

Committee on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice

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A Strategy for Change: A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM FOR



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Committee

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INTRODUCTION

The most understandable mood into which many Americans have been plunged by crime is one of frustration and bewilderment. For 'crime' is not a single simple phenomenon that can be examined, analyzed, and described in one piece. It occurs in every part of the country and in every stratum of society. Its practitioners and its victims are people of all ages, incomes, and backgrounds. Its trends are difficult to ascertain. Its causes are legion. Its cures are speculative and controversial. An examination of any single kind of crime, let alone of 'crime in America,' raises a myriad of issues of the utmost complexity.

(President's Crime Commission, *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society.*)

The "complexity" of this nation's crime situation has not diminished since the President's Crime Commission presented its strategy for change to the President and to the nation in 1967. If anything, the problems have grown more complex, and the need for solutions has grown more urgent. In fact, crime and public fear and misunderstanding about crime may constitute the major domestic problem now facing America.

And, yet, the response on all levels of government and in every community has been limited, ad hoc, and piecemeal. The agencies and institutions of the law enforcement and criminal justice system have not been allowed to keep pace with present-day needs. This must change, and the change must go beyond the emotionalism and the too simple solutions of the past.

For the first time in the history of our country, a major federal commitment to crime control has been made. This should provide each state with the stimulus to develop a comprehensive program for the reduction and control of crime. The federal commitment was made by the enactment of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 and the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act of 1968, both of which call for federal funding for State and local participation in this national strategy against crime.

The Commonwealth has responded both to the increasing crime rate and to the new federal program with the creation and development of its own criminal justice State planning agency, the Governor's Committee on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Criminal Justice.

Although Federal and State funding for this first year is limited, the resources provide an important beginning. And we must respond -- at both State and local levels -- in a unified and comprehensive attempt to plan a program for the reduction, control and prevention of crime and delinquency. It must be a comprehensive and unified program:

because crime is auto theft, drug addiction, embezzlement, public intoxication, arson and price-fixing, as well as riots and murder, and

November 30, 1968

therefore, finds its way into all communities in the Commonwealth, regardless of size, economic level, and social situation;

— because the problem of crime is the concern of thousands of agencies, public and private, State and local, throughout the Commonwealth;

— because the research, plans, funds, and action required to reduce crime in Massachusetts are massive, and beyond the scope of any one jurisdiction. The united efforts of federal, State and local forces are needed. In order to describe in greater detail the Federal Crime Control Program and to learn more about the local problems and needs in crime control, the Committee has convened the November 30 Federal Funds for Crime Control Conference.

“Together we must chart a national strategy against crime.”

(President Johnson, October, 1966.)

THE FOUNDATION FOR A NATIONAL STRATEGY

The President's Crime Commission set the tone and strategy of the Federal Government's program to reduce crime and improve criminal justice and law enforcement. For the first time a comprehensive study of crime in America was undertaken. The Commission made two hundred recommendations for changes which, if implemented, could affect the way we think about and deal with crime. Possibly the most significant finding of the President's Crime Commission is that if crime is to be controlled, it must be controlled by State and local governments.

Almost every recommendation in this report is a recommendation to State or local governments, the governments that by and large administer criminal justice in America.

The report recommends comprehensive planning by State and local governments, and, consequently, the construction of a State or city planning agency “specifically responsible for planning improvements in crime prevention and control and encouraging their implementation.”

The concept of a criminal justice planning agency is new. The philosophy behind it is simple and practical. The reduction of crime within a state is the long-range goal of innumerable public and private, state and local agencies. In a system as vast as a State's criminal justice system, coordination among agencies rarely exists. Plans and activities overlap or contradict one another. An experimental project is repeated; funds are wasted; significant research is overlooked. Thus, the President's Crime Commission concluded that a central agency, representative of and expert in all parts of the criminal justice and law enforcement process, can evaluate the entire state and local system, coordinate the efforts of all departments and suggest improvements — more objectively and efficiently.

The plans and actions, organized by such an agency, which must eventually cover all local and state law enforcement and criminal justice

institutions demand massive funds. A portion of these funds should come from the federal government, as the President's Commission stated.

Although day by day criminal administration is primarily a State and local responsibility, the Federal Government's contribution to the national effort against crime is crucial . . . The President's Commission believes . . . that the Federal government can make a dramatic new contribution against crime by greatly expanding its support of the agencies of justice in the states and in the cities.

The Commission noted that this funding should not interfere with State and local responsibility but should be "consistent with scrupulous respect for — and indeed strengthening of — that responsibility." To this end, and concurrent with the Report of the President's Commission, the President submitted two major legislative proposals to Congress: the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act and the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act, both of which were enacted during 1968.

Placing the same emphasis on State and local unity and responsibility as the Commission's report did, both Acts provide direct grants to each of the fifty states for the administration and development of their own strategy for change — their own comprehensive plan — and their subsequent design of action programs to implement the plan.

President Johnson has called the Crime Control and Safe Streets Act "the cornerstone of the federal anti-crime effort to assist local law enforcement." (Because the Federal appropriation for the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Act for this fiscal year was so small, only the funding provisions of Crime Control and Safe Streets Act will be described.)

The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 authorized expenditures of \$100,000,000 for this fiscal year (July 1, 1968 — June 30, 1969) and second-year expenditures of between \$300,000,000 and \$500,000,000. Of the \$100,000,000 authorized for this fiscal year, Congress appropriated only \$69,000,000 — \$19,000,000 to be distributed to the fifty State recipient agencies for planning purposes, and \$29,000,000 to be distributed to the fifty State recipient agencies for use in action programs.

Of the \$19,000,000 available to States for first-year planning purposes, Massachusetts has been allotted \$464,500. In addition to this planning money and after the Department of Justice has approved the initial comprehensive plan, the Commonwealth will be eligible for an allotment from the \$29,000,000 appropriated for action programs — a total of \$665,550.

The Crime Control Act requires a comprehensive State plan as the basis for issuing both types of direct grants.

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS:

— a detailed description of the existing law enforcement and

criminal justice systems in the state (the police, the courts, corrections, juvenile delinquency) and existing personnel, procedures, programs, and budgets;

— a detailed description of the available resources and the agencies and institutions related to or which might be utilized by the criminal justice system;

— an evaluation of how these existing systems compare with national standards (including the President's Commission recommendations) and with standards of other States;

— an evaluation of the needs and the goals of the law enforcement and criminal justice system;

— a strategy for change;

— specific programs to improve the capability of the system to control crime.

A comprehensive plan by its very nature is never complete — as soon as one plan is devised and even a single one of its recommendations is implemented, the comprehensive plan can and must change. And the needs of shifting and expanding cities and towns will demand constant modifications in a plan that must reflect the changes in the present system and must predict future needs.

Thus, the core of the national strategy for crime control consists of a State planning agency, substantial federal, state, and local resources, comprehensive plans and actions, and the assigning of roles to all levels of governments, roles that demand a major commitment to a strategy for change.

THE COMMONWEALTH'S RESPONSE

The Commonwealth has been working out its assigned role for two years now. Even prior to the report of the President's Commission, Governor John A. Volpe established the Committee on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice, in September, 1966, to act as his advisor on law enforcement and to plan the Commonwealth's strategy for crime control.

And, prior to passage of the Crime Control and Safe Streets Act and the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act, the Committee had begun accumulating information for a comprehensive crime control plan for Massachusetts.

Attorney General Elliot Richardson chairs the Committee which consists primarily of local and State public officials concerned with criminal justice. Specialized advisory subcommittees assist the Committee.

Discovering and implementing more effective ways to control crime in the Commonwealth is the Committee's ultimate goal. This involves:

— developing and revising comprehensive law enforcement and criminal justice plans;

— providing technical assistance to units of general local government

- for developing crime control planning and action projects;
- administering grant programs from public and private agencies;
 - allocating funds to local agencies for the development of planning and action projects;
 - designing and conducting programs and demonstration projects to reduce crime;
 - conducting research, collecting statistics and other data;
 - disseminating law enforcement and criminal justice information;
 - drafting legislation to improve State and local criminal justice systems.

In preparation for developing a crime control plan for the Commonwealth, the Committee undertook a continuing study of the State's criminal justice and law enforcement system, a small part of which was described in six reports submitted to the Governor and General Court. The findings were significant, and they indicated that new resources were desperately needed to control crime in the Commonwealth.

The Committee's findings to date indicate that the formal criminal justice system – the police, the district attorneys, the courts, and the correctional agencies – lack both the resources and the personnel to control crime and to apprehend and rehabilitate offenders.

Further, the Committee stated:

No responsible business concern would operate with as little information regarding its success or failure as delinquency prevention and control programs do in Massachusetts. Without reliable and up-to-date information, proper planning cannot be accomplished, and without proper planning, wasteful and ineffective programs are inevitable.

Specifically, the details indicating weaknesses and needs, accumulated by the Committee, were overwhelming in number and scope within the fields of police, juvenile delinquency, science and technology, crime laboratories, criminal law, and law enforcement information needs. And those details were to constitute only a beginning.

In June of 1968, Governor John A. Volpe designated the Committee on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice to administer the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act for the Commonwealth. The Governor also designated the Committee the planning agency for the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act of 1968.

This new federal funding program has allowed the Committee on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice to expand and intensify its study of the State's criminal justice and law enforcement system.

To fulfill its responsibility, the Committee has been compiling information on every facet of the system, and it has been evaluating

other systems in operation throughout the country. The Committee has hired and trained a full-time professional staff and has compiled an adequate and up-to-date library of the most current materials on criminal justice system. In its endeavor to prepare a comprehensive plan and comprehensive strategy for action for the Commonwealth, the staff of the Committee has traveled throughout the state, talked with representatives of public agencies concerned with crime, surveyed law enforcement and criminal justice agencies on both the State and local levels, contacted mayors and selectmen to discuss in detail their problems and needs, requested and received proposals from police chiefs throughout the Commonwealth, met with representatives of such organizations as the Massachusetts League of Cities and Towns and the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association, and toured and received suggestions for changes from various of the community-based and private-agency facilities in the Commonwealth. This Committee is attempting to develop a plan that is exact and exhaustive at the same time that it is dynamic and flexible. It will constitute the first comprehensive plan for the improvement of the Commonwealth's criminal justice system ever undertaken.

The Committee's progress to date goes beyond that of planning agencies in other states. Consequently, the Department of Justice has asked the Committee to prepare guidelines to assist the other forty-nine states in the development of their plans.

The Committee appears to be well qualified to receive planning and to coordinate program funds under federal crime control legislation which is now pending. In fact, the work of the Massachusetts Committee may well serve as a model for other states.

(Courtney Evans, Acting Director Office of Law Enforcement Assistance)

However, much more remains to be done in the preparation of a plan that must reflect the problems, needs and priorities of local communities throughout Massachusetts. Obviously, a plan designed at the State level with no regional or local involvement cannot be called "comprehensive."

To insure that the State strategy for crime control reflects the new programs and approaches developed by the local communities, the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 has designated that certain portions of the funds allocated to the Commonwealth's Committee on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice be reserved for planning at the local level.

FUNDS FOR LOCAL PLANNING AND ACTION PROGRAMS

Of the \$464,500 received for planning for the first year under the provisions of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968,

40 per cent or a total of \$185,800 must be granted by the Committee to units of general and local government for their participation in the statewide planning effort. Although available funds are limited for the first year, applications for planning grants may now be made to the Committee, and planning grants will be awarded by the Committee as soon after January 1, 1969 as is feasible. Application forms and guidelines will be prepared as soon as the Committee receives its planning funds for fiscal year 1969. More information on the availability of these funds will be provided during the Conference on November 30.

A planning grant would enable a community or a group of communities to study their own crime problems and criminal justice systems, set their priorities, and plan improvement projects for their communities.

The Committee realizes that many communities who wish to engage in criminal justice planning will be unable to do so, either due to the limited funding available for such efforts or due to the shortage in qualified personnel to undertake such a project. The Committee may, therefore, provide each of the communities in the Commonwealth with the most current and up-to-date information on criminal justice planning on a continuing basis. The Committee will also, upon request, provide technical assistance to local communities through use of the Committee's trained staff specialists wherever feasible and warranted. And, the Committee will undertake research and action projects which are beyond the capacity of local agencies.

The comprehensive plan must lead to comprehensive action if the Committee's goal to reduce crime in Massachusetts is to be reached. The second phase of the program provided by the Crime Control and Safe Streets Act is the action program phase which will commence upon approval of the first-year comprehensive plan for the Commonwealth by the Department of Justice. The types of programs to be funded by the Committee must be specified in the comprehensive plan. Of course, since the plan will be a changing document, new action programs and innovative demonstration projects suggested by local communities after the first-year plan is submitted to the Justice Department will be incorporated into the second-year plan and might be submitted from time to time to the Department of Justice for its approval.

Of the \$665,550 available to the Commonwealth for first-year action programs, 75 per cent or \$449,162 must be granted by the Committee to local units of government for action programs and demonstration projects. Suggestions for these programs have already been received from many of the local communities, and additional proposals for action will be received at the November 30 Conference. Once the comprehensive plan is approved by the Department of Justice, the Committee will establish guidelines, priorities, and specific grant specifications, and will forward these to each unit of local government along with the appropriate application forms for action grants.

General guidelines for funding of action programs have already been outlined in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act. Between 50 and 75 per cent of the cost of action programs falling within the following seven categories and consistent with the comprehensive plan may be funded by the Committee on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice:

- (1) Public Protection — "To improve and strengthen law enforcement and reduce crime in public and private place."
- (2) Recruitment and training of law enforcement personnel.
- (3) Public crime prevention education.
- (4) Construction of buildings and other physical facilities.
- (5) Programs to combat organized crime.
- (6) Programs for the prevention, detection, and control of riots and other violent civil disorders.
- (7) The recruiting, organization, training, and education of community service officers.

The action program phase of the crime control program will be discussed in greater detail at the Conference. However, there are two exceptions to the prerequisite of a comprehensive plan for the release of the action program grants. These should be mentioned at this time. Last summer, Congress decided that States and local communities might need a portion of the funds allocated for action programs dealing with the prevention, detection, and control of riots and other civil disorders. The Department of Justice approved the Committee's initial plan for the use of these funds; the cities and towns in the Commonwealth were notified of the availability of these funds and were instructed to submit applications to the Committee on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice by October 11, 1968.

The Committee's procedures for the review and award of grants is presently in operation, and awards should be made quite soon. Of the \$117,450 received by the Commonwealth for the prevention of riots and civil disorders, \$88,087 is to be made available to local communities, subject to the special plan specifications designed by the Committee and approved by the Department of Justice.

The second exception to the prerequisite of a comprehensive plan is for those funds (15 per cent of the \$29,000,000 allocated for action programs) which the Department of Justice is allowed to retain and award at its own discretion to national, regional, State, or local agencies which propose a program which might be of particular national significance.

THE CONTINUING INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

In order to obtain the maximum amount of federal funds for Massachusetts as quickly as possible this year, the Committee on Law

Enforcement and the Administration of Criminal Justice intends to submit its initial comprehensive plan to the Department of Justice well in advance of the final deadline of June 19, 1969. The Committee has solicited the views of representatives of law enforcement and criminal justice agencies throughout the Commonwealth to insure that the initial plan reflects local thinking. These representatives have contributed enormously to the planning process. But in order to gain an even clearer understanding of the problems and needs confronting the local units of government and in order to describe in more detail the crime control programs discussed in this brochure, the Committee on Law Enforcement has called the Conference on Federal Funds for Crime Control. Time has been set aside during the afternoon of the Conference for workshops to determine the problems which confront the various communities.

Thus, the initial comprehensive plan will incorporate the suggestions from local communities received by the Committee throughout the Summer and Fall as well as the issues and problems raised at the Conference on November 30. With intensive local community participation, Massachusetts should be one of the first states to receive action grants for 1969.

But this is only the beginning of local participation in this crime control program — this is only the beginning of a long-term commitment on the part of the Federal Government and the State Government to assist local communities in developing programs for the prevention and control of crime and delinquency.

CONCLUSION

The strategy for a comprehensive crime control program for the Commonwealth outlined in this brochure constitutes the initial stage, and it is particularly important that this funding program be put into the proper perspective from the outset. Considering the enormity of the crime problem and the needs of the law enforcement and criminal justice systems in the Commonwealth, it is quite obvious that the amounts of money available to the Commonwealth for first-year planning and action programs are small indeed. But these funds are an important beginning and they initiate the significant first step in a long-needed and long-overdue coordinated attack on crime.

In the past, there has been little organized effort to take full advantage of Federal funding. But the existence of crime in our towns and cities hits home more directly than other domestic problems. Therefore, the present Federal program so clearly designed to stimulate action to combat the crime problem should find widespread recognition and support among the Commonwealth's citizens. And, indeed, it must find this widespread support to be effective.

One of the main purposes behind the President's Crime Commission, the Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, and this State Conference on Crime Control is to set the tone and provide the impetus

for practical, precise, and comprehensive action within this program. And the action will be essentially local level action; its evolution will be strengthened by a foundation of Federal, State, and local unity; and it should generate criminal justice improvement and crime reduction in the cities, towns, and communities of Massachusetts. “. . . There are no easy answers . . . Controlling crime in America is an endeavor that will be slow and hard and costly. But America can control crime if it will.” (President’s Crime Commission, *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society*)

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