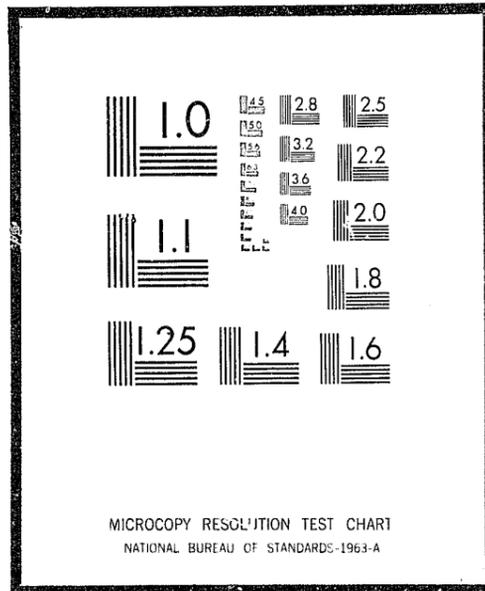


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The Resurgence of Youth Gangs in New York City

Study Report No. 1
Subcommittee on the Family Court
July 1974

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Chairman

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INTRODUCTION

Concerned over reports of increased gang violence, the New York State Assembly Subcommittee on the Family Court undertook a study of youth gangs in order to determine the scope of the problem and the adequacy of the response of public agencies.

As part of its investigation, the Subcommittee held a series of Executive Sessions (the transcript of the November 30, 1973 session may be found in Appendix B). In addition, a questionnaire was sent to the appropriate City agencies to learn what they know about the problem and what they are doing about it. (The questionnaire, a copy of which may be found in Appendix C, was sent to the New York City Addiction Services Agency, the New York City Board of Education, the New York City Department of Social Services, the New York City Police Department, and the New York City Youth Services Administration.)

This report is the first in a series dealing with

- 1) the scope of the problem of gang activity in New York City,
- 2) the organization and membership of youth gangs, and
- 3) the City's response to youth gangs.

After completion and publication of the third report, the Subcommittee will hold public hearings.

This report was prepared by Thomas H. McDonald, Jr. with the assistance of José D. Alfaro and Douglas J. Besharov, Counsel to the Subcommittee.

July 1974

Hon. Alfred A. Delli Bovi
Chairman, New York State
Assembly Subcommittee on the
Family Court

THE RESURGENCE OF YOUTH GANGS IN NEW YORK CITY

20,000 youths are now estimated to belong to 315 gangs in the City of New York. City agencies predict further increases in youthful gang activity.

Youth gangs and youth violence were prevalent in New York during the 1950's. By the early 60's, however, gang activity disappeared. City agencies offer no conclusive explanation for this disappearance but it appears that heroin addiction and the military draft for Viet Nam were major factors. It may be noteworthy that many of the neighborhoods where gang activity flourished were demolished under urban renewal programs.

In 1971, the police department first noted the resurgence of youth gangs. The first recorded act of gang killing occurred on May 10, 1971, when a fifteen year old was stabbed to death during a gang fight in St. Mary's Park in the South Bronx. From the South Bronx, this latest gang movement spread within a year to Manhattan, then to Brooklyn, and finally to Queens. The police state there are no gangs in the borough of Richmond at the present time.

Just as there is no definitive explanation for the disappearance of gangs, so, too, there is no apparent explanation for their reappearance and resurgence.

The police divide gang membership into two categories:

"Verified" members: Youths for whom the police have a name and address, which may be obtained from arrest records, school reports, community youth agencies and from private citizens, and

"Alleged" members: Unnamed youths whom the police suspect to be gang members but as yet have not obtained any information on.

The police have "verified" 8,000 of the 20,000 estimated gang members.

City agencies report that the majority of gang activity is centered in the South Bronx where nearly half of the estimated 20,000 gang members reside.

The agencies which responded to the questionnaire believe that the overwhelming majority of gang members are "Black, Puerto Rican and male." However, there are many Asian gangs on the lower East side of Manhattan, and white gangs in Queens and Brooklyn.

The police classify gangs into three types:

Fighting gangs: which engage in "substantiated" armed conflict with other gangs or members of the community,

Delinquent gangs: which engage in "substantiated" extortion, robbery and other criminal acts, and

Marginal gangs: which the police suspect are "likely" to become Fighting or Delinquent gangs but have not yet been linked to specific criminal acts.

More than half of all gangs are Fighting gangs. Police further subdivide Fighting gangs into "Adventure" gangs, engaged in violence for thrills and status, and "Defensive" gangs, formed for mutual protection against real or imagined threats. The overwhelming majority of Fighting gangs are "Adventure" gangs.

Police statistics on youth gangs by type of gang and by alleged and verified membership within each borough is:

Borough	Fighting	Marginal	Del.	Total	Membership	
					Alleged	Verified
Bronx	87	25	0	112	9519	3813
Man.	35	15	5	55	2330	1261
Bklyn	41	59	0	100	5024	1828
Queens	13	32	3	48	2630	1159
Richmond	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	176	131	8	315	19503	8061

However, there are indications that Police figures may be conservative. In Queens, for example, the Police say there are 48 gangs with 2,630 members. However, Probation officers from the Queens Family Court report that gang activity has increased dramatically and the real figures may be as high as 4,000 members and 94 gangs. (See text of Executive Session, p.B5 infra.)

City agencies point out that the gangs have attempted to create a media image of being neighborhood vigilantes trying to rid their communities of drug pushers and underworld criminals. City agencies maintain that, in truth, many gangs engage in shakedowns of area merchants and residents, and others traffic in soft drugs such as marijuana, amphetamines, barbiturates and cocaine.

Police department statistics show that in 1973 there was an average of 37 gang incident and 62 arrests per week which accounted for the following gang related arrests:

1973
CITY-WIDE GANG ARRESTS

Borough	*Youth Gang Homicides	Attempted Murder	Robbery	Rape	Serious Assault	Dangerous Weapons	Dis. Con. Riot Unlaw. Assem.	Kidnapping
Bronx	13	25	176	45	165	288	273	13
Manhattan	5	18	165	4	50	116	39	0
Brooklyn	21	15	48	19	60	89	229	1
Queens	2	6	92	5	61	87	92	1
Total	41	64	481	73	336	580	633	15

*Youth Gang Homicides are complaint statistics classified by Office of Chief of Detectives

Similar city-wide totals for 1972 were:

1972
CITY-WIDE GANG ARRESTS

Homicides	Attempted Murder	Robbery	Rape	Serious Assault	Dangerous Weapons	Dis. Con. Riot Unlaw. Assem.	Kidnapping
57	25	178	17	208	395	825	3

PERCENTAGE OF CHANGE IN 1973

Homicides	Attempted Murder	Robbery	Rape	Serious Assault	Dangerous Weapons	Dis. Con. Riot Unlaw. Assem.	Kidnapping
-28%	+256%	+272%	+429%	+162%	+147%	-23%	+500%

Unlike the gangs of the 50's, gangs of the 70's have greater access to lethal weapons. Where switchblades and zip guns were the style of the 50's, police now uncover large quantities of automatic rifles, pistols, grenades, and even Army bazookas and mortars. Contemporary gangs shun the mass rumbles of the 50's and prefer small, guerilla-type raids instead. Some gangs have a hand picked "Gestapo Squad" which carries out assassination and other retaliatory raids.

Commenting on gang firepower, one police officer remarked: "We should at least be thankful that these kids are such pitiful shots, otherwise there would be bodies all over the streets."

While youths who belong to gangs participate in the full range of criminal activities, some incidents border on the bizarre. One gang in the South Bronx invaded a funeral parlor and overturned the casket of a deceased rival. Another gang, when it learned that a rival they had shot had not died, tried to storm the operating room of the hospital to try and finish him off.

The ability of gangs to dominate any area they choose is demonstrated by a Police report that in the 41st Precinct of the South Bronx four allied gangs have taken over a complex of partially abandoned buildings and established a "gang compound" where it is not unusual to find several hundred gang members at one time.

Yet, in responding for the Board of Education, Chancellor

Irving Anker stated that "Schools are neutral turf for the gangs." Other city agencies strongly disagree. They point out that the schools are primary centers of gang activity, where gangs extort protection money from other students, assault the faculty, and attempt to recruit new members. One newspaper reports that the president of a Bronx gang is employed by the Board of Education as a school guard.

Gang activity pervades all areas of community life in affected neighborhoods. Indeed, there is no aspect of community life and no public or private agency and facility which is immune from the gang threat.

In the words of the New York City Police Department:

It is not uncommon in certain areas of the City for large groups of gang members, wearing "gang colors," to maraud through the streets, "ripping off" anyone in their path. The mere presence of large groups of gang members in our streets intimidates and frightens our law-abiding citizens, and this type of activity will not be tolerated.

It has also been documented by police reports that some gangs have attempted to march on station houses, bombard and damage police vehicles, attack and attempt to shoot police officers, take over and hold-up buses and trains, attempt to take over sections of public beaches, intimidate, assault and shake down shopkeepers, wound and injure innocent bystanders to gang conflicts and shake down narcotic pushers who they insist are an evil to their communities.¹

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1. New York City Police Department Youth Aid Division, Mini-Lectures on Youth Gangs, "Mini-Lecture #6, Gangs and Violence" p. 3.

APPENDIX A
YOUTH AID DIVISION
of the
NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT
MINI-LECTURES ON YOUTH GANGS

MINI-LECTURE #10

GANGS: A POWER STRUCTURE

Collectively and individually youth gangs influence the day-to-day activities of our society. Because of the number of youth gangs and their size, they have become a serious problem and a negative force in many communities and neighborhoods. To date, the youth gangs have not given any tangible evidence that they are a positive force in their communities; instead, they have acquired overwhelming statistics indicating their activities and behavior must be construed as a negative power that disrupts social organizations and social institutions.

In their interaction with the community at large, youth gangs have revealed that they are a power structure in a negative fashion in the following types of instances:

(a) In moving through the streets in large numbers of 25-50 gang members, they pose a threat of intimidation and fear as they pass by or confront law-abiding citizens.

(b) In different sections of the City youth gangs actually control the activity and events of certain streets and blocks. They attempt to control playgrounds, parks, recreation centers, and night centers to the exclusion of all other youngsters.

(c) Shopkeepers, construction companies, parking lot owners, apartment house landlords and supermarket supervisors have experienced the power and wrath of the youth gang and its ability to engage in assaults, intimidations, threats and fear tactics in order to obtain illicit money and favors for the gang.

(d) In times of disorder in communities, the gang participates as a negative force. In recent riots in Jamaica, Queens and in the Bronx, youth gangs were present and disorderly, causing serious problems for the police. Gangs have been known to attend and participate in taxi demonstrations, labor union strikes, hospital demonstrations, racial upheavals, and attempted marches on precinct station houses.

In the area of schools youth gangs have displayed a powerful negative influence in the following manner:

(a) In schools where youth gangs are in attendance, gang members have been known to assault and intimidate students and members of the school faculty, thereby causing a disruption in the orderly processes of the school's curriculum.

(b) Youth gangs have been observed interrupting the peaceful flow of school children in their travel to and from school.

(c) The gang, because of its negative force and power, has caused school administrators and their faculties to modify and change school programs and curriculums in favor of the gang's

needs and desires. Because of the gang's apparent power, the school administrators become intimidated and make changes they might not ordinarily make,

(d) In some schools where school administrators allow the gang to wear "colors," this overt act is tantamount to a written law that they are the clique that controls that particular school. It is a visual display of their force and strength, and they reap all the benefits possible.

(e) The school and its surrounding grounds is an ideal location for the gang to demonstrate its power and influence in effecting recruitment of students as new members. They use fear tactics, assaults and acts of coercion to recruit.

The youth gang, by virtue of its size and reputation for causing disorder, occasionally intimidates City officials to obtain employment, recreational facilities, and benefits from various other types of community programs. This happens when the gangs spread the word through the streets that the City had better comply or it will be a "Hot Summer." Another example would be the threat that they will demonstrate in front of or inside a City building. The City, knowing full well that the gang might attempt to carry out their threats, attempts to offer token programs, or immediately sends qualified people to speak with the leadership of the threatening youth gang. The youth gang situation has been considered serious and powerful enough by the City of New York to create a special Mayor's Task Force to deal specifically with the gangs.

On many occasions, the youth gangs have attempted to influence our Criminal Justice System by coercing and assaulting people who are witnesses to youth gang crimes. In the Bronx, the gang called the Savage Skulls have been known to post their "colors" (gang jackets) on the door or stoop of a witness, inferring "silence or death." Other gangs have been known to march in front of a witness's residence exhibiting guns and weapons. Recently a New York City Transit Police Officer was shot and seriously wounded, allegedly in reprisal by a youth gang called the Black Spades. The gang was angry because the officer had previously arrested some of the gang members.

The police are confronted daily with the problems and force of the youth gangs, in their involvement with crime and disorder, and they have responded by using additional manpower and creating specialized units to deal with the problem. An area of great concern for the police is the implied power and strength that gangs are attempting to obtain through gang unifications, alliances and coalitions.

Recently questionable adult groups and organizations, such as the Black Liberation Army, Black Mafia, Puerto Rican Socialist Party, M.I.R.A. (Armed Revolutionary Independence Movement), and others, are alleged to have been meeting with youth gangs in an apparent attempt to exploit and utilize the potential force and power of the cliques. This development may eventually present the most serious ramifications to the police and the community since the resurgence of the youth gangs in 1971.

APPENDIX B
EXECUTIVE SESSION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY COURT
November 30, 1973

Mr. Besharov: This is an Executive Session of the Subcommittee on the Family Court.

Mr. Alfaro: I just wanted to start by having you introduce yourself to us formally and tell us what type of work you do, how long you've done it, and what your training was, your background, before you started working in the juvenile system.

Ms. G.: I work in the Queens Family Court. I've worked in the Court for over ten years. I have a Masters in Psychology.

Ms. B.: I've been in the juvenile section of the Court since 1962. I've always worked with juveniles. I have a BA from Brooklyn College and I've done a great deal of work in Columbia School of Social Work. I am now in the graduate section of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice working on my thesis.

Mr. Alfaro: What's your thesis about?

Ms. B.: Gangs.

Mr. Alfaro: I thought maybe you would start by saying, from your work in the Court, what indications you have of the size of the gangs in Queens, whether the gangs are increasing or decreasing, or whether they're spreading around the city or diminishing.

Ms. B.: Perhaps I should define what a violent gang is. A violent

gang is people, youngsters who congregate and who are structured to commit violent acts against the community, which would include youngsters in school, businessmen, adults, etc. and the purpose is primarily to rip them off. And the money is for the youngsters to purchase guns.

Ms. B.: Since August we in the borough of Queens Juvenile term of court have tried to keep records. Now it's not done on any organized or structured manner. Ms. G. and myself have done this. On the average, sixteen juveniles appear in the Intake section daily. On the average -- these are my figures -- there are about three juveniles daily who appear in Court who are involved in these violent gangs.

Mr. Alfaro: How does this compare with, say, a year ago?

Ms. B.: I cannot account for it because there are no records.

Mr. Alfaro: Since the time you've started the counting, does it show any increase or decrease, or is it steady?

Ms. B.: More or less steady. Some days it can go as high as five, but on the average it totals about three.

Mr. Besharov: What allegations of misconduct do they involve?

Mrs. B.: Extortion, assault, homicide, arson, assembling for the purpose of inciting to riot.

Mr. Alfaro: Any sexual offenses?

Ms. B.: Yes. Rape.

Ms. G. Organizing youngsters in the school to tear the school apart.

Ms. B.: Vandalism.

Mr. Besharov: So, said in a some in a somewhat different way, approximately 20 per cent of children going before the Queens County Family Court are involved in gang related activities on the basis of statistics you have compiled.

Ms. B.: That's correct.

Mr. Alfaro: Maybe we should ask about the organization of the gangs. You interview the children, or the gang members that are brought into court, or people in Intake do--what do these kids tell you about the nature of the gangs, their size and organization?

Ms. B.: We don't depend solely on the information gathered from the youngsters. In each police precinct they have what is known as the gang intelligence unit, 103rd, 110th and 112th. They have long lists and I brought some of them from 105th; it's only a partial list.

Mr. Besharov: Let the record indicate that Mrs. B. has just handed us approximately 15 to 20 pages of alphabetical listing of names of children, including their nicknames, their address, sometimes their date of birth and sometimes a number, such as D369...

Mr. Alfaro: Is that a Probation or Court Docket number?

Ms. B.: No. I have to reread that to determine exactly what it means.

Mr. Besharov: You're saying that these are provided by the police department, and this is a list of those children who they believe are involved in gang activity.

Ms. B.: They know. They know because they've picked up the children when they've been involved in some anti-social act.

Mr. Besharov: Do they provide these as a regular course to the Court?

Ms. B.: No. I just begged one of the officers who I'm very friendly with. But this is only the 105th, I still have to get it from the 103rd, 112th and 109th, all of them.

Some of these children are 16 and over, but I just wanted to give you a picture, if you look at the birth dates.

Mr. Alfaro: What is your estimate of the number of kids in Queens who are in gangs?

Ms. B.: I have to base it on the figures given to me: the police say 3,000. I would estimate it to be many more.

Mr. Alfaro: How would you account for your estimate differing from what the official figures seem to be?

Ms. B.: Because I do my own something that's a little unethical. When a youngster comes in, naturally prior to coming to me, the clerk clears to determine whether they're affiliated with any

gangs. They clear with the gang lists and they generally clear with the precinct where the youngster lives. What I do if I take out that list that I just shared with you is: I say, "according to gang intelligence units you are known to belong to"...then I pick a name...the Seven Crowns, the Black Skulls or something...

Mr. Alfaro: This is just a bluff?

Ms. B.: Yes, just a bluff. And inevitably the kid says, "Yea, so what are you going to do about it?" So I feed back to the gang (intelligence) unit additional names. That's happened again and again. It's no good talking like this. I know what you want, you want facts, you want data, statistics, right?

Mr. Alfaro: No, tell us how you get a sense that the official figures may be very low, may not reflect the true incidence of gang membership.

Ms. B.: I also do that in reference to the NC cases, neglected children, because as you know the families are broken, on welfare, no father, the child's a truant normally. I go through the same thing. I also get facts, too, from the NC kids, which bears out what you said before.

Mr. Alfaro: Would you hazard any guess from your own sampling how many kids may be gang members?

Ms. B.: Let me make it 4,000, to be on the safe side.

Mr. Alfaro: You say you get about three a day in the Court who are members of a gang. Of those three, how many are already

known to the police, and how many are ones you've discovered?

Ms. B.: Out of the three, I would say two are generally known.

Mr. Alfaro: You seem to run 1/3 above...

Ms. B.: what the gang intelligence unit gives me.

Mr. Alfaro: Is there anything else you want to say about the size of the gangs?

Ms. B.: I can only document it with one or two cases: for instance, the leader of the Seven Crowns and the Savage Nomads... I have been interested to know the long-term goals.. Besides ripping off to get money, etc., even purchasing guns, etc., but I asked: "What is your long-term goal?" And two leaders of the Seven Crowns and Savage Nomads, over sixteen, one-"J"- stated that their ultimate goal is to become an arm, an adjunct of the Black Liberation Army, which is supposed to have been squelched.

Mr. Alfaro: This is what he told you?

Ms. B.: Oh yes, and then another little one, I can't give you his name, he also thinks that this is their ultimate goal. The Third World, or something.

Mr. Besharov: Ms. B., you're black and you're a trained social worker or at least you've been doing a great deal of this. Don't you think that might just be the puffing of a young boy trying to make an impression?

Ms. B.: Not Mr. Black, who Ms. G. also knows. I thought this was kind of sophisticated coming from a youth like that. I wouldn't

let it lay like that so I said, "How would you help these people?" He said, "We'll provide refuge when they're being hunted down, giving them money to arm themselves, to take off police officers, banks, "etc."

Mr. Besharov: I'd like to pursue something. How do you know Mr. Black--is that his name?

Ms. G: Could I interrupt for a minute? I'd like to give you some introductory material other than numbers. One day I got a case involving Halsey High School, in Queens at 108th Street, where a child was "ripped off". I started asking about what was happening in general in Halsey High School and discovered the place is a horror pit. Somebody told me there are 3,000 children organized all over the city who are "ripping off" children in the schools. In another case, the complainant didn't show up but the respondent was black and he was brought in by his two aunts for an interview. They walked in the door and were terrified saying "Please help us; we're scared to death." She said, "My son is a member of the Seven Crowns and they're waiting for him when he gets out. I said, "What's that?" I hadn't the vaguest idea what all this was about. The complainant hadn't come in so I called him and I said please get down here because I can't pursue the case without you and when the complainant appeared he indicated that he owns a cleaning store, was robbed four times--and he's a black man. He said, "I was intimidated before I came here, they painted seven crowns on my window and they're going to get me. I said, "Well I thought

maybe it was a black-white issue. He said, "That has nothing to do with it." I had to get that child out of my office that day and send him to another borough because he was too frightened to go home. The parents explained to me that the gang had burned a house down of a person in Brooklyn who refused to join the gang-- I had never heard of that before. I consulted one of the black probation officers and I asked, "What's this all about?" She started to explain to me.

The next case about two weeks later, was "J"--, charged with some little offense like resisting an officer which I know would never stand up in court, and the officer who arrested him told me that he's a gang member. I scribbled it down, and "J" said to me, "Well, I'm going to leave town anyhow." The grandmother said he is going to run away from the city because he is scared to death, and I swallowed all of that because I didn't know any better. Meanwhile, I made further inquiries and somebody told me there was a gang intelligence unit so I called and was told that he is the Supreme Commander of the Seven Crowns. One day a little lady comes to see Ms. B. on a PINS complaint (Ms. B.: That's 8/8/73) and mentions the name of "J" and reveals the following: "J" is the president of five boroughs of the Seven Crowns, he had plans to charter a bus to south Boston where he was going to organize people for this gang. He walked around with 12 armed bodyguards carrying 38 caliber guns; this woman noted that they've killed people. The older members of the Crowns organized the younger members to steal from warehouses, they use older people as fences, they've committed arson, intimidation, raping of sisters to get the children to join this gang, organized extortion of school children, vandalism

of department stores, and so on.

Mr. Besharov: You are reading from an official court record, are you not, a chronological record the office of probation keeps on Intake cases.

MS. B.: Let me interject this. The reason why this woman came to us is that three of her children were involved in this gang, and the three had terrorized both her and her husband. There were eight children, and the three older children were in the process of organizing the four younger ones. Under duress-- she had to become like a house mother or den mother--that's why she was able to give us all of these salient facts.

Mr. Alfaro: She came to you because she was frightened?

Ms. B.: Yes, and fearful. She accepted the fact that she lost the older children, 21, 18 and 16. But she was worried about the 15 year old all the way down to 6.

Mr. Alfaro: What was she asking the court to do?

Ms. B.: She wanted a family offense order of protection ousting the three older children from the home.

Mr. Besharov: We should explain that Queens County is in the second Judicial Department, and recognizes disorderly conduct under Article 8 of the Family Court Act to include illegal conduct by a child, disobedience to the parent and that such use of family offense proceedings is generally not resorted to in New York, the Bronx and Staten Island/Richmond counties because in the First Appellate Division, which has jurisdiction there,

has not so interpreted Article 8 of the Family Court Act.
To continue with "J"...

Ms. G.: I subsequently learned... there was nothing I could do. Having all this information, the frustration was that this menace was walking around the streets committing all these crimes, and I could do nothing with him. I subsequently learned that he was convicted on several charges in the Criminal Court-- he had reached sixteen. He was being investigated for a homicide. They had him on three other charges, but they suspected him of this homicide involving the murder of a liquor store owner. The last word this man uttered was "J"'s nickname. The witness was too terrified to testify so they could not continue with this case, and it is still open. On three cases involving knife assault and robbery, they sent him to jail for six months where he is currently. (Ms. B.: Riker's Island). One of the reasons that he was committed is that gang intelligence went to court, personally took an interest in the case, and gave a picture of the defendant.

Ms. B.: That's the gang unit of the police dept.

Ms. G.: We subsequently learned in our office from one of the children that he's still leading his gang--his brother, called Slaughter, took over nominal leadership while he's in jail. But he's still leading the whole situation from the prison cell where he is. So I call up the jail and advise them of this. They said, what can we do, we can't censor his mail--that's the new ruling now--so nothing could be done. Every officer that came in to see me in informal conversation brought this

situation up, the gang intelligence people were beside themselves, they didn't know where to turn to get any help. Finally we had a meeting in our office with probation officers, people from the gang intelligence unit, youth services administration and so on. Now if you have the patience and the time I just want to read to you a brief paragraph...

Mr. Besharov: Before we do that--will you be able to share with us a copy of the record of the meeting?

Ms. G.: Yes, I have it here. This is a record of the meeting about gangs that we had with representatives from the community, with parents, with Youth Services Administration, with anybody that was interested.

Mr. Besharov: If you could share it with us we could make a xerox of it here and you can take the original back and edit it as you wish.

Ms. G.: For further discussion here, I just wanted to mention the following: Merchants or individuals attacked by members of gangs are intimidated and do not go through with complaints -- it's a very important issue here. Parents of the children involved in the gang activities were also intimidated. These are innocent members of the community. The respondent's parents complained about gang members threatening to rape their daughters, burn their homes, and beat their children and their families. One of the mothers whose child was brought into Family Court on charges testified. She stated, and this is directly from her, that parents of the children who are members of the gang refuse to recognize that their children are involved in

gang activities, they threaten parents who bring complaints to court, threatening to take care of the parents and their families. The mother stated that her son was at the point where he was walking down the street with a stick to protect himself, she found out her son was a gang member and noticed a change in his behavior. He wouldn't listen to her; the mother was beside herself. She lost control of the child once he was out in the street. The gang takes over the child; parents take a back seat. Gang members become brothers and sisters more important than the parents, they take all their orders from the gang. One of our probation officers stated he received a call saying that the Seven Crowns were burning his house down. He doesn't live in that house but it belongs to him. The woman who rents an apartment there is afraid to bring her child back to the home. On the same date that these reports were received, Molotov cocktails were thrown at the house.

Mr. Besharov: I think that document really does speak for itself, and we will just include it as an appendix. Before we proceed, the list of juveniles, from ages, I suppose 17 to 30, handed to me by Ms. B...

Ms. B.: No that's incorrect. That's 14 to 28. The oldest is 28.

Mr. Besharov: Ages 14 to 28, from the 110th precinct, which is an alphabetical listing of juveniles and older persons known to be associated with or known to be gang members, came to approximately 619 and I'm now handing back to Ms. B. those names.

Ms. G.: I wanted to continue with some of the material which is not

in the written records which we submitted to you. We had one child who tried to get out of a gang and he ended up first in a mental hospital due to the pressure and tension.

When he came out of the hospital, they still intimidated and harassed him, and he committed suicide. One of our probation officers attended his funeral. This burning of this poor woman is related to the Seven Crowns here.

Mr. Besharov: Who says that? I heard that and found it a little bit hard to swallow. I don't need the names, just tell me...

Ms. B.: You remember I advised before of a woman who was sort of a den-gang-mother. At the time "J" was proposing plans to go to Roxbury Mass. for the purpose of organizing the Seven Crowns. We alerted the gang unit and they in turn alerted the FBI. However, instead of going on the specified date that they initially had decided upon, they went a day later, and therefore they escaped detection. When the incident occurred, one of the youngsters in the Seven Crowns -- now I guess this isn't factual -- boasted the fact that his boys set out to do what they did. Was it a woman that was stabbed or a man?

Mr. Besharov: Let me see if I can clarify that for a second. You're telling me that you were told, prior to the incident in Boston, that they were going up there; and then after the incident you're saying that one of the gang members boasted to someone that they had been involved. Who did he boast to, without a name?

Ms. B: It was to me.

Ms. G: We had a case of a group of Skulls who were found in an abandoned building with all kinds of weapons. One of them was a girl, and in an interview with me she told me that one child refusing to relinquish 35¢ was beaten on the head seven hundred times with a hammer. Of course the child finally died.

In a little confrontation between the Skulls and the Crowns, one of the female members turned her back on one of the others and they stabbed her four times in the chest and four times in the back--no complaint was ever made. They thought she had died, but she lived somehow, miraculously. Then there was a youngster who was found dead on a park bench--they called it suicide, and it turned out to be murder.

Ms. B.: Also unsolved.

Mr. Besharov: Who called it a suicide?

Ms. B.: 103rd police precinct.

Mr. Besharov: And how does it now turn out that it's considered a homicide?

Ms. G.: I interviewed this particular girl, and she knew about it. Not only did she know about the case, but every little gang member I talked to knew the case and they all said to me, "that wasn't suicide".

Mr. Besharov: You're trained workers. My great fear is, we get such a sense that these kids want to be seen as macho, etc. Isn't it possible that they take a suicide and they decide to

claim some kind of credit for it? Even if they didn't take part?

Ms. G.: They didn't tell me they had done it, they just knew...

Unrelated children came in to me...

Mr. Besharov: But don't you--you know the way rumors...

Ms. G.: They know...

Ms. B.: In reference to this suicide: I subsequently got the brother, the sibling, who told me that his brother did not commit suicide. He was endeavoring to get out of the gang to join another rival gang and he was shot. That information was given to me on 8/14/73.

Mr. Besharov: What did you do with that information?

Ms. B.: I gave it to Officer Peoples and I don't know what happened.

Mr. Besharov: I have to ask you a difficult question which is a little afield for me, and let me go off the record... I'd like to ask a follow-up question on the record. After that referral to the police department to investigate what was first seen as a suicide, did anything result from the investigation?

Ms. B.: I do not know, I never followed up. In response to the increase in gangs, now this I will also share with you, the Lutheran Prince of Peace Church pastored by Howard Funk, called a meeting which I went to on 10/25/73, and you'll see all the list of people who came--I called the meeting because one of the members of Reverend Funk's church --her youngster--

had money extorted from him and she went to the aid of her child and one of the respondent youngsters who was involved in a gang did fight with her , but evidently she lost. So the respondent youngster went and brought his mother back and she destroyed the other woman's car and broke every single window in her house. This wasn't the first instance. So as a result of this and many other things that happened in this area, a meeting was called with Youth Service Agency, Boy Scout leaders, social workers, PTA and all. The essence of this meeting was this: the gangs must be contained. Social workers believe the genesis of the gangs was caused by racism, discrimination; that gang members were deprived, they needed jobs, recreation, etc. But the other half was fed up. They said they were going to organize themselves into vigilante groups and they were going to handle it themselves. I think this is important.

Mr. Alfaro: Which community is this?

Ms. B.: Cambria Heights, 114-09 to 226th Street. That was the Lutheran Prince of Peace Church.

Mr. Alfaro: Did they express any feelings they had about any agencies or the juvenile justice system being able to protect the community?

Ms. B.: A lot of the ordinary citizens there were fed up. They said they're supposed to be protected, they're not. Their property is being vandalized. Their children are being assaulted in the schools, and a lot of them walk the streets in terror.

These are ordinary citizens, home owners.

Mr. Alfaro: Did they go ahead and start this vigilante patrol?

Ms. B.: I don't know, I never went back. That was October 25, 1973.

Mr. Alfaro: I want to try to get a clearer picture of how these gangs are organized. We hear reports that there are networks of gangs within New York City, and some people say they go outside New York City, other people say they don't.

Mr. Besharov: Again, only if you have personal knowledge. If you're going to relate it to the newspaper articles I think we really shouldn't discuss it.

Mr. Alfaro: When you handle these kids in the Court you get a sense if gang member X has any relation to gang member in the Bronx or in Jersey City, or whatever.

Mr. Besharov: You've already mentioned, for example, "J" was president of the five borough Seven Crowns.

Ms. B.: You say you don't want me to mention any other source of information...

Mr. Besharov: I just said not newspaper accounts.

Ms. B.: Well, according to the Officer Peoples and Officer Walker, of 103rd Police Precinct Gang Intelligence, they report that the Seven Crowns have an active chapter in the Virgin Islands, St. Thomas and Kingston, Jamaica.

Mr. Besharov: As an aside here, you've spoken to people, does

that story change?

Mr. Alfaro: He was less sure about it. He says that they are organizing around the City and have some connections outside the City. But he was reluctant to say anything about going into the...

Ms. B.: That's in our minutes, so I don't have to worry about that...

Ms. G.: Let me quote on this. At our meeting Sgt. Cotter was the one who brought that up. He emphasized the size of current gangs: they "can take over a whole borough" and that "there are gangs who even have members in the Virgin Islands."

Mr. Alfaro: What do you know about, from your contact with the leaders and the members, about the leadership of these gangs? Who directs them? Where do they get their expertise from? Their organizational ability?

Ms. B.: This is from my experience. Viet Nam veterans are disillusioned for one reason or the other. They are the ones that coach them in the arts of fighting: various things, judo, karate, kung fu, and also how to operate the guns which can vary from .38 police guns to Magnums. And also it's organized in this manner: you have a president, a vice president, and you have a war lord. Also you have parallel structures in reference to females: you have a Seven Crown male and you have a Seven Crown female. Also you'll have baby Crowns...

Mr. Alfaro: It's like a church auxiliary.

Mr. Besharov: The term "women's auxiliary" has been used.

Ms. B.: Also you have the infants, from 7 to 11, organized.

Mr. Alfaro: They recruit at the age of seven?

Ms. B.: We have had them as young as six. The six year olds they use as lookouts, but seven year olds are pretty much in it.

Mr. McDonald: This is a subdivision in the whole gang? What is the limit of their participation?

Ms. B.: They engage in extortion, or department store robberies, lookouts mainly. They'll be playing a game, divert attention from the older members when they're involved in anything.

Mr. Alfaro: Who gets arrested in these gangs?

Ms. B.: Mainly? Not the leaders. The followers.

Mr. Alfaro: Do the followers talk when they're arrested?

Ms. B.: I have means of making them talk. I don't harm them, but I use, I told you before what sort of methods.

Mr. Besharov: You use traditional casework methods.

Mr. Alfaro: I gather what happens is: the leaders remain in the background as directors, and the chance that the leader gets arrested in a gang action is slight.

Ms. B.: That's correct.

Mr. Besharov: Are these gangs organized to fight other gangs or are these gangs to do other things?

Ms. B.: There is warfare among various gangs, particularly your white gangs and black gangs, and between the powerful gangs, the Seven Crowns, the Black Skulls, the Nomads. However, again I'm going back to my original opinion that they're organized for something higher. They're organized to control the area through forceful means, weapons. Control it for what? I don't know. Power. They don't like the police, black, white... I guess we'd have to go into a lot of sociological theories and stuff like that. Maybe this is an aftermath of the civil rights struggle where the consciousness of whites was not really aroused. It was just shamed, and they see the situation the same as it was prior to 1950. Now, you tell me these are youngsters, they cannot conceptualize and know all this-- but they have parents and they see movies and all. Maybe it sinks down, I don't know. But when a kid tells me that he is going to help the Black Liberation Army at all costs, this is frightening to me.

Mr. Besharov: What you seem to be saying is that there are elements of this gang movement, at least in the minority gangs, that relate to--and I'm not trying to put any value judgement on them--but there are elements of this gang movement that relate to some of the broader social movements that our cities have been facing.

More in terms of Puerto Rican gangs but I guess that's because the word is Spanish--a need on the part of these

young people for machismo, to seem macho and brave and just to have control over some little element of their lives. In your experience, is that also true?

Ms. B.: Yes.

Mr. Besharov: Do you want to ramble a little? From your own sense of it.

Ms. B.: I'll talk about "K". He's a boy who has been in more than seventeen times. He's like a little gamin, nobody, no parents, no nothing. He can verbalize quite ably about this ethnic group being discriminated against, etc. etc.

Mr. Besharov: Can we play a game? You're in Intake now, one of the last stops. You've been in the Investigation section of Probation and you've done I&R's, right? You've done reports to the Court.

Ms. B.: Yes, sure.

Mr. Besharov: How about, in an abbreviated form, a report to the Court on "K"? I'm trying to give a little structure to his case.

Ms. B.: All right. "K", age anywhere from 13 to 14, has been in Court a total of eleven times, engaged in various acts from pilfering up to assault with a deadly weapon. Family structure, according to our records, unknown, because we subsequently learned that his name is not what he said, but is different, gathered from the gang intelligence unit.

Because this child lacks restraints, doesn't seem to have any supervision, we are recommending remand to the youth center for study.

Mr. Besharov: When you say you don't know his family structure, you've got "K" in Court and you don't have the sense of where he came from, you don't know what schools he went to, you don't have any school records.

Ms. B.: Although he's been arrested eleven times, he's only been known to Queens five. Every time he comes to Queens I have him.

Mr. Besharov: How do you know he's the same kid as the other eleven times?

Ms. B.: Because he gave the name "K" in the other four boroughs.

Mr. Besharov: I get the sense that, except for knowing his prior arrest record, you don't know anything about this kid.

Ms. B.: No. Subsequently, however, he got fed up with being in Youth House. The next time he appeared before me he did give me his name and I was able to track down his parents.

Mr. Alfaro: Was that the first time you could reach his parents?

Mr. Besharov: That's after eleven arrests. So the system, for eleven arrests didn't get his name and proceeded without knowing his history and I assume proceeded to release him ten times without knowing anything about him.

Ms. B.: I can only account for five.

Mr. Besharov: I assume he was released because he was on the streets. I'm not trying to be critical. But ten times he was released with a fake name with no history on him.

Ms. B.: Right.

Mr. Besharov: This is a question that's more generic to all of what goes on in the system. How in the world can you release someone when you don't have any history on him?

Ms. B.: Let me brief you carefully and say what goes on in Court. On the Intake level the cases which should go to court are determined and can be adjusted/settled. Then it goes up to the Intake part. The child is represented by the Law Guardians. Inevitably the Law Guardians for this particular child would recommend some alternate plan of detention, not youth house because he can just walk away.

Mr. Besharov: But how can the Court liason officer, in court, go along with that? The Intake report must say, "we don't know who this kid is."

Ms. B.: Because he's represented by a Law Guardian, and the Law Guardians are very powerful in the Court. The parallel person to the Law Guardian is the Corporation Counsel who is very, very weak--you have the worse type of lawyers there, failures.

Mr. Besharov: I've heard people say that the Law Guardians, because of their predominant positions, can intimidate the court and court personnel and force a decision on the court that many of

the professionals might not want to accept.

Ms. B.: This is correct. Because our court officers up there, our probation officers, keep mum. They won't speak up.

Mr. Besharov: This juvenile "K"--on the eleventh arrest, do you happen to remember what the allegations were?

Ms. B.: Extortion. He stole a youngster's bike and robbed him of every penny that he had.

Mr. Besharov: Who did he rob?

Ms. B.: A youngster, an eleven year old child. But the father this time got into his car and was able to apprehend the child.

Mr. Besharov: And what were the other arrests for?

Ms. B.: Extortion, assault, shoplifting. He was a truant-- never goes to school, but we didn't know that until we knew his real name.

Mr. Besharov: Had he even been brought into court under his real name for truancy?

Ms. B.: I regret to tell you that I did not investigate that. After I found out his real name I thought that was the most wonderful thing that had happened.

Mr. Besharov: It would be an interesting question. Could we presume upon you to--we can get it officially if you can provide us with his real name, and you can even check with your

supervisor--we'd like to get court records on him, because this is an interesting question. It seems to me that this kid-- who's not doing so many terrible things--might have been caught earlier, faster, if the Board of Education had brought him up. I'm not saying they did or didn't, but one gets the sense from the statistics that do exist in the Board of Education about what they come to court with--99 and 3/4%, and that's the actual statistic--don't come to court.

Ms. B.: That is correct.

Mr. Besharov: Do you have anything there in terms of written materials that you want to discuss at this time?

Ms. B.: I want to show you what occurs with the bulk of the children after the police have made extensive reports, they're processed in Intake and it goes to court. The court is used as a sort of revolving door. Case #1...

Mr. Besharov: Are these now case histories that you've summarized?

Ms. B.: Yes.

Mr. Besharov: If I could request that we insert this verbatim in your testimony and also put it as an appendix--I don't think we have to read it into this record. Ms. B. will now summarize her conclusions as based upon these seven or eight case histories.

Ms. B.: A sampling of the eight histories that I handled from August until October indicates that after arrest and process in court, the youngsters in almost every case with the exception

of one, were released. The cases are adjourned again and again and again.

Mr. Besharov: What do you attribute that to?

Ms. G.: I'd like to add a couple of facts to that if I might. There are some that she hasn't listed. I went through some of the cases in addition to several others, I went through about 15 serious cases that are known even to the little clerks that collect cards down there. There were many--some kids have five, six and seven petitions, one youngster had ten petitions on serious crimes--and they were floating around, cases being adjourned and adjourned until the end of time. There's one particular one--he's a celebrity in the court. He was brought in once for beating children with chains in the schoolyard. The second time a policeman who was pretending to be an old, crippled man took out some money to pay a news-dealer, a \$20 bill. He was pounced upon by this respondent, and then mugged by eight others who were waiting: the poor cop ended up hospitalized. This thing happened in August--the respondent is still on the street; he's got five other cases pending. He's going to be sixteen by the time he comes comes back to court in December or whatever it is, at which time they'll release him. This little that we mentioned, he's one of the heads of the Savage Nomads, he's been in and out. We let him out again for stealing, an apartment theft where he stole a carbine which, of course, he intended to use.

Mr. Besharov: A carbine rifle?

Ms. G.: Right. They paroled him home for that offense and we received a desperate call the following day. Ms. B. got the call from a policeman at the school which he was either attending or not attending...

Ms. B.: Not attending...

Ms. G.: He was organizing a baby group of the Savage Nomads and he was terrorizing the school. We advised them there was very little we could do. The policeman, however, was so desperate that he came in the following Monday. The branch chief, Ms. B., everybody went up to court on that case to see if we could somehow keep him confined for a little while, at least to quiet matters down. He's now roaming the streets again.

Mr. Besharov: He's fourteen, right?

Ms. G.: Right, and he brags and says nothing will happen to him. Kids walk out of this court laughing at us.

Mr. Besharov: Did he end up in detention?

Ms. G.: He was there for three days and out. He has four cases pending.

Mr. Besharov: He was put in three days after you made a big thing about it, and released after three days. Why was he released?

Ms. B.: I don't know, there's some rule...

Mr. Besharov: Yes, there's a statutory rule. They couldn't come to trial within three days?

Ms. G.: I just want to add the famous stabbing we recently had ... This case was in the papers. An auto stopped for a red light and the respondent youth, a pedestrian, objected to the abrupt halt of the auto near him. This youngster became incensed and went over to the car. I guess words were exchanged, and he dragged the driver, a young man, out of the car. More words followed and he took out a knife and stabbed the driver. They were strangers to each other. When this boy came into court after the little intake investigation, we were curious to know what happened, so I questioned one of the Court Liaison Officers, who advised me that if she had not pressured for a remand for at least a little while, the law guardian was ready to let him out in the street the same day on the basis of a technicality.

Ms. B.: Let me add that a police officer witnesses this youngster stabbing the young man.

Mr. Alfaro: How old was the Youngster?

Ms. B.: Fourteen

Mr. Besharov: Where is that kid who did the stabbing now?

Ms. G.: He's now in remand.

Ms. B. He is not in remand, he is out.

Mr. Besharov: It wasn't homicide, it was just a stabbing, is that correct?

Ms. B.: Homicide.

Mr. Besharov: He is now out of jail? Out of Spofford? Are you absolutely positive of that fact? Do you want to verify that on the phone?

Ms. B.: Verified Child still in remand.

Ms. G.: I was in this court for one month and of course I didn't know too much. I get a child on some very mild offense and I dig through a little: he's out on a warrant for homicide. Then I find out that he was returned on this warrant for homicide and the judge paroled him again. He doesn't show up again and they issue another warrant for him. So he returns to court, he's paroled on two warrants for homicide. I said, what can I do with this case, shouldn't I remand him or something? Nothing will happen, I was advised. On this particular case you'll have to parole him home because of this weak charge. Here the legal guardians will let him out. That was the end. I let him go.

Mr. Besharov: Why don't we start with this case which was in the newspapers, with, first of all, your understanding of the allegations.

Ms. G.: The allegations were, as reported by the New York City Police officer, that a fracas occurred involving "W" and the deceased. What happened was the driver of the auto, a young man, stopped abruptly at the light and our subject, the respondent child, was in the process of crossing the street, and he was insulted at the abrupt stop. He went to the car which was locked and forced the driver to open the door, and he did open it, and the fight ensued. During the fight the

respondent child, was in the process of crossing the street, and he was insulted at the abrupt stop. He went to the car which was locked and forced the driver to open the door, and he did open it, and the fight ensued. During the fight the respondent child plunged a knife into the driver's chest.

Mr. Besharov: This was witnessed by a police officer. I wonder why he couldn't get there fast enough.

Ms. B.: There was a huge crowd that had formed. And he was with another officer, a fellow officer. I don't know why...

Mr. Besharov: Was the victim white?

Ms. B.: No, Spanish. It's interesting to note that the child, knowing that the police actually witnessed it, denied vociferously that he stabbed him. And on the basis of that the Law Guardian sought to have the whole case thrown out.

Mr. Besharov: O.K., so the case was brought into Queens County Family Court, and an Intake interview was done, even though it's one of the cases that generally gets referred right up. Did you happen to do that interview?

Ms. B.: Yes, I did it. You have to get the history of the family in order to determine its strengths. On the record it showed no previous contacts. I was discussing it and a fellow officer in the court says, "I know this boy." So we checked the records together and it was revealed that a month prior

to this case his mother had brought a PINS petition alleging that the child was a chronic and habitual truant, he kept late hours, he was associating with the Seven Crowns...

Mr. Besharov: How old is he?

Ms. B.: He's fourteen.

Mr. Besharov: Why is it that in your search of the records you did not find the PINS petition?

Ms. B.: That is not my fault, that is the fault of the clerk. I don't know.

Mr. Besharov: No, no. I know that when you say your search of the records that means that you fill out a little slip and someone goes looking.

Mr. Alfaro: Were they under different names, or something?

Ms. B.: No, we had the same name, address, birth date, everything. Luckily we found it. And when it went before the judge...

Mr. Besharov: Just a minute, can I slow you down a little? During your intake interview of the parent, did you interview her before or after you found out about the PINS petition?

Ms. B.: Before.

Mr. Besharov: When you interviewed her, did she give you any sense of this previous difficulty, or what?

Ms. B.: She said he attended school regularly, his marks were

above average, never had any trouble with him. In other words he was an outstanding boy.

Mr. Besharov: What she was doing was withholding from you that previous information. Have you since that first interview spoken to her again and asked, "why did you..."

Ms. B.: No, because on an Intake level you interview them once, unless a parent comes down to thank you, or something after court process.

Mr. Besharov: What do you think about a system that gives a child and family at least four social workers and probation officers to each case?

Ms. B.: Four?

Mr. Besharov: Intake, court liaison, investigation, and supervision.

Mr. Alfaro: Do you think it would be better if they had one?

Ms. B.: I don't know how we could follow it all the way through. Because we have to determine whether it needs the action of the court, or a judge.

Ms. G.: Isn't that for the legal guardians to do? They maneuver so that a case is adjourned, and while it's in a state of adjournment for at least five months, nobody has any contact; they try to keep a finding from being made. When a finding is made the probation officer takes over and supervises. But in that interim period...

Ms. B.: And during that period when there's no finding made,

that's when the law guardians have the most power. They are able to manipulate, they have their youngsters involved in casework. When they come back to court the judge is given reports from the psychiatric clinic or a social work agency, etc.

Mr. Besharov: Of course, that's their job. Your point from what you said earlier, is not what they're doing, but that there's no countervailing force in the court. You don't say the law guardians should sit there meekly, like everyone else does. What you're saying is, somebody ought to speak up in the interests of the community.

Ms. B.: Right.

Ms. G.: That's a very important point, because the complainant very often is put on the stand and she becomes the respondent. If the mother brings in a kid on a PINS or truancy, they put her up against the wall, and she is to blame, and the child is the innocent one.

Mr. Besharov: By the way, when you interviewed the boy, was he willing to talk to you?

Ms. B.: He didn't have any choice. They had him in youth house, and they brought him down.

Mr. Besharov: Was he open in his discussion with you?

Ms. B.: After a little prodding.

Mr. Besharov: After some prodding, what kind of things did he

talk about?

Ms. B.: He said that the driver of the car almost ran him over and he was angry. The driver had a friend with him--and the driver voluntarily came out of the car and started the fight with him. This friend was the one who had the knife. Inadvertently the driver must have fallen over it.

Mr. Besharov: But talking about himself, what did he say about himself? I know you asked questions about his family, school.

Ms. B.: He said he was getting along fine, adjusting well...

Mr. Besharov: He didn't mention his gang?

Ms. B.: No way.

Mr. Alfaro: This was before you found the PINS case. Did he change after you found that?

Ms. B.: I didn't see him after that.

Mr. Besharov: What would your recommendation have been on the basis of your interviews and the history you had, which was no prior contacts?

Ms. B.: I still would have recommended it.

Mr. Besharov: What would your recommendation about detention have been?

Ms. B.: I would have recommended that they detain him and have a full study done, psychiatric, psychometric, physical, everything.

Mr. Besharov: What happened when the case reached court?

Ms. B.: The law guardian pleaded with the presiding judge to release the child because he'd never been in previously on any delinquency charge. When the court liason officer heard that she phoned me and immediately went up there with the PINS case and alerted the judge to the seriousness of the act and past actions of the boy, and his affiliations with the Seven Crown's.

Mr. Besharov: Let me ask you a 64-dollar question. Assume that this boy is successfully adjudicated a juvenile delinquent. I imagine the PINS proceeding is over, there hasn't been any adjudication. First, what would be the probation recommendation-- from other cases like that? And second, what is the reality of what will happen to him?

Ms. B.: At the worst, or at best, he will be sent to-- is it Highland now? A New York State Training School for Boys, and the judge generally states a period of 6 months to 18 months. But the average stay there is 3 to 6 months.

Mr. Besharov: And that's it?

Ms. B.: No, that's not true. They have an aftercare unit.

Mr. Besharov: I should tell you some stories about aftercare.

Ms. B.: I know.

Mr. Besharov: Do you have many relations with aftercare?

Ms. B.: Luckily the person who works with the aftercare boys has an office directly across from me, and I happen to know him quite well.

Mr. Besharov: Are aftercare records readily available to the office of probation?

Ms. B.: No way. You get an oral contact, that's about all.

Mr. Besharov: What if a boy is in a state training school for 3 months and goes out in aftercare and commits another crime?

Ms. B.: I have one right here.

Mr. Besharov: What happens?

Ms. B.: I recommend that he be returned. He was there from April 12, 1972 to October 13, 1973. Two weeks later he was involved in organizing a crime of burglary. He organized a group of three youngsters on 10/13, and if they had been successful they would have robbed four stores: it was a big time thing.

Mr. Besharov: Where is that boy now?

Ms. B.: He's in youth house.

Mr. Besharov: My question wasn't exactly clear. Since you know

that he was previously in a state training school and under aftercare supervision, I imagine that one of the steps you would have taken at the intake interview would be to contact aftercare. What kind of information do they share with you then?

Ms. B.: They tell me whether the boy is registered in school, whether he reports to them, if he was recommended for treatment, whether he goes...

Mr. Besharov: Are they open with the information they have? Is there more you could ask for?

Ms. B.: With me, yes they are open. I guess I could ask for more.

Mr. Besharov: One of the reasons I ask is not having anything to do with this kind of case. But in placements by the Bureau of Child Welfare into voluntary child welfare agencies, the Bureau of Child Welfare won't give them their file with all the psychological work ups, etc. That seems to me to be a very shortsighted policy, and I was just wondering whether, if aftercare has a set of psychiatrics and stuff, whether that stuff finds its way to the court's knowledge. The court can use that material.

Ms. B.: I would get just an oral record, but there's no way they would give me more.

Mr. Besharov: Is that because you never ask, or what?

Ms. B.: No, that's the policy.

Mr. Alfaro: Would it help you if you could have more than the oral report?

Ms. B.: Of course. You could document the case better.

Mr. Besharov: One of the things that concerns this committee is fragmentation. I'm told that there are more aftercare workers in New York City than probation officers. This seems to me to make little sense. They do the same thing, only at different times in a child's history. Why isn't there one kind of umbrella coordinating agency of some sort? Or at least some close cooperation, not on a personal basis so that you can call and ask, but automatically? I almost get the feeling that they become advocates, it seems, for the kid, and they argue against detention and terms at state training schools.

Ms. G.: I had one arrested seventeen times, and also was on aftercare--I think he assaulted an old lady and came to me for this. I recommended a remand for him to be sent back to the training school. He was out the following day, still out on aftercare.

Ms. B.: In order to help us a little better I prepared this form. I've asked the office to have it typed up so that every officer who's dealing with youth or a family offense to have it as part of the record. This would give us an idea of the affiliations of the youngster with gangs. It isn't a very good form but it's one I did hurriedly.

Ms. G. YOU know the problem you have now getting psychiatric

information--you have to have notarized forms. It's as if we were the enemy.

Ms. B: I strongly recommend a corporation counsel equal to in strength, profession and know-how to the present day law guardian.

Mr. Besharov: I think they have in fact reassigned some people there in the last month. Have you heard about those new measures?

Ms. B. I haven't. The ones they have now are sad. The law guardians are young, just out of law school.

Mr. Besharov: They're aggressive.

Ms. B.: They're really dedicated.

Mr. Besharov: You started talking about just what I wanted to end this on. Whatever things you see which make a quick and important impact--not necessarily to remedy the whole situation--things that would make an impact on how we handle these cases. Feel free to say anything in the last few minutes.

Ms. B.: First of all you mentioned Corporation Counsel. That's our greatest weakness in the courts. To combat the aggressiveness of the law guardians. Also I believe that there should be greater and closer working with the YAU, Youth Adolescent Unit of the police--no YAD, Youth Aid Division. Because about ten years ago they were very helpful.

Mr. Besharov: My understanding is that they don't exist that much any more. The majority of the members of Youth Aid were transferred into traffic a few years ago.

Ms. B.: They don't have them anymore? Some officers come in and report YD's. Where are they getting the facts from?

Mr. Besharov: The way the YD-1 works is that every three cards--when a kid got three cards they'd go out for them--that staff has been reduced by 50%. Look at what's happened to your branch in the last three years. Ok, stronger YD-1. By the way, how would you evaluate the YSA activities in your borough?

Ms. B.: I'm going to be very frank, I don't care if I'm on record or off. From my readings and the little I've read on the Youth Board: the Youth Board in the 50's were a very adequate group of dedicated people who went out on the street and worked with these kids, if they had problems they'd do things to remedy it. The YSA of today operates in offices only. There's no reaching out. I think that they could serve us and the court better if they share their findings and profiles with us. It's like pulling teeth to get it.

Mr. Alfaro: Why don't they reach out?

Ms. B.: I don't know. They say they can't get any young people to actually work--it's dangerous.

Mr. Alfaro: They're afraid?

Ms. B.: They are. In fact, we have PO's that are afraid to go out and make visits. B-40

Mr. Besharov: One thing that's been pointed out to us is that the Board of Education has absolutely no program for gangs.

Ms. B.: None. N-o-n-e. And their failure, the failure of the school, lies in the ineffectiveness of the truant officer. They don't, they fail to bring in the truants. Therefore, truants roam from school to school doing whatever they want to do, vandalism, extortion, assault.

Mr. Besharov: If there were strong enforcement of the truancy rules, then it seems that there'd be less time for the kids to hang around together, right?

Ms. B.: People working in the gang units tell you that during school hours, you can go into any school, even Forest Hills, around the school, or in the bathroom and find youngsters drinking and doing whatever the heck they feel like doing.

Mr. Alfaro: You mentioned to me before that your impression that the schools don't report incidents because they're afraid of getting a bad name.

Ms. B.: That is correct.

Ms. G.: I think one of the weaknesses behind this thing is these kids have an implicit permission to commit mayhem because they know nothing will happen to them. This work is spread around all over the place. They all know this.

Mr. Besharov: Have any of these kids ever said that to you?

Ms. G.: Yes, they've said it to Ms. B.

Mr. Besharov: What do they say?

Ms. B.: I'll say, "well I have to send you up to the courthouse"-- they say "so what, nothing will happen".

Mr. Besharov: Any comments about what goes on at Spofford, in relation to the availability of drugs or ...

Ms. B.: I can tell you what "k" told me, that they wouldn't keep him there beyond a day because he has methods of getting out. And there have been incidents of children, especially when they go to meals, they line up and they go along a corridor and they have someone from the outside, they can spring a door and they can walk right out. The security there isn't good.

Mr. Besharov: Have you ever been there?

I've been there many, many times. Five, six, seven or eight-- I've been in the court a long time.

Mr. Besharov: Anything else?

Ms. G.: She mentioned to me a case of a kid who put a knife to the throat of an 80-year-old-man. He came bouncing in. There is an arrogance and a coldness that's unbelievable. There is no remorse, there is no feeling about the most vicious crime, and this is what's frightening. So this child bounced around in her office, "so what, what's the difference, I'm going to bomb my parents' home..."

She ran to court to the Court Liaison Officer to reveal this and the respondent walked out that afternoon, because of some technicality.

APPENDIX C
GANG QUESTIONNAIRE

- I. What information does your agency have about juvenile gangs?
 - A. What factors or criteria does your agency use to define a juvenile gang? What distinctions, if any, do you make between gangs? (E. g., concerning purpose of gang conduct or that of members.)
 - B. In what geographic areas of the city do gangs exist? Please specify by specific local community the number of gangs both estimated and actually identified. Also please specify how many gang members are estimated and identified within the same areas.
 - C. To what extent has the existence of gangs and their membership changed in the last five years? Again, please specify by local community.
 - D. How are gangs organized? (E. g., how is leadership and geographic area determined?)
 - E. What types of activities, both legal and illegal, anti-social and constructive, do gang members engage in? (Please be specific.) (E.g., to what extent do they engage in violence, drug abuse, extortion, and truancy?)
 - F. What is the geographic scope of gang activities?
 - G. What is the ordinary composition of gang membership? (E.g., age, ethnicity, and sex.)
 - H. What type of Family do gang members come from? (E.g., intact homes, broken homes, welfare families, working poor families, middle income families, upper income families.)
 - I. Generally, what is the income level of the families of gang members in relation to the average income level of the community in which gangs live or operate?
- II. What does your agency do in relation to juvenile gangs?
 - A. What manpower and budget allocations are specifically made for gang related activities of your agency or can be identified as so used?
 - B. How does your agency first learn about a specific gang?
 - C. How many gangs are your directly and indirectly dealing with? (Please specify both and explain.) How many gang members are involved in each category?

D. What does your agency do when it first learns of a gang?
Is a distinction in response made between types of gangs?
And if so, please specify and explain.

E. What does your agency do when it learns of impending gang "friction" or specific illegal activity? (Please specify as to both.)

F. What does your agency do to curtail the anti-social behavior of gang members?

G. What problems does your agency perceive in dealing with gangs?

III. How does your agency perceive the role of governmental and private agencies in relation to juvenile gangs?

A. Are gangs, or are certain gangs, socially desirable?
(Please specify and explain.)

B. Assuming that certain gangs or certain gang activities not socially desirable, what can governmental and private agencies do about them?

C. What should the role of other agencies be? (Please specify and explain.)

D. What should be, as opposed to what is, the role of your agency?

END