

Gun-
Smart Gun

Gun Safety/Smart Gun Technology
FY 2001 Budget = \$10 million

\$10 million for the development of smart gun technology. The President's FY 2001 budget request will include \$10 million for the Justice Department's National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to fund the expansion, testing, and replication of "smart gun" technologies. Smart gun technologies limit a gun's use to the proper owner, thereby preventing accidental gun death, theft, and other unintentional gun usage.

How smart gun technology works. Several handgun manufacturers have started to experiment with smart gun or personalized gun technologies. Some technologies use a confirmation system, such as a ring that broadcasts a security code to the gun, activation of a personal ID number, or a fingerprint recognition system to activate the gun to fire. The President's budget request will support the development of these types of technologies.

Example of smart gun technology : Colt's Manufacturing. In a partnership with NIJ, Colt's Manufacturing has been working to develop radio frequency smart gun technology. This works by an energized firearm emitting a radio signal, which is received by a small transponder worn by the authorized user. The transponder returns a coded radio signal to the firearm. When the weapon hears the signal, the trigger is unlocked and the gun can be fired. Through the partnership, a prototype of this smart gun technology has been developed.

Benefits of smart gun technology. Smart gun technology was originally intended for law enforcement to keep criminals from seizing and using police officers' guns. However, once these smart gun technologies are fully developed and tested, they will not only allow law enforcement officers' weapons to be more safely secured, but they also can help to prevent the accidental deaths of children who might have access to a firearm. The accidental gun death rate of children in the U.S. is nine times higher than 25 other industrialized nations combined.

National Institute of Justice. The NIJ technology mission is to identify and provide access to promising technologies for use by law enforcement to enable them to perform their jobs more efficiently and effectively, and to provide the necessary tools to help protect the public

and law enforcement officers.

Budget background: The FY 2001 budget request will include \$10 million for NIJ child proof gun and gun prevention technology. The FY 2000 budget request included \$4 million for this purpose, none of which received funding in the final appropriation.

Final \$10 million
~~\$4,000,000~~ *

2. Childproof Gun and Gun Prevention Technology

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) technology mission is to identify and provide access to promising technologies for use by law enforcement agencies to enable them to perform their jobs more efficiently and effectively and to provide the necessary tools to enhance protection of the public and to law enforcement officers. NIJ requests \$4 million to expand development, testing and replication of "smart gun" technologies which will reduce the cost to human life resulting from the use of weapons taken accidentally or intentionally from their proper owner. Currently, there are four different and promising techniques for "smart gun" development - radio frequency, biometrics, voice recognition, and touch memory. Once fully developed and tested, these "smart gun" technologies will allow law enforcement officers' weapons to be more safely and reliably secured and will help prevent accidental deaths to children who have access to a firearm.

Of the \$4 million requested, \$1 million would be used to replicate and distribute the radio frequency technology prototype to law enforcement agencies for actual field testing, as well as provide training and testing for officers in the field. Of the four most promising techniques for "smart gun," radio frequency technology is the only one to be developed into a prototype. A partnership was formed with Colt's Manufacturing to develop the radio frequency "smart gun" technology. The radio frequency "smart gun" works by an energized weapon emitting a radio signal which is received by a small transponder worn by the authorized user. The transponder returns a coded radio signal to the firearm. When the weapon hears the signal, the trigger is unlocked and the weapon can be fired. Colt's Manufacturing has spent more than \$1 million of its own funds and NIJ has added an additional \$500,000 to support the development of the radio frequency "smart gun." In 1999, NIJ is planning a controlled field test of the Colt's Manufacturing radio frequency "smart gun" prototype. Two local police academies will develop simulations of situations in which guns are taken away from police officers, and evaluate the weapon's capabilities during these tests. These findings will help to further refine this technology.

As for the development of radio frequency technology, it is only one possibility and may not be the most suitable in many situations such as childproofing a weapon. Research conducted by Sandia National Laboratories suggests several other technologies that may be suitable for "smart gun" application, including touch memory, biometric technologies and voice recognition. The remaining \$3 million would be used to develop at least two of the other three technologies, at a cost of \$1.5 million a piece, to the prototype and testing

* We understand that this initiative, at the \$4 million level, will be included in the FY 2001 President's Budget.

phase. One or both of these technologies may be better suited for childproofing guns. At least one of these concepts, one similar to touch memory is currently available in an expensive, custom made revolver. This technology, although limited, could be further developed to childproof a gun.

Ballistics success stories:

- **New Orleans.** The New Orleans Police Department used ballistics technology to help solve a long-term investigation of a string of violent and brutal murders in the city. Cartridge casings and bullets collected as evidence from crime scenes and from the victims provided data for the IBIS system – which began to produce “hits” between evidence collected from multiple crime scenes. This data was used by the homicide unit to plot the crime scenes, and connected several different firearms used by a violent street gang with a number of drug-related murder and assaults. Ultimately, aided by ballistics technology, 13 members of the “Seventh Ward Soldiers” street gang were indicted, of which 6 were convicted, six pled guilty and one was acquitted.
- **San Francisco.** In June 1997, a victim was shot and killed in a telephone booth. Officers from the Oakland Police Department (OPD) were unable to identify suspects or to develop any leads. Projectiles from the shooting incident were entered into the IBIS unit located at the OPD crime laboratory. The next month, two suspects were arrested in possession of a firearm; since both suspects were felons in violation of their parole, they were incarcerated. In September 1998, the firearm that was taken from the two suspects was test-fired and entered into IBIS, and it was determined that the gun had been used in the June 1997 homicide. The incarcerated suspects confessed to the murder, and identified a third suspect involved in the crime, who was later arrested.

-DRAFT-*Guns -
Smart Guns***EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE
9:00 A.M. SATURDAY, MAY 13****NIJ
202/307-0703****JUSTICE DEPARTMENT TO FUND ADDITIONAL SMART GUN
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Washington, D.C. – President Clinton announced today that the Justice Department will make grants to two gun manufacturers – Smith & Wesson and FN Manufacturing, Inc. – for the research and development into “smart gun” technologies. Smart guns, which are firearms that can distinguish an authorized user from someone who is not supposed to fire the weapon, show tremendous promise in reducing the cost to human life when weapons are taken intentionally or accidentally from their proper owner. The President made the announcement during his weekly radio address Saturday morning.

“We are pleased to announce that these two leaders in the gun industry, FN Manufacturing, Inc. and Smith & Wesson, are working with us to expand what we know about smart gun technologies,” said President Clinton. “With this additional investment into smart gun research and development, we will be closer to having more tools to keep guns out of the wrong hands and keep our children safe. This new partnership with the gun industry is one of the greatest gifts we can give the moms of America for Mother’s Day.”

Smart gun research and development is being supported by the Justice Department’s National Institute of Justice (NIJ), in response to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) data that shows that over the past 10 years, 57 police officers were slain with their own weapons. An additional 113 weapons were stolen from law enforcement officers during this same time period. “Developing smart gun technologies is crucial in preventing needless law enforcement deaths,”

said Attorney General Janet Reno. "We have a responsibility to do whatever we can to protect the men and women who put their lives on the line each day to protect our communities. I am so pleased that we have the opportunity to further research these promising approaches so that once these technologies are fully developed, law enforcement officers' weapons will be more safely and reliably secured."

NIJ, with assistance from scientists at the Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico, has evaluated a variety of technologies that may be adaptable in creating effective "smart guns", such as radio frequency, voice recognition, biometrics, and touch memory technologies. The Smith & Wesson project will support the test the feasibility and functionality of an electronic fire handgun with code based combination lock; a separate fingerprint module that communicates with an electric fire handgun; and an analysis of existing Smith & Wesson technologies and design of the next generation prototype. FN Manufacturing, Inc. will use its NIJ grant award to further the research, development, and testing of its smart gun prototype, which uses embedded microelectronics to disable the firearm from use by an unauthorized user.

To augment and expand smart gun research and development, the Administration has requested \$10 million in FY 2001 to expand development, testing, and replication of smart gun technologies. With these funds, NIJ plans to:

- provide continuation funding to Smith & Wesson and FN Manufacturing;
- develop standards for smart gun technology use;
- undertake vulnerability studies and evaluation of technologies that could be adapted for use in a smart gun;
- develop a standard for gun locks; and
- issue a solicitation to other gun manufacturers for additional smart gun research and

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NIJ, the Justice Department's research and evaluation arm, supports research, evaluation, and demonstration programs, the development of technology, and both national and international information dissemination. For additional information about NIJ and its programs visit its site on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>. Information about other Office of Justice Programs (OJP) bureaus and program offices is available at www.ojp.usdoj.gov. Media should contact OJP's Office of Congressional and Public Affairs at 202/307-0703.

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For additional information contact Liz Pearson at pager # tbd.

Smart Gun Q and A

What is "smart gun?"

Smart guns are a seamless, transparent technology solution that will allow a weapon to only be fired by a recognized and authorized user. This technology is being developed to reduce the number of law enforcement officers killed annually with their own firearm: FBI data show that over the past 10 years one in eight officers killed in the line of duty was disarmed and killed with their own gun. In that same time period, an additional 113 officer's weapons were stolen.

The need for and applicability of this technology is described in an NIJ-funded research document issued by Sandia National Laboratories in 1996. The report, *Smart Gun Technology Project Final Report*, studied the problem of police firearm take-aways, identified the law enforcement requirements for smart gun technology, and investigated, evaluated, prioritized, and demonstrated the most promising "off-the-shelf" technologies available. Examples of these technologies, which could be adapted for smart gun use include radio frequency, voice recognition, biometrics, and touch memory technologies. Many firearms manufacturers and other technology industries are conducting their own research and development in these areas, independent of the availability of NIJ funds.

How does smart gun differ from other gun safety devices, such as triggerlock?

Typically, trigger locks are an external locking mechanisms that are attached to an unloaded weapon and are intended to prevent the loading and firing of the weapon. Most trigger locks warn users that they should not be placed on a loaded firearm, as there is the potential of accidental discharge during installation or removal. Trigger locks also require increased time to remove the lock and render the weapon operational. This poses a grave danger for law enforcement officers who typically, except during practice and qualifications, do not know when they will need their firearm to defend their life or that of a citizen.

When will smart gun be ready for the commercial market?

NIJ's work in the smart gun area has focused on developing smart gun technology for law enforcement use. The Smith & Wesson and FN Manufacturing projects will help advance the baseline for smart gun technology. Once operational prototypes are developed, the guns will undergo extensive testing to satisfy the performance expectations and needs of the law enforcement community. The evaluations will include a vulnerability assessment, environmental testing, performance testing (repetitive firing, drop safety, functional requirements, and drop function) and take-away scenarios to determine if the weapons will function in the field environment as intended.

NIJ also expects to develop a voluntary performance standard for smart gun use, similar to those it has developed for other law enforcement equipment such as personal body armor, weapons, protective gloves, and communications equipment. This standard will provide manufacturers

and law enforcement agencies with guidance about minimal acceptable levels of the technology's performance. NIJ expects this research, development, pilot testing, and standards development process to take approximately three to five years.

What is the Justice Department's role in developing this sort of technology? What is the history of NIJ's work in this area?

The smart gun is being developed by the NIJ's Office of Science and Technology (OS&T), which has as its charter to provide federal, state, and local law enforcement and corrections agencies access to the best technologies available and help them develop capabilities essential to improving efficiency and effectiveness. One of the six primary focal points of OS&T's work is to develop technologies to prevent crime and protect law enforcement officers.

In 1994, NIJ sponsored research by the Sandia National Laboratories to determine the viability of a suitable smart gun for law enforcement applications. In 1996, a \$500,000 award was made to Colt's Manufacturing, to further refine its prototype smart gun. The smart gun Colt's developed focuses on radio frequency identification technology. When energized, the Colt's prototype emits a radio signal. A small, wrist transponder is worn by the user. The wrist transmitter receives the signal and returns back to the gun a coded radio signal. The return signal prompts the removal of a blocking pin within the gun's firing mechanism, enabling the gun to fire. If an individual were to take the gun away from the individual wearing the wristband, the gun would not fire for that user.

Why isn't NIJ providing continuation funds to Colt?

Colt's Manufacturing elected not to request additional funds to support its smart gun project because it felt that the amount of funding available from NIJ in the near term would not support significant improvements in the current weapons speed and reliability.

Where did the funds come to make grants to Smith & Wesson and FN Manufacturing?

NIJ issued awards to Smith & Wesson and FN Manufacturing after their proposals, which were submitted in response to NIJ's 1999 Science and Technology Solicitation, were reviewed by an independent peer panel.

How many other gun companies submitted applications to NIJ?

NIJ has been contacted by a number of firearms manufacturers and technology developers interested in working on the development of smart gun technologies. A total of 4 Smart Gun proposals were received in 1999 in response to NIJ's solicitation.

Will NIJ fund other smart gun research and development grants in the near future?

The Administration has requested \$10 million in FY 2001 to expand development, testing, and replication of smart gun technologies. The program will reduce the cost to human life resulting from the use of weapons being taken from their proper owners. Once fully developed and tested, smart gun technologies will allow law enforcement officers' weapons to be more safely and reliably secured, and will help prevent accidental deaths to children who have access to a firearm. NIJ proposes to use the funding to:

- issue a solicitation for additional smart gun research and development.
- provide continuation funding to Smith & Wesson and FN Manufacturing;
- develop standards for smart gun technology use;
- ~~undertake vulnerability studies and evaluation of technologies that could be adapted for~~
use in a smart gun; and
- develop a standard for gun locks;

For more information about NIJ's work on smart gun, please contact Liz Pearson at the Office of Justice Programs', Office of Congressional and Public Affairs at 202/307-0703.

Al Gore's problem with the truth

Guns
Smart Guns

It may seem that Vice President Gore has taken the clue from his boss when it comes to finessing the truth. However, the fact is that Mr. Gore was lying long before he ever teamed up with Bill Clinton. Indeed, during Mr. Gore's ill-fated 1987-1988 pursuit of the Democratic presidential nomination, his own staffers twice admonished him in writing to tell the truth now that the national media was following his words. His press secretary told Mr. Gore his image "may continue to suffer if you continue to go out on a limb with remarks that may be impossible to back up." Later, his communications director told Mr. Gore in a memo, "Your main pitfall is exaggeration."

Mr. Gore fibbed when he told the Des Moines Register that his stint as an investigative reporter at the Nashville Tennessean "got a bunch of people indicted and sent to jail." In fact, as the newspaper acknowledged, nobody went to jail. For years Mr. Gore greatly exaggerated the danger he faced in Vietnam, where bodyguards were assigned to protect him. He lied when he claimed that Harvard professor Erich Segal used him and Tipper as the models for "Love Story." And Mr. Gore, of course, lied when he asserted that, as a congressman, he "took the initiative in creating the Internet." In fact, the Internet was created years before Mr. Gore entered Congress. Mr. Gore lied when he claimed to be a co-sponsor of the McCain-Feingold campaign-finance reform bill. As it happens, Mr. Feingold wasn't even in the Senate when Mr. Gore represented Tennessee there. Mr. Gore lied when he said it was he who "found a little place in upstate New York called Love Canal" and "had the first hearing on that issue . . . that started it all." In fact, President Carter had declared Love Canal a disaster area months before Mr. Gore's hearing. "I live on a farm today," Mr. Gore tells people, when, in fact, he resides at the Naval Observatory. Mr. Gore has repeatedly lied about his

evolving position on abortion.

Mr. Gore doesn't just lie to reporters or during debates. During his 1996 speech before the Democratic National Convention, Mr. Gore brazenly lied to a national audience about the impact the 1984 smoking-related death of his younger sister had upon him. "That is why until I draw my last breath I will pour my heart and soul into the cause of protecting our children from the dangers of smoking," Mr. Gore declared, conveniently forgetting that the Gore family continued to grow tobacco on the family farm for years after his sister's death and for decades after the surgeon general's 1964 warning about smoking. Indeed, Mr. Gore accepted thousands of dollars from tobacco political action committees after his sister died, and in 1988 he bragged to North Carolina tobacco farmers about his wonderful experience farming tobacco.

The man who introduced "no controlling legal authority" into the political lexicon has not shied away from lying about his role in the 1996 campaign-finance scandal. Mr. Gore's office insisted the political shake-down at the California Buddhist temple in 1996 was not a fund-raiser but merely "community outreach." Later, as evidence mounted, the afternoon was described as "political outreach." Still later, it was a "finance-related event." Mr. Gore also apparently lied when he said he did not know that the money he raised from his White House telephone calls was divided into both hard- and soft-money accounts. Memos and notes later surfaced contradicting Mr. Gore.

"Why should we believe that you will tell the truth as president if you don't tell the truth as a candidate?" Bill Bradley asked Mr. Gore at the Jan. 26 debate between the two. The best thing that can be said about Mr. Gore's refusal to answer Mr. Bradley's highly pertinent question is that he has not added still more lies to his mountain of mendacity.

'Smart' guns, dumb laws

Leave it to The Washington Post to highlight the supposed miracle of "smart" gun technology. The piece in yesterday's paper, right there on page A1, touted the wonders of handguns with built-in transponders, special magnetic locks and other gewgaws intended, ostensibly, to prevent their misuse, criminal or accidental. But all the article proved is that Post editors and writers will endorse any and every scheme to pester, hector and increase the costs and hassles of gun ownership for responsible people. Editors there won't concede that maybe all this electronic tomfoolery wouldn't be needed if, in the first place, a relative handful of irresponsible people didn't leave loaded weapons lying around where kids can get at them — and if people who deliberately misuse firearms under any circumstances were sent to jail, pronto, to learn the error of their ways.

Every serious study of crime and criminality has found a direct relationship between the prospect of meaningful punishment and lowered rates of all kinds of violence — gun-related violence included. The problem never was and never has been the availability of handguns. This point hardly merits debate among well-informed and intellectually honest people. Guns have been in American homes since the colonial era; handgun violence only became a problem during the 1960s and thereafter, when the criminal justice system got soft in the head and became more interested in "root causes" than in protecting public safety.

All of which is to say that "smart" gun technology, trigger locks and the rest of it are irrelevant. What matters is *who* has his hands on the weapon — not the weapon itself. Give the average solid citizen a fully-automatic Thompson submachine gun and he will do nothing untoward with it. But give even a pot-

metal \$20 "Saturday Night Special" to a thug and the end result is pretty predictable. Given this, what exactly would be accomplished by foisting "smart" gun impediments on honest, law-abiding citizens who wish to own firearms as is their right under the Constitution? Could it be that instead of reducing crime, the real object here is to make handguns more expensive, more complex, harder to use? It sure seems like an effective end-run around unpopular — and worthless — explicit gun-control legislation. If you can't ban guns, why not make them such a hassle to own — and so expensive to buy and maintain — that most Americans would say the heck with it? It's a pretty clever strategy.

The other issue — which has been given scant attention by the media, including The Post — is the long-term reliability of all this electronic stuff. Anyone who owns a late model, computer-controlled car knows that after a few years, warning lights start coming on for no apparent reason and various inscrutable sensors, switches and relays begin to fail. This is to be expected. But is such a thing to be desired in a lethal weapon? The double-action revolver has been perfected to the point of being nearly infallible; it is as excellent a mechanical device as one can find. But adding circuits and switches may turn what has become the perfect instrument when properly used into something that may not work — or may not work properly — when it is desperately needed. Will the government protect the firearms manufacturers against lawsuits arising out of deaths, rapes and assaults that occur because a weapon that could have prevented the act refused to fire?

"Smart" gun technology? Maybe to The Post's way of thinking. But it doesn't take a lot beans upstairs to realize what a really dumb idea this is.

Justice in New York

For the Albany jury to have convicted the four New York City policemen who mistakenly shot and killed Amadou Diallo of murder or any other criminal offense, it would have to have determined that the policemen, on pulling their triggers, did not reasonably fear for their lives. But as trial testimony showed, the policemen acted in what they believed to have been self defense. That they misjudged is the calamity that led to Mr. Diallo's untimely and violent death.

But was such calamitous misjudgment a crime? The jury, after careful review of the evidence, decided that it was not, and acquitted the officers of all charges. The Diallo shooting, the court ruled, was a tragedy, not a crime. This responsible verdict, rendered by a racially mixed jury, stands as a stunning repudiation of the political forces, led by the Rev. Al Sharpton, that first captured this tragic train of events last spring. By spray painting the Diallo shooting in the crudest terms of white and black, the Sharpton forces successfully obscured the more telling shades of fear and human error on the street. They were unable to do so in the courtroom, where the rules of evidence prevailed. As even Bronx District Attorney Robert Johnson said in defeat, "This was a fair trial."

Wish the same could be said about those political and religious leaders who have now seized upon the court-rendered verdict and are waving it like a red flag. While both Rudy Giuliani and Hillary Rodham Clinton have made conciliatory statements about the verdict, political leaders from presidential hopeful Bill Bradley to Rep. Charles Rangel have denounced it, with former Mayor David Dinkins, according to the New York Times, exhorting churchgoers in Harlem to make their outrage over the verdict "widely known." That's not all.

Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer insists that the verdict has brought about "no closure," and that it is now "hard to make the case in New York" that all people are equal before the law. In a column in the New York Post yesterday, New York State Sen. David A. Patterson, Harlem Democrat, wrote, "I cannot ask for calm in my community or anywhere else, considering my own anger." Neither can the Rev. Calvin Butts of Harlem's Abyssinian Baptist Church. Railing against the "evil that permeates the place called City Hall," Mr. Butts told Sunday worshippers, "What we are dealing with is a culture of white supremacy where a black man or woman has no rights that any white person, especially a police officer, is bound to respect." To the New York Post, Mr. Butts added, "There are many who are calling for calm, but I am not one of them."

Considering all the ugly and incendiary rhetoric, perhaps the biggest surprise of the Diallo affair is that the post-verdict protests have not been much larger and even violent. Maybe that's because most ordinary people can put themselves into the officers' shoes and imagine the danger, fear and remorse of that terrible night. And while everyone sympathizes with Diallo family's inconsolable loss, most of us recoil at its exploitation.

Meanwhile, Mr. Sharpton is in his element, leading marches — expect a protest outside the Justice Department on Thursday — and planning a boycott against companies that contribute to the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association for assisting with the policemen's legal defense. The Justice Department has announced that it will review the Diallo case for possible violation of civil rights laws. In order to proceed with indictments, federal prosecutors would have to believe that the Albany trial constituted a "miscarriage of justice." Here is hoping that reason prevails at Justice, no matter how loud the protests outside become.