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MILITARY POLICE JUVENILE SPECIALIST

by

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Military Police offices throughout the Marine Corps are experiencing a greater number of criminal complaints involving juveniles. As more marines are married base housing availability is expanding. Most Provost Marshal's Offices (PMOs) do not categorize complaints specifically in the area of juvenile activity. During the summer months delinquent juvenile activity increases. If a disproportionate amount of police complaints occur, short-term efforts will be employed to deal with localized juvenile problems. However, once the crisis has passed, little attention will be paid to monitoring juvenile activity.

The typical approach toward juvenile delinquent activity is made reactively only after a crime has been committed. The

Criminal Investigative Division (CID) of PMOs may have an investigator tasked with casework involving juveniles, which gives one investigator familiarity of current problems and offenders. Alternatively, a uniformed military policeman may be assigned as a "juvenile officer", a task that is also usually performed reactively to incidents that have occurred. These tactics may result in expeditious resolution in some investigations, however, other methods could have prevented such incidents. To have an effective proactive method of minimizing criminal juvenile activity would be ideal, however, this direction has not been viewed as having great potential.

Most proactive juvenile enforcement is limited to various forms of crime prevention awareness. Creative proactive enforcement is usually not developed, as high turnover in military police personnel limits a complex program from proving itself over a long term. Newly assigned personnel tend to reorganize whatever juvenile program exists as this area is usually performed with few written procedures. Further, considerable time is spent becoming oriented to the specific juvenile assignment.

Military policemen should not need a lot of time to be effective in a juvenile officer position if a fundamental procedure is established. Such a procedure can be passed on with little need for orientation for a new juvenile specialist. Also, it would streamline investigative effort, as previous programs had done, and systematically gather intelligence.

Marine Corps Air Station Tustin, California, experienced a concentration of criminal activity involving juveniles in the dependant housing area during the summer months of 1988.

The problem was identified in July and was met with conventional reactive enforcement via increased patrol and investigative activity. This resulted in a marked decline in reported complaints by the end of September. During that three month period 32 complaints were made, 19 of which required investigation resulting in two being resolved by identification of the perpetrator(s).

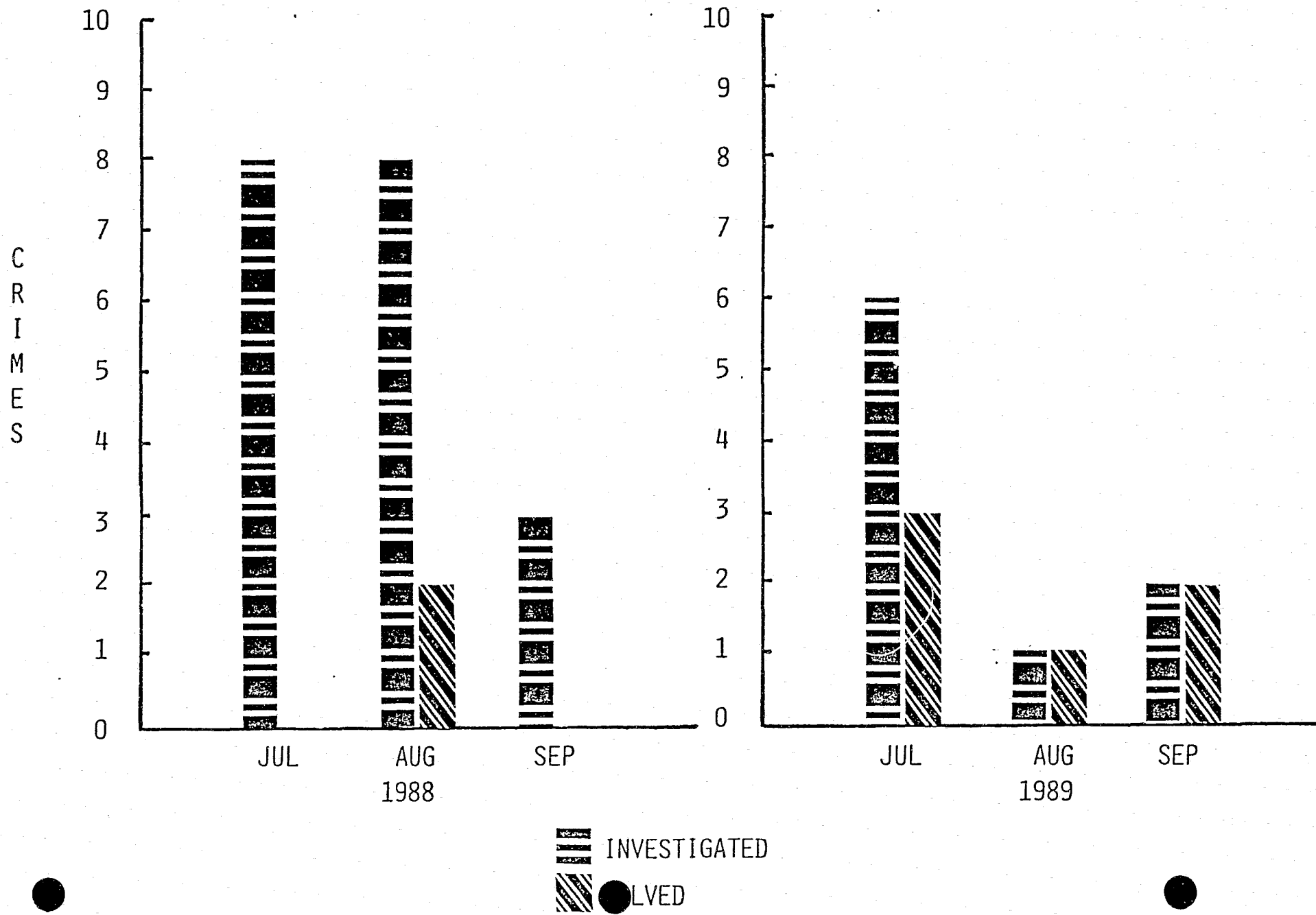
July 1989 appeared to be a repeat of the previous year's juvenile problem. By July 12th, nine juvenile incidents had been reported for the month. At that time, the Provost Marshal approved implementation of a juvenile program that involved a military policeman, assigned to CID, assuming the role of a juvenile specialist. By the end of September, 11 complaints had been made, nine of which were investigated with six resolved. During the same period there was no increase in patrol or investigative effort. In military police man-hours expended for response and reporting of juvenile complaints alone, 188 hours were spent during the three month period in 1988 as compared to 64 hours for 1989.

The juvenile officer was somewhat removed from a law enforcement posture. His activity consisted of spending peak hours in the housing area close to juvenile activity. Dressed in civilian attire and functioning as a helpful presence and peacekeeper earned him respect and trust as a problem solver. Also, he provided a channel that the parents used to express their concerns regarding juvenile matters because he was viewed as a no-threat mediator to problems. The juveniles communicated with and through him.

Extensive notes on the juvenile officer's activity were recorded daily with the names of all juveniles encountered cataloged in a file with any supplemental data. Those names were also entered into a series of block matrices that integrated information collected from many sources at various locations. Whenever an incident with juvenile involvement occurred, the intelligence data would be referred to and elimination of possibilities would be quickly narrowed. From there the juvenile officer would likely identify the participants through witnesses developed from the same data. This link analysis tracked juvenile activity covertly, identified players in leadership roles and new trends as they emerged.

An organized juvenile program could be mandated into a standard operating procedure directive. With specific procedures a new juvenile officer could be effective in the position with a minimal period of orientation. An ongoing maintenance of juvenile intelligence would proactively process housing resident's concerns and communication with the juveniles. One juvenile specialist would minimize man-hours spent on responding to and reporting of juvenile activity, and reduce military police polarization as strictly law enforcers.

JUVENILES
 TOTAL NUMBER OF CRIMES
 SOLVED THROUGH INVESTIGATION



PERIMETER

PERIMETER

BELKNAUP

SMITH COURT

TENNIS COURTS/BASKETBALL COURTS

ROSE LANE

HANNIBAL

ENNIS WAY

ROUSEL

BENNETT COURT