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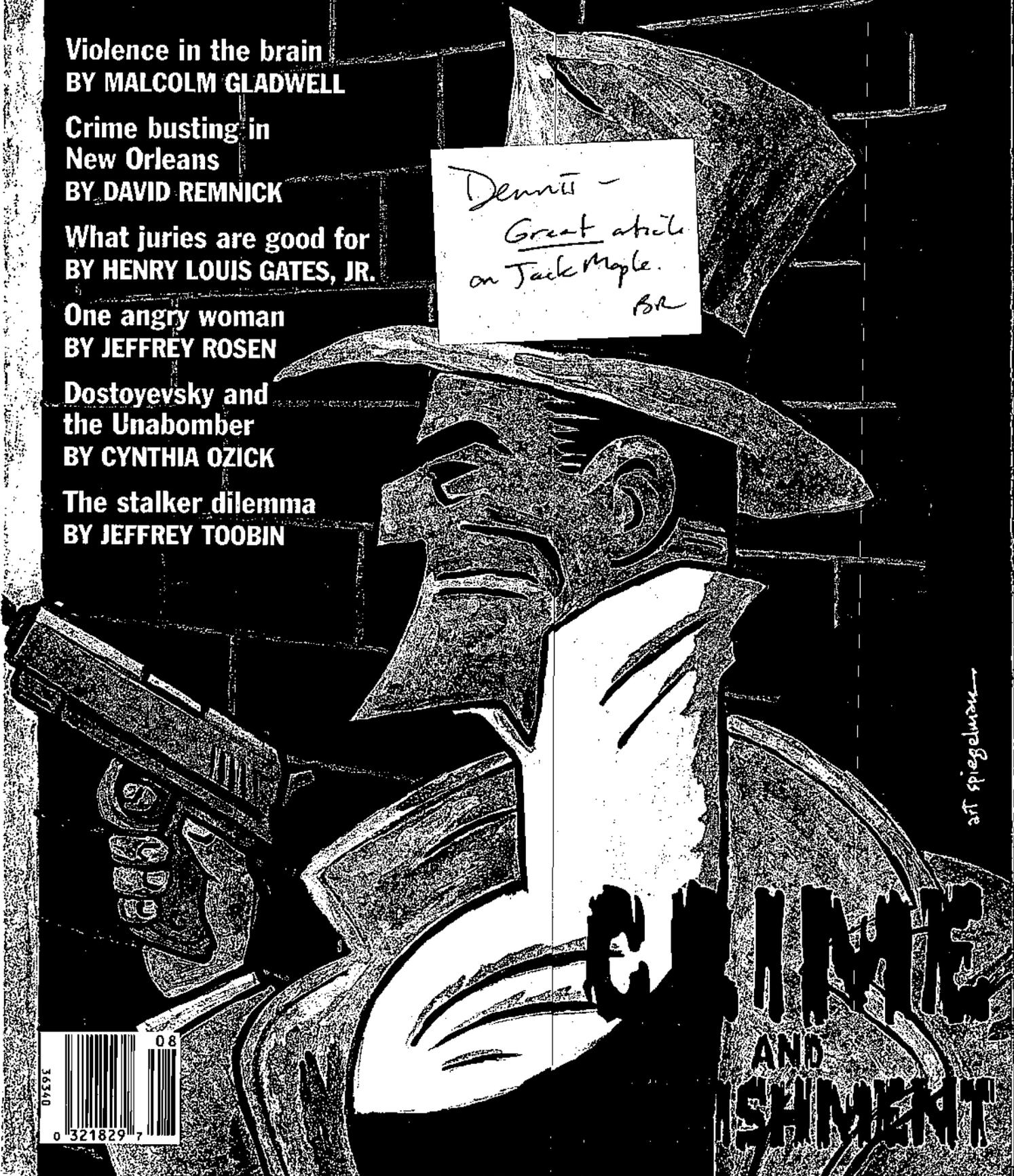
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Great article
on Jack Maple.
BR*



art spiegelman

**NAME
AND
SHIRT**



THE CRIME BUSTER

New Orleans is a fun town—except for a rotten police force and the highest crime rate in the country. Enter Jack Maple: the cop who cleaned up New York.

BY DAVID REMNICK

I. AT SEA

THE fat man couldn't sleep. It was two, maybe three in the morning, and he was staring out at the stars and the black waters off Montauk Point, still dragging on one of his Te-Amo Churchills, a Mexican cigar the size of a police baton. The smoke leaked out into the black night and swirled in the bitter winds. His head was never more crowded and confused than it was now. It had been a cold spring.

Jack Maple was used to the dark, to long solitary nights. For most of his career, he had been a "cave cop," a "mole"—a Transit patrolman on subway platforms. He was, in his own description, "one of your big loud guys with sore feet." He made a lot of arrests; worked long, even obsessive, hours; bombed out of a couple of marriages; and infuriated his superiors. He was the son of a post-office employee and a nurse's aide from Queens, a high-school washout who never figured to be a star. He was the fat kid who bought his pants off the racks marked "Husky" and "Stout," the slow kid who didn't get the aqua-colored reader—he got the brown. In between marriages, and sometimes during them, Maple slept in the back rooms of station houses; for a time, he slept on a cot in a Transit office under Central Park. It was not an easy life. His parents were dead now, and two brothers were lost to the crack pipe. The saving grace was that over the years he had developed a knack for deflecting every lacerating hurt into a sweet and fleeting joke. "I never played Joseph in the Christmas play," Maple would say. "I was always the beast in the manger."

But playing the beast was not a role for a lifetime, not for him. Maple was unschooled but smart. His memory was magical, his gift for numbers uncanny. He often told his friends, "I'm the Rain Man

and Forrest Gump. Call me Rain Forrest." Jack always knew that he was a good cop, even a visionary cop, a guy with a lot of ideas, and, what was more, he felt entitled to a taste of the good life, the rewards of luck or talent. In 1981, when he was still making twenty-odd thousand dollars a year, Jack walked into the Money Store and, using his house in Queens as collateral, got a home-equity loan for twenty thousand dollars. He spent that money, in large part, at the Plaza, where he ate a lot of chocolate cheesecake and drank Dom Perignon. When it was time to diet, he drank espresso by the quart, together with minnow-size portions of fish. Maple also spent handsomely on his appearance. In time, no one could fail to pick him out of a lineup: five-seven; broad-bellied, pillow-cheeked, he always wore two-tone spectator shoes ("Remember the shoes Santino Corleone was wearing when he beats the shit out of Carlo on the street, kicking him up against the fire hydrant there?"); he wore good gray slacks, a double-breasted Brooks Brothers blazer, a Raymond Weil gold watch (a gift from an Arabian prince), a candy-striped shirt, a bow tie, and a homburg from Knox Hats, at Fortieth and Eighth. One day a year, he dressed like a normal Joe: "On Halloween, I wear a regular tie, regular shoes, and no hat. I scare everyone to death."

At work, Maple racked up an arrest record so spectacular that his more bureaucratic superiors found him hard to take and easy to transfer. He was too aggressive. He generated too much paperwork. On his shifts and on overtime, he would run down hustlers and bag snatchers with names like Muscles Waxman and Sugarfoot Lawrence. Then he'd walk out of the caves, dust himself off, and head straight to the Oak Bar, at the Plaza. At the River Café, he was always amused

when he'd give his order and the waiter would brighten and say, "Excellent choice!" "I always wondered when they'd say, 'Dog-shit choice, sir!'" When the twenty grand ran out, so, too, did the high life—for a while.

Maple's dandyism, his self-invention, was a defiant parody of New York class distinctions, an inside joke on how bleak and degrading the job could be. When he told friends the story of his worst moment as a street cop, he didn't bring up the dangerous times: the shootings, the beatings he had taken and the beatings he'd administered, the long hours of tedium interrupted by moments of terror. No, the worst, he said, was a night in the dead of winter, 1975:

"I was down on the platform on Seventy-second and Central Park West. I was bored to death, freezing my ass off on the 8-to-4-A.M. shift. I was on a fixed post, all alone. Of course, Mr. Egomaniac refuses to wear anything particularly warm, and I don't even have on a bulletproof vest. As any cop knows, once your feet go you're dead, and my feet were numb. I also wouldn't wear the dickhead earflaps, because, after all, who knows when you might meet someone interesting coming down to the subway from the Dakota. So people are walking by me, laughing, going places, living life, and I'm freezing. I couldn't go somewhere to get warm, because who knew when your fuckhead of a sergeant would come around and feel your badge to make sure it was cold to the touch? But I was dying. So I went to this door on the platform near the men's room which opens onto a kind of closet. Inside, there's a radiator and a box to sit on. Real nice. You'd think it was the pier at Key West. You sit there and the steam makes you start to sweat, and you know you're gonna freeze to death when you go back

PHOTOGRAPH BY HELMUT NEWTON

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One colleague said of Maple: "If he's got balls enough to wear that, then he's got balls enough to buck the system."

outside, but for that moment I was in heaven. Then, suddenly, two guys—two transvestites in full gear—open the door slightly and start pissing on me. Maybe they thought I was the urinal, I don't know. So there I am, sitting on a box in the dark and transvestites are pissing on me, and I'm thinking, This is it. This takes the prize—my low point as a cop."

By the time Maple made lieutenant in Transit, he had also made a name for himself by running decoy squads in the subway. The squads arrested hundreds of teen-age muggers who worked in gangs—

a phenomenon known, in the mid-eighties, as wolf packs. So successful were the decoys (cops posing, generically, as "the Jewish lawyer," "the blind man," "the casual couple") that even the national media took notice. That was not enough for Jack. He told anyone who would listen that until the entire police force got out of its rut—until officers got out of their patrol cars and started fighting crime instead of responding to 911 calls—until that happened, the crime rate would keep climbing. Maple started mapping strategies to fight crime, and papered his walls with fifty-five feet of hand-drawn maps he called the Charts of the Future. The charts detailed every stop on every subway line and every robbery that had been committed. The idea was obvious but somehow untested: go after the bad guys where the bad guys did their work and get them before they committed more crimes.

It was that simple. And yet some of Maple's fellows wryly regarded him as Ralph Kramden—a big guy with big ideas, a dreamer. There were those, however, who got past the shtick and the bravado, who saw the intelligence and the ambition underneath. When, in 1990, a Bostonian named William Bratton was hired by Transit to do something about crime in the subways, he took notice of Maple. At dinners with columnists and judges in the back room at the Supreme Macaroni Co., on Ninth Avenue, Bratton listened to Maple dominate the conversation with his talk of cutting crime in the caves by half. Hell, they could cut crime in half all over the city! Why stop with the subway? Why not raid the crack houses every day until they were shut down? People laughed or looked at their shoes. Bratton, for his part, eventually elevated Maple to be his special assistant, and together they succeeded; between 1990 and 1992,

they cut felonies in the caves by twenty-seven per cent, and robberies by a third.

Maple revelled in his success and in his friendships with press guys like Michael Daly, a dour and intelligent columnist at the *News*, and John Miller, a flamboyant crime reporter at WNBC, who was known for his contacts among the city's five organized-crime families and its seventy-six police precincts. One night, Maple and Miller were at a good table at Elaine's. Maple was dressed in his usual ensemble; Miller was in a blue silk suit,

a Brioni. He noticed two unlovely yet familiar faces at the next table: a couple of wise guys from the Gambino crime family, drug thugs who operated out of a pizza place in Harlem. The wise guys recog-

nized Miller, too, and they fell to talking about John Gotti, New York's last great godfather, who had finally been carted off to Marion on a life sentence. The wise guys were talking up the virtues of their lost El Cid and waxing nostalgic when Maple broke in, saying, "Oh, yeah, it's really too bad what happened to poor John. In fact, didn't John used to hang out in those gay bars in Queens? In fact, didn't he run Nozzle Night?"

Aghast at such presumption, one of the wise guys said, "Who the fuck are you?"

"John Gotti is a scumbag piece of shit," Maple explained by way of introduction, "who deserves to be in jail for the rest of his life."

At this prompting, one of the Gambino members began talking darkly about how he was fresh out of Rikers and he was gonna "fuck up" Maple in some way that combined involuntary intimacy and in-temperate mayhem.

"Well," Maple said, interrupting, "you wouldn't like me. You're used to those really big hammers."

The conversation quickly turned to the feasibility of a fight.

"There's nothing holding you back," Maple said. "But before we get started I want you to know how it's gonna go: I'm a cop. When we're finished, I'm gonna arrest you and drag your ass to District One, and you can spend the weekend in the hole in the subway."

Finally, Elaine Kaufman, the proprietor, arrived and told the Gambino crew to "shut the fuck up and sit down." She then asked a waiter how the wise guys (dressed inappropriately, as it happened, in track suits, gold chains, and very big

rings) had managed to get a table in the first place. At which point, one mafioso, obviously chastened by Ms. Kaufman's tone, pointed to Maple and loudly whined, "Hey! He started it!"

"Hey now, come on, boys!" Miller said. "You guys aren't supposed to rat!"

WHAT a smile that was, and there were a million more. Even out here, floating like a cork off Montauk, Maple found it delicious to think about those Manhattan nights. In fact, there would be gaudier nights to come. In 1994, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani appointed Bratton commissioner of the entire N.Y.P.D.—the biggest urban police department in the world, with thirty-two thousand employees. Bratton stunned everyone when he brought in Maple to be his deputy and chief strategist; this was a promotion roughly equivalent to an ensign in the Coast Guard waking up one day as a three-star admiral in the Navy. He even hired John Miller as his press deputy. The rest of the department did not easily absorb the idea of Maple—not his unlikely ascent, not his ambitions, not even the sight of him. He did not go out of his way to hide the largeness of his personality; rather, with a sense of irony and with the help of his haberdasher, he insisted on it. Bow ties, cigars, two-tone shoes: Who was this guy? One of Bratton's other deputies, a career officer named John Timoney, took one look at Maple and began to think, Well, if he's got balls enough to wear that then he's got balls enough to buck the system.

That was just what Bratton wanted. Maple developed a computerized mapping system for the N.Y.P.D. based on his old Charts of the Future. It used to be that the police took weeks, even months, to gather accurate crime statistics; it was only by chance if someone noticed that, say, a particular block in Washington Heights was a nexus for guns, crack, and outstanding warrants. Maple's idea was to synthesize the information instantly, draw up a plan, act, and follow through relentlessly. Maple's new system was dubbed Comstat (for computer statistics).

Even to the most innovation-weary criminologist, Comstat represented a revolution in policing. Twice a week, early in the morning, police brass, along with representatives from the District Attorney's office and other agencies, gathered in the eighth-floor operations room at 1 Police Plaza. Maple projected his maps and grids on three huge screens



while he grilled precinct commanders on the patterns of evil on their turf. The meetings vastly increased the sense of organization and accountability in the department. Maple presided over Comstat with humor, swagger, praise, or insult, depending on what was necessary. Once, when a chief named Anthony Simonetti seemed to be fudging his way through a report, Maple projected a picture of Pinocchio on the wall.

But, in all, the results of the high-pressure sessions were rarely personal and were soon evident on the street. Comstat could not, on its own, stop crime, but if taken seriously it could help police catch a criminal after he'd committed his fourth robbery rather than his fourteenth. The police were not necessarily catching more criminals, but they were arresting them earlier in their careers. Between 1993 and 1995, homicides in New York dropped from 1,946 to 1,170; robberies fell by thirty-one per cent. Last year, homicides dropped below a thousand for the first time since 1968. For years to come, criminologists will be studying Maple's system; other cities, in the United States and abroad, are already eager to adopt it.

"The Mayor hired Bratton, and Bratton hired Maple, and that created a paradigm shift in policing," said one assistant United States Attorney.

What seemed to irk Mayor Giuliani, however, was that Bratton, Maple, and the others seemed to be having such a good time at their work. They were winning a war and spending night after night at Elaine's. They were staples of the tabloids. From the start, this did not sit well with City Hall. Maple remembered one of his first moments in his job under Bratton. They were marching up Fifth Avenue in the St. Patrick's Day parade, and, in the glory of the moment, Maple turned to Bratton and said, "Don't blink, Commissioner. It's all going to be over in an instant."

Maple had that right. In November, Giuliani will probably win reelection as Mayor, mainly because of the drop in the crime rate. In March, 1996, he de-

cidated to push Bratton out of office and replace him with the fire commissioner, Howard Safir, a far less colorful and threatening figure. Out of loyalty, mainly, Jack followed his patron into exile.

So now, as spring elided into summer, Jack had nothing to do, no reason to wear the bow ties and the hats. On his boat, a thirty-one-foot Boston Whaler, he wore the same sorry outfit every day: a pair of filthy purple shorts, no shirt, Gucci boat shoes, and three-hundred-and-fifty-dollar Gaultier sunglasses. He let his beard grow. When his hair needed cutting, he did the job himself with a pair of wire cutters. He warded off the whiff of decay with an occasional swig of Scope, but he spit the wash back into the bottle. "I'm economizing," he told himself. His girlfriend, Brigid, a sergeant in the N.Y.P.D., found him a nondescript gray Olds—"a stickup car"—to tool around Long Island in. If he was hungry, he dipped into his stash of cold-bass salad, which he ate for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. "You gotta nuke the bass until it's really dead—you know, *cooked*—and then add Miracle Whip, oregano, onions, and Paul Newman's salad dressing," Maple would explain to an occasional guest. "It's even better than my other specialty—matzo pizza."

For four months, Jack did nothing but kill time, think things over, screw around. He hung out with Al the Mate. He would visit his friend Lenny at the tackle shop

and talk fish. "We did Fishstat." Sometimes he thought about taking the boat down to Key West. He told his friends, only half in jest, that he would get a job there selling boats or bagging groceries at the local Publix. "I'll do Bagstat." He thought about writing a book about police strategy for the academies. "There's no 'Art of War' for policing." But he didn't get around to that, either.

Mostly, he felt lost, washed up at forty-three. Maple could always summon a movie to fit the situation, and now the scene was clear: "I was like the fighter El Toro in 'The Harder They Fall.' He's bleeding, broken, pathetic after the fight, and they say his share of the fight is forty-nine bucks, seven cents. And now he's gotta buy a pair of shoes." Forty-nine bucks was barely enough to resole a pair of two-tones.

Then the phone rang. It was a management consultant named John Linder, one of Bratton's old confrères, who had worked at both Transit and the N.Y.P.D. Linder was cool and polished, an itinerant executive who called an adobe hut in New Mexico home and issued inscrutable recommendations as if they were Zen koans. Linder was a fifteen-hundred-dollar-a-day man, a mystic with a beeper. Now he had a proposal for Maple: Would Jack be interested in coming down to New Orleans for a while? Linder was already there. It



"How about the eighteenth? That's the day my electronic anklet comes off."

was the worst police department in the country right there in the most crime-ridden city. How about it? Big Easy-stat.

2. CRAWFISH PIE

IT was a sweet deal: the New Orleans Police Foundation, a group of wealthy businessmen and other worried citizens, was ready to pay Maple and Linder more than half a million dollars to bring New Orleans into line with the New York model. Linder, the marketing-and-management guru, would come in and write up what he calls "the cultural diagnostic," an analysis of the New Orleans Police Department's faults, along with suggestions for reform; then Maple, the street guy with the police credentials, would plant himself down the hall from the top brass for six months or so, help institute the New Orleans version of Comstat, and whisper his prescriptions in the ear of the chief. In time, police officers in New Orleans began referring to Linder as the Spin Doctor and to Maple as the Witch Doctor.

There is no underestimating the horror of New Orleans: its abysmal crime rate; its abysmal police force. The city's murder rate is five times that of New York City. Crime statistics show New Orleans competing with Washington, D.C., and Gary, Indiana, for the title of Murder Capital, U.S.A. In the Bywater section of New Orleans a year ago, about a hundred residents who had been victimized by drug-related crimes held a voodoo ceremony. Their prayers, led by a priestess from Maine, called on Ogoun le Flambeau, the voodoo god of war and fire, to rid the city of crack cocaine. When Maple arrived, the police were solving about thirty-eight per cent of the murders committed in the city—well below the national average. The department had only thirteen hundred officers—proportionately half as many as the N.Y.P.D.—and was one of the most poorly paid forces in the country. It is nearly impossible to recruit qualified officers. The police have also distinguished themselves with an astonishing level of corruption. Officers have been arrested for rape, burglary, narcotics trafficking, even murder. The Department of Justice has described the city's police force as one of the most brutal in the country.

New Orleans is a heartbreakingly poor city; economically, it bottomed out during the oil bust of the eighties. It has rebounded since, but the poverty rate is still

WORRYWART

Worrisome you

You worry for your mother, your father, your sister, your brother, stepsister, stepbrother, stepmother, stepfather

You worry for your husband, daughters, sons, stepsons, stepdaughters

Now you're worrying for Tom

Worry for you

not Tom

Tom worries for Tom

as tomorrow worries for itself

No letters! No packages! Phone disconnected!

Parole board is approaching

No home to go to!

Halfway housing! No money but handouts!

Prison to bleak future?

Lord help the homeless!

Now you're rocking,

cannibalizing yourself

By the time you're finished

nothing will be left of you

Body filled with cankers, ulcers,

paranoia, hallucinations

800 milligrams of Motrin

four times a day

Wrinkles, gray hairs that dance their way through your skull

Worry not you!

Health's too precious to swim with worries

—JOY WOSU

the third highest of any major city in America. Louisiana consistently competes with Mississippi for the lowest rank in crucial statistics like education. There is hardly any middle class in town: there are, in the main, the wealthy and the upper-middle class, who thrive on tourism and oil, and the poor and the lower-middle class, who work in the hotels and restaurants for minimum wage. This sad gumbo of ingrained corruption, violence, and poverty has been a constant in the city for so many years that most people take it for granted as an immutable law of local existence.

In late 1994, after a long string of police commissioners who, for the most part ranged in quality from *laissez les bon temps rouler* to outright corruption, the city hired an outsider—Richard Penning-

ton, of Washington, D.C. Chief Pennington is tall and soft-spoken. His walk is a kind of lumbering roll. Even his detractors concede that he is a man of integrity. Maple would come to see him as Gary Cooper in "High Noon." He is a Vietnam veteran who became a cop, he said, "because the department was offering eight thousand dollars a year." In New Orleans, he has several volumes of Dale Carnegie on his shelves and appears to have read them. He is, in a laconic sort of way, a winning presence.

Pennington's appointment was meant to be a dramatic break with the past. He inherited a department that had disbanded its vice squad because the squad was riddled with vice. It was a department in which the head of the robbery squad got in a drunken shootout with his own son.

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Pennington, however, had come from Mayor Marion Barry's Washington, where municipal corruption scandals and the soaring murder rate compete for press attention. He had every reason to think he had seen it all. He was sworn in on October 13, 1994. That night, as one veteran of the department, Major James Treadaway, put it to me, "Chief Pennington discovered just where he lived." The news emerged that a patrolman named Len (Robocop) Davis had ordered a hit on a young woman who had dared to report him for brutality. At the time, the F.B.I. had been conducting an elaborate sting operation on Davis and at least ten other officers.

With the sting in progress, Kim Groves, a mother of three children, complained to the department that Davis had pistol-whipped a neighbor of hers. Within twenty-four hours of the complaint, someone in the department got word of it to Davis. In tapes played in court, Davis was heard saying, "I can get P. to come do that whore now and then we can handle the Thirty." "P." was a drug dealer and hit man named Paul (Cool) Hardy; a "Thirty," in New Orleans police lingo, is a homicide. Davis called Hardy and told him to "get that whore."

He added, "After it's done, go straight uptown and call me." Just minutes later, Groves was found dead in the yard in front of her house. Her skull had been shattered by a 9-mm. shell. Davis was tried, and was sentenced to death by lethal injection. He is on death row in Arkansas.

From the day of the Groves murder, Pennington has been on a tear against corruption. He has fired, suspended, or demoted more than two hundred police officers, and thirty-six more have quit while under investigation. He disbanded the Internal Affairs Division and replaced it with a public-integrity department that has on its staff two full-time F.B.I. agents.

Pennington is the most ambitious chief in the history of the city. At a time when the homicide rate is still absurdly high, he wants to cut it in half by 1999. And he has persuaded the City Council to raise salaries and hire four hundred new cops.

But the outrage has continued. The most notorious case involved Officer Antoinette Frank. On January 20, 1993, three weeks before Frank was made an officer of the law, she disappeared, leaving behind a note for her father. "I was doomed since the day I was born," she

wrote. "I see that now, I hate myself and my life." By February, she was back home and on the New Orleans Police Department. On the night of March 3, 1995, Frank and an eighteen-year-old friend named Rogers Lacaze dropped by a Vietnamese restaurant called Kim Anh, in East New Orleans. Frank had an occasional job moonlighting as a security guard at Kim Anh, as did a fellow-officer named Ronald Williams. The door was locked—it was after closing time—but Williams let her and Lacaze in. One of them shot Williams several times, and he was finished off with a bullet to the head. Williams was twenty-five and had a wife and two sons, one a week old. Frank went into the kitchen. There she found two of the owner's children: Ha Vu, who was twenty-four, and Cuong Vu, who was seventeen and wanted to be a priest. The two had been cleaning up. When they saw Frank and her gun, they sank to their knees and begged for their lives. Frank pistol-whipped them both and then shot them in the head. Their sister, Chau Vu, had been hiding in a storage cooler with her brother Quoc, and saw the murders; later, she testified against Frank.

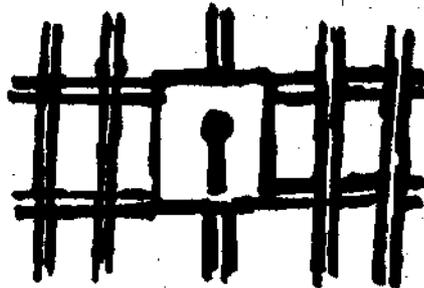
"One of the bitches got away," Frank said as she left the kitchen. Then Frank and Lacaze robbed the restaurant of ten thousand dollars and left the scene. Frank headed to her station house, where she picked up a patrol car. Word had spread that a police officer had been killed, along with two other people. Police began arriving at the restaurant, among them Chief Pennington. As they pulled up, they saw Frank forcibly leading Chau Vu out of the restaurant. Frank turned to her and asked, "What happened?"

"You saw what happened?" Vu said. "You killed my brother and sister!"

The other police began to question Frank. Before long, she confessed.

"An officer murdering another officer—that's the first time I've ever heard of that happening," Pennington told me. "That was an all-time low."

At Frank's trial, the jury deliberated for



twenty-two minutes before convicting her on three counts of first-degree murder. Frank has been sentenced to death by lethal injection and is awaiting execution at a women's prison in St. Gabriel, Louisiana. As she was put in jail, police reopened a missing-persons report filed on her father, Adam Frank. In November, 1995—fourteen months after the report was filed—a dog discovered human bones at Mr. Frank's house. Pathologists soon discovered ribs, part of a spine, and a skull with a bullet hole in it. So far, nobody has been indicted; however, the main suspect, sources in the department said, is Antoinette Frank. "Some unbelievable things happen in New Orleans," Pennington said. "Truly unbelievable things."

3. THE NEW YORK YANKEES

I FLEW to New Orleans to meet Jack Maple and had as company his patron, Bill Bratton. Since Bratton was forced out as commissioner, he has been working as an executive for a security company called First Security. He has travelled to South Africa, England, and various American cities to provide, for a fee, advice on policing. New Orleans was Maple and Linder's account, but he was going there to give a luncheon speech to the Police Foundation and spend time with Maple.

Bratton favors regimental ties, a suit during the week, a camel-hair jacket on weekends. His posture is military straight. He enjoys the company of the rogues around him, but he also travels easily in higher realms. It does not take too long before he has given his opinion of tasting menus (negative) or the amenities at the Colorado spread of the investor Henry Kravis (positive).

Even unbalanced strangers have quickly discerned the stylistic differences between Bratton and Maple. Once, the two men were walking through the main concourse of Grand Central Terminal and a vagrant, deep in his cups, stopped them. "Hey! You know who you look like?" the bum said to the Commissioner of Police.

"No. Who?"

"Douglas MacArthur," he said.

Bratton seemed pleased.

"And you look like Winston Churchill," the vagrant said to Maple.

Maple was also pleased, and the two men started to move on. Then they heard the man shouting after them.

"No! Wait a minute!" the vagrant said,

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pointing at Maple. "You're not Churchill—you're Fatty Arbuckle."

Bratton stretched his legs and smiled at the memory of it. But, like all Maple's friends (and even his enemies), he was quick to point out how deceptive, how deflecting, Jack's image can be.

"Remember one thing: Jack is the smartest man I've ever met on crime," Bratton said. "He has a high-school education, and yet no one is smarter. You cut through all the conscious flamboyance and there is a brilliant man sitting there. Way back when, his was the one voice crying out in the wilderness."

Just as Maple was writing his *Charts of the Future*, in the eighties, crime went out of control—in New York and in nearly every other city in the country. Tens of thousands of mentally disturbed people were deinstitutionalized; S.R.O.s were closing; and, worst of all, crack cocaine spawned an unprecedented rise in narcotics-trade murders. The crack trade led to drive-by shootings, to gang wars played out with machine guns. Bratton has long said that one of the main influences on his thinking about crime was a 1982 article published in *The Atlantic Monthly* by James Q. Wilson and George Kelling called "The Police and Neighborhood Safety"—but better known as "Broken Windows." (Maple said to me, "Don't tell the Commish, but I never bothered to read 'Broken Windows.' Shoot me.") The article claimed that society had undergone a precipitous decline in standards of behavior, and that we had learned to tolerate a range of once forbidden conditions: in New Yorkers' terms, farebeating, public drinking and urination, mild harassment. Wilson and Kelling's view, which Bratton put into practice at Transit and at the N.Y.P.D., was that the police should be vigilant about the minor, "quality of life" infractions that heightened discomfort and fear, by doing that, they could also make inroads against the people who were committing more serious crimes.

When Bratton and Maple took over the Transit Police, seven years ago, they pushed an uncompromising program for "taking back" the subways. Officers were stationed at turnstiles and were ordered to make arrests. Fare evasions dipped from nearly two hundred thousand per day in 1990 to forty-five thousand per day in early 1996; police also found that they were arresting people with outstanding warrants—the same people, very often,

who were committing violent crimes above ground and below. All New Yorkers—in Harlem or Howard Beach or on the Upper East Side—can see the improvement in the subways, just as they now can see the changes on the street. Some criminologists insist that at least part of the statistical drop in crime in New York is due to a momentary drop in the population of teen-age males, ceasefires among drug gangs, a stabilization of the crack market, the economy, and other factors beyond police control. But even the most critical give at least some credit to Bratton and company. "We changed behavior," Bratton said. "Disorder went down in all seventy-six precincts."

WHEN Bratton arrived at the New Orleans airport, a tall and smiling businessman named John Casbon met him at the gate with his hand outstretched. In despair over the New Orleans police, Casbon had come to New York and sat in on a session of Comstat while Bratton was still commissioner, and he was so inspired that he rounded up the money to start the New Orleans Police Foundation and, eventually, to hire Linder and Maple. "I'll tell you one thing," Casbon said gravely as the limousine headed downtown. "If we don't clean this place up soon, we're all gonna lose our shirts."

Jack Maple was waiting for Bratton at the Royal Sonesta Hotel, in the French Quarter. He was decked out in his usual (non-boating) attire: blazer, bow tie, a full beard. As he watched Bratton work the room, Maple confessed that after a couple of months in New Orleans, he missed home. "After all," he said reasonably, "there's just so much of this gumbo shit you can eat." His headache was eased by the discovery of a decent local haberdasher, Meyer the Hatter, and the even more pleasant discovery that, at least at the very top, the New Orleans Police Department and the city government seemed, at last, determined to change. They had to fight especially hard in two areas, Maple said: the French Quarter downtown, and the housing projects. The French Quarter (known as "the Eighth" to police) is the center of tourism; the housing projects—Desire, B.W. Cooper, Iberville, St. Bernard, St. Thomas—were the scenes of horrific crime and concentrated despair. To lose the battle with crime in the Quarter would be to lose the city's economic heart; to lose it in

the projects would be to lose the city plain.

Maple popped an hors d'œuvre into his mouth and said, "The city's back is against the wall, and every other cliché you can think of. This is their big chance. The public wants it, the police want it, everybody wants it. They've got to move."

The most glaring difference between New Orleans and New York, he said, was that in New Orleans "everyone has a gun." More or less. Now there is even a law allowing citizens to carry concealed weapons with a permit. "In New York, I never carried a gun," Maple said. "Here I carry a Glock. But, look: they've got a lotta problems down here. People talk about, 'Oh, you don't understand—New Orleans is special. It's unique.' Yeah, fine. I still think we're gonna have a big win here. You watch."

We all filed into an enormous ballroom. In front of an official audience, Maple is, even now, deferential to Bratton, and during Bratton's speech—a speech he has given, in one form or another, hundreds of times—Maple affected an expression of intense concentration.

"You tipped one way," Bratton said, "and you can tip the other way." Bratton is nothing if not a professional cheer-

WANTED POSTER

In 1841, Edgar Allan Poe introduced C. Auguste Dupin—and, arguably, the detective genre—in a short story about a mother-daughter murder with an unlikely perp. In the racy 1932 Universal Pictures version advertised at the right, all that remains from Poe's tale of ratiocination is his culprit, an ape, whom Bela Lugosi vainly tries to mate with young ladies snatched from the streets of Paris. On March 1st, the poster, along with nearly four hundred others from the collection of Todd Feiertag, goes on the block at Sotheby's. "I was contacted by a family in the Midwest," Feiertag said, explaining his well-preserved acquisition. "They had been living in an old schoolhouse, and during renovation they discovered the poster between two beams in the attic. Such posters were perfect for insulation, since they're fourteen inches wide and that's how far apart the beams are."

leader, and in New Orleans he was pumping the pompoms pretty hard. The crowd cheered dutifully. My table was filled with police commanders, and they raised their brows as one and slowly joined in the clapping. "We can always try," one of them allowed.

THAT night at Emeril's, a celebrated place in the Warehouse district, Maple was informed that he most assuredly would not get any of that gumbo shit. He would have been lucky if he had. Instead, Maple, his girlfriend Brigid, Bratton, and a few members of the Police Foundation sat in Emeril's wine room and faced up to a string of teenyweeny courses, each preceded by a team of learned waiters reciting scientific explanations. I believe we were told that the crawfish before us had been "flayed with an angelic precipitate." Maple looked for the crawfish and found little. Later, when a waiter used the word "emulsion" in regard to the three-inch-long quail on our plates, Maple arched his brow and, oh so subtly, used his left pinky to nudge the plate away from his person.

"That bird must have put up some fight," he said.

With Bratton at the table, it was easy to see why he had been commissioner and Maple his liege. Bratton is a man infinitely bored with his new life. He has gone from being the center of tabloid attention in the biggest city in the world to being on the sidelines. He passed on a mayoral run against Giuliani, and now he hopes, his friends told me, that if the White House cuts loose Louis Freeh, the director of the F.B.I., he will be the replacement. At Emeril's, Bratton seemed to put himself on autopilot, and between courses he entertained us with set pieces on crime. The foundation people were charmed.

Maple, on the other hand, puzzled over the emulsions and rolled his eyes. He was not terribly interested in feigning an interest in that which did not interest him. He fairly glowed, however, when I asked him about what he was reading.

"I've been gorging on military history and strategy," he said. "I never read much before, but now I can't get enough." And with that he launched into a monologue

that compared the frosty relationship between Roman emperors and their generals to the conflict between Giuliani and Bratton. (Later, Maple gave me his copy of Lawrence Keppie's "The Making of the Roman Army," with a passage underlined about Augustus Caesar's need to take credit from his commanders in the field: "Victories were his, and to be publicised.") He also discoursed on the varieties of genius displayed by Napoleon, Admiral Nelson, and Hannibal, and their willingness to break with convention.

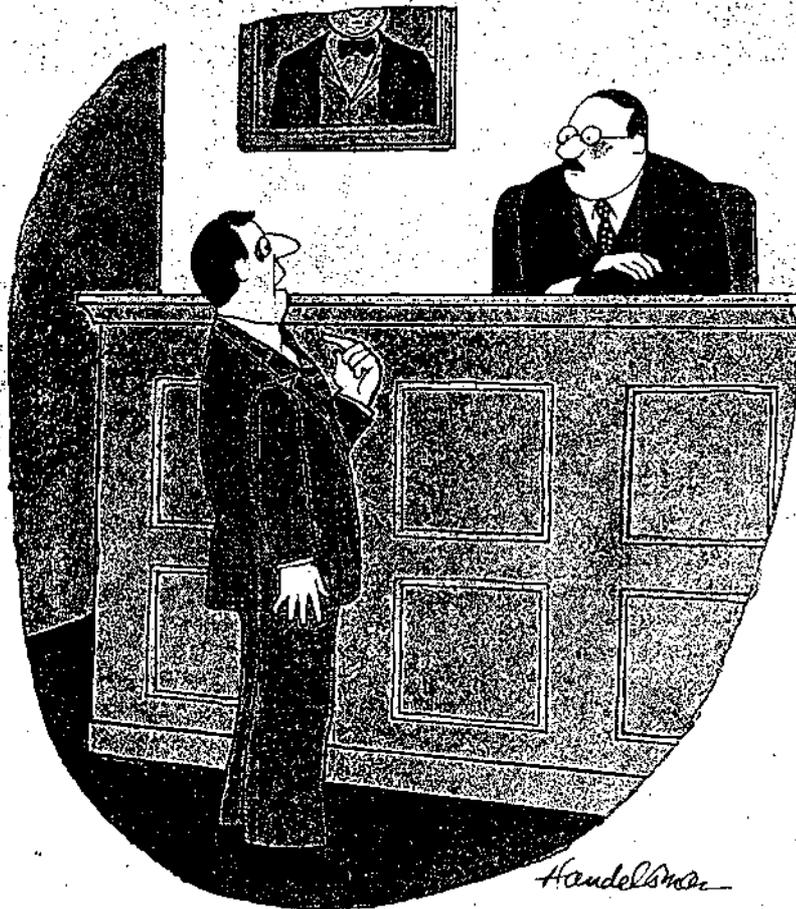
"See, policing is dysfunctional in this country, and—maybe it's distasteful, but the thought process, the analogy, has got to be military," Maple said. "For a long time, policing has been using the Fabian defense. You remember: Hannibal is rolling toward Rome around 217 B.C., breaking one legion after another. The Romans are getting a-scared. So they trot out Fabius, who knows he can't win a pitched battle with Hannibal. Fabius knows he can only stick and run, contain the damage. Well, policing until Bill Bratton became police commissioner was about the Fabian defense.

"In New Orleans, before Pennington showed up, they had no sense of mission down here. They were downtrodden because of the corruption issues. God knows, when I came in, an outsider, there were some resistant lieutenants at first. They'd say, 'What makes you think this shit will work here? What do you know about New Orleans?' The chief is far more progressive than a lot of the rest of the organization. He's straight. I met the former head of homicide, and practically the first thing out of his mouth was 'What the hell do you Yankees think you can tell us?'"

Maple described how he had begun regular Comstat meetings in New Orleans modelled on the ones in New York. At first, the sessions were rudimentary and slow, rather like prop planes compared with a New York Concorde.

"But it's got to help them," Maple said. "And it's not me. I've never had an original thought in my life. Comstat just comes from experiences I've had, being a police officer, a detective. Ideas usually seem like obvious things. Look at your paper clip. Look at your zipper. Someone once said to me about Comstat, 'Well, this stuff ain't brain surgery.' But I doubt that brain surgery is all it's cracked up to be. But I'll leave that to the brain surgeons."

A waiter interrupted to tell us about the new emulsions that had been swirled



Handelman

"Never mind what I did, Your Honor. I want to be judged for who I am, as an individual."

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over our dessert. Jack looked up at him with grave irony, like a smart schoolboy regarding an impossibly dumb teacher.

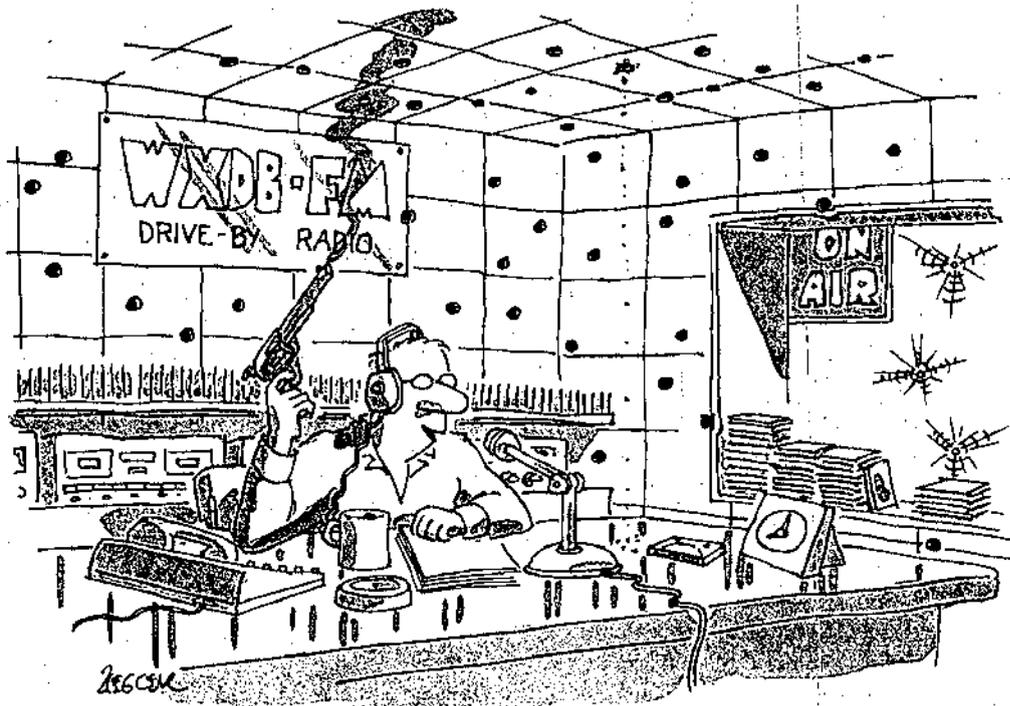
After the waiter left, Maple returned to his favorite theme since he arrived in New Orleans: the likelihood of a turnaround in America's baddest city. A grin cut across his face. "We've gotta win!" he said. "The crooks in this town are exhausted. The burglars can't lift their arms! They can't steal any more stuff! The murderers have run out of ammo!"

EARLY the next morning, after Maple had stoked himself with enough espresso to fuel half of Umbria, we rode around the city in an unmarked car. Just looking, he called it. Just looking is what Maple has done regularly since he's been in New Orleans. Equipped with a notebook, a badge, and his Glock, he spends his days dropping in on meetings, crime scenes, investigations, and neighborhoods. "Jack kind of looks like a car salesman from New York," Pennington said. "New Orleans police officers probably thought he *was* a salesman, and some thought he was arrogant and pushy, but they began to see that he was very smart and competent. He is a very knowledgeable person. He's made a difference already. He's got us focussed on fighting crime now, and he has us believing we can do something about crime. I've given him carte blanche in the organization."

Maple's driver and assistant, a lieutenant named Michael Pfeiffer, was just about to take us out to one of the housing projects north of downtown when he got a call that there had been a homicide in a working-class neighborhood in the Second District (there are eight police districts in all).

"Let's go there instead," Maple said. "I just want to see who shows up and who does what, who interacts, and like that." It is Maple's theory that "the biggest lie in law enforcement is 'We work well together.'" One of the main reasons for instituting Comstat in New York had been to coordinate the activities of various antagonistic bureaucracies and, as Maple put it, "enforce cooperation."

We travelled away from the New Orleans known to the casual tourist and



"Good morning, everyone!"

down streets of shabby houses and rocky lawns until we found a herd of police cruisers. Pfeiffer pulled over to the curb. As Maple got out of the car, he saw the Second District commander, Linda Buczek. An intense and wiry woman in her mid-forties, Buczek had been at the murder scene and looked shaken.

"It's a bad one, Jack," she said.

"Well, let's take a look."

A detective led Maple past a yellow police line and around the back of a house to the body of a young woman who had been bludgeoned to death; her skull had been crushed, maybe with a hammer. Her pants were pulled down around her ankles. In door-to-door canvassing, the police heard about some of the people who might have been around the house. The victim may have been a prostitute. It was all very vague, but it was still early. Maple stayed for a few minutes, figured out who was around and who was not, and who was talking with whom. Then he headed back to the car. He seemed satisfied.

"They did her pretty good, huh?" Pfeiffer said. He said it more in resignation than in cynicism.

"Yeah, they did," Maple said.

"They got a suspect?"

"Not yet. But they're doing the right things."

Pfeiffer grew up in the city. He stud-

ied engineering and earned a law degree, but despite the rotten pay and the department's reputation he decided to become a cop. Pfeiffer, like a lot of white cops I talked to in town, said that in the old days, when the force was almost completely white, corruption was concentrated mainly on shaking down bar owners, bribes of all kinds, protection rackets. The force expanded integration at about the same time as the cocaine market grew, and as a result, he said, the black cops who were inclined to corruption moved toward that new market.

"Corruption is the constant down here," Pfeiffer said. "This is Louisiana. They vote the cemeteries down here. It's better than it was, but not much."

"Cops are not from another planet," Maple said. "Their backgrounds, their weaknesses, are the same as any other human being's. They are not descended from the Planet Honest. We get them from Earth."

At night, I did some more looking around with Maple. We walked through the French Quarter, searching for police.

"Nothing," Jack said. "Not one car. I've gotta tell Pennington. He'll blow a gasket."

At its vortex, on Bourbon Street, the Quarter is like an endless frat party: a huge scrum of people drinking beer

from big plastic cups. The music from dozens of bars and strip joints blares. Tourists come stumbling out into the streets of the Quarter, gumbo-stuffed and liquor-dazed, and they are, to the hustlers who work the area, fresh meat. The crime rate in the Quarter is nothing like it is in the projects, but here a single shooting is front-page news in the *Times-Picayune* and, no doubt, another dent in the city's tourist industry. The Quarter is the generator of wealth, of jobs, of self-image.

"You'd think that with the Quarter being as important as it is," Maple said, "a few foot patrols would show up."

Maple's main problem in New Orleans is one of temperament. In New York, as a deputy commissioner, he could issue an order and it would be executed. He could unmask a lazy or incompetent precinct commander, and that commander would suddenly fear for his job. In New Orleans, he is a consultant; he suggests, cajoles, implies. He cannot order. Jack lives in a world of 78 r.p.m. In New Orleans, as a rule, people tend to move at 16.

"I'm not great at biting my tongue," he said. "But I try."

ONE night, we went walking with Pfeiffer through various housing projects. The projects in New Orleans are low-slung, brick, badly lighted, and in many cases half abandoned. The federal government began a renovation program that has pushed people into scattered-site housing around the city, and the population of large projects like St. Thomas and Desire is substantially less than what it was ten years ago. Amazingly, depopulation does not necessarily lead to a lower rate of crime. The abandoned houses are gentrified: they become crack dens.

We drove to a project on Malpomene Street, and Pfeiffer dug in his trunk and fished out a blue police windbreaker for me. By the look of its insignia, I had joined the narcotics squad. I didn't know exactly who was hanging out here, but I knew that, in general, Louisiana had its fair share of gangs: Banditos, Sons of Silence, Banshees, Bottom Boyz, Latin Kings, 59 Bloods, Viet Pride, Asian Life, 211 Soldier Bloods, Rolling 60's Crips. As we walked toward a particularly nasty stretch of the project, Maple saw the worried look on my face and said, "Don't worry. If there's trouble, we've got a jour-

nalist and a consultant on hand. We'll say, 'Stick 'em up! It's the Imaginary Police!'"

It was a warm night, humid and buggy, and many people were sitting on their stoops. Little kids were still out playing ball amid concrete and broken glass. Maple strolled around as if he had been doing this all his life and nothing and no one would hurt him. Pfeiffer, on the other hand, seemed nervous, jumpy.

It bothered him when a few people looked at us and talked about us, sotto voce. I stayed near Maple.

We were not here for tourism. Maple had another purpose in mind. Every so often, he stopped and asked people whether they had much contact with the police, whether foot patrols had come

through lately. Invariably, the answer was that they had not seen an officer in a very long time.

"Haven't seen anyone in a year."

"It's been a few months at least."

"Tell you the truth," one woman said.

"I'm shocked to see you boys at all. Where you from?"

MAPLE grew up in the Richmond Hill section of Queens. He is one of seven children. His father, who was a mail carrier on the New York-to-Buffalo run, died in a veterans' hospital three years ago. His mother, who died two years ago, was a nurse's aide. Jack went to Catholic schools "with nasty nuns" and then attended Brooklyn Tech, a prestigious school for math and science wonks. He failed the exam in aeronautics, among other subjects. Mainly, he was a truant who spent his time at the Museum of Natural History. Brooklyn Tech did not choose to confer on him the honor of a diploma. Eventually, he got one from a less distinguished outfit: the Fort Greene Night School.

"My father knew I'd be a loser—there was no way I was going to college—and so he brought me to Grand Central one night," Maple said. "This was just in seventh or eighth grade and the war in Vietnam was going on, the early stages. There were coffins on the platforms. My father said, 'Kid, if you don't make something out of yourself, you're going to die in Vietnam.' And so he had me take all the civil-service exams—police, transit, post office, fire department, all of them—when I was sixteen. My father had what we call in the police 'accurate and timely intelligence.' He knew where I was heading."



Before he joined the force, Maple also worked unloading U.P.S. trucks and "21" as a page boy and, for a night, as men's-room attendant. At "21," the kid from Richmond Hill saw Aristotle Onassis in his sunglasses, Eddie Rickenbacker walking with a pair of canes, Richard Nixon, Vince Lombardi, Taylor and Burton ("Who never tipped"), and Joe Crawford ("I don't know if she beat her daughter, but she was a terrific tipper"). "Growing up, I didn't know nothing about nothing," Maple said. "I don't think I was very smart. The nuns pounded into my ears that Jews were going to Hell and the Protestants weren't too hot either. We were taught that the Jews crucified Christ and that we were in big trouble if we even looked at the Protestant parade on Eighty-fifth Avenue Brooklyn-Queens Day. But working '21,' that was good experience, because that I wasn't intimidated. I realized that even the powerful people pull down their zippers to piss."

In 1970, Maple started working as a Transit trainee in Bedford-Stuyvesant. Three years later, as an officer, he got a taste of the danger of the job: during an arrest, he was smacked over the head with a four-foot-long steel pipe; finally, in a struggle, Maple and another officer shot and killed the assailant. Things got worse Working undercover in 1975, Maple bought some pot from a dealer on subway station near Bryant Park. When Maple tried to arrest the dealer, the dealer grabbed Maple's gun—a humiliation, as well as a mortal danger, for a cop—and shot twice. The shots just missed Maple's head. The incident ended with Maple getting his back, and shooting—but not killing—the dealer.

"I almost gave up that time," Maple said. "I was right on the edge. He was overbearing me, knocking me around. These things stay with you in a funny way. You don't learn about them. You learn how to protect yourself better. You correct your mistakes."

The one mistake Maple never learned to correct—the one he never wanted to correct—was an insistence on making arrests "off post." Transit police are supposed to make arrests on the street, but Maple did it all the time. For his efforts, he was transferred around the city and was given such assignments as guarding the J line on Thanksgiving Day. Once, when he was living in Howard Beach, he was assigned to the Bronx, a commu-

Wednesdays off. "I was two"—the Twelfth captain who was the "Richmann," Maple's point of the token but make any trouble start making arrests was screwed. I was the chief of the Traffic, once told me a guided missile." "Sir, I am a military plan."

Maple's rise began with boy squads; then, he scored in the city and he took over the Task Force. In a came calling. But his characteristically a new apartment which was promptly took all my thin clothes," he said. "I was personal life was falling transit people were re-

For all the pleasure in his success, as makes, he has had failed marriages (sheer not talk about), children from those ma- teen-year-old c- the first, a seven- from the second), v- when he can. But says self-pity and empathy when it co-

"I'm very lucky," he said, sipping over coffee. "Have a look at how these in these fucking projects? My life is 'The King me, knocking me around. These things stay with you in a funny way. You don't learn about them. You learn how to protect yourself better. You correct your mistakes on a scale of pain."

MAPLE takes police less seriously any man does the he also adores the value of his job Maple was eating the French Quarter, Bratton, and Br Cheryl Fiandaca, a legal reporter for W. in the midst of every

Wednesdays off. "The head of the One-Two"—the Twelfth Precinct—"was a captain who was to the right of Adolf Eichmann," Maple said. "He puts me in front of the token booth and tells me not to make any trouble. But what happens? I start making arrests on the way to work. I was screwed. I was cornered, tortured." The chief of the Transit Police, James B. Meehan, once told Maple, "You're an unguided missile." To which Maple replied, "Sir, I am a missile, but I know my flight plan."

Maple's rise began in 1985, with his decoy squads; then, in 1988, he got the top score in the city on the lieutenant's exam and he took over the Central Robbery Task Force. In April, 1990, Bill Bratton came calling. But even that transition was characteristically hard. Maple moved into a new apartment, on the East Side, which was promptly burglarized. "They took all my thin clothes and left all the fat ones," he said. "I was heartbroken. My personal life was falling apart, and the Transit people were ready to stab my eyeballs out."

For all the pleasure that Maple has taken in his success, and for all the jokes he makes, he has had a very rough time: the failed marriages (which he would rather not talk about), the two children from those marriages (a seventeen-year-old daughter from the first, a seven-year-old son from the second), whom he sees when he can. But he never betrays self-pity and deflects sympathy when it comes his way.

"I'm very lucky," he said one morning over coffee. "Have you taken a look at how these people live in these fucking housing projects? My life is 'The Cosby Show,' it's 'Father Knows Best' compared to that. I can identify with some of those lives, but not that scale of pain."

MAPLE takes policing no less seriously than a military man does the Army, but he also adores the entertainment value of his job. One night, Maple was eating dinner in the French Quarter with Brigid, Bratton, and Bratton's wife, Cheryl Fiandaca, who is the legal reporter for WABC-TV. In the midst of everything,

a raging argument began: What are the best police movies and television shows? Bratton and Maple agreed on the movie in a second: "Madigan," with Richard Widmark and Henry Fonda. Maple, of course, knew huge hunks of the film by heart and recited most of it. "It's a great movie, and realistic," he said finally, "because it's not some complicated thing. It's about a cop who gets his gun taken from him and then tries to get it back. It's about a couple of guys who were doing a favor for some guys from Brooklyn."

On the issue of television shows, there was a more complicated debate. One thing was for sure, Bratton insisted—the winner was surely not "NYPD Blue."

"Sipowicz is a racist brute," Bratton said, referring to the homicide detective played by Dennis Franz. "People are fascinated with him, and they play him as a sympathetic character, but he is everything you try to get rid of. He's racist and brutal; he's all too real."

"I'll tell you what show got it right," Maple said, and he began to sing:

There's a holdup in the Bronx,
Brooklyn's broken out in fights.
There's a traffic jam in Harlem,
That's backed up to Jackson Heights.
There's a scout troop short a child,

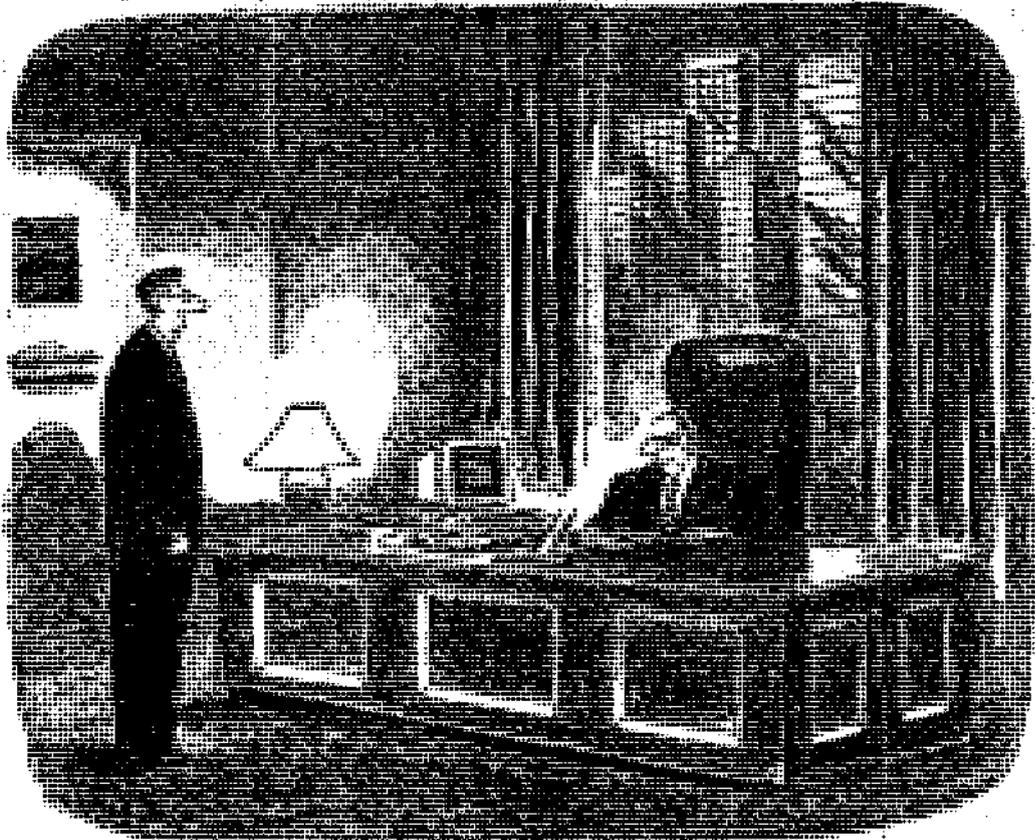
Khrushchev's due at Idlewild—
Car 54, where are you!!

I thought that maybe Maple's taste in cop shows went back to the sixties because he hadn't seen many lately. He does not watch much television. A couple of nights later, we went up to his room at the Hilton. At my request, we watched "NYPD Blue." I wouldn't say he liked it any less than Bratton had, but after half an hour or so, when a secretary breathily informed Detective Sipowicz that she was wearing a black rubber brassiere, Maple smiled and said, "Well, that's the first realistic thing I've seen so far."

4. MAPLESTAT

IF Maple is going to make a dent in the crime rate in New Orleans, a great deal will depend on how much he can transmit to Pennington's key deputy, Chief of Operations Ronald Serpas. Come spring, Maple will be in New Orleans just one week per month, and Serpas will be on his own.

Serpas's birth certificate says he is thirty-six. He looks as if he had begun shaving during the Clinton Administration. He seems so young and has been promoted so quickly—more quickly than



"Blackmail has given me a confidence I never felt before."

anyone else in the modern history of the N.O.P.D.—that his less charitable colleagues have dubbed him Major Minor.

One afternoon, I went around the Desire project with Serpas and a lieutenant named Russell Vappie. As we drove along the highway, Serpas pointed to a collection of tiny houses and said, "That's where we grew up, poor as church mice." Policing has been the family profession since 1914. Serpas is, perhaps, the least cynical person in the department. He dropped out of school when he got his girlfriend pregnant and had to go to work. He is now closing in on a doctoral degree in urban studies and is even more steeped in the sociology of crime than Bratton is, to say nothing of Maple. But to Serpas the project is personal rather than academic.

"Pennington is giving us the opportunity to be something we've never been before," Serpas told me. "I came here when I was twenty—almost seventeen years ago—and I was surrounded by people who'd been indicted and reprimanded, people who had been abusing the system every which way.

"In the late forties and fifties, there were so-called brown-bag capers—bribes paid out by bars and strip joints, for extra protection. In the late seventies, some officers in the Third District were running their own burglary ring. These problems are endemic in police work. But there's a difference. If a doctor is guilty of malpractice, well, sooner or later people will go to another doctor. In our case, if the police are guilty of malpractice, where is the community supposed to go? When

THE GAUNTLET

It has been said that the decline of American civilization began when ladies stopped wearing gloves on Fifth Avenue. Now the glove has once again marked a milestone on our national road to ruin. The Rockingham glove, the glove that didn't fit—invariably referred to as "the bloody glove," a phrase we heard so often that the adjective began to take on a distinctly British connotation of disgust—has attained macabre immortality. In "Bad Boys" the Bay Area artist Catherine Alden has created a mordant wall piece riffing on the most infamous exhibit in the trial that mesmerized the nation.

we've lost their trust, what do they do? Find *another* police force?"

I told Serpas, who is white, that a lot of white officers said that at least part of the reason for the decline in the eighties was affirmative action. They were filled with jealousy and resentment—a strange emotion, it seemed, considering the reputation of the department for decades before. Serpas grimaced. "Were it not for affirmative action," he said, "I and many other white and black officers would never have been promoted. The only ones promoted would have been the ones with personal connections. That's the way things worked. At some point, we became the employers of last resort. We would take anyone who could read and write—and just barely read and write. We lost a lot of faith in ourselves, and we certainly lost the faith of the community."

We drove and walked around the Desire project for a while. But, unlike some other projects where I had been with Maple, Desire had benefitted from the establishment of a "substation" in the housing project, a kind of adjunct to the Sixth District headquarters. One teen-ager told me that just having the office in the project meant that there were fewer guns around. "These guys hesitate a little before doing bad," he said.

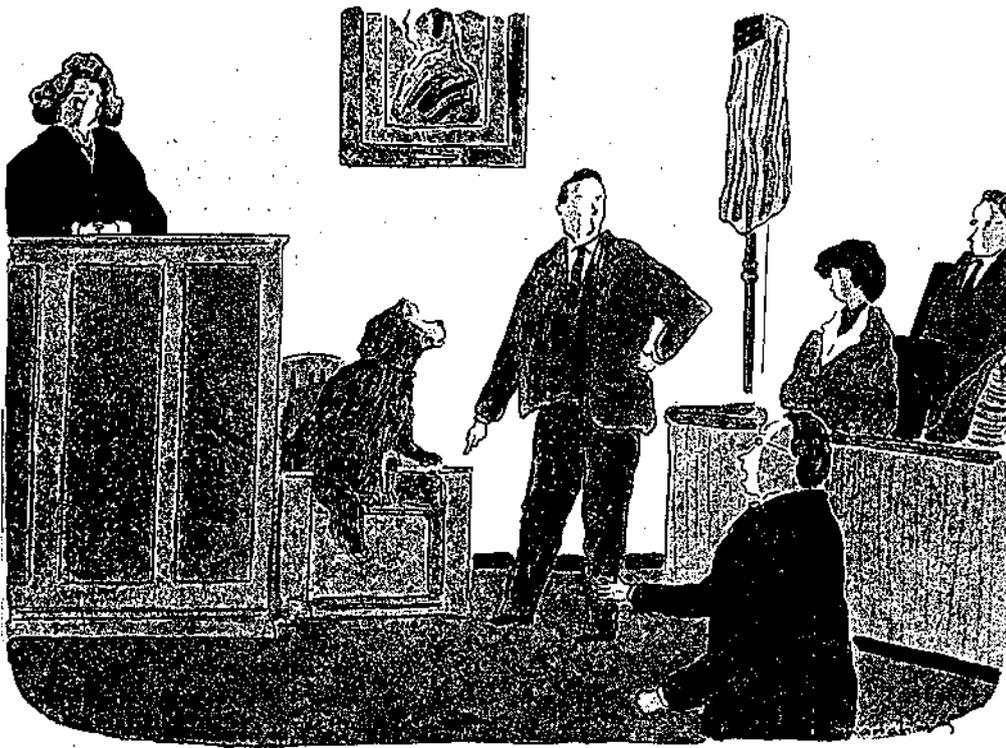
Desire is stuck far away from downtown New Orleans. Vappie said he knew children who had never been downtown, never been on Canal Street or in the French Quarter. "They spent their whole lives inside Desire," he said.

"For the people in these projects, the odds are just overwhelming," Serpas said. "A lot of these young people will soon be dead or in prison. But, if we can help, what greater success could there be? And that's not pie in the sky.

"Jack is critical. He gives us a chance to see things new. We don't have enough experience from outside—or we didn't until now. The vast majority of these people are law-abiding citizens, and if we can help them, well, what better thing is there? I am an unabashed idealist. I don't get embarrassed about it, but I think most police officers do."

THE next morning, at seven, I took a cab to police headquarters with Maple for a Comstat session. Districts Two, Five, Six, and Eight were all scheduled to give reports. The commanders and other police brass more or less stumbled into the seven-thirty meeting. Maple was





"Objection, Your Honor! The prosecution is combining dog years and people years in a callous and deliberate attempt to confuse the witness."

pumped up, edgy, like a ballplayer before a game. Nearly everyone else seemed at ease, leisurely, like ballplayers in the off-season. Maple frowned. "They gotta crack the whip on the time," he said under his breath.

Finally, everyone had filed into a dull conference room with scattered chairs, an overhead projector, a screen, and a few tables. Serpas sat down. Maple pulled his seat up behind him.

"You want a doughnut, Jack?" someone said, offering a box.

"I want *all* the doughnuts," Maple said. "But, no, thanks."

"Aren't you hungry, Jack?"

"I've been hungry since I'm five years old," he said.

The lights were dimmed, the projector went on, and Comstat began. In no way did it resemble the intensity of the New York version. The commander of the Second District gave a defensive performance, rather like a schoolkid caught out on his homework. Serpas, for his part, pressed the commander, but he did not press too hard.

Once in a while, Maple would half whisper, half cough a suggestion ("Uh, warrants? What about . . . warrants?"), but he couldn't go far. Sometimes, Serpas felt

pushed, and, as is his right, he pushed back. Maple's instincts, his metabolism, are New York, but Serpas and Pennington have to live in New Orleans. Comstat was still new. "A month ago, these guys didn't know anything about what was going on in their own precincts," Pennington told me later. "Nothing. They'd tell me, 'Chief, we're so busy with calls for service that we don't have time for anything else.' They weren't focussed on crime fighting at all."

Captain Michael Ellington, of the Sixth District—a district filled with crime-ridden housing projects—was much more sure-handed and had the answers required of him. He had an easy sense of where crimes were being committed and how to deploy his officers to make arrests and cool off the hot spots. Ellington's headquarters were the worst in the city—I had been there a couple of nights before, and the building had all the roominess and elegance of a toolshed—but he had done remarkable work. Homicides were still at an "unacceptable" level, but other categories—rape, armed robbery, car thefts—were coming down. Ellington also came to Comstat with a sense of occasion. "This guy's got it," Maple whispered to me. "He's got the hint of arro-

gance, the pride, you like to see."

Ellington was also in possession of a wry bureaucratic turn of phrase. In reference to a murder on South Galvez, he said, without a hint of a smile, that the victim's "genital area looks like it could be involved with a prostitution-type arrangement."

"Maybe she was a biter," Maple said.

MAPLE and Linder are hoping for quick results, but even their most ardent supporters believe that they will have to wait a while. The department is still short on officers and resources; Comstat is new; a photo-imaging department and the crime labs are just starting to get used to the latest technology. Worse is the department's cultural legacy. For years, the leading crusader against police abuse in town has been Mary Howell, a lawyer in her forties who has represented clients in cases of police brutality. Howell is not a zealot; she does not hate the department, nor does she despair of it. She does, however, know it well.

When Howell began speaking out about some celebrated brutality cases, she was rewarded with obscene phone calls, bags of excrement on her doorstep, and a dead pit bull thrown on her driveway. Though she admires many officers on the force, Howell has no illusions about the New Orleans Police Department. She has seen reformers come and go; she has read many earnest reports. It has also not escaped her notice that accompanying the drop in crime in New York was a steep and alarming rise in citizen complaints about abuse of authority, discourtesy, use of obscene language, and other infractions that indicate a more brazen force.

Maple and Howell hang out sometimes at the same bar—Molly's, on Decatur Street in the French Quarter—and Maple made it a point to pay an official call on her. Maple came away with a stack of civilian complaints (nearly all had been dismissed or ignored) and Howell came away lightly impressed.

"Jack is a bright guy who wants to do good, but there have been other bright guys who have wanted to do good, and he isn't staying forever," she told me. "This is a tough city—and a tough city for outsiders to get ahold of. It's slippery that

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way. There's a lot of 'Oh, yes, that's very interesting,' and then you'll go away and we'll go right back to the way things have always been. I told Jack one thing, really. 'Show me.' I'm skeptical that there is a quick fix in New Orleans. You can't just move toy soldiers around and assume a huge change."

Howell said that one of the last reformers the city brought in to run the N.O.P.D. was James Parsons, a police chief from Birmingham, Alabama. Parsons arrived in 1978, a Ph.D. candidate with a sterling reputation. He left less than three years later, convinced that the place would not change. "You go back to the days of the pirates and the French in the eighteenth century, and you see that the political stuff is so systemic," Parsons, who is now in private business in Birmingham, told me. "These New Yorkers are blowing smoke, I'm afraid. I think it's a hopeless case."

There are scores of criminologists who can argue all sides of the question on both New York's success and New Orleans's failures. Few are as qualified as James Fyfe. After spending sixteen years on the N.Y.P.D., Fyfe became an academic and a writer, and one of his main areas of study has been the department in New Orleans. He teaches at Temple University. Fyfe warned against an over-optimistic reading of the New York numbers.

"There is a pattern being repeated since the nineteen-twenties: a new, highly profitable substance comes onto the market that is illegal," Fyfe said. "Former thugs in low-profit crimes become involved. Since they are unschooled and undisciplined, they screw each other and kill each other, but, after a while, the situation evolves, and the strong and the smarter ones gain a monopoly. The violence starts to go away, and the traffic gets less visible. In Prohibition, the violence was highest in the early twenties. By the time Prohibition ended, in 1933, there was far less violence. Capone and others were controlling the traffic. The same thing was true in Detroit in the late sixties and early seventies with heroin, and in Miami in the late seventies and early eighties with cocaine."

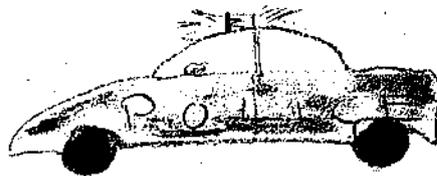
In New Orleans, they should be so lucky. Homicide has shown signs of decline, but not over a sustained period. Thanksgiving week, for example, was a disaster, a string of murders. In the French Quarter, men holding up the

Louisiana Pizza Kitchen shot four employees; three were killed. An advertising executive was raped, robbed, and murdered by a parking-lot attendant. The murders led to a candlelight vigil and a demonstration. In the French Quarter, posters urged people to call the mayor's office: "Give your name, telephone number, say the word 'death,' and hang up."

JACK flew north toward home for a brief holiday. He lives in a studio apartment on Central Park South, an address he chose mainly to be "close to the general." Bratton lives in more spacious quarters, a few doors down. Maple's apartment is decorated with a care inversely proportional to the attention he gives his wardrobe. The place is chaos. There is a Murphy bed, a pair of rosewood dragon chairs, an excuse-me-while-I-get-into-something-more-comfortable screen, and many things on the floor. The microwave is used occasionally for the preparation of matzo pizza. More often, Maple goes out.

When he gets to New York now, Maple sees his children, and then heads out at night with the old crowd: Bratton, John Miller (who is back on the air at WNBC since being forced out of the N.Y.P.D. by Giuliani in 1995), John Timoney, Michael Daly. They all met for dinner not long ago at Elaine's. A couple of tables away, Claudia Schiffer and David Copperfield sat together, looking as bored with each other as any old married couple. He glared and she shimmered, both exuding a certain pleasant light, but they seemed sour somehow, as if all this were not enough. No one at Maple's table seemed to pay the stars any mind. They were more interested in busting each other's chops and having a good time. While Maple and Timoney and Miller traded stories—street stories, mob stories, Comstat stories—Bratton receded into his camel-hair jacket, smiled thinly, and took it all in. Maple was intent on cheering him up.

"C'mon, Commish!" he said. "I'll be like Lee Marvin in 'Cat Ballou'! I'll go to the ol' trunk and get out the old clothes, and we'll take it on the road one more time."



Bratton smiled, but it was a forced smile, the smile of a boy getting kissed by a powdered aunt.

"We still have fun, but it's a little painful to think about how short a time we had in the limelight," Miller told me later. "At least for us, it was Camelot. Bratton was this new star on the horizon who had all of this promise, and very quickly the promise started to come true. It didn't have to unfold over long years. He was a charismatic Kennedyesque character in New York. And he came in alone. A lot of commissioners came in from the ranks and had their own guys and put those guys in place. Bratton brought in me and Jack: a TV reporter and a Transit lieutenant. When people called me Commissioner, when I went to the meetings and the guards snapped a salute, I revelled in the tradition. But Jack used to say, 'Yeah, yeah, we're a coupla clerks who work downtown.' We had this incredible run. At least I had a high-paying job in the public eye. But look at Jack. Jack looked up one day and said, 'I know what I wanna be and I know what I am,' and instead of leading the miserable life dealt to him, he turned around and invented the guy he wanted to be. He invented Jack Maple and went forward as Jack Maple. I think he was happiest in his life in the N.Y.P.D. It was just a golden time. He spent his whole life waiting to fix this Rubik's Cube. Finally someone came along and handed him the cube."

Maple still misses New York, that golden time, but he is no longer at sea. "I can live with focussing on New Orleans," Maple was saying. "I know what all the critics and the academics are saying. But all the naysayers are related to the people who thought the world was flat. This is a revolution. Remember how Hannibal used infantry and artillery together, or how Napoleon used rapid deployment? Those were revolutions, and so is what we're doing."

Around midnight, Miller and Maple proposed a trip up to Harlem to see Lonnie Youngblood play sax at another favorite hangout, Showman's Cafe, on 125th Street. Bratton, who cannot bear smoke and loud music, begged off and found a cab. His head would hit the pillow at about the moment Youngblood played the opening notes to "Stagger Lee." Miller hopped in his jeep and Maple and Brigid got in a Mustang and the race to Harlem was on.

As Maple steered through the night, he heard the blare of a police siren not far off.

"Hey, Brigid! Listen!" he said. "They're playing our song!" ♦

Crime Prevention's Bottom Line

Crime rates are going down and Washington is eager to take credit. The Crime Act of 1994 quadrupled funding for state and local crime prevention to more than \$3 billion per year, the highest levels ever.

Whether that funding increase caused the subsequent decline in violent crime is unclear, primarily because federal funds support hundreds of different programs. Some programs work, some don't, and some may even increase crime. But until Congress spends more to evaluate these programs, we can't tell.

That is the major conclusion of a report prepared by the University of Maryland's department of criminology and criminal justice at the request of the Justice De-

Rule of Law

By Lawrence W. Sherman

partment and mandated by Congress. By asking for a comprehensive scientific evaluation of the Justice Department's funding for local crime prevention, Congress framed a more basic question: How do we know what works? What's the bottom line?

Despite recent efforts to "reinvent government" with closer analogues to a bottom line, the more appropriate model for evaluating crime prevention programs may be the Food and Drug Administration's approach to evaluating drugs: Do field tests with human beings show this program to be safe and effective? There are already documented examples of how this approach is relevant to crime prevention:

- A University of Southern California evaluation of a gang prevention program

found that the program was holding the gang together and sustaining its violent crimes. When the program lost funding, the gang broke up and its crime rate declined.

- Controlled evaluations of mandatory arrests for misdemeanor domestic assaults show that while arrest deterred some assailants, arrest caused some other assailants to increase their violence against women.

Despite these research results, Congress has spent hundreds of millions of dollars a year on domestic violence and gang prevention programs that may actually cause more crime to occur. Whether Congress is aware of these bottom-line results is unclear. What is clear is the absence of a systematic process for measuring the effectiveness of crime prevention programs.

Some of the most popular crime prevention programs have already been tested—at great federal expense—and found ineffective. Yet their funding continues unabated. Military-style boot camps for juveniles, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) classes taught to schoolchildren by police officers, and neighborhood watch programs are but three examples of proven failures to which Congress gives millions of dollars annually.

More effective ways of treating juvenile offenders and preventing drug abuse have been demonstrated by careful evaluation research. Teaching juvenile offenders skills like reading works better than boot camps. Making schools more firm and consistent in overall discipline works better than D.A.R.E. But these strategies lack political advocates and lose out in the competition for funding.

The biggest danger from ignoring the bottom line of program evaluations is not

wasted funding; it is wasted opportunities. Some of the most effective crime prevention strategies known to science are not even on the national agenda for funding, let alone in congressional appropriations for the Justice Department. Two of these focus on a widely recognized cause of crime problems: early childhood development in the home.

In early infancy, home visits by nurses can produce major reductions in child abuse, which is a risk factor for later delinquency. Such visits are required in a number of Western nations. Hawaii offers it on a voluntary basis to all new parents, the majority of whom accept. Repeated visits for the first two

A recent RAND study suggests that home visits to infants may be more cost effective than prison.

years of life provide the greatest benefit to children at high risk. This is expensive, but the results are good. A recent RAND study suggests that home visits to infants may be more cost-effective than prison.

In preschool years, Head Start programs with home visits by teachers can prevent delinquency up through age 25. This clear effect has been found in several controlled tests started in the 1960s. Yet today, few Head Start programs are budgeted for teacher home visits, and Head Start itself lacks sufficient funds to meet demand.

The good news is that there is increasing evidence to support the largest single program in the 1994 Crime Act: putting 100,000 more police on the streets, funded

at \$1.4 billion in fiscal year 1996. National Institute of Justice studies show that an increased police presence reduces crime in high crime "hot spots," where most crime is concentrated. Full enforcement or "zero tolerance" policies in those hot spots may even reduce gun crime, the leading theory about New York City's free-falling homicide rate—now almost two-thirds lower than in the early 1990s.

The bad news is that much remains unknown about strategies for deploying police and the cost-effectiveness of different alternatives. Sudden increases in personnel provide an unprecedented opportunity for controlled tests of policing strategies, especially in high-crime poverty neighborhoods where policing often backfires. Funding this program without a substantial investment in comparing the impact of hundreds of different approaches to community policing is more than a wasted opportunity. It is comparable to the Eisenhower administration giving schoolchildren many different polio vaccines without testing any of them for safety and effectiveness.

The University of Maryland report recommends that 10% of all federal funding for local crime prevention be set aside for independent evaluations of the programs' impact, commissioned by an independent evaluation agency in the Justice Department. Several bills now pending in Congress use the same formula. Opponents of this idea say that evaluation money could be better spent on effective programs to fight crime. But until Congress invests more money in program evaluations, it will have no way of knowing which programs are effective.

Mr. Sherman chairs the department of criminology and criminal justice at the University of Maryland.

*Shane
Rundberg*

Don't Count the Revenue Yet

By JAMES GATTUSO

A key element of the budget balancing agreement is a plan for more auctions of communications-spectrum licenses by the Federal Communications Commission. Encouraged in part by the bidding in auctions held last year, Congress is counting on this plan to provide some \$20 billion in revenue by 2002. But the FCC's inability to collect promised revenues from last year's auction is increasing doubts that it can raise such a large sum.

The present crisis has its roots in the FCC's 1994 rules for a new "personal communications service," a new type of advanced cellular system. Six PCS licenses were scheduled for auction in each market. To encourage "diversity," two sets of frequencies were set aside as "entrepreneur blocks" for small businesses. Successful bidders for these licenses were given preferential payment terms, including six years of interest-only payments, with only 10% down.

As it turned out, many start-up entrepreneurs had little difficulty raising the initial capital that was needed, getting commitments from Wall Street, incumbent telecommunications firms, and even a large amount from Asian investors. With Uncle Sam's generous payment terms added to the mix, the bidding became a free-for-all. By the time the first entrepreneur block auction ended in spring of 1996, a mind-boggling \$10.2 billion had been bid. (The second auction, involving less spectrum, brought in just under \$1 billion.) This was almost three times the amount bid in the auctions for the so-called big guys. Almost half of this came from one company, NextWave Telecom, which bid \$4.2 billion.

Things might have worked out fine if the bull market for cell-phone investment had continued. But it didn't. The market is now flooded with competitors, so capital is hard to come by. Simply put, the bidders made a bet and lost.

Making things worse, the FCC decided to crack down on foreign investment, invoking an antiquated law limiting such investment to 25%. As a result, NextWave

had to restructure its financing plan, and it had to wait more than 10 months before it actually got its licenses. Now it and several other bidders have told the FCC they can't keep up with its payments.

This puts the FCC in a real pickle. It looks like there is no way it will get the full \$10.2 billion as scheduled. And if bidders declare bankruptcy—as one already has—the courts may tie up the frequencies in litigation for years.

Excessive leniency, however, would be unfair to firms that lost in the original bidding and would hurt the credibility of the auction process. A good compromise solution might be a deal in which the licenses are re-auctioned and the licensees forfeit what they've paid so far, but are relieved of any other obligations.

More important, the FCC should ensure that this sort of fiasco never happens again. The basic problem here is that, in addition to being an auctioneer, the federal government helped finance the bids. The FCC should insist that all future auctions be held on a cash basis, leaving financing (and risks) with the private capital markets.

At the same time, the FCC and Congress should make sure it doesn't impose unnecessary obstacles to raising the necessary cash. Any foreign investment limits not already barred by the World Trade Organization should be eliminated immediately.

Policymakers should remember that despite the recent problems, spectrum license auctions have still been a tremendous success. Money aside, the process has allowed the FCC to get more spectrum into private hands faster than at any time in history. But to continue this success, and to live up to the expectations of this budget agreement, the commission should borrow a page from the movie "Jerry Maguire." After every auction, the FCC should demand: "Show me the money."

Mr. Gattuso is vice president for policy development at Citizens for a Sound Economy Foundation.

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