

**MURDER IN AMERICA:  
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE  
IACP MURDER SUMMIT**

**156236**

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**International Association of Chiefs of Police**

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ACQUISITIONS

*The typical assumptions associated with homicides throughout this century must be reevaluated in view of the unprecedented shift in national homicide patterns as evidenced during the 1990s. Every American now has a realistic chance of murder victimization in view of the random nature the crime has assumed.*

*Crime in the United States, FBI, 1993*

*Homicide should not be viewed as one type, but many, that begin as another confrontation and escalate along a violence continuum to death. Homicides that begin as different types of confrontation have different characteristics, occur in different areas of the city, affect different segments of the population, and must, consequently, have different strategies for prevention.*

*IACP Murder Summit, November 1994*

*Conventional wisdom tells us that murder cannot be prevented, that the police and community are relatively powerless. Summit participants do not accept conventional wisdom. They believe that by changing the traditional approach, homicide can be controlled more successfully.*

*IACP Murder Summit, November 1994*

*Strategies to reduce violence and homicide must be community-wide, involving law enforcement, educators, community residents, health professionals, the business community, and others in a coordinated effort. Lesser, or stop-gap efforts will not effectively address the root causes of such violence.*

*IACP Murder Summit, November 1994*

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### EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

In January 1993, 20 members of the International Association of Chiefs of Police convened for a summit on violent crime. The purpose of the gathering was to formulate and refer to federal and state policy makers recommendations designed to reduce the growth of violent crime in the United States. In April, 1993, our report, *Violent Crime in America: Recommendations of the IACP Summit on Violent Crime*, was issued. Recommendations, presented as a "starting point for addressing violence," addressed principal correlates of violence -- guns, drugs, and gangs, and called for an intensified national commitment to understand, prevent, and control violence.

Reinforcing its commitment to foster effective responses to violent crime in November 1994, the IACP assembled 55 practitioners and scholars to address the most evident and threatening dimension of contemporary violence in our society -- murder. The charge to the participants of this second summit was to fashion a package of proven, promising, and innovative homicide reduction strategies for consideration and, ideally, implementation by those institutions and individuals directly responsible and accountable for prevention and control of murder in the U.S.: police; courts; corrections agencies; health services; schools; other social service agencies; legislatures; and elected and appointed political executives.

This report distills the discussion, debate, and recommendations engaged in and offered by summit participants. Their thoughtful work was the basis for preparation of this document. Recommendations follow.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS: LAW ENFORCEMENT INITIATIVES

- Exercise leadership to develop community-wide murder reduction strategies.
- Intervene against all forms of violence as early and decisively as possible.
- Intensify use of community policing and murder-specific problem-solving strategies.
- Intensify use of tactical teams and task forces to regain control of high crime and violent environments.
- Maximize substance abuse prevention and enforcement programming.

- Use emerging technology to improve homicide clearance rates.
- Enhance ability of police to conduct field-based (patrol car) record and warrant checks.
- Supply responding officers with enhanced domestic dispute and violence history information.
- Improve witness protection in violent crime cases.
- Acknowledge and reward successful efforts by officers to reduce gun-related violence and murder.
- Intensify use of gun buy-back programs.
- Intensify efforts to improve physical plant security (target-hardening) for community businesses and facilities.

**RECOMMENDATIONS: COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES**

- Create crime advisory committees to assist law enforcement agencies with murder reduction.
- Involve all segments of the community in violence and murder prevention and control, including the business community.
- Augment detention capacity by adapting existing available facilities such as closed military bases.
- Intensify alcohol consumption reduction programs.
- Provide cash and other incentives to citizens for information on violent crimes and crimes involving use of guns.
- Provide safe havens for youth after normal school hours.
- Increase use of risk factor assessments for children by schools and health professionals.

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- Provide additional shelters for abused women and children.
  - Expand use of electronic monitoring of domestic/intimate violence and other offenders who are granted intensive probation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS: LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES**

- Increase sanctions for gun-involved crimes, particularly robberies.
- Allow police to seize weapons during domestic/intimate violence calls.
- Prohibit gun ownership by stalkers and intimate and domestic violence offenders.
- Reorient the juvenile justice system to promote swift and sure intervention against career juvenile offenders.
- Allow police to photograph, fingerprint, and document criminal behavior of career juvenile offenders.
- Allow interagency and interstate sharing of juvenile information among police and other agencies.
- Require a 72-hour cooling-off period in domestic violence cases.
- Expand mandatory hospital and medical personnel reporting of suspected violence caused injury.
- Require states to enact "responsible beverage service" laws.
- Raise the minimum drinking age, increase state or central control of alcohol sales, and limit prevalence of liquor stores through stringent store/population ratios.

**RECOMMENDATIONS: EDUCATION AND TRAINING INITIATIVES**

- Intensify programs to teach citizens how to avoid becoming victims of violent crime.
- Conduct symposia to promote and increase school administrators' support for anti-



**violence programs.**

- **Train teachers to identify, confront, and control violent and potentially violent students and situations.**
- **Conduct school awareness programs to deglorify violence and violent offenders.**
- **Train students in elementary, middle, and high schools in dispute resolution techniques.**
- **Train police officers to recognize and respond to different types of violence, including domestic and intimate.**
- **Provide comprehensive ethnic and cultural awareness training to law enforcement officers.**
- **Conduct nationwide public service announcement campaigns emphasizing family values, the dangers of firearms in the home, and targeting various forms of violence.**

## I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMIT BACKGROUND

*Violent crime in America has become so widespread, and occurs so randomly, that it profoundly affects the way we think, act, and where and how we live our lives. Violent crime has altered our assessment of the future for ourselves and our families. It is a problem that has grown to crisis proportions and swept the entire nation. Violent crime has increased in small jurisdictions as well as in major cities. The nation has already experienced the spill-over effect from densely populated urban areas to sparsely populated rural areas, including the nation's Indian country. Violent crime is a problem perpetually in the forefront of concern of police executives and one that has now captured the attention of the President of the United States and the Attorney General.*

These observations, from *Violent Crime in America*, remain no less true today than when they were set forth at our first summit. It is these very conditions that have compelled us to carry forward our search for meaningful, practical responses, this time to the most violent of all crimes--murder.

In 1993, 24,526 persons were murdered in the United States, one every 21 minutes, an average of almost 500 every week. Between 1965 and 1993, an 18-year period, both number and rate of murders increased, from 9,850 to 24,526, 149%, and from 5.1 per 100,000 to 9.5 per 100,000, 86% (Crime in the U.S., 1993, FBI).

During the most recent five-year period for which data is available, 1989-1993, reported murders increased 14.1%. The highest number of recorded murders was in 1991, 24,703. The average number during the period was 23,585.

The "statistics within the statistics" are even more grim. A 1994 Bureau of Justice Statistics report reveals that:

- Homicide was the 10th leading cause of death for all Americans in 1991.
- For blacks of all ages, homicide was the fourth leading cause of death.
- For black males and females aged 15-24, homicide was THE leading cause of death.
- For whites aged 15-24, homicide was the third leading cause of death, exceeded only by accidents and suicide.

Murder is a national problem, occurring in jurisdictions of all sizes. Nevertheless, cities with large concentrations of population have higher numbers of murders. Of the ten jurisdictions with highest number of murders in 1994, seven have a population which exceeds one million. Only four of these cities are among the top ten in rates of murder (per 100,000). Nine of the cities with the highest rate of murder have populations under one million, seven of them under 500,000. Each of these cities is the core of a populous metropolitan area, however.

Of profound significance for analysis and response to murder is the changing nature of the crime. FBI/UCR analysis of murders from 1975 to 1992 reveals not only increases but fundamental changes in characteristics and patterns:

- More murders are between strangers, 53 percent of all United States homicides in 1992.
- Drug trade is considered to be a major factor contributing to the increase in murders whose circumstances are unknown.
- Number of victims killed in "crime of passion" circumstances decreased by 22 percent from 1975 to 1992.
- Juvenile gang killings are the fastest growing type, increasing 371 percent from 1980 to 1992.
- Guns have become the weapon of choice. Percent of victims in 15-19 age group killed by a gun has increased from 66 percent in 1975 to 85 percent in 1992.
- Greatest increase in murder arrests is among whites, 67 percent among all whites, and 204 percent among white juveniles.
- Clearance rates for murder dropped from 91 percent in 1965 to a historical low of 65 percent in 1992, most likely a result of the increase in stranger-stranger murders. (*Crime in the United States*, 1993, FBI).

Some experts conclude that the violent crime problem, and murder problem, can best be solved by increasing support for social programs. Because so many crimes are committed by the poor, the uneducated, and the neglected in American society, these experts argue that we can make greatest progress by ensuring that everyone in this country has a decent place to sleep and eat and sleep, has adequate medical care, is provided with the opportunity to acquire an education, and earns or receives enough money to avoid the ravages of poverty. Others theorize that crime is committed by people who consciously and willingly decide to do so. Still others contend that

social programming has failed to even stabilize increases in violent crime and that until such time that it does, strict and sure law enforcement and punishment are the only reasonable options for maximizing the safety and security of the public.

While experts debate causes and cures, the bottom line is that there has been a tremendous increase in violent crime. Murder remains a problem that undermines the security and quality of life of all Americans. Immediate interventions are required to control and reduce violent crime and murder, while the search for permanent and more fundamental cures is pursued to successful conclusion. It is heartening to be able to report that participants at the murder summit felt that such interventions are or can become available. Conventional wisdom tells us that murder cannot be prevented, that police and community are relatively powerless. Summit participants did not accept conventional wisdom. They believe that by changing the traditional approach, homicide can be controlled more successfully.

### THE SUMMIT

IACP's governing body elected to convene the Murder in America Summit to carry forward the work of its Violence in America Summit. The summit was organized and chaired by IACP Fourth Vice President Darrell Sanders, Chief of Police, Frankfort, Illinois. Fifty-five practitioners and scholars were assembled to collaboratively examine homicide in America, and to introduce, define, and advocate constructive responses--homicide reduction strategies. Participants were carefully selected to blend perspectives, expertise, and experience in the critical functions and disciplines that deal with murder: law enforcement; health services; drug and alcohol abuse treatment; juvenile justice; research and evaluation. A complete list of participants can be found in Section IV of this report.

The creative work of the summit was conducted by four panels, each focused on one of the following murder/violence types:

- Youth Violence and Homicide
- Confrontational Violence and Homicide
- Robbery-Related Violence and Homicide
- Intimate Violence and Homicide

Each panel was charged to address three dimensions of its type/classification or murder: extent and nature of the problem; current law enforcement response; and strategies to reduce the problem. Guns, drugs, and alcohol can, and typically do, appear as aggravating factors in murder/violence situations. Each has the ability to adjust the threshold of violence, usually lowering it, and precipitating further or more deadly violence. Accordingly, panels were

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encouraged to examine the influence of these factors as well. The action agenda produced by the panels and then by the body of participants as a whole is outlined in Section III.

**II. HOMICIDE IN THE UNITED STATES**

Almost two million violent crimes were reported in the United States in 1993--one every 16 seconds. In 1993, 24,526 persons were murdered in the United States, one every 21 minutes, an average of almost 500 every week. Violent crimes -- murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, cause the greatest and usually irrevocable suffering to victims, constant and often paralyzing anxiety to ordinary citizens, and represent the dominant problem faced by law enforcement agencies. Evidence is irrefutable that violent crime has reached record levels. Trends indicate that absent immediate and revolutionary interventions, violent crime will continue to increase. America has become less and less safe. Unless education on violence and ways to reduce violence are accorded greater priority, American neighborhoods will become even more dangerous.

**A LONGSTANDING PROBLEM**

Between 1965 and 1993, an 28-year period, both number and rate of murders increased. Number of murders increased 149% from 9,850 to 24,526, and rates per 100,000 increased 86% from 5.1 to 9.5. Murder declined slightly during the early eighties, after peaking in 1980, but resumed an increasing trend in the late eighties. (See Table 1 and Figure 1)

Both the number and rates of murders increased during the more recent five-year period, 1989-1993:

Year	Number	Change	Rate/100,000
1989	21,500	--	8.7
1990	23,438	8.3%	9.4
1991	24,703	5.4%	9.8
1992	23,760	(3.8)%	9.3
1993	24,526	3.2%	9.5

Source: *Crime in the United States*, FBI.

The 1994 BJS report, *Violent Crime*, diagnoses many characteristics of homicide in the United States and reveals, among other findings, that:

- 1980 and more recent homicide rates are at the highest levels recorded in this century.

- Homicide was the 10th leading cause of death for all Americans in 1991.
- For blacks of all ages, homicide was the fourth leading cause of death.
- For black males and females aged 15-24, homicide was THE leading cause of death.
- For whites aged 15-24, homicide was the third leading cause of death, exceeded only by accidents and suicide.

Young persons and blacks are among the highest at-risk groups. Figure 2 displays the continuous rise in victimization of 12-18 year olds between 1984 and 1990. Figure 3 shows a higher rate of murders per 100,000 population for blacks than for the United States population as a whole.

### **METROPOLITAN AREA MURDER**

Level and rate of murder are often high in heavily populated urban areas. Tables 2 and 3 display the 10 cities in the United States with the highest rates per 100,000 and total numbers of murders. Concentrated populations tend to yield relatively high *levels* of murder, while even relatively small communities can have high *rates* of murder.

### **THE CHANGING NATURE OF HOMICIDE**

Law enforcement specialists, in particular, have become aware of the changing nature of violence. The increasing use of force to settle disputes, including lethal force, has been of particular concern. Drive-by shootings, stalking, and carjackings have become increasingly prevalent. Changes in homicide have been insightfully captured by the revealing work in *Homicide Patterns: Past and Present*. The work argues persuasively that homicide is not only increasing, but *changing* in nature. As the FBI compares data from 1975 to 1992, a number of changes in homicide patterns appear:

- More and more murders are between strangers, 53 percent of all United States homicides in 1992.
- Drug trade is thought to be a major factor contributing to the increase in murders whose circumstances are not known.
- Number of victims killed in "crime of passion" circumstances decreased by 22 percent from 1975 to 1992.

- The fastest growing murder circumstance is juvenile gang killings, with such killings increasing by 371 percent from 1980 to 1992.
- Guns have become the weapon of choice. The percent of victims in the 15-19 age group killed by a gun increased from 66 percent in 1975 to 85 percent in 1992.
- Changes in arrest statistics show that the greatest increase has occurred with white arrestee levels, 67 percent among all whites, and a 204 percent among white juveniles arrested for homicide, from 1975 to 1992.
- The clearance rate for murder decreased from 91 percent in 1965 to a historical low of 65 percent in 1992, most likely a result of the increase in stranger-stranger murders and the increased difficulty of investigating such crimes.

DEA reports or studies conducted between 1978 and 1988 in Miami, New York, and Washington (DC) found that approximately one-quarter to one-half of homicides were drug related. Another study of over 400 homicides in New York City in 1988 found that over half of those were directly linked to drugs or alcohol, 84 percent of the drug-related homicides involved cocaine in any form, and 60 percent of the drug-related homicides involved crack cocaine.

### **THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT**

Figure 3 displays homicide rates in the United States and nine other countries, for a two-year period, 1989 and 1990. While there is a great debate about international statistical comparisons and reliability of homicide counts by individual nations, the data are nonetheless striking. The total homicide rate for the United States exceeds every other nation in the comparison set.

### **SEEKING ANSWERS**

The data on extent and nature of murder tell a clear story: homicide is a critical and growing public safety issue in the United States. The summary statistics suggest a host of underlying issues that need to be addressed. The 1993 Proceedings of the Homicide Research Working Group (HRWG) point out that it is not the level or rate of homicides that is confusing--it is the underlying reasons why our homicide problem has grown so much in recent years. The HRWG report raises a number of critical concerns about how to view and respond to the changing pattern of homicide:

- Violence and homicide must be viewed as both a public safety and public health problem.



- Prevention programs should focus on known at-risk target populations, particularly young black males.
- The escalating nature of violence and how minor incidents grow to eventual homicide must be understood.
- The relationships between drugs and violence must be clarified.
- Prevention approaches should target occupations where a concentration of homicide exists, including law enforcement, taxi drivers, hotel clerks, and convenience store operators.
- If homicides are concentrated in large urban cities and counties, prevention programs must be emphasized in these areas.
- Many victims precipitate their own murder through confrontational behavior, sometimes characterized as "homicide contests."

The HRWG counts among its members law enforcement, health, research, academic and other professionals all seeking solutions to this problem. The emergence of the HRWG reflects the growing concern about homicide in the United States. While homicide is obviously a law enforcement issue, its nature and extent at this time also makes it a community-wide issue, requiring community-wide participation in the solutions.

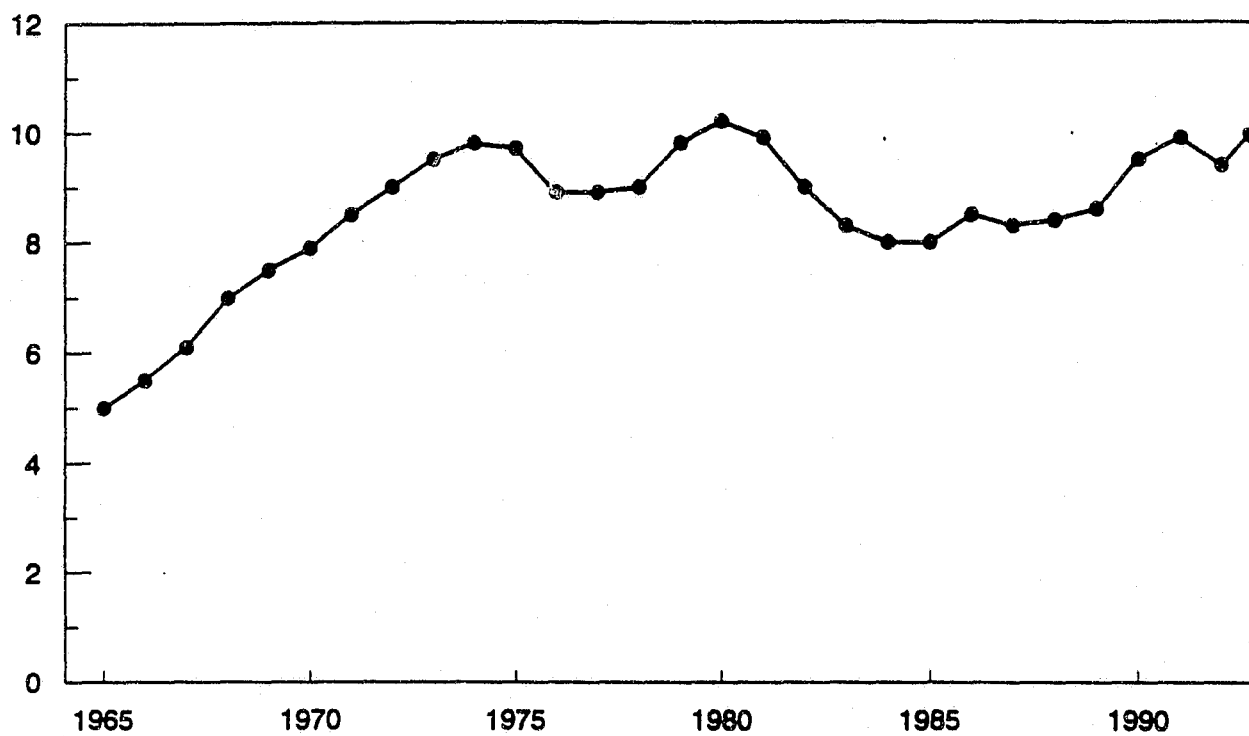
Table 1  
Murder and Non-Negligent Manslaughter  
in the United States - 1965 to 1993

Year of Offense	Number of Offenses	Rate per 100,000
1965	9,850	5.1
1966	10,920	5.6
1967	12,090	6.1
1968	13,650	6.8
1969	14,590	7.2
1970	15,860	7.8
1971	17,630	8.5
1972	18,550	8.9
1973	19,530	9.3
1974	20,600	9.7
1975	20,510	9.6
1976	18,780	8.8
1977	19,121	8.8
1978	19,555	9.0
1979	21,456	9.7
1980	23,044	10.2
1981	22,516	9.8
1982	21,012	9.1
1983	19,308	8.3
1984	18,692	7.9
1985	18,976	7.9
1986	20,613	8.6
1987	20,096	8.3
1988	20,675	8.4
1989	21,500	8.7
1990	23,438	9.4
1991	24,703	9.8
1992	23,760	9.3
1993	24,526	9.5

Source: *Crime in the United States*, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1965-1993

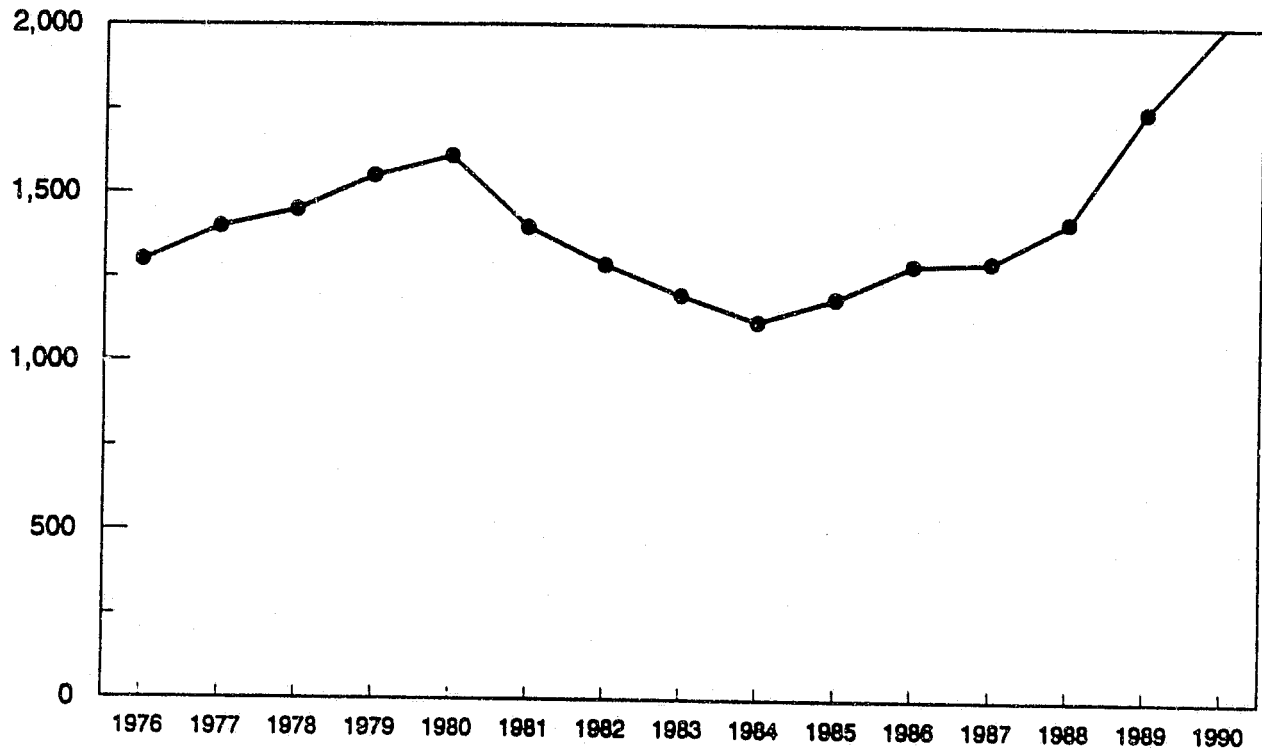
Figure 1  
Murder Rates, United States  
1965 - 1993

Rate per 100,000



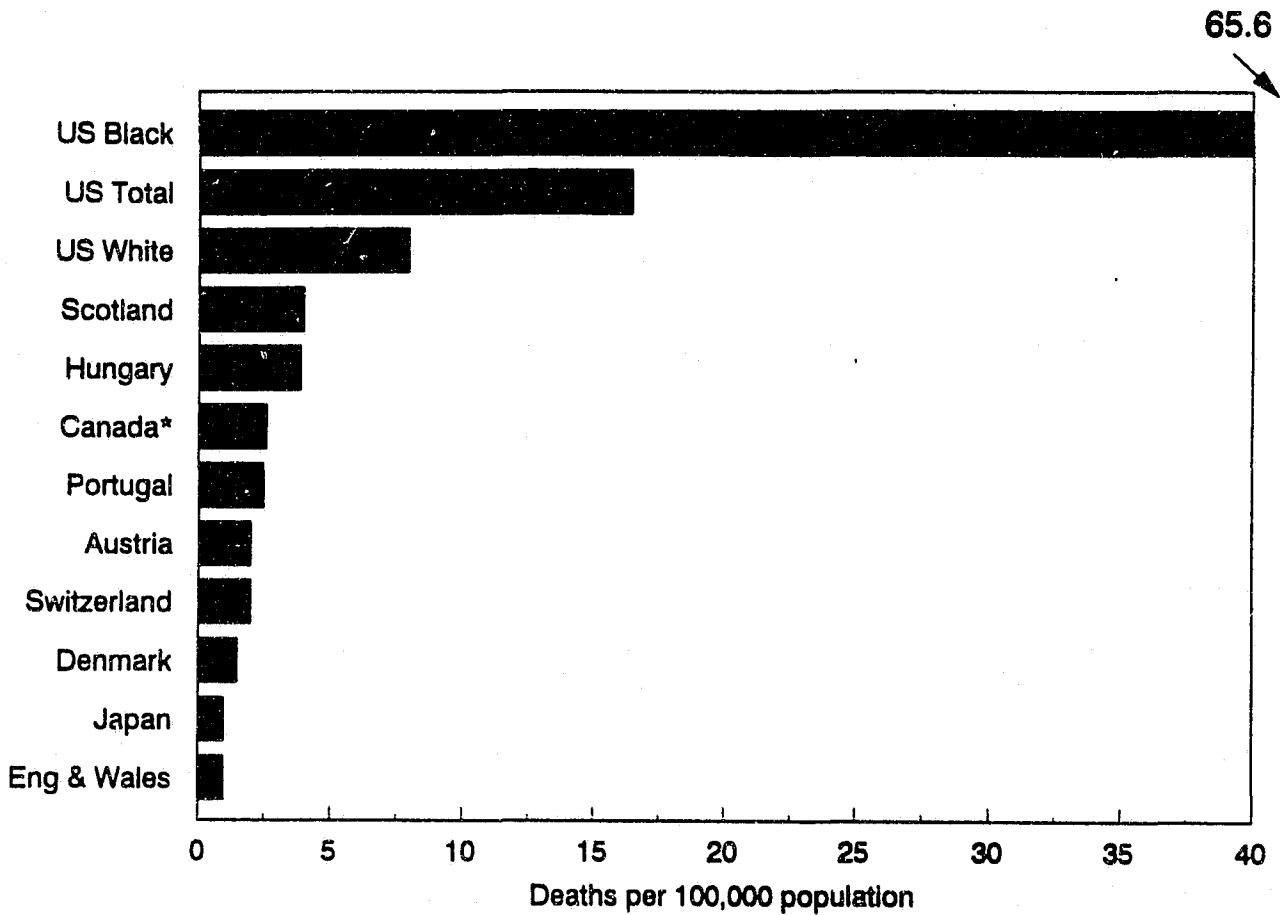
Source: Crime in the U.S., Dept. of Justice, FBI, 1994

Figure 2  
Homicide Victims Between Ages 12 and 18  
For 1976-1990, According to the SHR



Source: Questions and Answers to Lethal and  
Nonlethal Violence, NIJ, 1993, SHR Data  
\* Supplemental Homicide Report, UCR

Figure 3  
Male Homicide Rates in the U.S.  
and Selected Nations  
1989 - 1990



Source: WHO Annuals and NCHS

\* 1989 only

**Table 2**  
**Murder Rates in Ten Cities 1994**  
**(Over 100,000 pop.)**

CITY	POPULATION	TOTAL*	PER 100,000
1. New Orleans, LA	491,619	425	86.4
2. Richmond, VA	205,331	160	77.9
3. Washington, DC	578,000	399	69.0
4. Gary, IN	117,836	80	67.9
5. St. Louis, MO	387,053	248	64.1
6. Detroit, MI	1,020,062	541	53.0
7. Birmingham, AL	268,768	135	50.2
8. Atlanta, GA	402,877	191	47.4
9. Jackson, MS	198,227	91	45.9
10. Baltimore, MD	732,968	321	43.8

\*Homicides and non-negligent manslaughters.

**Table 3**  
**Number of Murders in Ten Cities 1994**  
**(Over 100,000 pop.)**

CITY	POPULATION	TOTAL*	PER 100,000
1. New York, NY	7,347,257	1,561	21.2
2. Chicago, IL	2,788,996	928	33.3
3. Los Angeles, CA	3,525,317	846	24.0
4. Detroit, MI	1,020,062	541	53.0
5. New Orleans, LA	491,619	425	86.4
6. Philadelphia, PA	1,559,534	404	25.9
7. Washington, DC	578,000	399	69.0
8. Houston, TX	1,724,327	375	21.7
9. Baltimore, MD	732,968	321	43.8
10. Dallas, TX	1,042,619	296	28.4

\*Homicides and non-negligent manslaughters.

Source: *Crime in the United States* (Washington, DC: Federal Bureau of Investigation, preliminary 1994 data).

### III. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants at the summit, like those who comprised the earlier summit, urge recognition and acceptance of the premise that no single institution in our communities and governments can or should be responsible for reducing homicide. It requires the collective commitment, coordination, resources, and effective performance of all institutions, as well as members of communities. Accordingly, summit participants introduced, discussed, and advocated a broad ranging package of recommendations to reduce murder and violence. The package includes 39 action recommendations for law enforcement, the juvenile justice system, schools, legislatures, community groups, social services agencies, health services, and individual citizens.

#### LAW ENFORCEMENT INITIATIVES

- **Exercise leadership to develop community-wide murder reduction strategies.**

Police can neither control violence and murder alone nor be held solely responsible. Communities must work as a team to stop violence. Any intervention or prevention strategy must include key players in neighborhood organizations, schools, health, law enforcement, and other government agencies. Law enforcement can and should take a leadership role in coordinating effective violence/homicide reduction programs.

- **Intervene against all forms of violence as early and decisively as possible.**

Murder is the final act of a continuum of violence. To stop homicide, earlier forms of violence must also be controlled. The earlier the intervention (childhood, pre-school, grade school) the greater the potential to effectively curb violence. The essential goal is to stop individuals from progressing along the violence continuum. The "Keeping the Kids Alive" program initiated by the New York City Housing Authority Police Department is one example of a successful police-based initiative.

- **Intensify use of community policing and murder-specific problem-solving strategies.**

The emergence of community policing and problem-solving strategies hold great promise for reducing crime and violence in the neighborhoods. Increased involvement of the community, proliferation of community-based programs, and collaborative planning efforts with the police are energizing the response to violence. One particularly innovative application, where neighborhood residents have direct input into actual police patrol and shift assignments in each beat, merits further attention.

- **Intensify use of tactical teams and task forces to regain control of high crime and violent environments.**

There is a present need to regain control of violent environments, for example public housing facilities overrun by gangs. Law enforcement agencies should continue to conduct building sweeps, run gun-checkpoint programs and cooperate within various municipal enforcement groups and crime task forces to ensure that ground is gained, not lost, on interdicting weapons and re-taking violence-racked neighborhoods and buildings.

State and local law enforcement agencies should work to take advantage of federal task force resources. The DEA's Mobile Enforcement Team (MET) initiative is one example. MET is designed to support law enforcement agencies in their efforts to combat violent crime and drug trafficking by cultivating drug intelligence and investigations against violent offenders and to share that information with state and local authorities to further their homicide cases and prosecutions.

- **Maximize substance abuse prevention and enforcement programming.**

Drug use and dependency is connected to the commission of violent and other property crimes, and thus presents a continuous problem for law enforcement. Drug demand and supply reduction efforts should target those criminal activities most tied to potential violence, drug cartel activities and high volume sales/dealers.

- **Use emerging technology to improve homicide clearance rates.**

Clearance rates for murder dropped from 91 percent in 1965 to a low of 65 percent in 1992. The FBI attributes this decrease in clearance rates to an increase in stranger-stranger murders. Law enforcement should use advanced automated information systems, linkages to federal information resources (CHRI, AFIS, NCIC 2000) and other emerging technologies to improve information sharing, increase suspect identification, and raise clearance rates.

- **Enhance ability of police to conduct field-based (patrol car) records and warrants checks.**

"Livescan" has improved the method for obtaining fingerprints at booking. Placing Livescan equipment (reduced scale) in police cars may expedite fingerprinting, increase information about a suspect at time of arrest, and reduce later booking time. The principal objective would be to identify wanted violent felons during traffic stops and



other police interventions.

- **Supply responding officers with enhanced domestic dispute and violence history information.**

Even with more sophisticated computer-based information systems, many police departments still dispatch officers to domestic disputes with little or no background knowledge about the occupants of a house. A much-improved system to document sequential domestic incidents is needed so that responding officers are aware of past behavior, past incidents, violence-prone occupants of the house, and especially if occupants of the house own weapons. Armed with such knowledge, officers can arrive on scene better prepared to intervene effectively and safely.

- **Improve witness protection in violent crime cases.**

All too often perpetrators, or gangs affiliated with the perpetrators, so successfully intimidate witnesses, or injure or kill witnesses, that prosecution and trial procedures cannot continue. Aggressive witness protection programs should be put in place where such intimidation has, or is likely to, occur. Improved programs should improve the closure rate on murder and other violent crime cases.

- **Acknowledge and reward successful efforts by officers to reduce gun-related violence and murder.**

Provide awards to police officers for gun violence arrests. Police efforts in the area of gun violence investigations and arrests should always be acknowledged. Police officers could receive cash or other incentive awards, possibly from a consortium of community/business concerns, for outstanding investigative efforts to reduce illegal weapon possession and use.

- **Intensify use of gun buy-back programs.**

Reaction to and success with gun buy-back programs appears promising. These programs tend to promote community-wide intolerance to guns, send a strong warning to those carrying illegal weapons, and result in the confiscation and destruction of street weapons. Such programs should be expanded, particularly in environments like schools, where they can have a direct effect on safety.

- **Intensify efforts to improve physical plant security (target-hardening) for businesses and facilities.**

Recent studies, including one by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, cite the need to make community facilities more secure including convenience stores, gas stations, and fast food stores. Taking aggressive action, using technology as a baseline (perimeter monitors, sensing devices, closed circuit TV), facilities can be brought to a security level that will lower the potential for them to be "targeted" by criminals.

### COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

- **Create crime advisory committees to assist law enforcement agencies with murder reduction.**

Cities have created crime advisory committees, made up of residents and leaders of the community, particularly as they have moved to community-oriented policing. Preliminary results indicate that the feedback and advice emerging from these working committees have been very helpful to law enforcement's response to violence.

- **Involve all segments of the community in violence and murder prevention and control, including the business community.**

Community-based strategies typically focus on neighborhoods, and involve community-based volunteer organizations and government agencies, primarily law enforcement. In addition, the business community in most towns and cities can be a very effective player in homicide/violence reduction strategies. A concerted effort led by community-policing leaders should be undertaken to bring business and their substantial resources to bear on the problems of violence and murder.

- **Augment detention capacity by adapting existing facilities.**

Use closed military bases for detention centers for non-violent offenders. Adaptive re-use of closed military facilities for minimum- and medium-security correctional environments for non-violent offenders could reduce construction/capital costs; provide immediate availability of needed maximum security correctional space for violent offenders, and free funds that can be directed toward violence prevention/reduction programs.

- **Intensify alcohol consumption reduction programs.**

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Alcohol abuse can lead to increased violence in certain cases. A new initiative, employing education and informational material should focus on reducing alcohol consumption. Alcoholic beverage brewers, distributors, bar owners, liquor distributors and other vendors should be called upon to support and encourage a media-oriented program.

- **Provide cash and other incentives to citizens for information on violent crimes and crimes involving use of guns.**

Cash incentives should be available to citizens for information on gun and other violent crimes. Like programs to provide incentives to school students, programs for community residents can have a degree of success. Increased resources for neighborhood-based programs can be the vehicle for implementing this strategy.

- **Provide safe havens for youth after normal school hours.**

The breakdown of the family structure and the subsequent loss of the home as a haven have created serious problems for youth. Keeping schools open in the afternoon and evening has been found to be a welcome alternative for children with no safe place to go. While this requires additional resources from a variety of agencies for volunteer staff and program materials, the benefits in reduced violence and or homicide can be substantial.

- **Increase use of risk factor assessments for children by schools and health professionals.**

Risk factor scales -- paper and pencil survey instruments directed at a number of sources and factors -- can help identify children at risk of violence. Early childhood assessment of risk factors (parental or sibling alcoholism or drug use, parental neglect, poor home environment) permit early intervention by school and health professionals and hopefully lead to reduction of violent outcomes.

- **Provide additional shelters for abused women and children.**

Women and their children across the United States regularly enter "underground" programs across state borders to protect them from abusive partners. Substantial funding should be made available to increase the number of shelters and the staff for those shelters, so that a safe environment can be created for victims while prosecution or other actions are taken against abusers.

- **Expand use of electronic monitoring of domestic/intimate violence and other offenders who are granted intensive probation.**

Commonly referred to as "EM," programs combining electronic monitors (ankle or wrist bracelets) are now in place in many cities in the United States. These programs bring technology to bear on criminal behavior patterns. Expanded use of such technology, and even a broadening of application should be considered. EM has been applied successfully to several pilot domestic violence and stalking cases, where accused or convicted offenders volunteer to wear EM equipment, and victims are equipped with an in-house alarm to detect whether an abuser has violated court-ordered distance rules.

### **LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES**

- **Increase sanctions for gun-involved crimes, particularly robberies.**

Much of the data on all instrumental and robbery-related violence, in particular, indicates weapon usage as a primary factor. Robbers view use of a gun as a predictor that a victim will not likely resist. Many robbers shoot victims, even after a successful robbery (money obtained, no one injured) has been effected. Legislation should recognize the growing use of guns in robbery-related offenses and provide enhanced sanctions for such weapon use.

- **Allow police to seize weapons during domestic/intimate violence calls.**

Several jurisdictions have laws that permit weapon seizure at the time of a police response to a domestic dispute. The removal of a weapon during such a call is likely to reduce the potential for increased violence after the police depart. Particular attention must be paid to situations where indictments or orders of protection are already in place.

- **Prohibit gun ownership by stalkers and intimate and domestic violence offenders.**

Persons convicted of certain stalking or domestic violence offenses are, in many instances, able to purchase and carry a firearm. The repetitive nature of domestic disputes calls for legislation that would resolve the problem of a repeat domestic offender having a legal weapon available at a subsequent confrontation. Section 110401 of the 1994 Crime Bill addressed this issue on the federal level.

- **Reorient the juvenile justice system to promote swift and sure intervention against "careerists."**

The juvenile justice system is geared to protecting the juvenile, to a degree that may often conflict with the goal of protecting neighborhoods and communities from the activities of serious youthful offenders. Reevaluation of national juvenile justice policies, and reorientation toward swift and sure intervention for juvenile crime "careerists" is in order.

- **Allow police to photograph, fingerprint and document criminal behavior of career juvenile offenders.**

In many jurisdictions, it is currently very difficult to create information which could prevent "career juvenile offenders" from getting lost in a system. Laws should promote protection of the accused, but not, inadvertently, promote a juvenile's capability to commit crimes, go undetected, and ultimately unpunished.

- **Allow interagency and interstate sharing of juvenile information among police and other agencies.**

Based on historic juvenile court philosophies directed toward protecting the juvenile from harm, many current laws actually thwart law enforcement interdiction of activities of sophisticated and repeat juvenile offenders. Increased information sharing would limit the juvenile offender's ability to evade the criminal justice system.

- **Require a 72-hour cooling-off period in domestic violence cases.**

Additional violence often occurs during the three-day period after a domestic violence incident. A 72-hour cooling-off period would require an alleged abuser and complainant to stay away from each other for that time period, thus lowering tension and emotional levels.

- **Expand mandatory hospital and medical personnel reporting of suspected violence caused injury.**

Current laws narrowly define incidents in which doctors or nurses must report a suspicious injury. Since many victims of violence seek hospital assistance but not police intervention, out of fear of reprisal, medical professionals are a first line of information. New, aggressive laws should be enacted that would expand the role of nurses and doctors in collaborating with law enforcement officials on all types of suspected violence.

- **Require all states to enact "responsible beverage service" laws.**

"Responsible Beverage Service" laws focus responsibility (liability or criminal charge) on the beverage server (bar, bar owner, bar employees) when a patron becomes drunk and subsequently commits a crime of some sort. These laws, limited to a number of states, deserve broader enactment throughout the United States. A strong message of culpability to purveyors of alcohol may result in reduced consumption.

- **Raise the minimum drinking age, increase state or central control of alcohol sales, and limit prevalence of liquor stores through stringent store/population ratios.**

To reduce alcohol consumption, legislative initiatives are needed to raise the drinking age, extend state or central control of alcohol sales, as well as regulate the number of liquor stores based on population density and existing liquor store/population ratios.

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING INITIATIVES

- **Intensify programs to teach citizens how to avoid becoming victims of violent crime.**

Pre-victim educational programs that train citizens on how to avoid becoming victims of crime are a significant way to reduce violence and homicide. Noteworthy efforts in this area already in place include McGruff ("Take a Bite Out of Crime") and city-specific safety training courses sponsored by the National Organization for Women. More resources and funding should be made available to make programs like these more visible and to create even tougher pre-victim counseling efforts to help citizens understand how easily they can be victimized.

- **Conduct symposia to promote and increase school administrators' support for anti-violence programs.**

Crimes and violence in schools have been documented throughout the United States over the past decade. There appears to exist a concern among school administrators that acknowledging a problem or seeking help on such issues is tantamount to admitting failure. Such attitudes inhibit reduction of school violence. Regional symposiums on the issue of school crime and violence can bring educators together with others in their community, including the police, to develop cooperative relationships and break down territorial barriers.

- 
- **Train teachers to identify, confront, and control violent and potentially violent students and situations.**

Needs for classroom violence management are immense. Today's school teachers encounter many violent criminal incidents. Inability to confront or control such situations leads to continuing misbehavior or escalation of violence. There is a need for an expanded curriculum for new and experienced teachers to familiarize them with techniques to confront and control students and de-escalate potentially violent situations.

- **Conduct school awareness programs to deglorify violence and violent offenders.**

More programs to help school-aged children become aware of the realities of drugs, crime and violence are needed. Symposiums on "real life vs. romance of crime," like that conducted by the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, exemplify effective approaches. That program shows graphic slides of dead drug dealers and shows the reality of the violence that accompanies the drug trade.

- **Train students in elementary, middle, and high schools in dispute resolution techniques.**

Dispute or conflict resolution is a simple method to reduce confrontational and violent situations in almost any setting. It is currently taught in the classroom, the boardroom and in marital counseling sessions. Youth in particular need even more exposure to dispute resolution techniques. Programs should be expanded in elementary, middle and high schools throughout the United States, using experienced and volunteer mediators as trainers.

- **Train police officers to recognize and respond to different types of violence, including domestic and intimate.**

Intimate violence covers a number of relational incidents, including spouse, partner, child and parental abuse and assault. Police officers often have a limited view of intimate violence as simply "domestic" incidents among married couples. A curriculum should be developed for police academies, in-service training programs and even roll call training to expand officers' awareness of intimate violence patterns.

- **Provide comprehensive ethnic and cultural awareness training to law enforcement officers.**

Many problems that arise when police attempt to resolve violent incidents in a

community are related to the nature of a community itself. A lack of understanding of cultural mores and/or language differences can produce escalation rather than the reduction of violence. Professionals, as well as community volunteers, should step forward and offer ethnic awareness training to departments with culturally diverse communities.

- **Conduct a nationwide public service announcement campaign emphasizing family values, the dangers of firearms in the home, and targeting various forms of violence.**

Many successful ad campaigns have been mounted on a variety of public issues. Campaigns, possibly supported by the Ad Council, could focus on violence. A series of ads can be considered, targeting the various types of violence with key actions to take to avoid the escalation of violence. This might be, in essence, an "Only you can prevent violence" campaign. Other topics could include firearms in the home and family values.

Research is required to validate the effectiveness of a number of recommendations. In particular, thorough process and impact evaluations should be conducted for each newly implemented program.



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