



Department of Justice

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1. INTRODUCTION

Any discussion of the problems facing the nation's criminal justice system must begin with this question: Just how bad is crime in the United States today? And the answer, indicated by every meaningful yardstick available, is that it is much more serious than most citizens realize.

The FBI says there were nearly 4.5 million serious crimes reported in 1968 -- a 17 percent increase over the previous year.

Since every one of these crimes has at least one victim we should examine those figures carefully. They include 1.8 million burglaries, 1.2 million larcenies of \$50 or more, 777,000 auto thefts, 282,000 aggravated assaults, 261,000 robberies, 31,000 forcible rapes, and 13,000 murders.

That is an awesome toll of lives lost; lives shattered; bodies and minds damaged, perhaps beyond recall; property losses from which families and firms may never recover.

Those are the reported crimes. Many experts feel they represent only the visible part of the iceberg. In-depth studies show, for instance, that there may be twice as

many aggravated assaults and larcenies than are reported to authorities.

As the facts show, something has gone terribly wrong in America, particularly in the criminal justice system -- the police, the courts, and corrections.

Police do not prevent enough crime and they do not apprehend enough suspected offenders. Courts are so clogged -- and so under-staffed -- that felony defendants frequently are not brought to trial until a year or two after arrest.

Corrections is failing in its great tasks of protecting society while rehabilitating offenders, for some studies indicate that perhaps as many as 70 percent of persons released from prison go on to commit new crimes.

But this is not the fault of the criminal justice system alone. In many states they have been trying. But the police, courts, and corrections agencies have been starved for decades -- starved of resources, of manpower, and of genuine public support.

As you know, the major burden for law enforcement and criminal justice rests with state and local governments,

and should remain there. You must expend most of the energy and most of the money for needed improvements and reforms. you, have needed help for a long time. And, now, for the first time in years, this Administration is going to make sure that your plight is no longer unheeded.

There is a legitimate and needed federal role, and it is being carried out by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) -- which was created by Congress in June 1968 in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act. The LEAA program gives to the federal government the role of a partner with state and local governments, not a dictator.

Through financial and technical assistance, LEAA helps the state and local governments to improve their own criminal justice systems. It leaves the basic responsibilities for law enforcement where our traditions and laws require they must be -- at the local level.

2. LEAA 1ST YEAR

In the first year of the LEAA program, ending last June 30, the agency's budget was small -- only \$63 million. But an enormous amount was accomplished. Before the LEAA program began, criminal justice planning and programs were

badly fragmented. Most states had no thorough criminal justice planning agencies creating state-wide improvement programs. Cities and counties and states often went their own separate ways. Police, courts, and corrections frequently had little or no contact, even in the same city or state. All that is now changing.

In one short year, with the aid of LEAA funds, every state has created a state-wide criminal justice planning agency. In cooperation with their city and county governments, you have drafted plans for state-wide law enforcement improvements. And now, with the aid of LEAA action grants, you are initiating those reforms on an ever increasing scale.

In submitting their first-year action plans, the states were remarkably candid about their shortcomings in the law enforcement field. And what they reported gives added emphasis and meaning to the crime statistics I mentioned earlier.

One state reported that from midnight to 8 a.m. on the average night, only about 30 policemen were actually on duty in the whole state.

In another, sheriff's deputies work up to 80 hours a week for a salary of \$425 a month.

In still another, the starting salaries for some policemen are \$165 a month.

Only 72 hours of recruit training for new policemen is required in one state -- an unacceptable amount when we consider that the average barber has some 1,500 hours of formal training.

A number of states have no state-wide or region-wide system of emergency communications.

One major state's police teletype network is connected to only 125 police departments out of a total of more than 1,100.

LEAA reported recently that police experts feel that many major police departments count themselves lucky if they have more than 50 percent of the total force assigned to police patrol -- a shocking fact when we consider that large, well-trained patrol forces can have the most immediate impact on street crime.

Two years ago, the National Crime Commission said that on the average night in a city of a half million population, there will be only 65 policemen on patrol duty.

All of these things are terribly inadequate. But to the great credit of state and local governments, they reported those things in their state plans -- and they reported more.

In the area of courts, a number of states said that defendants in felony cases often are not brought to trial until as much as two years after arrest. Such delays deny justice -- for both society and the defendant. In many areas, prosecutors have such enormous workloads they often are forced to prepare cases in minutes, rather than days.

One state said its justices of the peace hold court in pool rooms.

Another said its lower court judges do not even have to be lawyers.

These findings are especially meaningful when we consider that most citizens have either their first or only contact with the court system in the lower courts. One state reported that a major contributor to huge backlogs of cases was its system for retrieving court dockets manually -- under a basic method set up 137 years ago.

In the area of corrections, the states again were brutally candid in examining their shortcomings. They included these things:

- * Boys as young as 14 who were confined to adult prisons where there was little or no separation of the mentally ill, the criminally sophisticated, homosexuals;
- * a state prison system that permits inmates to serve as guards, armed with both rifles and pistols, prisons where rehabilitation programs were either rudimentary or non-existent;
- * a badly-crowded county jail where prisoners had to sleep on mats atop welded cages that served as cells;
- * a jail where heating was so inadequate that a teenage boy burned his shoes in an effort to keep warm;
- * and a state that said most of its juvenile offenders were put into adult jails under conditions that would be unfit for the confinement of animals.

Let me emphasize again that these shortcomings in state and local criminal justice systems were reported by state and local governments themselves, in the action plans submitted to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration.

It is to their great credit that they did so, for no meaningful reform and improvement programs can begin if we avert our gaze from the realities.

But the states did much more in their action plans. They drafted programs to begin the complex task of solving these shortcomings and making their criminal justice systems function effectively. This is a promising beginning in the nation-wide program of reducing crime and increasing both safety and justice.

Each law enforcement improvement plan now being carried out by the 50 states is comprehensive -- with special emphasis on law enforcement. After all, the police are our first line of defense and they must be given immediate attention. Major emphasis is being placed on such things as training of law enforcement officers, prevention and control of civil disorders, and the control of organized crime.

Let me cite, first of all, a few of the general priorities for some of the states -- and I emphasize that there are many priorities in each of the states.

Alabama will modernize police departments and conduct wodespread juvenile delinquency prevention programs.

California is allocating one-third of its action grant -- or about \$800,000 -- for prevention and control of civil disorders, with heavy emphasis on police-community relations.

A state-wide criminal justice teletype network is being created by Alaska.

Corrections improvement programs are receiving one-fifth of New Mexico's action grant funds.

Illinois is developing new programs to control organized crime and for public education programs concerning narcotics.

Crime laboratory facilities are a priority in Hawaii.

Georgia is beginning a new program of work release for prison inmates.

Missouri is strengthening its prosecutors' offices.

Maine is using half of its action grant to improve police training and selection.

Michigan is spending one-tenth of its \$1 million grant to train juvenile court staffs.

Colorado is creating new police communications systems that will serve a large number of departments.

And several states are starting programs to automate their court docket systems.

The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act specifies that LEAA can award 15 percent of the total action funds at its own discretion for urgent and high-priority anti-crime and criminal justice projects. With the limited funds available in the first year of the program, LEAA used about one-fourth of these discretionary funds for grants of about \$100,000 each to the nation's 11 largest cities -- a total of \$1.1 million.

These projects are far-ranging, and are designed by the cities themselves to make a major impact on major problems they face.

For instance, Baltimore is more than matching the LEAA grant to purchase a helicopter for use in a variety of anti-crime patrols.

Cleveland is setting up a special 18-member police group whose work will range from special anti-crime street patrols to police-community relations work.

A new kind of electronic burglary alarm system -- which signals specially-equipped police cars on permanent patrol in a major business area-- will be put into operation by Detroit.

Philadelphia has two major projects: To reduce violence by street gangs and develop a police communications system using closed-circuit television.

New York City plans to create a new system of high-speed transmission of fingerprints that might save up to 100,000 police man-hours a year.

Dallas is starting a program to prevent first-time juvenile offenders from becoming crime repeaters.

Two cities -- Chicago and Houston -- are creating treatment and rehabilitation programs for chronic alcoholics who comprise about one-third of all arrests made each year in the nation.

Milwaukee is setting up broad programs for police-community relations and improved police training.

Other LEAA discretionary funds also were used in fiscal 1969 for programs of benefit to police and criminal justice generally. A \$600,000 grant was given to six states to help develop the prototype of a computerized criminal justice statistics system. It is hoped the project will be a major part in development by LEAA of a National Criminal Justice Statistics and Information Center which would enable each

state -- at long last -- to compile comprehensive statistics not only on offenses and offenders but statistics on courts and corrections as well.

Organized crime is one of the most corrosive law enforcement problems existing today, and LEAA made major strides in this area. Five states received a \$174,000 grant to develop the prototype of a computerized system for storage and retrieval of organized crime intelligence data. Technical assistance for the project is being furnished by the Organized Crime and Racketeering Section of the Department of Justice. When it is completed, the design of the system will be made available for all of the states -- and LEAA will furnish both technical and financial assistance to put it into operation. A \$100,000 grant also was given to develop an organized crime intelligence program to combat that growing activity in the Caribbean area.

LEAA has set up technical assistance divisions which furnish teams of experts to state and local law enforcement in such vital areas as organized crime, police operations and management, corrections and rehabilitation, prevention and control of civil disorders, and the courts.

LEAA funds were used, for instance, for a series of conferences for the police chiefs of 150 major cities on civil disorders and other major programs. The Organized Crime Programs Division has developed the first series of nationwide training conferences for local policemen and prosecutors on how to create really effective organized crime programs.

One of the most urgent needs in law enforcement is for research into new and more effective ways to prevent crime, apprehend more offenders, and rehabilitate those who have been convicted. In large measure, the criminal justice system operates in this latter half of the 20th century with 19th century techniques.

Research in criminal justice has been skimpy and incomplete. But this shortcoming is being corrected by the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, the research and development arm of LEAA. Even though its budget in fiscal 1969 was very small, the National Institute began a series of valuable research programs and activities.

One priority is to develop equipment badly needed by police -- including small, inexpensive radios that every patrolman could carry on a beat or when he is away from the

patrol car. Another is a night-vision device, of particular relevance in anti-crime patrols.

Other research programs include how to speed the arrival time of police at the crime scene; ways to enhance training of policemen; ways to prevent more crime through anti-burglary and anti-theft devices; how to best utilize police patrols; how to predict where robberies and other crimes are most likely to occur.

With a larger budget in the current fiscal year, the Institute will place its research emphasis on programs to reduce assaults and other street crimes, devices and programs to make homes and business firms as nearly burglar-proof as possible; how to better control traffic in narcotics and dangerous drugs; new ways to prevent and control civil disorders, and how to effectively reduce organized crime.

In short, the Institute's work is designed to bring 20th century technology and science fully to bear on the problems of 20th century crime. This work must be given an absolute priority in the years ahead. If we have the technology to put a man on the moon, science can also help to make the streets safe again back here on earth.

In its first year of operations in fiscal 1969, LEAA's \$63 million budget was used this way: \$19 million for planning grants, \$29 million for action grants, \$3 million for research and development, \$6.5 million for college degree studies by criminal justice personnel, \$2.5 million for administration, and \$3 million for FBI programs.

The budget obviously was too small to meet all of the nation's criminal justice needs. But Congress has just approved a budget of \$268 million for LEAA in the current fiscal year, and these funds will make a substantial impact.

For instance, California's grant will increase from \$ 2.3 million in fiscal 1969 to \$17.2 million in fiscal 1970. New York will increase from \$2.2 million to \$16.3 million; Missouri from \$564,000, to \$4.1 million; Florida from \$737,000 to \$5.5 million.

The action funds for fiscal 1970 -- those funds slated for actual, on-the-spot improvement programs -- will be about \$214 million. Of that total, some \$182 million will go in

block grants to the states, and LEAA will have discretion to award the remaining \$33 million directly to high-priority projects.

A large share is scheduled for direct aid to metropolitan areas where crime is of such terrifying proportions that citizens lock themselves in at night and are attacked in broad daylight on the streets.

One of the keys to meaningful improvements in the criminal justice system is to have planning and action programs created on a broad scale. The logical unit for this work is the state.

Under the LEAA program, 85 percent of the action funds are given to the states in block grants. They are required, in turn, to make at least 75 percent of the money available to units of local government or combinations of those units. Where criminal justice planning and action were fragmented before, they are comprehensive now. Each state, working in cooperation with its cities and counties, created state-wide law enforcement improvement plans in fiscal 1969. They now are all at work on their second-year plans, which will be even more comprehensive and sophisticated.

Some persons have suggested that the block grant concept be altered substantially, with only half of the action funds going to the states and the other half going directly to the cities. Such a change, if carried out, would set the LEAA program -- and that of the states -- back immeasurably.

It would mean, in essence, that much of the planning and coordination set up so painstakingly would have to be scrapped. It would be a return to a fragmented system. It would return to a system of federal government dictatorship.

There are, after all, some 18,000 cities and 3,000 counties in this country. Altering the block grant program would mean that cities and counties and states might well quit talking to each other, and once again start going their own separate ways, to the detriment of all.

In a very short time, the block grant approach already has produced substantial results. In one short year, we have gone from an almost complete lack of coordination to a point where state-wide improvement projects are underway in every state. To change courses now would be totally unproductive. The block grant concept must be given a chance to work.

In fact, it already is working.

Another key to meaningful, effective, law enforcement improvements is the achievement of levels of cooperation never before attained in this country. They must occur in two areas: In the criminal justice system itself; that is among police, courts, and corrections officials; and among local and state governments and a variety of their elected and appointed officials.

The LEAA program already has brought police, courts, and corrections officials together -- sometimes for the first time. They not only are members of state and regional boards planning criminal justice improvements throughout the country. Their agencies themselves are now beginning to cooperate in more fruitful ways. But the range and quality of this cooperation must be greater. Let me cite just a few examples.

Police, for instance, often have detailed information about offenders sent into the corrections system. But it frequently is not made available to corrections agencies. On the other hand, corrections officials frequently do not seek help from police in setting up work-release or community-based corrections programs, when police better than

anyone else know a community's strengths and weaknesses and could furnish invaluable assistance.

Courts frequently have little or no idea of problems facing police and corrections agencies. And police and corrections often do not know very much about problems facing the courts. The criminal justice system has become compartmentalized, to the detriment of each of its major components.

Greater cooperation also is required -- it is an absolute necessity -- among state and local governments. Current conflicts about block grants should be shelved -- and state officials and local officials should work together as never before. Continued rivalries can only set back the great programs now underway to make law enforcement more effective. They should be discarded -- whether they are sectional, regional, or partisan in nature.

Many mayors and county administrators are naturally concerned that as large a share of LEAA funds as possible be given to cities and urban areas with major crime problems. I appreciate their concern and I agree that the cities must be given major aid. That also is the intent of the Safe Streets

Act. In fiscal 1969, many states gave much more than the required 75 percent share of their block grants to local governments. I am confident that enhanced aid will be the rule in the states during the current fiscal year.

Governors, state legislatures, and state planning agencies must bend all of their efforts to putting LEAA funds to their best use in high-crime areas. At the same time, local governments must make their needs known to the states, and then cooperate fully in the programs which are designed for maximum impact. One reason crime has made such inroads in this country is that government efforts have been so fragmented. High levels of cooperation can achieve remarkable results of direct benefit to our people.

Every public official at the state and local level, every criminal justice official, should ask himself what he would do if there were no federal assistance program in existence now. Even without federal aid, some progress could be made in a relatively short time. Greater effort costs no money. Greater cooperation costs no money. And courage costs no money.

It certainly takes courage to discard old ways and

long-established patterns that no longer bring results. Organized crime cannot exist without a measure of public corruption. I believe that such corruption among police and public officials could be rooted out quickly if cities and police departments would begin cleaning house today. Find the corrupt officials and then prosecute them and send them to prison.

A major -- and much-avoided -- law enforcement problem today is in police relations with minority groups. We have known for decades that these problems existed. Yet, even now some police departments have no police-community relations programs at all, and others merely operate them as public relations programs. But we must build bridges across the no-man's land that exists in so many parts of our country today. Many members of minority groups may not dislike policemen because there is a white face -- or a black face -- in a blue uniform. Their resentment may spring from their deeply-held belief that the police are not protecting them adequately against crime.

It is an absolute necessity that police give full and equal protection to members of minority groups, especially

in the central cities, for they are victims of crime out of all proportion to their numbers. There is no place in the LEAA program -- in any federal law enforcement program -- for those who have dreams of repression, or for those who are oracles of mindless fear.

The LEAA program is not an enforcement program -- it makes no arrests, conducts no investigations. It is designed to aid local and state criminal justice agencies with funds and technical assistance so that they can do a better job. Neither does the LEAA program deal with the economic or social causes of crime. Those are the responsibilities of other programs now underway at both the federal and state level.

But the LEAA program is deeply involved in efforts to make the criminal justice system function more effectively at every level of government. Your State and local officials in every part of this nation must respond. Despite all of the grisly facts about law enforcement failures, I am convinced that some public officials still do not have a sense of real urgency about the depth of the problems. They must develop it -- and right now.

There are examples of mayors of adjoining cities who will not cooperate with each other, mayors and governors who are uncooperative, governors and state attorneys general who will not work together. All of this must stop.

Crime and its consequences are too deadly for public officials to indulge in the dubious pleasure of partisan or sectional bickering. The LEAA program was designed by Congress to be bi-partisan, and that is how it must be carried out if it is to achieve meaningful results.

There are no magic formulas to invoke in controlling crime. It will take hard work and unmatched resolve from public officials. It must be a resolve that lasts beyond tomorrow's headlines. Our task is to inform the public fully on the magnitude of the problems and then carry out programs to solve them.

It will require money -- a great deal of money. Both the officials and the public must be prepared to expend it if they really believe in progress.

But simply having more of the same in law enforcement won't work, for what we have isn't working now. We must have dynamic new approaches and concepts. We must have

dynamic new approaches and concepts. We must have quality -- especially quality in police personnel. Our moral commitment to progress and justice has to be lasting. No one knows how long it may take to begin reducing crime across the country. If we waste more time, it may never be reduced.

On one thing I am certain. This business of reducing crime and making a safer, more just America is not a charade, is not some academic discussion. It is real -- as real as a tombstone in a cemetery. There can be no real progress in any important area of our national life -- no progress for anybody -- if crime and its effects continue to flourish.