias -- some shapers of opinion and policy do not understand the complexities of the police role and become preoccupied with the occasional errors of judgment of individual policemen.

And, it is true, of course, that there have been serious abuses of police power in our history. But, at this time when our free society is afflicted with an escalation of crime and tension in the streets, it is irrational to make the police the enemy, to let prejudices against the police delay the needed upgrading and professionalization of police services.

Certainly the police can do much to dispel the negative image they sometimes evoke. The community can do even more. With increased sophistication, our police can achieve the community support that is essential to crime control.

Because police are at the front lines, and because their job is to maintain social peace, they are seen as the "shock troops of the Establishment," as the New Left is fond of saying. They are the primary "enemy" because they are the visible "enemy." You don't find groups of corporation executives or Congressmen to attack on the streets, but the police are there on the streets, in the slums, and wherever disturbances erupt, every day.

I do not mean to suggest that we in law enforcement are asking for a soft job or for sympathy. But I do believe that if society expects more, it should give more. For years, everyone has known that police are undereducated and undertrained. Everyone should also know that police work in dark, forbidding station houses, doing many jobs which are demeaning and unprofessional. It is a truism that they are underpaid.

Now, the public has become aware of these needs. Perhaps now we will begin to give police assistance as well as recognition. When people say, "Support your

GI's," they mean give them the training and tools to do their jobs. "Support your local police" should mean the same.

Police departments are already making significant progress. But much remains to be done. Their recruitment methods must be improved, selection standards upgraded, and salaries raised. Equipment must be designed to solve today's problems. Police must draw on the many other tools which have been used for years by the Defense Department, NASA, and private corporations.

Recently, significant advances have been made. Three years ago only 20 states had minimum standards for law enforcement officers. Today, 31 states have these laws and 17 of them set mandatory standards.

Departments have stepped up their recruitment efforts and more Negroes are joining urban police forces.

Many of the improvements are due in part to the Federal effort, to the little-known, but highly productive program carried out under the Law Enforcement Assistance Act of 1965. That program, which has been absorbed by the new Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, spent \$20.6 million in the three years of its existence on 359 separate criminal justice projects. The program fathered the one we are now beginning, the Law Enforcement

Assistance Administration.

Several of the OLEA funded projects were designed to reduce violence in the community. One grant to the New York City Police Department seeks a more effective way to handle the numerous family disturbance calls which so frequently end in violence, both to citizens and police officers. It created a "Family Crisis Intervention Unit" consisting of 18 highly-trained officers to handle intra-family assaults and violence in a precinct in West Harlem. These men, trained by the City College, confer each week with the college's clinical psychologists. The results, so far, are promising. Although it is estimated that as much as 22 percent of police fatalities and 40 percent of police injuries* stem from family complaint calls, these Crisis Unit officers have not received any injuries in the past 15 months. Moreover, in the 1,120 family crises in which they have intervened, there has not been a single homicide among the families.

It has been said often that many crimes of violence cannot be deterred. This demonstration project of the New York Police Department suggests that we should not accept this generalization so readily.

*Injuries resulting in time off from work

In Houston, Rice University and the Mayor's Office cooperated in an LEAA-sponsored project to chart the potential for community violence. Negro interviewers, working within the Negro community, found that hostility toward police was an index to violence potential. Hostility rose as the potential increased because, as they found, police are a focal point for heightened hostility to white people in general. An outcome was the police department's program whereby officers and members of the Negro community met to air grievances and discuss their feelings. Beginning last year, each officer met three times a week for six weeks with the same group of Negro citizens. This is helping to reduce tension. The number of complaints about police by ghetto residents has decreased.

Other grants aided the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the National Bureau of Standards, and the Department of Defense to help local police prevent and control riots.

The IACP is devising a plan for research on riot control equipment, including tear gas-type chemical agents.

The National Bureau of Standards is investigating crowd control devices, particularly non-lethal weaponry.

The IACP prepared and distributed a 77-page manual for police departments advising them on strategies to control civil disorder, and other documents on tear gas and Chemical Mace.

LEAA will continue to work with police departments and the communications industry on the question of a nationwide emergency telephone number -- 9-1-1. When the American Telephone and Telegraph Company announced early this year that they were making "9-1-1" available throughout the Bell System, LEAA personnel moved quickly to help air the operational questions and problems of the single number.

A demonstration project in Lakewood, California in 1966-67 provided helicopter patrol for 16 hours a day by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office. Lakewood reported an eight percent decrease in major crimes and a six percent decrease in robbery. During that time, major crimes in Los Angeles County rose nine percent and robbery increased 22 percent. This test included experimentation with lighting and sound equipment and may be a model for other cities.

In Cleveland, with LEAA funds, the Police Department is designing a surveillance truck that has closed circuit TV and electronic equipment. The truck can be parked more

than a block away to avoid detection at a robbery "stake-out." It may be effective in surveying crowds during disorders or protecting dignitaries.

Under another LEAA grant, the Cedar Rapids Police Department is producing an inexpensive robbery and burglar alarm system that can be operated by a police department to protect business firms. A University of Iowa research team is assisting with the test which will cover 350 businesses in Cedar Rapids during 1969-1970.

Because crime-solving frequently depends upon the rapid exchange of information -- within a city, city-to-city, or coast-to-coast -- LEAA supported a dozen communications or information system projects, including the coast-to-coast National Crime Information Center. This Center was developed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and has been operated by the Bureau since early 1967. It now has 72 control terminals in 45 states, the District of Columbia and Canada. These 72 terminals are either in state police agencies or in the police departments of large metropolitan areas -- smaller cities can link into the metro area systems. The Center has over 662,000 active records -- wanted persons, vehicles, license plates, property items, and stolen, missing or recovered guns.

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When the Center gets a positive response -- the property is recovered, the suspect is found, or the crime is solved -- it's known as a "hit." In June 1967, the Center was making 125 hits a week and now it is making 800 a week.

These projects, only a handful of those funded during the last three years, and others which are now on the drawing boards of police agencies throughout the nation, promise great things for law enforcement and for our local communities. Title I of the Law Enforcement Assistance Act offers \$63 million for this year's nationwide attack on crime. Already nearly \$4 million has been granted for riot control projects and \$2.5 million was awarded last week to the states so they could begin mapping comprehensive crime control plans.

The National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, created under Title I, is preparing to launch research to develop better equipment, new operational techniques and increase coordination among the over 40,000 separate police departments of the nation.

We are ready to issue applications and guidelines for the Title I tuition and loan program that will help police officers earn college degrees. This is now a \$6.5 million

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program -- a "first" for law enforcement. Police officers will receive the kind of public support that for years has subsidized the schooling of teachers, social workers, engineers, physicians and scientists.

Planning, research and action -- Title I is a big new package for law enforcement. All three elements are vital and all three present an exciting challenge to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration.

At this point, I suppose I should add a disclaimer as I do not want to overstate the capacity of law enforcement to control violence, even with Federal assistance.

Law enforcement cannot erase the causes of violence. Some children grow up believing that violence is the right way to gain status, settle arguments or get a new suit of clothes. Some suburban and inner-city youth are convinced that they establish their manhood by physically injuring others. Guns and knives, they believe, equal manhood.

Too many Americans -- from both the lower and upper strata -- believe they earn respect by their possessions -- TV sets, cars, clothes, jewelry. But some people believe it makes no difference how they acquire the things they want. If legitimate ways are not open, any other

way will do -- burglary, looting, or armed robbery.

These problems of distorted values and attitudes represent, of course, much more than a police problem.

I have said here today a few things, I hope, about what can be done to lower the level of violence in our country. I hope I have sounded optimistic because I do believe in all sincerity that we can make progress and that this great new Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 represents a significant start.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear here today.

END