

SUBJECT TO DEBATE

A NEWSLETTER OF THE POLICE EXECUTIVE RESEARCH FORUM



Mayors Join PERF In Getting Crime Back on the Agenda PAGE 2

Above: Miami Mayor Manny Diaz spoke to the National Press Club on August 4.

VOL. 22, NO. 9 | SEPTEMBER 2008

Senate Panel Asks the Experts: What's the Latest in Fighting Violent Crime?

ON SEPTEMBER 10 THE SENATE JUDICIARY Committee held a hearing on “New Strategies for Combating Violent Crime: Drawing Lessons from Recent Experience.” Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy said his goal was to tap into the wisdom of some of the most successful academics and practitioners in the field of criminal justice, in order to produce guidance for the next President and the new Congress to consider in devising a national crime policy next year.

Senator Leahy, along with Sen. Arlen Specter, the ranking Republican on the committee, welcomed the five witnesses:

- **Dr. Alfred Blumstein**, professor and former dean of the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management at Carnegie Mellon University;
- **Jeremy Travis**, president of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice and former head of the National Institute of Justice, the research branch of the U.S. Justice Department;
- Providence, R.I. Chief of Police **Dean Esserman**, former chief in Stamford, Conn., recipient of PERF's Gary P. Hayes Award, and former PERF board member;
- **Dr. George L. Kelling**, professor of criminal justice at Rutgers-Newark University and one of the originators of the “broken windows” theory of crime control; and
- **Rev. James Summey** of the English Road Baptist Church in High Point, N.C., who helped spearhead one of the most successful and acclaimed violence-reduction programs in recent years.

Following are excerpts from the statements of Senator Leahy and the witnesses:



Chairman Patrick Leahy: Let's Work for Another Era of Major Crime Reduction

Today, the Committee turns to the critical issue of violent crime. While we saw great progress in reducing violent crime in the 1990s, that success has largely stalled... Too many of our communities are seeing resurgences in violent crime.

At today's hearing, I hope we can begin to look behind [the] national statistics and trends and learn more about what is working and what is not. I particularly want to hear about the new, community-based strategies that are proving to be more successful than ever and that could lead to another era of substantial crime reduction, as we saw in the 1990s...

>> continued on page 3



Sen. Patrick Leahy calls the hearing to order.

Mayors Are Joining PERF In Getting Crime Back on the Agenda

THREE MONTHS AGO, MY MAYOR, MANNY DIAZ, took over as President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and one of the first things he did was announce that he wanted to work with his fellow mayors to get crime back on the national agenda. On crime and other issues, Mayor Diaz said, “Washington has lost its values, lost its principles, lost its sense of purpose. They no longer invest in our cities. They no longer invest in our people.”

Of course I was very glad to hear the mayor say this, because PERF has been working for a couple years now to refocus the country’s attention on violent crime, ever since we noticed back in 2005 that violent crime was increasing. Crime has fallen off the radar screen for a lot of reasons, but mainly because 9/11 and the war in Iraq have taken the attention away.

Mayor Diaz did not waste any time moving forward. On August 4, he spoke to the National Press Club in Washington and announced that he was convening a series of national forums on crime and several other issues, including the nation’s infrastructure and poverty. The next day, he launched the forum on crime at a meeting in Philadelphia, hosted by Mayor Michael Nutter. About 25 mayors and 25 police chiefs attended this session. One of the mayors who came to Philadelphia was Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson, who was head of the Conference of Mayors back in 1993 and was a major force behind the 1994 crime bill that created the COPS program.

I worked with Mayor Diaz to moderate the discussion in Philadelphia, and we came up with a detailed anti-crime agenda for the next President to consider.

The overall thrust of our meeting was that the mayors and police chiefs have a sense of moral outrage that violent crime doesn’t get the attention it deserves. On an average day, 34 people in the United States are the victims of homicides involving guns, and many of these deaths hardly get any attention. Imagine what the nation’s response would be if Al Qaeda killed 34 Americans every day. Yet the federal government has all but abandoned the partnership it had with local police during the 1990s, which was a big factor in the successes we had back then in reducing violence.

Some will say that crime is strictly a local issue, and it is true that in our system, we don’t have a national police force, and crime is handled overwhelmingly at the local level. But that is not to say that there is no federal responsibility. And with that responsibility comes an obligation to provide some kind of resources.

To take one example, the FBI once played a role in investigating certain types of crime, like bank robberies, but since 9/11 it has been backing out of that role in order to focus on terrorism, and local police have had to pick up the slack.

And as I have said before in this column, the federal government maintains several national criminal investigative databases that are important to local police, on fingerprints, ballistics, and DNA. I believe that if the federal government maintains these databases, it has an obligation to ensure that they can be used to their full potential. We need some way to develop national “best practices” in how these databases are used. We have a good system

for the fingerprint database; local police fingerprint people, those fingerprints go to Washington, and we can check the database locally. But on the ballistics database, there is no sharing of the information, and on CODIS, the DNA database, it’s idiosyncratic. Some police departments do nothing, because there is no national mandate to submit DNA evidence, while others spend a lot of money to submit evidence, like the NYPD, because they have the resources. And others develop their own protocols, like Miami and Philadelphia, where we submit DNA evidence for certain types of crime, such as stranger rapes. There is a need for national protocols and standards, and a federal obligation to train local police and fund these databases properly.

This database issue is covered in the mayors’ agenda. The mayors and chiefs had several other recommendations that I believe are critical to restoring a fair balance between federal and local responsibilities for dealing with crime:

- We called for restoring the COPS program, but with more flexibility so that local police departments can use COPS funding not only to hire officers, but also to hire other kinds of personnel, such as DNA analysts and technicians.
- We called for restoration of a ban on AK-47s and other assault weapons. Since the previous assault weapon law expired in 2004, there has been a dramatic increase in the use of these firearms by criminals.
- We noted that the federal government has not been effective in the interdiction of illegal drugs at U.S. borders, so it has a responsibility to help stop the sale and use of illegal drugs in our cities.

I have been involved with my mayor and with Mayor Nutter in bringing this agenda to the attention of both Presidential candidates. Interestingly, the keynote speaker at our Philadelphia meeting was Sen. Joe Biden, the main architect of the 1994 crime bill. At that time, he had not yet been named the Democrats’ vice-presidential nominee, but he told us he had spoken to Senator Obama and had been given the authority to speak on his behalf, and he expressed support for many of our recommendations. We’re still working on Senator McCain.

On October 8, PERF will hold a Violent Crime Summit in Washington to address these and other issues, with the goal of developing its own action plan for the next President. I look forward to working with my PERF colleagues to restore a proper sense of balance between federal and local responsibilities on crime.

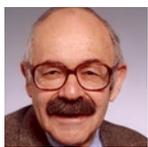


Chief John F. Timoney, PERF President

We have real success in combating violent crime when we focus our communities, and when our communities join with our law enforcement professionals in the fight against crime. Community policing has long provided greater safety for our hardest hit neighborhoods. [For example], in High Point, N. C., the local police had all but written off the West End, which for decades was dominated by drugs and prostitution. In 2002, police there decided on a new approach, building on earlier models proven successful in the Boston CEASEFIRE initiative. Instead of just doing more sweeps and arresting the usual suspects, police targeted the most serious offenders, met and worked with local community leaders, clergy, and service providers, and united all of these parts of the community to attack the problem together.

The results were clear. Within weeks, drug dealers and prostitutes were gone from the streets; crime fell by more than 50 percent, and now more than five years later, it is still down. More importantly, the community looks and feels like an entirely new place. This initiative involved more than just the police making arrests; it put the community and its police and service providers on the same page, so they could give hope and promise to all its residents. This spirit of unity and joint commitment remains.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about the most effective new strategies for combating violent crime so that the next Congress, and the next administration, can be better prepared to help our cities and towns to implement effective anti-crime strategies.



Alfred Blumstein: Targeting Assistance to Cities with Outbursts of Violence

I would like to focus on the two most serious and best measured violent crimes, murder and robbery...

Following [a] peak in 1993, the nation experienced a decline of over 40 percent in murder and robbery, reaching a level by 2000 that had not been seen since the 1960s. Since 2000 those rates have been impressively flat, with murder rates oscillating between 5.5 and 5.7 per 100,000 and with robbery rates oscillating between 137 and 149, impressively narrow ranges for those two offenses...

MEDIUM-SIZE CITIES MAY NEED FEDERAL HELP

Having noted that the national rates have stayed flat does not mean that that pattern prevailed in all cities... [The] recent trends have been driven...by the specific situations in individual cities: some have been up, others have been down, some up-and-down, and others down-and-up. The patterns in the three largest cities, New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago, have been interesting because they have generally been steadily declining over this interval. That is probably because their managements are quite skillful and sophisticated, and they also have the resources to throw into a developing situation.

It is clear that based on these aspects of recent activity that there is much that could be done to strengthen the ability of the medium-size cities (say 250,000 to 1 million in population) to respond to an outburst of violence. The Office of Justice Programs could initiate a major program to analyze the approaches that have

worked in a variety of places, to carry out an evaluation, both to document the innovation in order to facilitate its replication elsewhere and to assess its contribution to a reduction in violence. It could then develop technical assistance teams who could travel to cities experiencing a spurt in violence and help them organize an appropriate response.

FEDERALLY SPONSORED POLICING RESEARCH IS LAGGING

My suggestion of providing technical assistance to police is an important means of implementing our current and accumulating knowledge of what works in at least some circumstances... It is distressing to note how minuscule the Federal commitment to building that capability is. The Federal agency responsible for building that knowledge base is the National Institute of Justice (NIJ). Its budget is something under \$50 million to help fix the entire criminal justice system. Compare that to almost \$400 million committed to the National Institute of Dental Research.

In its wisdom, the Congress saw fit to insulate NIJ and the Bureau of Justice Statistics from the political environment of the Department of Justice by giving their directors sign-off authority on grants and contracts and on publications. That independence was removed by an obscure clause incorporated in the Patriot Act passed after 9/11... I would hope that the Congress would give serious attention to rebuilding the statistics, research, and development efforts of these agencies by ensuring their independence and enhancing their budget levels.



Jeremy Travis: It's Time for a National Compstat

As this Committee is well aware, over the past 20 years our nation has experienced a dramatic rise and fall in the levels of violence in our communities. Setting aside for a moment some year-to-year fluctuations since 2000, we can confidently say that we now experience the lowest levels of violence in a generation.

In my view, we should not be complacent, for one minute, about the current rates of violence. Yes, we are justifiably proud that our nation no longer experiences the high rates of violence seen in the early 1990s... Yet, three different perspectives on these national data should give us reason to set our sights much higher:

International Perspective: While the United States no longer leads the developed world in all forms of violence and property crime, it still has the highest levels of lethal violence. Even after U.S. homicide rates fell by more than 40 percent during the 1990s, they remained four-to-ten times higher than those of other developed nations. For example, the latest available data on homicide from 2006 show that the homicide rates in the United States (5.7 per 100,000) are more than four times the homicide rates of England and Wales (1.4 per 100,000).

Sub-National Perspective: We typically measure crime rates at the national level and ask whether property crime and violent crimes are up or down across the country. For many years, these national trends in turn reflected sub-national trends. In other words,

>> continued on page 4

if crime went up or down nationally, it likely went up or down in all cities. The increase or decrease may have been sharper or flatter in any given city, but the trends were mostly in the same direction.

Beginning in 2000, this relationship between national and sub-national trends began to weaken... According to the Uniform Crime Report, homicide rates increased slightly in 2005 (1.8 percent) and 2006 (1.8 percent), and robbery rates increased in both years as well (3.0 percent and 6.1 percent). Yet these national statistics mask important local variations. Between 2004 and 2006, homicides decreased by 25 percent in Dallas and 31 percent in Portland, and increased by 23 percent in Philadelphia and 25 percent in Seattle. Robbery rates were essentially flat over those two years in New York and Los Angeles, but increased 44 percent and 63 percent, respectively, in Milwaukee and Oakland.

We do not yet have a good understanding of the reasons for these very different crime trends at the sub-national level. But the fact that we are seeing these divergent trends underscores two points. First, in those communities experiencing upward trends in violence, the fact that the national trends are showing only slight increases presents little comfort. Second, any national strategy adopted by Congress and the new Administration must include a robust analytical capability to diagnose these local trends, and must target resources to communities where the rates of violence are highest.

Inner-City Perspective: A third perspective is perhaps the most important as we consider future directions for policy. We know that crime does not affect all Americans equally. Crime is concentrated in urban America, and particularly in the poorest urban neighborhoods, which are typically communities of color. Furthermore, violent crime is most often committed by, and committed against, young men. So, within this demographic group, of young men living in America's urban neighborhoods, violence is a daily fact of life.

NATIONAL CRIME STATISTICS STILL IN THE 'PRE-INTERNET, PRE-GIS MINDSET'

Compared to virtually any other area of high policy interest in America, we have a very limited ability to track, analyze, and describe the phenomenon of violence. Our data from the Uniform Crime Reports are released months after the close of the year. Our National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is conducted annually, but only at a national level—statistically, it cannot capture the realities of crime at the local level...

At the local level, police departments are making enormous strides to bring their reporting systems into the modern era, posting crime data on public websites, conducting geo-spatial analysis

of crime reports, and using the Internet to encourage crime reports. But at the national level we are still operating in a pre-Internet, pre-GIS mindset.

The federal government should take the lead in designing and implementing a robust national crime data system that allows police executives, policy makers, elected officials, academics and other researchers, and community groups, to have a data-informed policy discussion about crime trends and effective responses... I would suggest that such a program include, at a minimum, rapid collection and dissemination of standardized police reporting data on crime, so that every month we would know whether crime rates were increasing or decreasing in every major jurisdiction across the country.

Our goal should be to create a robust crime analysis capability at the national level, just as we have a national capability to understand fluctuations in unemployment rates, housing starts, or business cycles.

	2002	2007	Change
Murder	23	14	-39%
Rape	95	34	-64%
Robbery	560	392	-30%
Aggravated Assault	603	500	-17%
Burglary	2,206	1,746	-21%
Motor Vehicle Theft	2,950	1,654	-44%
Larceny	7,602	5,481	-28%
Total Crime	14,039	9,821	-30%

Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island displayed a chart detailing sharp reductions in crime in Providence.



Colonel Dean M. Esserman: Police Succeed When They Form Partnerships

I have been the chief of police of the city of Providence for five and a half years. Providence encompasses a very high concentration of our metropolitan area's residents living in poverty; we are in fact among the top five poorest cities in the United States for children. And for too long we were also a city that saw too much violence, especially violence among our young, among our children.

I am very proud to say that the men and women of the Providence Police Department have started to make a difference, to turn the tide. For more than five years, crime has been going down in Providence... The Providence Police Department has done more than transform its strategies and tactics. The department has undergone an extensive reengineering and has fundamentally changed the way it thinks about itself and its work.

POLICE ARE NO LONGER 'ARMED REFEREES'

In the past, the department saw itself [as many other departments did]: Police were like armed referees who kept an authoritative distance—to the point of being almost anonymous—while trying to maintain order in a community that was not their own.

I was recruited by the mayor to change that. I was asked to bring the community policing philosophy to Providence. Our improvement as a police department has directly coincided with our ability to make that transformation.

In our reengineering efforts, we have adopted the lessons learned over the past two decades in American policing of what works. First, we have embraced and instituted community policing,

decentralizing the department, and dividing the city into neighborhood police districts. Each district has a community-donated neighborhood substation office and a commander accountable to the residents and to the department.

Second, the management tool adopted by the department to oversee our newly decentralized operations is weekly detective and command staff meetings driven by timely and accurate crime statistics (often known as the New York City Compstat model)... Moreover, the department has embraced the important principles embodied in Professor Kelling's work, well known as "broken windows." We focus our resources on serious violent crimes and neighborhood quality of life offenses with equal efforts.

The results speak for themselves. Over the past five years, crime is down 30 percent and homicides have been cut nearly in half. This represents the lowest level in 30 years. As importantly, there is a strong and growing sense of trust and partnership between the community and the police department. When we form community partnerships, we are not just meeting, we are not just visiting, we are staying.

Let me outline a few of our partnership and problem-solving strategies:

- **Gun prosecutions:** The department formed a gun task force that specializes in conducting both short- and long-term investigations into illegal firearms possession, use and trafficking. The gun task force works closely with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. For every gun arrest in Providence, an ATF agent and a Providence police detective interview the suspect. The department also partnered on a Project Safe Neighborhood initiative with the U.S. Attorney's office and the Rhode Island Attorney General's office focusing on the coordination and federal prosecution of all eligible gun cases.
- **Fixing neighborhood problems:** The department partnered with the Rhode Island Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) to transform distressed neighborhoods into vibrant and healthy places.
- **"Street workers" help stop violence:** The department partnered with the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence... [Staff members of the Institute], known as street workers, are certified nonviolence trainers and veterans of life on the street, often former gang members. They teach the principles of nonviolence developed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for reconciling conflict... Street workers visit shooting scenes and emergency rooms in an effort to quickly stem off retaliation. Street workers offer school and community-based crisis intervention and mediation, and serve as mentors to at-risk youth. The Providence Police Department and the street workers work in tandem to

establish a dialogue with some of the most violent city combatants in real or perceived disputes. Street workers appear in full force in time of crisis and in open disputes. By working all hot-spots, the street workers are familiar with the feuding sides and are equipped to assist in particular cases.

- **Probation working with the police:** The department partnered with the state Department of Probation so that probation officers are assigned to neighborhood police district offices and their caseload is specific to that neighborhood.
- **Drug intervention:** And finally, in 2006 the national and Rhode Island Urban Leagues approached the Police Department about working together to implement a drug market intervention initiative in the Lockwood Plaza neighborhood of Providence. The drug market intervention initiative is based on the initial work of John Jay Professor David Kennedy in High Point, N.C. The Lockwood initiative is a tremendous success in bringing crime down and restoring a sense of calm and hope to the citizens of Lockwood.



Colonel Dean Esserman (testifying), Rev. James Summey, Dr. George L. Kelling

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Many of the initiatives that I have outlined were born from federally sponsored research and started with federal grant funds from the National Institute of Justice, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and specifically, Project Safe Neighborhoods and Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant funds, which were recently eliminated or dramatically reduced in the last federal budget. I ask you today to restore these much-needed funds in order for effective programs such as these to continue to develop and to assist police departments in

fighting crime and improving our citizens' quality of life.

With the right support from the federal government, today's police departments can make a difference in the quality of life of our citizens of our communities.



Dr. George Kelling: Sustaining a Crime Reduction Requires a Critical Mass of Community Involvement

During the past five years, I have worked on the ground in six cities: Newark, Los Angeles, Denver, Boston, Milwaukee, and Allentown, Pa. In Newark, homicide is down in comparison to 2007 by 40 percent; in Los Angeles, 9 percent (with a two-year decline of 23 percent); Milwaukee, 30 percent; Boston, 13 percent; and Denver, 22 percent. Allentown's homicide rate has held steady, but our efforts have just begun there.

Two common threads run through my experiences in each of

>> continued on page 6

these cities: first, the need for leadership; and second, a shift in approach on the part of all concerned, from “reacting to crime after it occurs” to “stopping the next crime.”

The sources of leadership vary from community to community. In some locations it is political; in others, police; in others, both; in yet others, a mix of private and public agencies. Regardless, these leaders, almost all of whom saw violence surge in their cities, have been appalled by the carnage on their streets and deeply committed to ending it. As important, they had learned from colleagues, the literature, and their own experiences what had to be done to reduce violence.

Specifically, they understood that the reactive model of crime control had failed miserably and that they had to take political and organizational risks to field effective violence prevention.

I will describe briefly five basic methods of crime prevention...that most communities can move to immediately:

1. Increase the “Felt” Presence of Capable Guardians: Starting with police but moving on to prosecution, probation and parole, other governmental agencies, and even the courts, we must increase the real presence of each in neighborhoods. For police this means getting out of their cars, walking, riding bicycles, meeting with citizens, and in other ways becoming an active neighborhood presence.

2. Persuade People, Especially the Young, to Behave: Law enforcement agencies and others involved in crime reduction efforts need to think beyond formal measures. Among the most fundamental and successful tactics is persuasion. Persuading people can range from simply “talking to them” to complicated programs that link active law enforcement with persuasive ways of communicating with young people on the verge of serious trouble.

3. Restore Order: I am, of course, referring here to an idea that I helped develop: “broken windows.” Put simply, broken windows argues that for a community to be safe and prosperous, minimal levels of order must be established and maintained.

4. Solve Problems: Until recently, police and other criminal justice agencies have treated violent acts as independent incidents rather than symptoms of problems with both a history and a future. Right now [a major problem is that] a relatively small number of youths are carrying guns, dealing drugs, draping themselves in gang colors, and shooting each other to settle what are often trivial disputes. The effects on communities are disastrous and degrading.

Both the Department of Justice and the Police Executive Research Forum have developed inventories of successful problem-solving efforts... These strategies can inspire similar innovations in other cities.

5. When Formal Measures are Appropriate, Enforce the Law Swiftly and Fairly: Finally, law enforcement. A small population of offenders is busily nominating itself for incarceration by repeatedly committing both minor and serious offenses. For this group, we should have no reluctance to imprison them for extended periods of time.

COMMUNITY-WIDE ENGAGEMENT IS KEY TO SUSTAINING POLICE SUCCESSES

The primary question facing us now is: Once we have initially reduced violence in a neighborhood, how do we sustain those gains? I think that close examination of what happened in New York City will help us answer this question. Let me summarize what I believe really happened in New York City.

During the late 1970s, the 1980s, and early 1990s a demand for order developed out of a disorder and crime crisis. Things were simply so bad that citizens and institutions wanted change in, or wanted out of, New York. An idea surfaced as early as the 1970s that order had broken down, threatening the viability of the city itself. A theory of action...was implemented aggressively and persistently by a diverse set of organizations ranging from public transportation to Business Improvement Districts (BIDS). By the mid-1990s, police became seriously involved. Under Mayor Giuliani and Commissioner Bratton, police not only adopted a congruent theory of action, they brought with them their...crime prevention capacities.

I would explain both the steepness and persistence of the crime decline in NYC as resulting from the fervent pursuit of self-interest by a critical mass of public and private agencies operating out of a congruent understanding of the nature of the problems and their solutions. When joined by the NYPD, this critical mass reached a tipping point.

This does not mean that [merely] emulating aspects of NY, especially Compstat, is without profit; it means that [without the critical mass of involvement by other entities], the achievements are limited; the tipping point that literally changes a city’s culture cannot be reached.



Rev. James Summey: Helping the Community Give Offenders an Ultimatum

When I became pastor of the English Road Baptist Church in May of 1992, I knew part of the history of this community of approximately 1,400 people located in the West End area of High Point, N.C. I had grown up on a small farm [nearby]... The West End community for most of the 20th Century had been a blue collar area of town. West End neighbors labored in the nearby cotton/hosiery mills and worked in the many furniture factories. People worked, worshipped and recreated in this area, as this little niche of town had most of the amenities that people needed years ago.

With changes that began in the mid- and late 1970s in the hosiery and furniture markets, there was some slowdown in manufacturing. Also, many of the folks who had labored in those jobs now were nearing retirement, and fewer workers were devoted to the trades of the area. A once fairly stable community became more transitional. A sense of “not knowing the neighbors” developed. In the late eighties, crack cocaine found a home in this part of town, and the drug sales along with the vices of prostitution, violence, intimidation, neighborhood suppression, and a general sense of unrest developed.

By the 1990s the West End became a place where the residents lived in fear and in a “lock-down” mentality. Gunfire rang

out frequently. Street robberies and muggings of every nature were everyday events. Prostitution was so rampant that on one Sunday morning in 1997 there were so many prostitutes walking the sidewalks around the church area that church attendees could not turn into the parking lot because of the “johns” picking up the girls. The police used every traditional method of policing and deterrence available. Drug raids, drug sweeps, prostitution stings, and round-ups were utilized. Yet so very often the results were short-lived. Citizens complained, tempers flared, and frustration ran amok, creating a very unhealthy community.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS TOOK THE INITIATIVE

In 1999 three of the West End Church pastors began to meet and discuss the problems of the area. All three (myself included) shared the same concerns and frustrations. We decided to include other members from the three churches to meet monthly and discuss how we could work together to have positive impact on the community... Each church took an area of concern. [For example], Rankin Methodist Church addressed youth concerns and opened their doors to host a neighborhood Boys and Girls Club, and First Reformed Church took on neighborhood appearance, organized meeting with city inspectors, and pushed community clean-up days....

All the work of the community and the churches helped, but the violence and the drug market activities still prevailed. Chief Jim Fealy became High Point’s new chief of police in January 2003. The first community meeting that Chief Fealy attended was in the West End. I told Chief Fealy after the meeting that I appreciated his words, but frankly, I had lost faith in the Police Department to do anything lasting about our problems. Jim Fealy took my words as a challenge.

RESIDENTS ‘CALL IN’ PRIME OFFENDERS FOR A CONFRONTATION

I was asked to come to a meeting and to just sit and listen. [We] heard a Harvard associate professor talk about some ideas he had about neighborhood drug markets, how they worked, what drove them, and how to “undo” them. His name: David Kennedy. David Kennedy articulated my frustration. He talked about the police being honest, supporting the Constitution, doing less harm, building relationships with the community, and creating an atmosphere

where citizens and police could truly dialogue.

David talked about the police identifying the real perpetrators of the violence and the drug markets and then asking them (not telling them) to come to a meeting where the community could tell them that their actions were not acceptable and would no longer be tolerated and that the community supported the police.

The community would then give the “called in” violent and drug marketing offenders an ultimatum: Stop the violence and the drug market and tell us you want to turn your life in a positive direction and we will do all that we can to help you. But, if you continue, we will do all that we can to make sure that you face arrest and the court system.

May 18, 2004 was the “call-in” day for the West End Drug Initiative. The offenders had been identified and notified by police, area clergy, and citizens that they could come to this meeting with no reprisals, just come and listen. As nine people came to this meeting and heard the messages of the community and the police, a great sense of positive empowerment came over the community and the police who were involved that night. The next day, West End was quiet. No one sold drugs on the corner. No one ran from a house to the street 30 times a day to do curb-service drug delivery. Not even one prostitute was seen. No gunshots rang out. There was no yelling and fighting and intimidating congregations of people walking down the middle of the street blocking traffic. A new day had arrived.

A NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSFORMED

This “new day” still thrives in the West End. We once led the City of High Point in murders for 10 years, but there has not been a murder in West End in over four years. New homes are being built. People walk to the stores to purchase goods. Kids walk to church and people sit on their porches. People are planting flower beds and tending them. There is a sense of relief that has lasted because people who were once strangers due to fear now talk, meet on the sidewalks, go to neighborhood meetings, and maintain relationships with law enforcement.

With this method of policing, involving the community, everyone has a choice to see what life truly can be. This way is a way that brings out the very best of people, because it is people living and doing their best to help each other. 



POLICE EXECUTIVE
RESEARCH FORUM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT

John F. Timoney | Chief, Miami
Police Department

VICE PRESIDENT

Charlie T. Deane | Chief, Prince
William County, Va., Police Department

TREASURER

William M. Lansdowne | Chief,
San Diego Police Department

SECRETARY

Rick Myers | Chief, Colorado Springs
Police Department

AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Sir Ian Blair | Commissioner,
London Metropolitan Police Service

Edward Flynn | Chief, Milwaukee
Police Department

Ella M. Bully-Cummings | Chief,
Detroit Police Department

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
Chuck Wexler

The Police Executive Research Forum is a nonprofit association of progressive police professionals dedicated to improving services to all our communities. ■ *Subject to Debate*, published by the Police Executive Research Forum, welcomes input from PERF members and other interested parties. Please submit articles, ideas and suggestions to Craig Fischer, PERF, 1120 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 930, Washington, D.C. 20036. Phone: (202) 454-8332; fax: (202) 466-7826; e-mail: cfischer@policeforum.org. ■ Contributors’ opinions and statements do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of the Police Executive Research Forum. ISSN 1084-7316. ■ Subscription price: \$35/year.



POLICE EXECUTIVE
RESEARCH FORUM

SUBJECT TO DEBATE

1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 930
Washington, DC 20036

Pre-Sorted
First Class
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 4889
Suburban, MD

SUBJECT TO DEBATE

**Senate Panel Asks the Experts:
What's the Latest in Fighting Violent Crime?**

PAGE 1

FROM THE PRESIDENT:
**Mayors Are Joining PERF
In Getting Crime Back on the Agenda**

PAGE 2

Upcoming PERF Events

PERF Town Hall Meeting

November 9, 2008
Westin San Diego
400 West Broadway
San Diego, Calif.
(In conjunction with the IACP Conference
and Exposition)

PERF Annual Meeting

March 26-28, 2009
Ritz Carlton Washington Hotel
Washington, D.C.
(Mention PERF to obtain special meeting
rate of \$225 when you call 800-241-3333.)

Subject to Debate
is generously supported
by a grant from:



MOTOROLA

www.Motorola.com