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THINKING GLOBALLY ABOUT CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESEARCH:
AN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT THE 1995 MEETING OF THE
WORLD CRIMINAL JUSTICE LIBRARY NETWORK

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Dr. Feltes, Professor Mueller, friends and colleagues:

I am very honored to be invited to this Conference as your keynote speaker. This has been whirlwind two weeks for me. For the past week, I headed the United States delegation to the United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. While I was there, I signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the National Institute of Justice and the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, establishing the National Institute of

Justice as one of the family of criminological institutes associated with the United Nations. This week, I have met with colleagues at the Kriminologisches Vorschungsinstitut von Nieder Sachsen and the British Home Office.

-and with the Staatssekretar Herr Otto Kobel

It is therefore particularly appropriate that I end this introductory tour in the international criminal justice community with this talk at the Conference of the World Criminal Justice Library Networks. The main theme of my talks and discussions over the past two weeks has been to establish that the National Institute of Justice is eager to become a full partner in the global dialogue on the problems of crime and crime prevention, and the efforts to improve the administration of justice. As a research institute, we are particularly eager to establish close working linkages between our research capabilities and those of other nations. At this Conference are representatives of the worldwide community of criminal justice researchers, librarians, practitioners and academics -- those individuals and entities who are the critical partners in the establishing the success of this new dimension in the mission of the National Institute of Justice. So, two months ago in Boston, when Thomas Feltes and Gerhard Mueller invited me to speak here today, I accepted without hesitation.

Today, I would like to share three related sets of thoughts with you. First, I wish to provide a brief report on the status of criminal justice research in the current environment in Washington -- in particular, presenting some new directions for National Institute of Justice. Second, I wish to discuss some recent ^{the} developments in the rapidly changing world of information technology, particularly sharing of criminological research. Finally, I would like to discuss one of my favorite topics -- the emerging trends and issues in the role of the police in democratic society.

I am pleased to report that the National Institute of Justice is thriving. As you may know, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) was established in 1968 as the research arm of the Department of Justice. Since then, the Institute has supported research, development, and evaluation on a very wide range of criminal justice topics. We recently celebrated our 25th Anniversary, and I hope you will have an opportunity to read the report of our first quarter century I left with Dr. Feltes. Today, we are the beneficiaries of a historic constellation of events. Crime continues to dominate our national consciousness -- and, although approaches to dealing with crime differ between the two parties -- the interest and concern about crime within Congress is strong. Although the new majority party in the Congress has articulated significant differences in crime control policy and the formulation of federal responses, I find it noteworthy that there is strong bi-partisan support for the proposition that there SHALL be a significant commitment of federal resources -- between \$20 and \$30 billion over five years -- to address the problem of crime.

At this time of heightened activity at the national level, the current Administration has made an unprecedented commitment to support research and evaluation. There are four areas in which the 1995 Crime Act provides substantial support for innovation -- community policing, violence against women, boot camps and treatment drug courts. In each of these program areas, the Department of Justice, under Attorney General Janet Reno, will be allocating a percentage of the funds -- up to five percent -- to fund research and evaluation programs within the National Institute of Justice. Our approach is NOT to evaluate every program funded; nor will we only fund large national evaluations. Rather, we will develop -- and release within the next three months -- evolving research and evaluation strategies that will offer knowledge to guide the implementation of these new programs.

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This is a particularly important development for NIJ. Not only will our research funds increase significantly -- in fact, they will more than double -- but we will be conducting research at a time of high innovation, with researchers working side-by-side with program administrators implementing new approaches to the problems of crime and justice. We will learn from experimentation at the local level, and rapidly disseminate those findings to other jurisdictions around the country. We call this "learning by doing". We will learn about what techniques are most effective in community policing, not merely put 100,000 officers onto the street. We can learn about whether boot camps can divert beginners from criminal careers, rather than just using them to relieve overcrowded prisons. We can learn about effective combinations of sanctions and services in treatment drug courts, not just add a new segment to the court system. We can learn about how best to intervene in and prevent family violence, not just fund battered women's shelters.

Socrates thought the unexamined life was not worth living. I believe fervently that the unevaluated federal innovation is not worth funding. At the National Institute of Justice, we believe we have a special obligation to be accountable to the country, and the Congress, to learn from what we do, to identify failures and replicate successes, to advance the field so that it can promote more effective policy-making -- and to develop the knowledge base so that we can intelligently design the next set of innovations.

Of course, the research agenda of NIJ extends beyond the evaluation of specific initiatives in the 1994 Crime Act. In our new Research Plan (a copy of which has been left with Dr. Feltes), we reflect our commitment to funding investigator-initiated research, leaving to the research community the important

responsibility of recommending specific research topics and strategies. In our new Plan, we place special emphasis on research partnerships with other federal research agencies, encouraging the field to pursue interdisciplinary projects and collaborative funding.

In reviewing the Institute's portfolio of prior and ongoing research, I have identified three areas of concentration for the future -- violence, especially juvenile handgun violence; sentencing and punishment policy; and the relationship between drugs and crime. I would like to briefly describe our approach in these areas.

Juvenile violence is a serious complex of problems. In partnership with the Centers for Disease Control, NIJ is sponsoring model research and demonstration projects to reduce gun-related violence in three cities. These programs will attempt to break the link between young people and guns through various types of intervention. Through other research projects, we are learning more about gun trafficking, gun availability to juveniles, the impact of targeted police enforcement in areas of high gun crimes, and technology for detecting concealed weapons.

A second area for research focus -- fueled by the explosion of the prison population and the poverty of our sentencing options -- is our use of the criminal sanction. Last year, our country broke a national record, when the number of people behind bars exceeded one million. Average time served per violent crime approximately tripled between 1975 and 1989. But violent crime did not decrease. These figures suggest that our punishment policy is inadequate for the problems we confront. As Prof. Al Blumstein remarked at a recent conference, that policy has been based on a "prison-centric universe" -- a "pre-Galileo_ model that needs to be reconceived for the modern world.

In about six months time, NIJ will publish a separate research solicitation on these issues -- examining the policy-making process in designing legislative options; evaluating the role of correctional administrators, including probation and parole; understanding the impact of imprisonment on individuals, their families, and the communities they leave behind and to which they return; and evaluating the effectiveness of various sentencing options.

Finally, NIJ will be expanding its investment in basic and applied research to develop our understanding the relationship between drugs and crime. Through interviews with arrestees in 23 urban areas, NIJ has developed an ongoing research platform that offers us an opportunity to learn about a wide range of drug-related issues, including drug market dynamics, and the procurement of guns by drug-using and other offenders. We will also be conducting research on the effectiveness of various police strategies to disrupt drug markets; and exploring the criminal justice system's coercive power to increase the use of effective drug treatment strategies -- in prisons, through drug courts, in intensive supervision, and on probation and parole.

These three areas of concentration -- and our research programs under the 1994 Crime Act, will represent our primary areas of new investments. We will also be expanding the international dissemination dimension of our statutory mission.

It is appropriate that ^I discuss our recent activities in this area because this is an area of central concern to this ^{Conference} Congress. As I mentioned, I recently attended the United Nations Congress in Cairo. The thrust of the United States participation in that Congress was to provide support for the technical assistance and training

activities at the Congress. I was particularly proud that the National Institute of Justice organized a series of workshops and presentations on the international dissemination of criminal justice research. Allow me to highlight some of the ingredients in those presentations.

As this audience is well aware, NIJ administers the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS), a vast clearinghouse of criminal justice information. NCJRS contains information about a broad range of topics in the field of criminal justice -- victimization, juvenile offending, innovative programs to reduce crime, and substance abuse. Currently, there are more than 130,000 items in the NCJRS document data base, and in one recent 8-month period, we received and filled more than 52,000 requests for information.

The traditional means of requesting and receiving information and documents from NCJRS has been by phone, mail and, more recently, FAX. In the age of new technologies, NCJRS is moving rapidly to offer new services. To integrate its electronic services and to join them to the International Information Infrastructure -- the Internet -- the National Institute of Justice has created NCJRS Online. Because of Internet's ability to link to other computer networks anywhere in the world, NIJ, which primarily serves a domestic market, now has a much broader capacity. The Internet enables NIJ to make all the services and products it develops for the cities, counties and states of the United States, available to the Nations of the world, and to so at minimal cost.

What are some of the specific features of NCJRS Online?

Services
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E-mail: Electronic Messaging permits almost instantaneous communication between NCJRS and our "customers". Users can write to individuals, or to groups of individuals, through special addresses. One such address is: ASK NCRJS! -- this service enables users to ask reference questions about criminal justice matters, order free publications, and receive instructions on using NCJRS Online. Another service is: Listservs. These are electronic mailing lists for exchanging information among groups of people who have shared, specific interests. Information posted to the list's address is automatically sent to all list subscribers. Listservs can be one-way, or can serve as discussion groups. JUSTINFO: The electronic newsletter, a one-way listserv, presents information about news, events, and publications of the bureaus of the Office of Justice Programs within the Department of Justice. The first issue of this twice-monthly newsletter, available to users with Internet e-mail, was posted February 1, 1995.

Electronic publication. One of the major features of NCJRS Online is electronic publication. All documents published this year and in subsequent years within our office are available electronically. Documents published in earlier years are being processed so that they too will be available online.

NCJRS Online is intended to be a special Internet "boutique", where people working in criminal justice agencies and affiliated professionals begin their criminal and juvenile justice information search. Starting from NCJRS Online, an American user can electronically leave our country to visit the document collections of the UN Crime Branch, to access files from Finland and Canada, or to ask questions of any of you who have chosen to join an electronic discussion forum.

We are very excited about these developments -- they open up a new world of technology, and a new world of global access. We also hope that they will serve to make information available more rapidly and more readily so that policy-makers and practitioners can benefit from the findings and insights of the research community. One area in which we are now exploring new ways to link research and practice is the field of policing, and I would like to conclude this talk by sharing some of my thoughts on the evolution of the policing profession.

I have devoted much of my career to thinking about the role of the police -- when I established the first victim assistance program in New York City, when I served as a Special Advisor to the Mayor, and during the last ten years when I held two different positions on the Executive Staff of the New York City Police Department. The police role is, in my view, central to our modern society. It represents the most frequent, most intimate, ~~most~~ visible form of governmental authority and service. It has as its mission responding to, and preventing, the violation of social norms. It is authorized by society to use deadly force in justified circumstances. In short, the police function, if performed well, can promote a stable and democratic society; if performed poorly, it can undermine the bonds that keep that society together.

In our country, we are witnessing a remarkable, sustained effort to transform the police function. This effort can be traced to the mid-1970's, when research findings -- the Kansas City ^(K. J. 2. 1. 10) Patrol Experiment -- challenged the fundamental foundations of police practice, the belief that random motorized patrol, responding to 911 calls, was the most effective way to deter crime, increase public perception of safety, and apprehend criminals. This research study, and those that have

followed, showed that these beliefs were unfounded. The fundamental approach to policing was deeply flawed.

Twenty years later, the policing profession has, in my judgment, made significant steps toward development of a new approach. Through trial and error, with the gentle prodding of research studies commissioned by NIJ, the police profession has constructed a new set of hypotheses. This new approach is commonly called community policing, sometimes problem-oriented policing. At the core of this new philosophy is a simple, but powerful, notion: that it is the role of the police, in partnership with the community, to JOINTLY identify the problems of crime and disorder facing the community, JOINTLY design strategies to address the problems of crime and disorder, and JOINTLY assess the effectiveness of those strategies.

The new style of policing views crime as a problem to be solved, not merely an event to be reacted to. The community is viewed as a partner in this effort, not merely witnesses to be canvassed after the event and a public to be consulted regarding police issues.

Because the new style of policing is predicated upon a different relationship with the community, in which the community is seen as both partner and consumer, community policing, in my view, holds great promise for re-affirming the democratic values that should lie at the core of the police function, properly performed. For this reason, the National Institute of Justice and the U.S. Department of State are about to embark upon a project to explore the implications of community policing for the development of the police functions in emerging democracies around the world.

Next week, the National Institute of Justice will be announcing the most ambitious research and evaluation agenda in its history on the role of the police in society. We will tie our plan to the components of the 1994 Crime Act which supports the movement of the police function toward community policing around the Nation. We will examine such important issues as the obstacles to the implementation of community policing within a police department. We will recreate some of the classic research of two decades ago when, through ground-breaking observational studies, we learned about the day to day work of the police and their interactions with residents. We will examine "police culture", the important issue of police integrity, and the role of the police in special environments such as housing project, Indian country, and immigrant communities.

We have so much to learn, but it is an exciting time to be in the business of supporting the development and dissemination of knowledge about the pressing issues of crime and justice. Archimedes once said, "Give me a lever long enough ... and I can move the world." I believe, fervently, that in research and the development of knowledge, we have that lever. We are, I think, at this moment at a crossroads where there is a unique convergence -- of public concern about crime and violence, commitment of the United States government to support for research, a sound research base on which to build, a sophisticated world of practitioners and policy-makers, and an international willingness to learn from the experiences of others. I thank you for asking me to join with you ^{to day} tonight at this Conference, and I urge all of us to seize this moment, and use the lever of research, in close partnership with practitioners and policy-makers, to move the world toward a more effective -- and more humane -- system of justice.

Thank you.