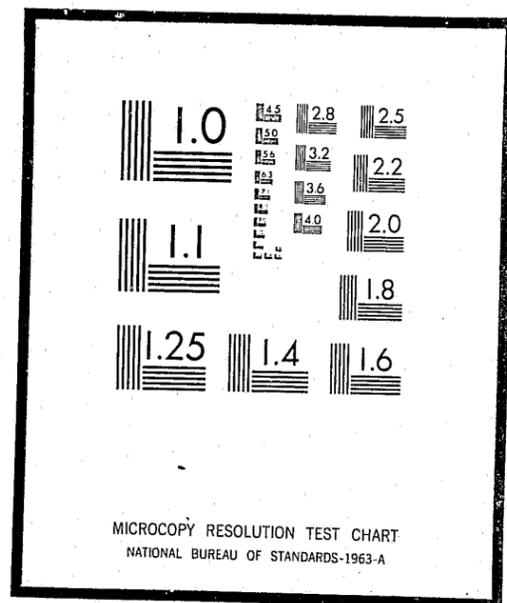


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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
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SELECTED REPRINTS

Safe Streets

by Jerry Laughlin

In the aftermath of a peak of public concern and dialogue on our nation's "crime problem," states and local government units, aided by the newly enacted "Safe Streets" legislation, are beginning the more difficult task of doing something about it. Under the pressure for immediate action, there will be a continuing temptation for public officials to avoid the obvious and difficult task of planning concerted and effective action, and instead, demonstrate tangible hardware and "show piece" programs without regard to the overall relation or effect on the total crime problem.

We know relatively little about crime or how to prevent it. We do know that any solution to the total problem will have to come as a result of the better and more efficient working of complex criminal justice systems. These systems not only involve the various functional law enforcement disciplines—police, sheriffs, courts, corrections,—but each function within the system must operate under a welter of state, county, city, town, and village jurisdictions. In New York State, there are over 3,600 separate units of law enforcement. In Cook County, Ill., there are over 100 separate units. It is crystal clear that the nation's counties, with their broad and varied law enforcement functions, and particularly the role of the county sheriff, will become increasingly involved in any consideration of the complex multi-functional, multi-jurisdictional challenges to better and more efficient law enforcement in the nation.

Under the omnibus "Crime Control and Safe Street Act of 1968," the states, counties, and cities of the nation will have the opportunity to take a long look at their efforts in the broad field of law enforcement. They will also have the opportunity to undertake a mutual and coordinated planning effort which could surpass anything done in the past to strengthen and improve crime control effectiveness.

Under the act, administered by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration within the Justice Department, \$19 million will be distributed for plan-



ning purposes to states and local government units this fiscal year. The money will be apportioned by block grants on a population basis to the states, but at least 40 per cent of each state's allocation for planning must be made available to local units to participate in the formulation of a comprehensive state plan.

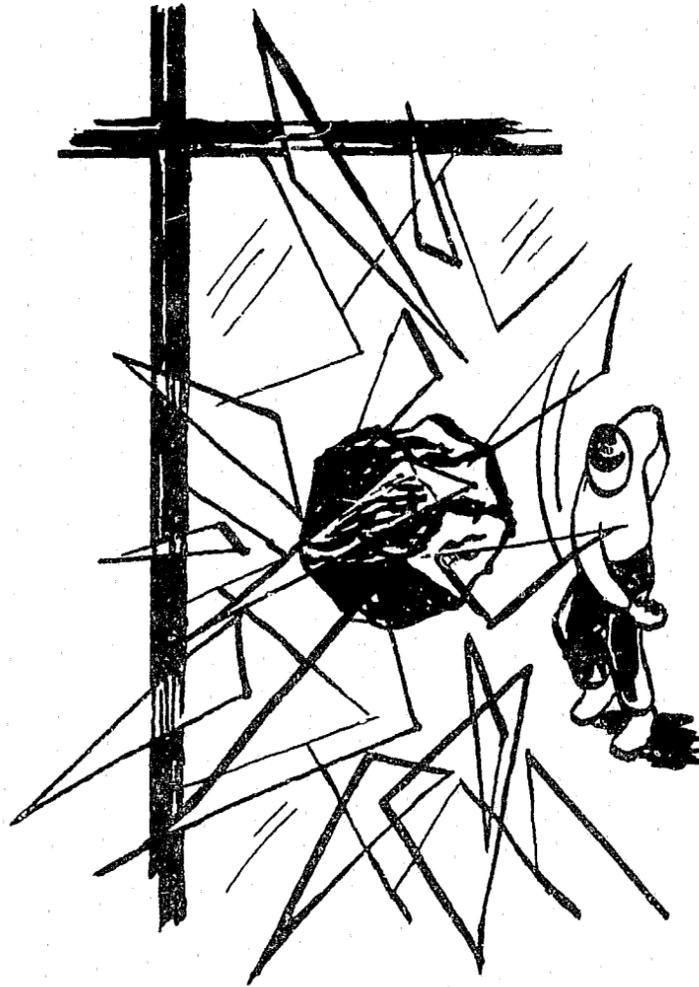
The state plan, when it is submitted, will lay the foundation for an application for "action" in support of state and local programs. The law requires states to "make available" at least 75 per cent of these action funds to local units. This year's appropriation for the "post planning action" is \$29 million, and expectations are that next year Congress will increase such funds to as much as \$200 million. Thus, local planning effort and input into the state's overall comprehensive plan will be extremely important. That plan will be the basis for determining to whom federal aid funds will go and how they will be spent.

It is understandable, then that Congress placed a good deal of emphasis on *planning* for more effective law enforcement systems. The law states: "It is the purpose . . . to encourage states and units of general local government to prepare and adopt comprehensive law enforcement plans based on their evaluation of state and local problems of law enforcement."

The federal guidelines for planning grants make it clear that the purpose of state planning funds transferred to local units should be to: "provide local components of the comprehensive state plan, or studies, recommendations, analyses, and data to be used in formulating, revising or expanding the state plan, and where appropriate, establish and support continuing planning units or capabilities."

Counties have many options under the above concept. In many metropolitan areas, they will be able to provide the areawide leadership for a joint county-city, of multi-county approach to planning and for a greater degree of coordination, both functionally and by jurisdiction, within the law enforcement process. Such areawide comprehensive planning, particularly in high-crime rate metropolitan areas, could be a significant component of the state plan.

As an alternative to, or in preparation for, the development of an overall planning approach involving the various law enforcement disciplines and the many jurisdictions within an area, counties may want to approach the problem by developing studies and analyses of the scope of the problem and the possibilities and alternatives for the roles which each function and jurisdiction might play in evolving a total approach. In many cases, sufficient data must be developed to guide local and state decision making at a later date. In other cases, these analyses may reveal that for some counties or regional areas, with limited planning resources, concentration in particular law enforcement or criminal justice areas would offer the greatest return while other areas are being suitably planned at the state level (e.g., state-



wide criminal justice information system, statewide institutional planning for maximum security offenders, and statewide advanced crime laboratory.)

A countywide or multi-county law enforcement planning agency could be established to provide continuous, ongoing input into the state plan, which must be updated each year. Such an agency, either newly created or as a new dimension of the county's present planning capacity, could serve as a research facility for fact finding, analysis, and interpretation. It could provide alternative proposals and preferred alternatives. It would serve as an ongoing means of stimulating and coordinating more functionally oriented planning in the various law enforcement functions and within the smaller jurisdictions. The level or local planning funds available for such continuing operations, both under the "Safe Streets" legislation and, possibly, with assistance from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) comprehensive regional and local planning programs will determine how many such entities can be supported in a given state and on what basis. This factor could be a real restraint which local government should recognize and perhaps seek to alleviate.

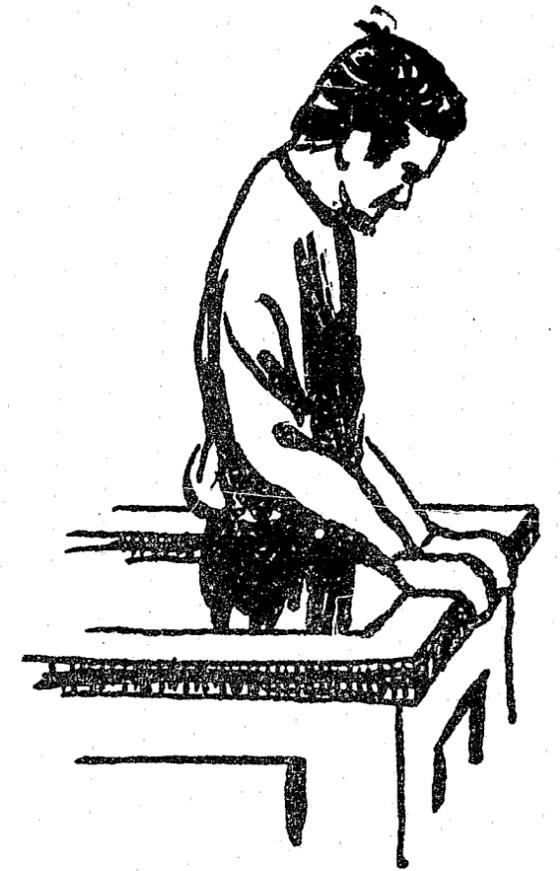
One of the advantages of establishing such continuous planning in the law enforcement area will be

the opportunity to develop "in-house" planning capacity and to discover and analyze problems on a constant basis. Present law enforcement planning efforts have been highly limited. Even the large consulting firms, with general systems analysis, operations research, and organizational development capabilities have had relatively little experience in the field. In addition, there exists an extreme shortage of law enforcement planners possibly due, in part, to the fractionalization of responsibility for the various law enforcement functions between states, counties, and municipalities. Effective planning, even on a single county basis, much less a metropolitan and regional basis, must begin to transcend jurisdictional boundaries and local agency responsibilities.

Law enforcement planning is increasingly becoming a major concern of regional councils of governments and their member local governments. A consideration of programs—which councils are adopting with great frequency and which are thought to be of primary importance as services to the counties and cities which the councils serve—shows law enforcement planning near the top of the list. Two examples indicate the possibilities.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments has established a regional police academy. The academy has the advantage of centralization for more in-depth and specialized instruction by highly trained law enforcement experts than would be available to the police officers of each individual county and city.

Other programs under way or being mapped out include police-community relations, uses and needs



of detention facilities, and standardized communications, and records system.

The Metropolitan Atlanta Council of Local Governments has developed programs in recruit training, traffic school, safe burglary and auto theft seminars, use of the FBI's computerized National Crime Information Center, advanced police education scholarships, a regional teletype center, a fugitive squad, and a voluntary gun registration program.

In 1968, HUD, in cooperation with the Justice Department, gave out "701" grants for study designs to confront problems of organization and planning activities in the law enforcement area. Assistance for law enforcement planning can be part of an overall comprehensive planning grant from HUD.

Since the guidelines for "Safe Streets" grant applications give preference in many instances to "multi-jurisdictional" activities, many counties might find that their own regional councils offer a preferred opportunity for the counties in cooperation with other units of government to develop and participate in law enforcement planning.

Whatever the various areawide developments and opportunities, counties are presented with a unique chance to get in on the ground floor of comprehensive law enforcement planning. As an areawide unit with a broad tax-base and heavily involved in a broad range of law enforcement functions, counties can do much to bring about coordinated, efficient systems both within their own jurisdictions and in



relationship with neighboring units. Over half of the present 231 Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSA's) are within single counties.

Planning should be done on as broad a basis as possible, both in regard to the integrating and coordinating of functional areas (police, courts, and corrections) and in regard to political jurisdictions and geographic areas. Speaking of the latter, the federal guidelines state that "planning efforts on a regional, metropolitan, or other 'combined-interest' basis are encouraged and should receive priority." In addition, counties can be key building blocks to concerted and efficient metropolitan and regional action in larger areas.

County governments, particularly those with interrelated law enforcement functions and some developed capacity for countywide planning, can bring stability and initiative to beginning this planning effort. Counties, generally, have heavy responsibilities in all areas of law enforcement. Also, they have the geographic size to be a cohesive, uniting factor, in either a single county-city approach to crime planning, or as a major part of a multi-county, metropolitan, or regional effort.

Several broad, rather undefined areas for reform suggest themselves as particularly appropriate planning subjects for effective county action.

1. Coordinating police services—Counties with effective planning could develop service agreements with their smaller component jurisdictions to share limited resources and to make countywide operations more effective. (California's counties have utilized such intergovernmental agreements on a wide-spread basis).

2. Joint police recruitment, selection, training programs. Counties or groups of counties could develop effective mechanisms for recruiting, selecting, and providing the training needed within the various jurisdictions.

3. Joint records and communications. Counties could establish an areawide records center, enabling police at all levels within the area to conduct inquiries without duplication of effort and facilities.

4. Field operations, criminal investigation, work with juveniles, vice control, and special task forces. (In Suffolk County, N.Y., and Dade County, Fla.,

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county investigators can be called into incorporated municipalities).

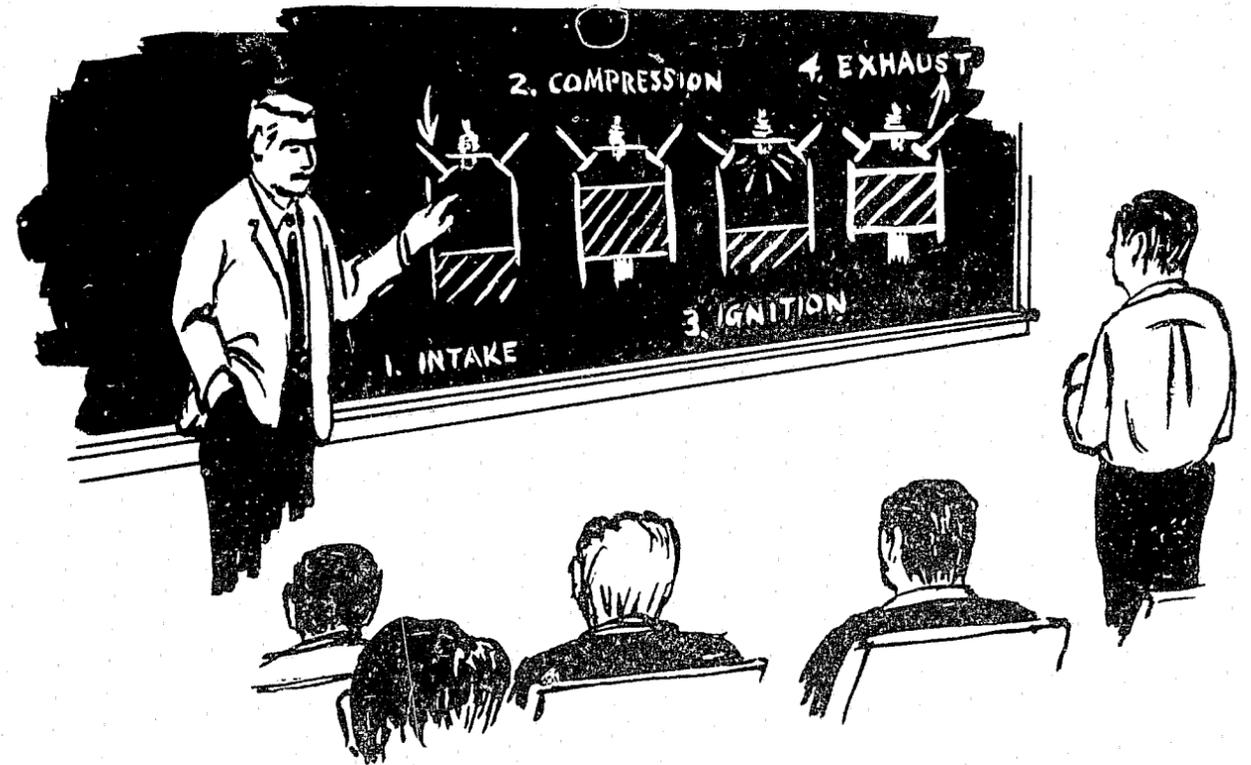
5. County correctional centers. Counties could play an effective role in establishing a countywide system of small centers with improved capacities for work experience, counseling, half-way house services, and other rehabilitative programs.

6. Courts. Counties, now greatly involved in administrative criminal courts systems, could bring about substantial changes in the processing of criminal cases and the number and calibre of judges and administrators essential to the total perspective of crime control.

Adequate law enforcement planning, even at less complicated levels, such as functional data compilation and analysis, will enable law enforcement and elected officials, to make more considered judgments on the allocation of resources. Comprehensive planning, in its most sophisticated sense, can serve as a basis for the establishment of systems or adaptations of planning-programming-budgeting (PPBS), almost a prerequisite for multi-year planning in today's complex economic and governmental structures. The federal comprehensive plan standards recognize this.

With a continuing crime planning capacity, counties or groups of counties can begin to identify and document the fundamental objectives involved, the major feasible alternatives, and the impact of proposed or current programs on other programs, other agencies, and other levels of government, and the progress being made. Adequate and efficient law enforcement planning can assist counties to place in perspective the principal issues of where "action" money should be spent and in what priorities.

County or areawide planning can eliminate the



pitfalls which are bound to develop between the competing functional systems of law enforcement in their individual needs and the resources to meet those needs. Likewise, adequate plans can assist in meeting the debate which is bound to develop as program spending increases between socially-oriented "people" programs and "hardware" acquisition. Both types of programs have an important role to play in crime control efforts, and it is essential that the blend be balanced, realistic, and calculated to most effectively implement well defined goals.

Much confusion exists in the "comprehensive planning" required by federal programs in other more developed areas of planning. The confusion partially results from the inability of planning organizations and mechanisms to come to grips with the actual process of decision making, and, eventually, demonstrate ability to initiate bold action to implement planning efforts. Too many plans have gathered dust because the locally elected official was not consulted and involved from the beginning of the planning effort. Too often, planners of all varieties develop plans outside the realm of practical realities. The extent elected county officials are involved, either directly in the planning process or with constant coordination, will often determine the degree of success in implementing a law enforcement plan which will, of course, require substantial local matching funds. This will be particularly true in law enforcement, which cuts across so many "sacred cows" of function and political boundary. The significance of the elected official to the success of the "Safe Streets" program is recognized by the guideline requirement

that balanced representation of the state "supervisory board" (in essence a board of directors for the entire program within the state) must include representation from local government units by elected policy-making or executive officials and by local law enforcement representatives.

The same important role for the elected official should be apparent in local areawide planning efforts. Perhaps more than immediately apparent to some law enforcement professionals is the fact that elected officials with significantly policy-making authority can often assist in the difficult task of beginning to coordinate and make more effective the inter-related working of a complex criminal justice mechanism.

Implementation of "Safe Streets" programs requires that more attention than ever be paid to the continuing dichotomy between the planning process and the elected representative who must approve plans and appropriate local funds to carry them out. "Local evaluation of law enforcement problems" as expressed in the federal guidelines, should and must involve the local elected official in the decision-making process from the beginning. The act's purpose is "to encourage the state and units of general local government to prepare and adopt comprehensive law enforcement plans" and to encourage "units of general local government to carry out programs and projects to improve and strengthen law enforcement."

The elected official as the legally elected decision maker will necessarily play a large role in the approval and carrying out of the plans. What kind of

a role, however, is not clear. A negative, obstructionist, or narrow attitude on the part of local elected officials with respect to adequate and balanced law enforcement, including attention to courts, corrections, and police, could hinder the effectiveness of funds spent for planning.

On the other hand, a spirit of understanding and cooperation on the part of the elected official could bring about the appropriate climate to simulate necessary change. If this spirit is present from the start, many hurdles usually encountered as the plans reach the approval and funding stages, might be avoided.

There exist two potential barriers to an effective role by the elected officials. First, there still exists in this complicated, technical, and diverse area, the danger of law enforcement functionalists from all levels of government talking only to each other as the program progresses. Notwithstanding adequate representation of the local elected official on the state plan "supervisory board" admixed with adequate representation of law enforcement agencies, the communications gap, so common in other federal-state programs, could impair implementation of plans and action.

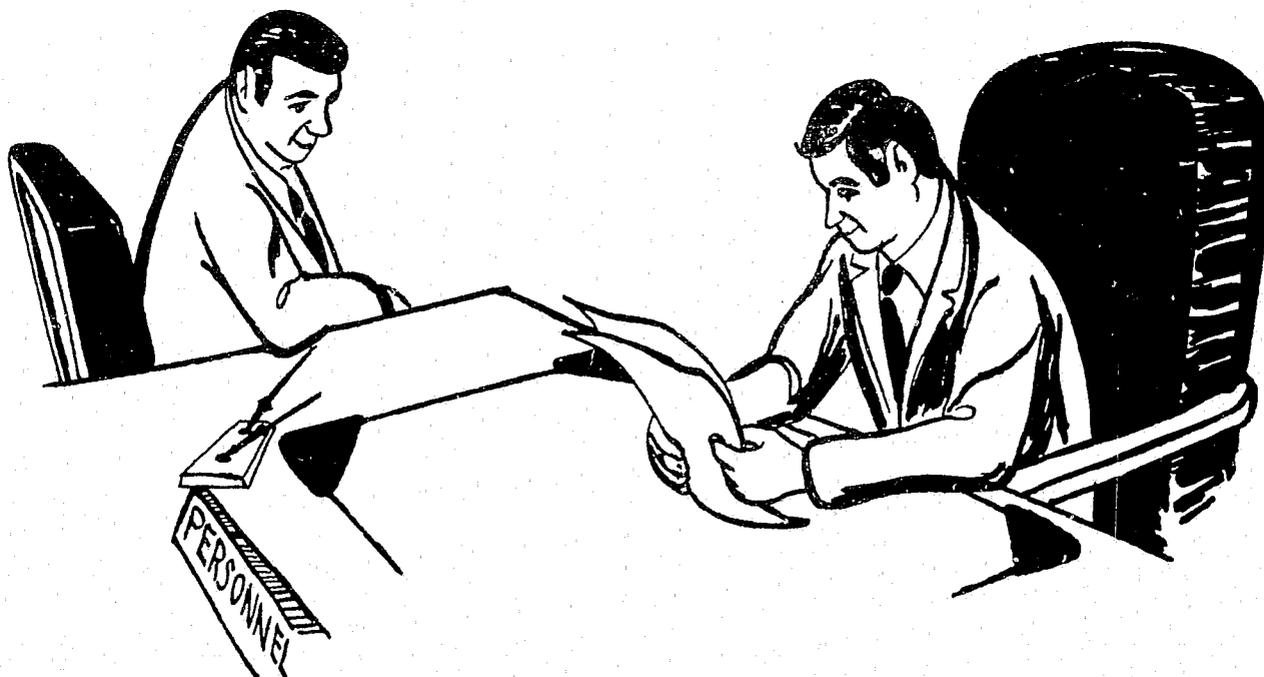
A second area for concern lies in the common situation where the functionalist system, itself, although drastically in need of improvement and reform, will not or cannot reform. This is particularly true, in county-level functional areas, with court operations, juvenile systems, and adult corrections. There has often been no demand for change by the elected official, himself. Here informed and involved elected officials can stimulate much needed impetus for change.

At the same time law enforcement planning efforts

begin to materialize they should be integrated and coordinated with other comprehensive planning efforts in closely related fields such as health, welfare, highway safety, and housing. In relation to this "social" aspect, professional law enforcement planners and their elected officials will probably have to suffer the same type of initial shock which other planning efforts have undergone in reaction to citizen involvement and participation.

In an area as diverse and having as much effect upon people as law enforcement, local governments will find considerable pressure to involve the citizen, particularly the poor who suffer more than any from inadequate law enforcement. Law enforcement planners will be increasingly called upon to find appropriate mechanism for listening to and involving the citizen in setting goals and determining priorities.

As counties, many for the first time, move toward large-scale law enforcement planning, it will be increasingly important to keep two factors in balance. First, the temptation for "action now" will most likely be over-whelming. Mounting public pressure, internal county organizational pressure, and the deadlines and demands of federal and state administrators could lead to minimal and superficial local planning efforts in order to achieve immediate results. Secondly, because the problem of law enforcement reform in all its dimensions is so diverse and complex, there will be the danger of bogging down in technique or reaching for planning goals which are neither politically nor economically feasible. Only careful and considered planning, involving all the law enforcement functions and all the jurisdictions, will result in sound criteria for action and a blueprint for much needed change.



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