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**LORD, HOW DARE WE CELEBRATE?**

**Practical Policy Reform in Delinquency Prevention and Youth Investment**

**Testimony Before the Committee on Education and Labor  
Subcommittee on Human Resources  
At the Reauthorization Hearings for  
The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention**

**United States House of Representatives**

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*Lord, how dare we celebrate? [With] twenty-three million Americans functionally illiterate ... more than forty million Americans without health care .... young African-American boys killing other young African American boys over failed drug transactions ... [a recession in which] nobody is even sure whether their job is secure ... Lord how dare we celebrate?*

Reverend Bernice King  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Memorial  
Atlanta, January 17, 1992

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee. My understanding is that the Subcommittee is interested in a broad view of options on juvenile and youth policy.

According, I will assess present federal policy on high risk youth, suggest reforms, and specify budget levels for new initiatives.

### **Trickle-Down Policy Has Failed**

Over the last decade in the U.S., and now in the 1990s, federal Executive Branch policy has been "trickle-down." Trickle-down policies give special tax breaks and other benefits to those in the private, for-profit sector who already have some -- or considerable -- power, wealth, and upward mobility or who control American economic and political institutions. The U.S. was promised that such power brokers then would translate those breaks into benefits for those less well off. Simultaneously, in the 1980s, the federal government cut back on domestic public investments and services. It became fashionable to say that inner city problems had been *caused* by too much generosity, too much compassion, too much commitment.

The U.S. now has 10 years worth of evaluations of this policy. They show failure. It is past time to move on.

In his book, *The Politics of the Rich and Poor*, conservative analyst Kevin Phillips observes how, over the 1980s, an extraordinary concentration of wealth at the top of American society was generated by the federal government, at the expense at the poor. As Figures 1 and 2 show, over the 1980s, as a result of federal policy, the rich grew richer and their effective federal tax rate declined. The poor grew poorer and their effective tax rate increased. The federal tax system grew less progressive.

These shifts were unprecedented in the post World War II era. Incomes of the richest American families have soared while those for everyone else have increased modestly or dropped over the 1980s. For example, from 1977 to 1988, the after tax income of the richest 1% of the population increased by 122%, while for the poorest fifth of the population it declined by 10%. Marvin Kosters, Director of Economic Policy Studies at the conservative American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C. stated, "I think most analysts would agree that there is an increase in inequality."

Harvard Kennedy School Professor Robert Reich sees the "fortunate fifth," the upper income group in Figure 2, as, in effect, seceding from the rest of American society. For example, 85% of the richest families in the greater Philadelphia area now live outside the city limits, and 80% of the Philadelphia region's poorest live inside. This has had a tremendous impact on the tax base of Philadelphia, which is typical of many cities.

Increasingly, according to Professor Reich, the fortunate fifth is linked by jet aircraft, fax machines, telephones, satellites and fiber optic cables to their commercial and political counterparts throughout the nation and the world. *But they are less and less connected or concerned with the bottom four-fifths of America in their own home towns.*

To use the words of the 1968 Kerner Riot Commission, American society became "increasingly separate and less equal" during the 1980s as a result of this trickle-down policy and associated disinvestment.

### Smokescreens

Politically, a New Rhetoric also was created. In many ways, the purpose was to cover-up and rationalize away the growing inequality, the resources withdrawn and the growing racial tension. The key political "buzz words" for the New Rhetoric included "volunteerism," "self-sufficiency" and "empowerment."

Careful American evaluations have found that, while the spirit of volunteerism was to be commended over the last decade, it had very sharp limitations in the inner city. Some forms of volunteerism seemed to be effective, according to these American evaluations. One example was mentoring of high-risk youth, potential delinquents and young people who already have begun to cycle in and out of the juvenile justice system. But inner city residents, already overwhelmed by poverty and increasing inequality, often did not have the time and energy for much voluntary activity. When they did, some forms of volunteerism simply did not work. For example, volunteer citizen block watches did *not* reduce crime in inner city neighborhoods, based on almost all responsible American evaluations over the last decade. Sometimes they reduced fear while crime remained high or even increased. This created a false sense of security. Often, citizen volunteers complained that they could not deal with the "heavy metal" fire power and other means of violence associated with drug dealers. Importantly, these inner city citizen volunteers asked for *more public service investment* -- in the form of more police,

as long as they were adequately trained and supportive of community-based youth investment strategies.

"Self-sufficiency," defined as providing a way out of welfare dependency, also was set forth as an important goal in the U.S. Yet the effect of American federal tax policy and of federal disinvestment in the 1980s led in just the opposite direction. Trickle-down made more people more welfare dependent.

Self-sufficiency also was a term used in the context of inner city non-profit youth development organizations. Over the last decade, American federal grants increasingly were given out on the condition that the non-profit organization would be able to secure ongoing financing, after 2 or 3 years of federal assistance -- often, ideally, through internally generated income streams. Such a definition of self-sufficiency for a non-profit youth institution proved extremely naive. The problems that inner city non-profits faced often were overwhelming. They had to do with the growing inequality in the broader American society and the deterioration of the economy. These organizations were dealing with extremely high-risk populations. Often the young people served had many contacts with the juvenile justice system. It became painfully clear that, while efforts to increase income streams from new sources were worth exploring, non-profit institutions in the private sector working on inter-related inner city youth problems would almost always need ongoing public sector support, particularly for operating budgets.

The word "empowerment" became fashionable, particularly in public housing. It was used to describe programs for tenant management and tenant ownership. The trouble was, with very few resources available, such programs were limited to a few demonstrations. For example, one such demonstration, in Washington, D.C., became a showcase for visitors. Even the Queen of England came to see it. Yet, without sufficient resources to train all or most tenants in all or most public housing around the U.S., such empowerment did not promise any national impact.

*So, in part, the U.S. was left with endless modest demonstrations which mainly empowered the bureaucrats and political appointees who created them, as well as the technical assistants and evaluators from the fortunate fifth who watched over them.*

At the same time, care was taken *not* to use the word empowerment in many areas where it *did* make sense. There was, for example, no use of the word empowerment to describe innovative ways to invest in remedial education linked to job training and placement which would provide a pathway out of poverty for high-risk youth. There was no use of the word empowerment to describe tax changes that would encourage more non-profit youth organizations to create multiple solutions to multiple problems in the inner city. And there was no use of the word empowerment to describe increased access by the poor to the legal system.

### Throwing Money At the Problem: Prison Building

Yet there was at least one American sector of ambitious social engineering in the 1980s: prison building. Figure 3 shows that, over the 1980s, the number of American prison cells doubled. Figure 4 shows that, over the 1980s, the United States achieved the highest rates of incarceration in the industrialized world -- moving past even South Africa and the former Soviet Union. This prison building was extremely expensive. The cost of a new prison cell in New York State ran from between \$75,000 to \$100,000 each year. The cost of maintaining a prisoner was up to \$30,000 a year, more than sending a student to Howard or Harvard.

Little of this prison building was based on scientific studies which compared the effectiveness of prison to alternative policies, like community-based youth programs. Rather, politicians voted the money for new prisons to show that they were "tough on crime," so they could get re-elected.

The prison building did not just represent criminal justice policy. Because the inmates were disproportionately young, in many ways prison building became the American youth and juvenile justice policy of choice over the 1980s. By the end of the decade, 1 in every 4 young African-American males was either in prison, on probation, or on parole. In California, which usually leads the rest of the U.S., it was 1 in 3. Hence, in some ways prison building was the nation's civil rights policy, a way to deal with racial minorities. Given that the number of American prison cells more than doubled over the decade while funding for housing for the poor was cut by more than half, and given that the cost of a new prison cell in a State like New York was about the average cost of a new home purchased in the U.S. nationally, in some ways prison building became the American low income housing policy of choice in the 1980s.

Yet, as Figure 5 shows, violent crime reported to police increased over the 1980's. The uptrend for all violent crime also held for murder alone. This is critical, because murder is the most accurately reported of all crimes. (Crime rates based on victimization surveys remained about the same over the decade, though these surveys encounter some reporting problems in the inner city.)

Another way of looking at the effectiveness of prisons is to compare different countries. If the high cost of prisons is to be justified as worthwhile to the average citizen whose taxes finance the prisons, one would hope to show that countries with higher rates of imprisonment have lower rates of crime. But, in the case of the U.S., just the opposite is true. America has by far the highest rates of crime in the industrialized world (Figures 6 and 7), at the same time that it has the highest rates of incarceration.

What about drugs? According to the federal government's National Household Survey, the rate of use of any kind of illicit drug was down from 1985 to 1990 among Hispanics and Whites; for African Americans, the rate declined and then increased. Drug use among persistent offenders increased. For cocaine, the overall rate of use increased by 18 percent from 1990 to

1991, based on the National Household Survey. This increase was especially concentrated among African Americans and the unemployed.

The federal government claimed success in reducing cocaine use based on another measure, a survey of high school seniors. Yet the survey does not include high school dropouts. The dropout rate is 50% or higher in many inner city locations, and drug involvement is high among dropouts.

Use of LSD and heroin seems to have increased over recent years, as measured in part by information collected from hospitals.

Collectively, all of these statistics make it difficult to justify to the American taxpayer how prison building at up to \$100,000 per cell over the 1980s was an effective or cost-effective way to stop crime and drugs.

### Effective Programs For At-Risk Youth

The irony is that there is good evidence that prevention programs work more effectively than prison building, and are cheaper.

This is not to argue against the need for prisons to protect the population. But the available scientific evidence makes a strong case for increasing prevention initiatives in the U.S. -- so that there is a balance between preventive investment in youth and communities, on the one hand, and reactive spending on traditional criminal justice, on the other.

We have known for some time that intensive interventions with children at risk -- especially the federal Head Start preschool program -- are among the most effective vehicles the U.S. has for *simultaneously* preventing crime, drug abuse, school dropouts, and welfare dependency -- and for increasing employment and earnings.

During the 1980s, a number of evaluations also have shown that the preschool formula of "multiple solutions to multiple problems," to use Harvard Professor Lisbeth Schorr's phrase in her book, *Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage*, also can be applied to junior and senior high school age at-risk youth.

What do such evaluations suggest are some of the shared, common components underlying programs that work among high risk youth in disadvantaged American communities?

Typically, there is some form of "sanctuary" (a place to go) off the street. Paid and volunteer mentors function as "big brothers" and "big sisters" -- offering *both* social support *and* discipline in what amounts to an "extended family." Sometimes youth who need such social investments are teen parents, who receive counseling in parenting skills. In some successes, where feasible, mentoring and counseling also involve the parents of the youth who receive the mentoring.

One goal of the mentoring process is to keep youth in high school or help them receive high school equivalency degrees, sometimes in alternative community-based organizational settings. Here, too, there are many variations among successful programs. They include day care for the infants of teen parents. Remedial education can be pursued in community-based settings, often with the help of computer-based learning, like that developed by Robert Taggart with USA Basics, that allow youth to advance an entire school year through 2 or 3 months of one-on-one work with a computer. There are vocational incentives to stay in school, like the Hyatt hotel management and food preparation course being evaluated by the Eisenhower Foundation at Roberto Clemente High School in Chicago, which assures a job with Hyatt upon graduation. And there exist at present over 150 variations nationally of Eugene Lang-type "I Have a Dream" ventures which insure a college education for those who complete high school.

Some successful programs also link high school education either to job training or to college. When job training is undertaken, social support and discipline continue, frequently in community-based settings, and there is a link between job training and job placement. *The training-placement link is crucial because the present American national job training program for high risk youth -- the Job Training Partnership Act -- does not adequately place youth in jobs.* Sometimes in successful programs, job placement is in the immediate neighborhood of a sponsoring community-based organization (as in initiatives which train young workers to rehabilitate houses). This can help in the social and economic development of the neighborhood.

There are some promising ventures where this youth, social and economic development is assisted by community-based and problem oriented policing. Getting police officers out of cars and into foot patrols usually does *not* reduce crime in American inner cities, based on scientific evaluations. But it can make businesses less fearful. With careful planning, the result can be business retention and investment in the neighborhood, which can maintain or increase the supply of jobs for high risk youth.

In sum, scientifically based American successes over the last two decades often embrace a multiple solutions formula which includes sanctuary, extended family, mentoring, peer pressure, social support, discipline, educational innovation which motivates a youth to a high school degree, job training with continued social support linked to job placement, feasible options for continuing on to college, employment linked to economic development, and problem oriented policing which is supportive of the youth, social, community and economic development process.

*Not all successes have all of these components, but multiple solutions always are evident in the formula.*

Particularly for the inner city, therefore, it is naive to formulate policy as "delinquency prevention," "crime prevention" or "drug prevention" alone. The best programs are more comprehensive.



Similarly, the successes tend to have multiple good outcomes -- like, not uncommonly, in successfully evaluated programs, less crime, less drug abuse, less welfare dependency, fewer adolescent pregnancies, more school completion, more successful school-to-work transitions, and more employability among targeted high risk youth. The communities where there young people live can experience business, housing, job and economic development. As with the multiple solutions in the program formula, not all model programs and replications achieve all of these good outcomes. But the point is that *multiple* good outcomes are the rule, not the exception.

Evaluated successes for disadvantaged youth over the 1980s which share many of these components and many of these outcomes nationally include: Job Corps, Job Start and Project Redirection. Locally, evaluated successes include Centro Sister Isolina Ferre in Puerto Rico, the Fairview Homes Public Housing Program in Charlotte, North Carolina, the Argus Community in the South Bronx, the Dorchester Youth Collaborative in Boston, City Lights in Washington, D.C., Youth Guidance, Inc. in Chicago, and Youth Development in Albuquerque.

### Some Examples Of Programmatic Success With High Risk Youth

Here are summaries of some of these successes:

#### Job Corps

Job Corps is an *intensive* program that takes seriously the need to provide a supportive, structured environment for the youth it seeks to assist. Job Corps features classroom courses, which can lead to high school equivalency degrees, counseling and hands-on job training for very high-risk youth. Corps programs are located in rural and urban settings. Some of the urban settings are campus-like. Others essentially are "on the street." In the original design, a residential setting provided sanctuary away from one's home. Today, nonresidential variations are being tried, and it will be important to compare their cost-effectiveness to the live-in design. Yet even for the nonresidential programs, the notion of an extended-family environment has been maintained.

According to U.S. Labor Department statistics, during the first year after the experience, Job Corps members are a third less likely to be arrested than nonparticipants. Every \$1.00 spent on the Job Corps results in \$1.45 in benefits -- including reduced crime and substance abuse (which account for \$0.42 in benefits alone), reduced welfare dependency, increased job productivity and higher income. Evaluations found that 75 percent of Job Corps enrollees move on to a job or to full-time study; graduates retain jobs longer and earn about 15 percent more than if they had not participated in the program. Along the same lines, a U.S. General Accounting Office study concluded that Job Corps members are far more likely to receive a high school diploma or equivalency degree than comparison group members and that the positive impact on their earnings continues after training. According to one evaluator, "Naysayers who deny that labor market problems are real and serious, that social interventions can make a

difference, or that the effectiveness of public problems can be improved will find little to support their preconceptions" in the experience of programs like Job Corps.

### **Project Redirection**

Project Redirection focuses on teen mothers 17 or younger who lack a high school diploma or an equivalency degree. Most are eligible for receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Implemented in several locations around the U.S., the program's approach is comprehensive, seeking to enhance the teens' educational, job-related, parenting and life-management skills, while encouraging these young people to delay further childbearing until they have become more self-sufficient. The program's strategy is to link participants with existing services in the community and to support these "brokered" services by providing workshops, peer group sessions and individual counseling in the program setting. Project Redirection also pairs teens with adult community women, who volunteer to provide ongoing support, guidance and friendship both within and outside of the formal program structure.

Five years after entering the program (and 4 years, on average, after leaving it), Project Redirection participants, while still disadvantaged, had more favorable outcomes than a comparison group of young mothers in terms of employment, earnings, welfare dependency, and parenting skills; their children were at a developmental advantage, vis-a-vis a comparison group.

### **Centro Sister Isolina Ferre**

Centro Sister Isolina Ferre, in the LaPlaya neighborhood of Ponce, Puerto Rico, was started in 1968 by a Catholic nun, Sister Isolina Ferre, who had spent the past several years working on New York City's toughest streets. Playa de Ponce was a community "where 16,000 people lived neglected by government and private agencies" -- with delinquency rates more than twice that of the rest of the city of Ponce, high unemployment, poor health conditions, no basic health care services, and "few, if any, resources." Centro began on the premise, "If family and community could be strengthened, and meaningful employment made available," it might be possible to "make substantial progress in the struggle against neighborhood crime and violence."

With this vision, Sister Isolina, who is Vice Chair of the Eisenhower Foundation, began to put into place several programs designed to develop the competence of community youth. One example stands out especially -- the system of youth advocates or "intercessors." These were young, streetwise community people who became all-around advocates and mentors for young people brought before the juvenile court. The advocates would "get to know the youth and his or her peers and family, and would look into the schoolwork, family situation, and day-to-day behavior of the youth." They would involve the youth in a range of developmental programs the Center began to create, including job training, recreation, and tutoring. Their role went well beyond simple individual counseling; the advocate was to "become familiar with the whole living experience of the youth," to work with "the family, the peers, the school, the staff, the police and the court" -- in short, "to help the community become aware of the resources it had that should help the youth develop into a healthy adult." After some initial mistrust, the

police began to work closely with the intercessors, often calling them first before taking a youth to court.

Centro also developed innovative educational alternatives for youth at risk of dropping out of school, and a program of family supports through "advocate families" who took the lead in helping their neighbors with family problems. They created an extensive job-training program, on the premise that "building a community without jobs for youth is like trying to build a brick wall without cement."

The journalist Charles Silberman, in his 1978 book, *Criminal Violence, Criminal Justice*, called Centro "the best example of youth and community regeneration I found anywhere in the United States." LaPlaya is considered the toughest neighborhood in Ponce. Over the period of initial operations of Centro, from 1968 to 1977, the rate of reported juvenile offenses was fairly constant in Ponce, while it showed a two-thirds decline in LaPlaya. Centro and the Eisenhower Foundation now are replicating and evaluating the program in San Juan, and very preliminary assessments show crime reported to police down in the Centro precinct, compared to other San Juan precincts. More comprehensive evaluations are being undertaken.

### The Argus Community

The Argus Community on East 160th Street in the Bronx was founded in 1968, the same year as Centro, by Elizabeth Sturz, a poet, former probation officer and Trustee of the Eisenhower Foundation. Argus is a community-based center for high-risk youth, mainly African-American and Puerto Rican. It provides "an alternative life program for adolescents and adults who have been on the treadmill of unemployment, underemployment, street hustling, welfare, substance abuse, crime and prison, and who saw no way out for themselves."

Through residential and nonresidential programs, Argus seeks to offer some fundamentals too often lacking in the families and communities from which these youth come. It aims to create an extended family of responsible adults and peers that could offer "warmth, nurturance, communication, and structure," and that would model and teach productive values. Within that "extended family" setting, the program offers prevocational, vocational and academic training, and works to link those trained with employers in the city.

Over time, Argus added day care, family planning, health care and early education, which not only provided parenting assistance for the children of teen mothers in the program, but also sought to "teach the young mothers -- and fathers -- how to be good parents." Founders of Argus believed that "angry, alienated teenagers can be pulled in, can be brought to the point where they not only do not steal and assault but have something to give to the society."

The nonresidential program, the Learning for Living Center, is mostly for teenagers who are at risk but not yet in serious trouble. It is designed as alternative life training to prevent the need for youth to end up in the residential program, for those somewhat older with more serious

problems -- today, especially drugs. So a full range of intervention has evolved, from early prevention to treatment.

Some people are referred to Argus from throughout New York City. Most come from the neighborhood. Argus youth are at higher risk than the clients of most other community-based youth agencies in New York City. Despite this extremely troubled clientele, the program has had encouraging successes.

The Eisenhower Foundation evaluated a cycle of the Argus day time, nonresidential Learning for Living Center. Youth were assessed over 20 weeks of training and then over a follow-up period. Measures were taken before and after, 9 months apart, with 100 high-risk Argus youth and 100 comparable youth who did not receive training. Argus youth had higher salaries, and received more job benefits than the comparison youth. To complement these findings, studies by the Vera Institute and the New York Criminal Justice Coordinating Council have shown that 67 percent of the Argus Community's enrollees attained non-subsidized job placement in 1980. This is a much higher job-placement rate than for similar high-risk youth who are not involved in the program. These studies also demonstrated lower crime recidivism rates for Argus graduates than for graduates from almost any other program in New York City that works with such high-risk youth.

#### A Corporation for Youth Investment and Management

David Hamburg, President of the Carnegie Corporation, in New York, observes that, when it comes to prevention for disadvantaged children and youth, "We know enough to act, and we can't afford not to act."

Along the same lines, in her recent study, *Adolescents at Risk: Prevalence and Prevention*, funded by the Carnegie Corporation, Joy G. Dryfoos, a Trustee of the Eisenhower Foundation, says:

Enough is known about the lives of disadvantaged high-risk youth to mount an intensive campaign to alter the trajectories of these children. Enough has been documented about the inability of fragmented programs to produce the necessary changes to proceed toward more comprehensive and holistic approaches. Enough is known about the inadequacies of the educational system to give the highest priority to school reform. The comprehensive multicomponent framework appears to make sense, linking educational enhancement with social support of all kinds. Money and commitment are the bottom lines. The funds have to be located and redirected toward a giant rescue operation.

*In some important ways, then, we need to stop thinking in terms of experiments and demonstration programs alone. We need to start implementing and replicating what already works.*

The American Head Start preschool program provides an institutional vehicle to implement multiple solutions for the needs of very young children. But there is no entity at the national level to provide leadership, seed funding, technical assistance and management training for day-to-day operating programs (not experimental demonstrations) that help solve the interrelated dilemmas of inner city junior and senior high school age at-risk youth.

It is time for a new, dynamic, creative implementing agency -- a Corporation for Youth Investment and Management. Ultimately, the Corporation needs to replicate the shared components which seem to underlie success, at a sufficient scale to begin to create a national impact.

To replicate more generic underlying components shared by many programs rather than specific "model" programs wholesale means that local youth investment programs will need to tailor local variations to local variations through a genuine grass roots "bubble up" planning and implementing process. In so doing, they must create their own initiatives, and evolve a genuine stake in the process and the product which it yields. One task of the Corporation for Youth Investment and Management should be to facilitate the "bubble up" process -- providing guidance based on past experience while avoiding "top down" control.

The Corporation will need to scientifically evaluate replications. This means both an "impact" and "process" evaluation with both a "test" and "comparison" group to measure change among individual youth as well as change in the community for a minimum of four years. Today, few delinquency, crime, drug and drop out prevention programs are evaluated in such a comprehensive way. The result has been national policy based more on political expediency than on scientific rigor. The new Corporation has potential for raising evaluation standards for both privately and publicly financed initiatives. For the latter, we also need hard-hitting critiques by the General Accounting Office, the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Technology Assessment on the inadequacy of most federal evaluations and the steps needed to reverse the politicalization of evaluations.

Replication and evaluation are not enough. Inner city non-profit organizations have great potential. But often there are not enough resources to create good management practices as programs are implemented. There already exists in the U.S. a management training curriculum and a national internship program for senior staff of community *economic* development organizations -- particularly those engaged in inner city housing rehabilitation and construction. This program was begun by the Development Training Institute in Baltimore. The Development Training Institute curriculum has been adopted by local teaching institutions, such as the Pratt Institute in New York.

The new Corporation for Youth Investment and Management should build on this management training curriculum -- but target a different group of people -- principal staff of selected non-profit inner city organizations which are focused on youth, social development, crime prevention, drug prevention, school drop out prevention, teen parenting, job training and job placement. For principal staff and designated youth in these kinds of organizations, the

long-term goal of the Corporation should be to create an appropriate management training course with the prestige of the Harvard Business School, the Yale School of Management and the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

Details on a Corporation for Youth Investment and Management are available from the Eisenhower Foundation. As part of the re-authorization of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, funding for the Corporation should be considered. To insure innovativeness and prevent bureaucratic sluggishness, the Corporation should operate in the private sector, as does the Local Initiatives Support Corporation begun by the Ford Foundation for neighborhood-based housing construction and rehabilitation in deteriorated areas.

The private sector Corporation needs to be completed by a new public sector institution that, among other objectives, brings to bear innovations from other nations on the inner city problems of the U.S. For example, the Japanese are ahead of the U.S. in community-based policing and in-depth training of police. And the French have developed youth investment and delinquency prevention initiatives that are more coordinated at the local level than in America.

Presently, there is discussion of a new United Nations-affiliated delinquency and crime prevention institute that would assemble information world-wide and undertake training of government decision makers. Other countries presently are ahead of the United States in advocating that a new institute be located in their capitals. Now is the time, therefore, for American government officials to argue that the institute could more effectively serve the world and the U.S. by being located in Washington, D.C. and linked with the Corporation for Youth Investment and Management.

### Complementary Federal Policy

Such a new, national non-profit Corporation can facilitate inner city non-profits as local vehicles for reform. But this is only a small part of the reform needed. To complement local non-profits as delivery vehicles for change, America needs early intervention for all disadvantaged youth, significant urban school reform, more comprehensive school-to-work transitions for high risk youth, an economic development strategy that is integrated with social development and with the need for public service jobs to combat the nation's recession, and drug abuse treatment that is linked to drug abuse prevention. What follows are just a few highlights of such a comprehensive initiative.

### Early Intervention and Urban School Reform

The Head Start pre-school program should be expanded to all eligible disadvantaged children who presently are left out because of insufficient funds.

After the earliest intervention, one promising comprehensive plan is for states, localities and the private sector to create variations of the Rhode Island Children's Crusade. The State

of Rhode Island is providing state college scholarships for low-income pupils, combined with academic and remedial help from third grade through high school. The only requirements are that parents allow state monitoring of report cards and that students obey the law, shun drugs, avoid early pregnancy and do not drop out. Pupils will be tutored and paired with mentors throughout primary and secondary school. When old enough, top performers will secure summer jobs, where they will serve as role models to others.

To underscore such state initiatives, America needs more federal funding for urban school systems and middle school youth, based on the well-thought-out reform plans recently proposed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. These reforms range from replacement of rigid class schedules with cooperative learning in small groups to creation of new governance procedures that allow a school system to intervene if a specific urban school does not meet agreed upon objectives.

### **Reforming Existing School-To-Work Transition Programs**

An American Corporation for Youth Investment and Management will provide a new, focused operating vehicle that expands the capacity and number of inner city non-profit organizations to train and place high-risk youth.

The exact formula for that training and placement already has been established -- through the public sector Job Corps and through the private sector JobStart demonstration program funded by the Ford Foundation and other foundations. These initiatives provide basic education, occupational training, support services such as child care and transportation, and real job placement assistance to disadvantaged school dropouts. The vehicles for implementation are community-based organizations, Job Corps centers, vocational schools and community colleges.

The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), the existing system for youth job training, should be reformed so that local sites operate more like Job Corps and JobStart.

With significant cuts in the size of American armed forces in the 1990s, the need is even greater for more civilian job training and placement among high-risk youth.

Training must be linked more effectively to private sector placement. There now is a demographic opportunity. The number of 18 year olds in the population will not again reach present levels until 2003. Consequently, companies will need to extend their reach for new workers. If federal training can be better linked to this corporate need, the future American work force and our international competitiveness can be strengthened at the same time that we invest in disadvantaged youth.

## A "Community Enterprise" Development Strategy for the Inner City

Key to a new human resource and urban agenda must be a concerted plan to develop the "whole community" through providing long-term, stable, public-sector employment opportunities that address genuine local needs.

There is clearly no shortage of public needs to be met through local community enterprise. The mile-long collapse of U.S. Interstate Highway 880 during the San Francisco earthquake of 1989 was only one of the more tragic illustrations of decrepit urban infrastructure across America that urgently needs reconstruction--and that could supply tens of thousands of new economic development jobs to properly trained youth who presently are high risk.

At the same time, as the hundreds of thousands of homeless Americans on the street demonstrate, we need a renewed federal commitment to the construction and rehabilitation of low-income housing -- with budget authority returned to the spending levels of the late 1970s. The current private sector for-profit system in effect "bribes" developers to build and rehabilitate low-cost housing. A new system should be based on private sector nonprofit corporations that construct and rehabilitate low-income housing. Many of the jobs generated should be for high-risk youth.

*The result should be a national policy that treats low-income housing not as an economic commodity but as a human right.*

The need for public service employment to rebuild urban infrastructures and the highway system that links them together is all the greater given the current, prolonged recession. By packaging the program for both the middle class unemployed and the inner city poor, it becomes more feasible politically.

## Drug Abuse Treatment and Prevention

America's national drug strategy is unnecessarily daunted by the crisis of the inner city. Present policy needs to be balanced more with the lesson that, especially in the inner city, demand creates supply. The youth investment and community reconstruction programs proposed here are at the heart of demand-side prevention in the inner city.

The surface of creative drug policy barely has been scratched in this country. There are a total 5,000 existing drug treatment centers of all kinds. Most are short term and outpatient. There is as yet little scientific proof of their cost effectiveness. There is poor coordination in terms of channeling the estimated 4 million addicts into them. A majority of treatment slots still are for heroin users. Yet they now are far outnumbered by cocaine addicts and multiple abusers -- who require different treatment strategies. And there is insufficient attention to the special needs of the disadvantaged and women.



Something close to a consensus has emerged that significantly more funding is required to close the gap between treatment need and availability among the disadvantaged. Without it, hard drugs will continue to ravage families and communities in the inner city; drug-related violence will continue at levels that place many neighborhoods in a state of siege. Unless we begin to turn that situation around, it will undermine all of our other efforts to develop the inner city economically and socially. Expanded drug abuse treatment, intensive outreach and aftercare need to be linked closely with youth enterprise development, family supports and remedial education. As a high official at the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse has observed, "For many addicts, it's not rehabilitation, it's habilitation. They don't know how to read or look for work, let alone beat their addictions." Most of the successful community-based youth programs, like the Argus community and Centro Sister Isolina Ferre, have long found it appropriate to integrate drug treatment and prevention in the same institutional setting.

### **A \$10 Billion Per Year, Ten Year Federal Budget**

The amount of new federal multiple solution spending focused on disadvantaged high-risk children and youth that is needed per year over a minimum 10 year period to create a national impact depends on success in reforming and better co-targeting existing federal education, employment and economic development programs.

If significant progress on such reform is forthcoming in the practical ways proposed here, then a reasonable beginning for a national program is \$10 billion per year in federal spending for each of 10 years.

These should be new funds above and beyond American federal fiscal year 1993 spending. The new funds should be carefully targeted to the disadvantaged -- via the Corporation for Youth Investment and Management (\$500 million), additional Head Start funding so that all eligible disadvantaged children are covered (\$5.0 billion), and job training and placement, reformed to implement JobStart type initiatives locally and expanded to more eligible youth (\$2.5 billion above present JTPA levels). All of these initiatives can be considered as demand-side drug abuse prevention. In addition, at least \$2.0 billion more per year is needed in the U.S. on coordinated drug abuse treatment that is integrated at the grass roots community level with prevention through multiple solutions for multiple problems.

This estimate does not include returning low income housing spending to the levels of the late 1970s, repairing the interstate highways (federal responsibilities) or reforming urban educational systems (more local and state responsibilities in the U.S.). It assumes an equal amount of new expenditures from state government, local government and the private sector combined. It assumes that corporate America will significantly expand permanent labor market opportunities for high-risk youth in the 1990s, even though more job opportunities must be provided by the public sector in urban infrastructure reinvestment and low-income housing rehabilitation and construction.

These are ultimate goals. To increase their political feasibility, the \$10 billion per year increase should be implemented incrementally. Increases of \$2 billion per year are feasible, so that, after 5 years, total spending on federal programs will be up by \$10 billion per year. Such a schedule will allow for managed growth and orderly administrative expansion of capacity. A similar incremental process makes political sense for the related federal reforms in housing and infrastructure development, as well as for matching state, local and private sector financing.

### New Revenues Are Politically Feasible

But where will America find the money?

Ultimately, revenues are a matter of political will, not budget ceilings. The Executive and Legislative Branches found the means to bail out American savings and loan institutions and to finance the Persian Gulf War. When it comes to the military budget, we do not ask employees to work for free, understaff front line operations, get along without sufficient equipment or seek match funding from church bake sales. The Pentagon testifies before Congress about investments in the future and says that costs real money. To avoid a double standard, we also need to replicate what already works in depressed areas in the United States with real money, not rhetoric about volunteerism.

Revenue for the initiatives proposed here should be based on new personal income taxes on the richest 1% of the American population (which experienced the 122% increase in income over the last decade due to tax reductions, as shown in Figures 1 and 2), reductions in military spending and reductions in foreign aid. There are detailed plans and responsible legislative initiatives by politically conservative analysts and high ranking legislators for each of these revenue sources.

To increase political feasibility, the urban infrastructure and highway repair public works program should be packaged as providing jobs for both the disadvantage and the middle class, and taxes should be reduced for both income groups.

Politically, it also should be remembered that the list of corporations which have funded or otherwise supported non-profit community-based economic development organizations reads like the *Fortune 500*. The recent bipartisan National Commission on Children, chaired by Senator John Rockefeller, has called for Head Start for all eligible children and for an increase in Job Corps. The corporate executive officers on the Committee for Economic Development have endorsed Head Start as the most cost effective prevention plan yet devised. The *Wall Street Journal* has described the Argus Living for Learning Community as "an inner city school that works." Yet most of these programs, or their underlying concepts, have been embraced by the more progressive reports issued recently by the Carnegie Corporation and the William T. Grant Foundation. And almost all of these programs are based on President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society or on Robert Kennedy's Mobilization for Youth program of the 1960s.

As Yogi Berra once observed, in another context, we have de-ja vu all over again.

### Public Understanding and Political Action

The public needs to better understand the political feasibility of multiple solutions, the need to implement what works, the savings that will accrue to the average taxpayer, the greater cost-effectiveness of prevention over prisons, and the way reform can be financed.

One vehicle is the upcoming twenty-fifth anniversary of the final report of the bipartisan National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence. Begun by President Johnson after the assassination of Martin Luther King, the Commission was extended by President Nixon and submitted its recommendation to the nation in 1969. Financed, perhaps, by OJJDP, a twenty-five year update report along the lines of this testimony could be widely disseminated and well publicized in the media.

Of course, Americans, especially younger ones, respond more today to the electronic than to the print media.

Public service television advertising on delinquency, crime and drug prevention has, up to this time, been ineffective for the inner city. There is no scientific proof, for example, that the "Just Say No" campaign, the Partnership for a Drug Free America campaign or the national crime dog campaign have reduced crime or drugs among minority high risk youth in the inner city.

One alternative electronic strategy for the inner city is to produce public service announcements narrated by corporate, education, athletic, Hollywood, recording and other personalities who are taped on location at programs which have been scientifically evaluated as successful. The aim should not be to directly reduce crime, drugs and dropouts through the ads. Rather, the immediate objective should be to educate citizens and politicians that there are multiple solution prevention strategies that are cheaper to the taxpayer and more effective than prison building. In turn, the long range goal should be to convert more receptive attitudes by citizens and politicians into more funding for multiple solution prevention.

That conversion from attitude changes to budget increases needs to be undertaken through old fashioned, grass roots political organizing. For example, the Children's Defense Fund, the leading national nonprofit organization in the U.S. on children and poverty, has organized, lobbied for and won an increase in Head Start funding of over 10%. The same kind of hard ball organizing needed to advocate for increased funding of prevention proven to work can be used to persuade voters to replace politicians who fail to lead.

We need political leaders who, in the words of Theodore Roosevelt, throw themselves into the arena of "dust and sweat and blood" and who, unlike "those timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat," dare greatly to fulfill the dream.

As Langston Hughes asked:

*What happens to a dream deferred?*

*Does it dry up  
Like a raisin in the sun?*

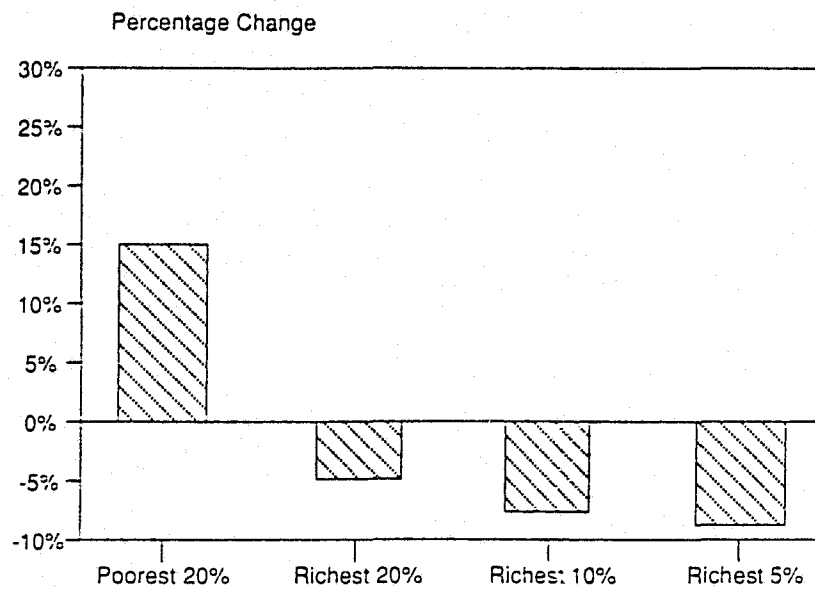
*Or fester like a sore --  
And then run?*

*Does it stink like rotten meat?  
Or crust and sugar over  
Like syrupy sweet?*

*Maybe it just sags  
Like a heavy load.*

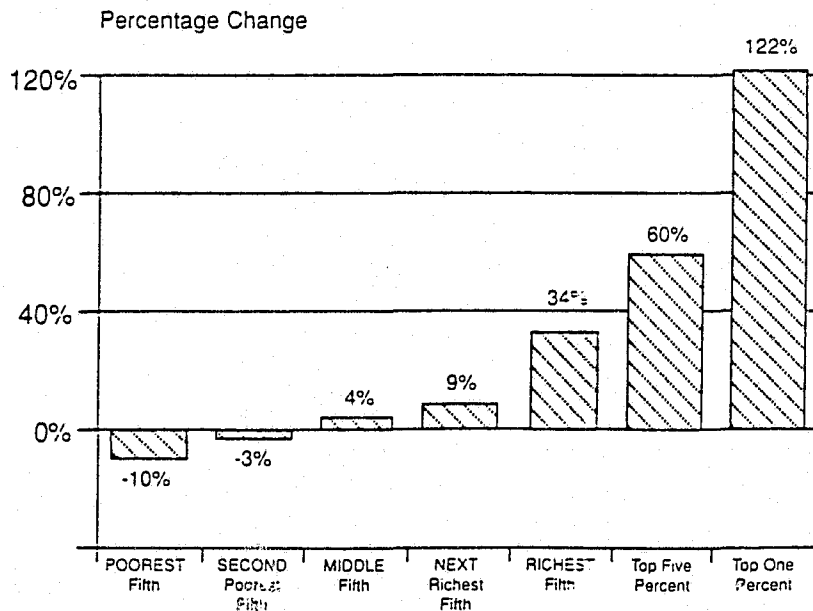
*Or does it explode?*

**FIGURE 1**  
*Changes in Tax Rates Between 1980 and 1990*



Source: Congressional Budget Office

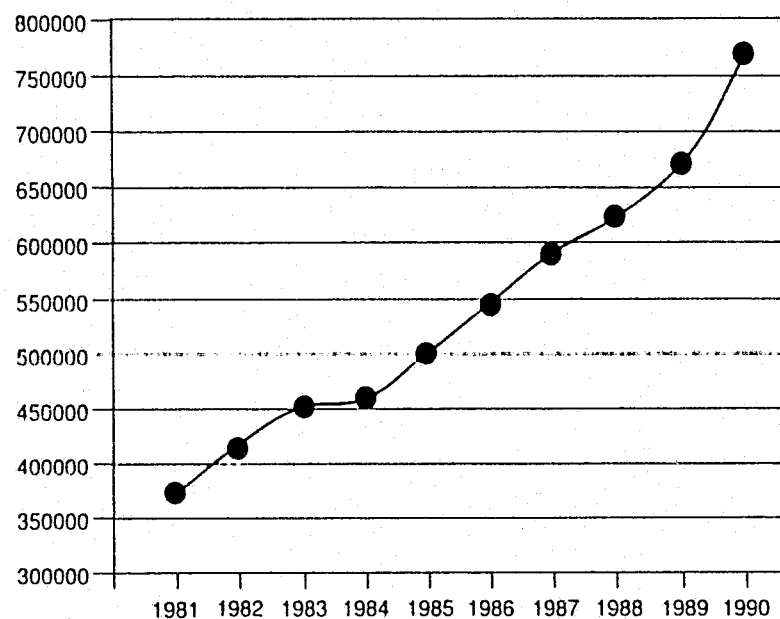
**FIGURE 2**  
*Average After-Tax Income Gains and Losses Between 1977 and 1988, By Various Household Income Groups*



Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and Congressional Budget Office

**FIGURE 3**

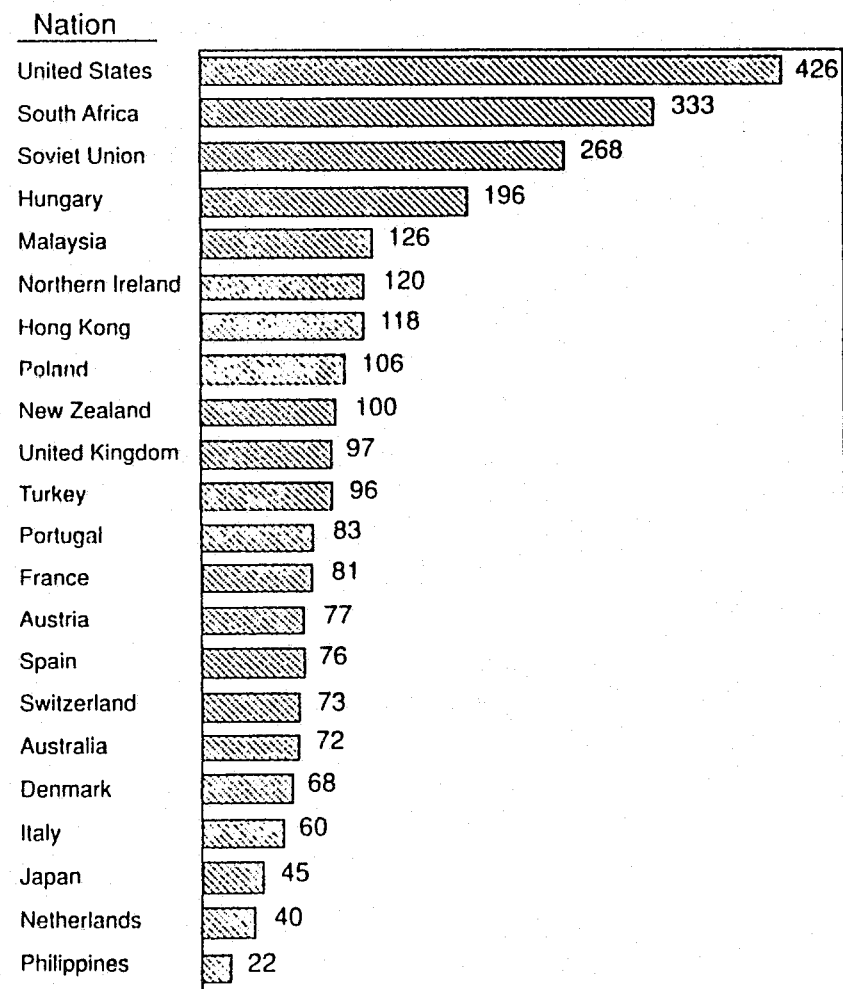
*Total Inmates in State and Federal Prisons in the United States*



Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

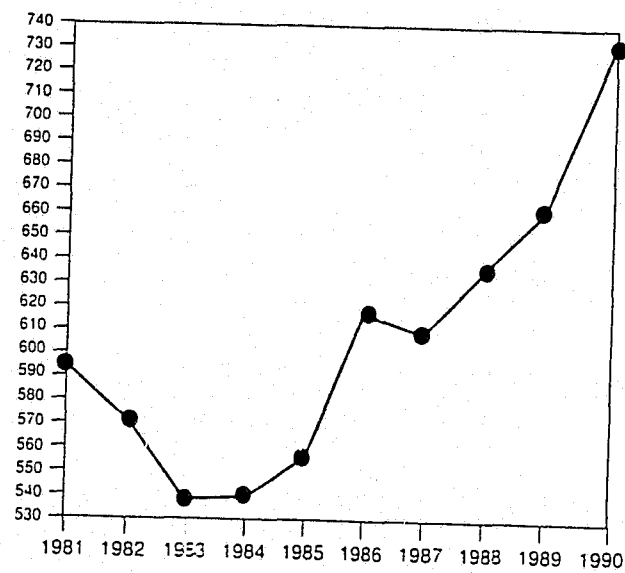
**FIGURE 4**

*Rates of Incarceration per 100,000 Population*



Source: The Sentencing Project and Penal Reform International, 1989

**FIGURE 5**  
*The Violent Crime  
Rate Per 100,000  
Population in the  
United States*



Source:  
U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. Based on murder,  
forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault reported to the police.

Figure 6

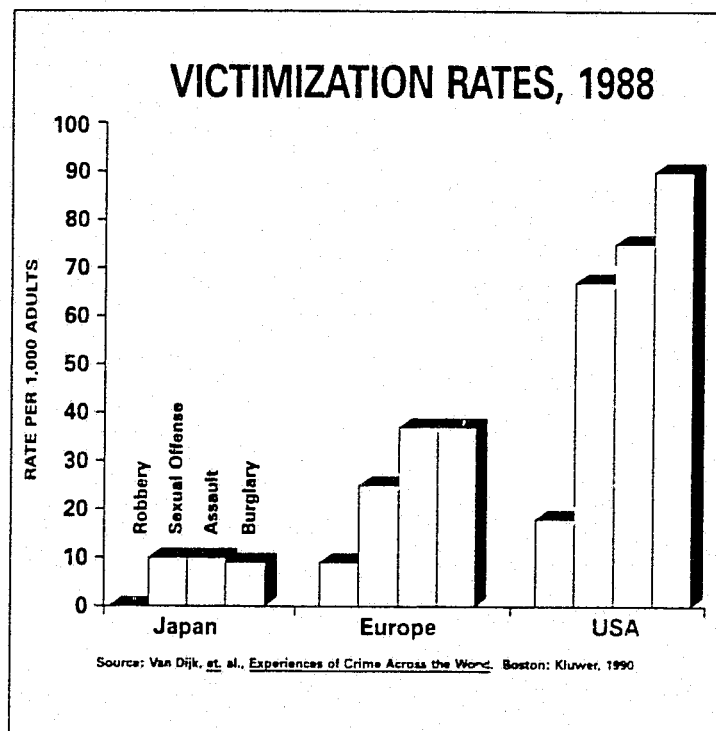




Figure 7



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