

THE WHITE HOUSE
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DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL

Crime -
Community
Prosecution

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COMMENTS: JEREMY TRAVIS' SUGGESTIONS
FOR HOW TO BROADEN THE
"NON-HUNG" 20% OF THE
PROPOSED COMMUNITY PROSECUTORS
INITIATIVE.

SUBJECTS.
Joe

DRAFT

New Community Prosecutors Initiative -- Non-Hiring Programs

Fighting Crime Smarter (\$10 million)

- < The best solutions to crime problems are customized to specific family, school, or neighborhood needs. But we don't yet understand what is happening in neighborhoods that were once unsafe and are now safe and strong communities.
- < The challenge for Federal leadership is to identify validated interventions that allow communities to fight crime smarter. This initiative would test, in 6 communities, comprehensive anti-crime programs to determine what works and to build our knowledge about crime, "Block by Block."
- < These sites would serve as "test beds" for innovative or promising practices, which would be studied carefully to determine their impact. Tested initiatives would include attempts to get offenders to quit, activities to strengthen community resistance to crime, and projects that reorient local justice systems to community performance. Proven programs could then be replicated, allowing the entire nation to benefit from a handful of intensive experimental efforts.

Providing Community-based Tools for Crime Fighting (\$3 million)

- < Today's automated crime information systems can describe and analyze the social and physical indicators of crime, so that communities can make informed decisions, design specific interventions, and target limited enforcement resources.
- < This initiative would allow 20 communities to receive assistance to develop their crime analysis capacity and to learn to apply crime mapping techniques to improve community safety.

Helping Communities Move Toward a New Model for Justice (\$7 million)

- < Innovative courts such as the Midtown (NYC) Community Court have begun rethinking their approach to the administration of justice -- with immediate disposition of cases, mandatory community service, and restitution for offenders, under the paradigm of swift, certain, and visible justice, carried out within the community itself.
- < Some community corrections departments are beginning to view themselves as co-producers of neighborhood safety, re-organizing caseloads on a geographic basis and involving community groups in decision-making and priority-setting. Public confidence in the justice system can be revitalized through such efforts to listen to community concerns and respond appropriately.
- < Federal leadership can foster these new models of community justice -- sharing lessons learned from successful community court and community supervision initiatives, serving as a catalyst for innovation, and providing a source of information on successful experiments. This initiative would allow 10 communities to serve as incubators of community justice and would provide support for experimental approaches to the administration of justice.

Revised to include AAG + Travis comments
12/12/97 NAF

December 12, 1997

TO: Jose Cerda, Domestic Policy Council
FROM: Jeremy Travis, National Institute of Justice
RE: Addenda to New Community Prosecution Initiative:
Community Safety & Community Justice Programs

INTRODUCTION

The successes of community policing have now created important opportunities for policy development in two new areas -- community safety and community justice. As community groups and the police have engaged in a constructive dialogue about ways to reduce crime, fear and disorder, both police and communities have recognized a need to strengthen the community infrastructure that produces safety and enhances the resilience of neighborhoods. As crime rates have plummeted in most jurisdictions, there is a growing recognition that accelerating this decline, and holding the gains made, cannot only depend upon more law enforcement personnel. Rather, creation of safe communities will require stronger communities, where the criminal justice system works with the community to prevent and reduce crime.

This recognition, of the importance of communities, is supported by the landmark study, the *Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods*, led by Dr. Felton Earls, that recently found that "collective efficacy," a sense of neighborhood cohesion, is the strongest single factor correlating with low levels of violence -- stronger than poverty, race or other socio-economic variables. The challenge to the federal government is how to promote community safety by learning about the successes of strong, safe communities, and spread those successes around the Nation.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Fighting Crime Smarter -- Building Safety, Building Knowledge, Block by Block

The Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods is a very ambitious research effort, spreading over eight years of data collection. Yet it is not a demonstration program -- it does not test the effectiveness of different interventions and programs in the participating neighborhoods. If the thesis of the findings from Chicago is correct -- that community strength is correlated with low levels of violence -- then the new question is how to develop strong and safe communities.

Through the Block-by-Block initiative, the federal government would work with a small number of jurisdictions, and neighborhoods within those jurisdictions, to develop a better understanding of the impact of a number of efforts to reduce crime, and build stronger communities at the neighborhood level. By building safety, block by block, this effort would also yield new

building blocks of knowledge about what interventions are most effective, and what combination of interventions are most effective. Each jurisdiction will address three major challenges: getting offenders to quit; strengthening community resistance to crime; and, reorienting local justice systems to community performance.

In collaboration with local governments we can implement multiple public safety interventions within experimental communities, and develop evaluation feedback processes that continually improve project operations. At the same time we will help these governments build jurisdiction-wide infrastructures for planning, action research, and evaluation. The Block-by-Block program will aim to adapt and transfer successes at the community level to other communities within the jurisdiction. On-going studies at the jurisdictional level will improve interventions to reduce and prevent crime in the experimental communities. Participating jurisdictions will also comprise a national learning network for other local governments. This initiative represents a significant departure from traditional Federal efforts in knowledge transfer.

Crime Mapping Initiative

One of the most powerful tools at the disposal of police and communities in the new technological era is the computerized map of crime and other indicators of community status. This tool was central to the success of the New York City Police Department's COMPSTAT program that produced rapid geographic displays of crime reports in order to mobilize a police response. Under this aspect of the community safety initiative, a small number of cities would be selected to participate in a national crime mapping project to develop ways for communities, police and other criminal justice agencies, and researchers to use neighborhood level data to track trends in crime and other indicators, develop new responses to them, and predict developments that will require response. This initiative will allow us to identify social and physical indicators of crime, so that automated systems can describe, analyze and inform neighborhood safety.

Amance?

COMMUNITY JUSTICE

Experience with the COPS program has shown us that the flexibility to make small investments in innovative programs at the local level have yielded valuable national insights and has helped to develop successful models of organizational change and community responsiveness. As police departments around the country have engaged in community-oriented, problem-solving approaches, other components of the criminal justice system have begun to follow their lead.

In dozens of jurisdictions, district attorneys are assigning prosecutors to work with neighborhood groups to design novel legal approaches to address community crime problems. In Boston, Austin, Indianapolis, Portland, OR, New York City, to take some examples, elected district attorneys are fundamentally rethinking the role of their offices and explicitly committing themselves to responding to the community's desire to reduce crime and solve concrete problems.

Under the 20% discretionary portion of the New Community Prosecution Initiative proposed, prosecutors would be empowered to 1) work with communities (and courts) to develop the

concept of community impact statements; 2) partner with prosecution to develop community service programs and victim restitution programs as part of sentencing; 3) work to develop a wider range of legal remedies, including civil remedies and code enforcement to provide a broader array of responses to community problems; and 4) establish programs of community involvement in reparative boards. In addition to these activities, resources would be made available to support program enhancements such as training, technical assistance, and improved management information systems. In essence, prosecutors would be encouraged and supported to partner with others, particularly community groups, and to expand the range of dispositional options to reflect more of the community's concerns. Successful sites would be used as a mentoring resource for other communities attempting to implement a full community justice model.

Just as the successes of community policing present new opportunities for prosecution, opportunities exist for altering the way that other components of the criminal justice "system" relate to offenders and the community.

Innovative courts such as the Midtown Community Court in New York City have engaged the community in rethinking the approaches to the administration of justice, developing the concept of immediate disposition of most cases, with immediate community service by the offender to repay the community, including both services and sanctions under the community court supervision. Similar efforts are now underway in Baltimore, Portland OR, Brooklyn and other jurisdictions.

Community courts are highly accessible to a community or neighborhood and deliver swift and certain justice for those offenders guilty of crimes that are most problematic to the citizens of that area and which could lead to more serious offenses if not handled with clear sanctions. Jurisdictions for this type of court often cuts across traditional lines and focus on problem-solving. Another key component is providing leadership in identifying needed social services for children, families, victims, and offenders. To make justice visible and immediate, sanctions should be swift, carried out within the community, and be done for the benefit of the community and the victim. A community mediation component is also important.

Innovative probation departments are reorganizing their caseloads along neighborhood lines, leveraging community resources to reduce crime rates by probationers, placing victim restitution squarely at the center of the offender's sentence, enhancing a sense of accountability for the crime and a sense, by victim and community, that justice has been done. One probation department in Oregon has renamed itself the Community Justice Department to reflect his new orientation.

CONCLUSION

Taken together, the programs outlined, as an addenda to the new Community Prosecution Initiative proposed, seek to restore public confidence in the criminal justice system by reconnecting the criminal justice system to the citizens it serves. Federal support for these

reform efforts would significantly accelerate the pace of innovation, as it did for community policing through the 1994 Crime Act.