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FOCUS

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POLITICAL TRENDLETTER®

Perspective

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History Month: Remembering Black Fighting Men

Fifty years ago, African American soldiers, sailors, and airmen were among this country's fighting men who participated in World War II. Some of them were in celebrated units like the 332nd Fighter Group—the black fighter outfit also known as the Tuskegee Airmen. Despite their heroic and courageous exploits in the air, they had to submit to the humiliation of segregation on the ground.

In 1944, a dozen African Americans made history as the Navy's first black commissioned officers. They were assigned to segregated support duties and were not permitted to serve on ships as line officers, but it was a departure from prior Navy policy when the only roles that black men in the Navy could have were as stewards' mates, essentially servants who cleaned up after white officers and brought them meals.

There was a group of African American soldiers who did not receive the renown of World War II's black flying and naval officers. They were common soldiers also serving in segregated units in Europe. In December 1944, American commanders called on black volunteers to fill out understrength units as replacement riflemen. Most black ground troops had been assigned to support and service units and had not seen combat duty.

The call for volunteers from Lieutenant General John C. H. Lee, commander of support units in Europe, read, in part, that the general "is happy to offer to a limited number of colored troops...the privilege of joining our veteran units at the front...." Blacks were to fight "shoulder to shoulder" with white soldiers. Mixing black and white troops was a radical departure from traditional Army policy. Then-Supreme Allied Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower amended the call, removing references to fighting "shoulder to shoulder."

Initially, over 4,500 black truck drivers, supply specialists, longshoremen, construction foremen, and cargo checkers volunteered. After a brief training period, the first volunteers were formed into 37 all-black platoons (groups of about 35 men) and assigned to previously all-white companies and battalions. Some black troops were thrown into battle immediately, distinguishing themselves on the west bank of the Rhine near Cologne, and during fierce fighting at the Remagen bridgehead. Many among the forces that pushed deep into Germany in the offensive of March and April in 1945 sustained high casualties and won medals for their bravery.

This is a little-known episode in American military history involving nameless and faceless black soldiers who helped secure final victory while striking a blow at the Army's policy on segregation. The urgency of defeating Germany with a unified force brought home the impracticality and waste of maintaining separate black and white units and confining African American troops to support and service units. Black soldiers proved their fighting abilities and exhibited valor under fire, contradicting myths to the contrary. Furthermore, faced with the same dangers and privations of combat, black and white soldiers bonded with one another, destroying the misconception that integrating the army would threaten good order and discipline.

While President Harry S. Truman's Executive Order 9981, calling for the desegregation of the armed forces, would not come until four years later (in 1948), the foundations for the policy had been laid by countless black soldiers fighting in German towns with names like Creussen, Gottsfeld, and Lichtenfels. As the nation focuses on African American history this month, we should remember the courageous Americans who fought for freedom on two fronts in World War II. ■

Eddie N. Williams

PRESIDENT

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Will Tougher Prison Terms Make Us Safer?

Against Pressure to Adopt More Severe Criminal Penalties, Some Groups Advocate Alternatives to Incarceration for Many Offenders

by Kenneth F. Schoen

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton declared: "Violent crime and the fear it provokes are crippling our society, limiting personal freedom, and fraying the ties that bind us." While the rate of crime has stabilized or even declined in most American communities, crime remains one of the nation's most serious problems. According to the FBI, there were 1.9 million violent crimes committed in the United States in 1992—23,760 murders and over 100,000 rapes—and half of all homicide victims are African Americans. In many poor urban areas, crime is fueled by a profusion of guns, drug wars, disintegrating families, and unemployment.

The emotionally charged atmosphere which the issue of crime generates is also one in which political demagoguery thrives. Lawmakers in state legislatures and Congress have focused more and more on "get-tough" laws that restrict judicial discretion and require mandatory sentences, life without parole, and death penalties for an expanding list of crimes. Characterizing the spirit in which the U.S. Senate recently passed its omnibus crime bill, Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.), who chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee, recently said, "If anyone proposed barbed-wiring the ankles of anyone who jaywalks, I think it would pass."

Unfortunately, the approach of applying the broad brush of incarceration to cover a myriad of infractions has failed to reduce crime and has resulted in the imprisonment of tens of thousands of Americans at escalating costs. In many cases, especially involving nonviolent, first-time offenders, alternatives to incarceration can be applied more effectively and at less expense.

More Prisons Don't Equal Less Crime

The prison population in state and federal penal facilities has increased by more than 120 percent in a decade, jumping from 369,930 in 1981 to 824,133 in 1991, according to figures from the U.S. Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics. The Bureau estimates that the number of inmates in municipal jails was nearly 450,000 in 1992. As the total number of people behind bars approaches one and a half million, the cost of operating state and federal prisons has also increased. In the last decade, state governments have spent $34.6 billion on the construction of nearly 1,000 penal facilities for a total of 661,388 prison beds, according to Jamie Lillis, research director of the *Corrections COMPENDIUM*, a national journal for corrections professionals. In many prisons, the cost of incarcerating one inmate exceeds $25,000 per year. And the Senate crime bill would provide an additional $3 billion for new construction of regional prisons.

Today, the United States imprisons a greater proportion of its citizens than any other country in the world—455 per 100,000 as compared to 311 in South Africa, 97 in the United Kingdom, and 42 in Japan, according to the Sentencing Project, a Washington-based organization that focuses on sentencing reform in criminal justice policy and promotes alternatives to incarceration. Yet the doubled incarceration rates have not deterred the increase in violent crime. According to the FBI, the rate of violent crimes per 100,000 Americans rose from 594 in 1981 to 758 in 1991.

I'm Tougher Than You

The frenzy to enact "get-tough" laws that would result in locking up more citizens has engendered a dangerous "I'm-tougher-than-you" political one-upmanship that bears little relationship to promoting justice or making our streets safer. For example, Georgia Governor Zell Miller, in a January crime proposal, said: "We're going to get tougher on repeat offenders. Real tough.... Repeat violent offenders must be dealt with harshly. In Georgia, the rule is going to be 'Two Strikes and You're Gone.'"

"Three-time loser" laws (three serious felony convictions that require an automatic sentence of life behind bars) and so-called "truth-in-sentencing" policies (where offenders must serve at least 85 percent of their full sentences, essentially eliminating parole) are being proposed as a means of getting dangerous offenders off the streets. The effectiveness of these measures is questionable, and their cost to taxpayers is expected to be considerable. According to black Congressman Bobby Scott (D-Va.), who serves on the House Judiciary Committee, truth in sentencing will greatly increase prison costs nationwide. "If we ended parole in my state, it would cost us an additional $2.6 billion for prison construction," says Scott. "That's enough to build a brand new $1 million fully staffed Boys and Girls club in every precinct in Virginia with $600 million to spare," Scott adds.

Washington State's Initiative 593, known as the "Three-Strikes-and-You're-Out" law, has been touted as the way to

Mr. Schoen directs the Justice Program at the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation in New York.

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Prisons

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permanently imprison criminals who have committed a third violent crime. However, it is not likely to be administered with surgical precision, since crimes from murder to promoting prostitution fall within its purview. The initiative won 75 percent voter approval in November and took effect December 1. "Administering this law won't be simple," asserts Claire Johnson, senior associate at the Institute for Law and Justice. "It's not clear whether the law will equate three robberies or three assaults with three homicides. If we're going to pick which offenders we're going to overload the prison system with, shouldn't they be the most violent criminals?" asks Johnson.

Others have similar concerns. The provisions of Initiative 593 make it possible, for example, for a 20-year-old who has been convicted of assault in connection with a barroom brawl and has had two prior convictions as a teenager—one for burglarizing a vacation home and the second for the theft of a bicycle—to spend the rest of his life in prison.

The U.S. Senate's recently passed crime bill would compel most states to keep inmates longer, requiring more prison space. Texas has 27 new prisons under construction or in the planning stage. Ohio has 15, Maryland and South Carolina have 12, and both Wisconsin and Arkansas are building 10. Many states are staggering under the costs of operating existing prisons. Jamie Lillis of the *Corrections COMPENDIUM* reports that the cost of running the state and federal prison systems in 1993 was $21.9 billion.

In South Carolina, two newly built penal facilities sit idle because the state cannot muster the funds to operate them. Ironically, guards have been hired to protect the buildings from vandals. The Oklahoma legislature, fed up with requests for more prisons after filling facilities with 2,000 new beds, mandated that the Department of Corrections release imprisoned offenders when the inmate population reaches 97 percent of prison capacity. Oklahoma State Sen. Herbert Rozell, the chair of the state's Senate Appropriations Committee, declared, "Oklahoma has bought all the law and order it can afford."

Can We Afford the Social Costs?

Critics of "get-tough" laws charge that they are being pushed through legislatures without careful consideration of their social and financial costs or whether they will be effective. Some policymakers, like Congressman Scott, argue that money spent on education and youth jobs would have a greater impact on preventing crime. "The 'Three-Strikes-and-You're-Out' law suggests that we aren't locking up enough people," observes Scott. "But a 10 percent increase in incarceration in Richmond would cost an additional $7.5 million a year. With that much money, we could send every poor high school graduate with a C+ grade average to college and provide a summer job for each young person who couldn't find one. We have to ask ourselves which expenditure would be more effective in preventing crime," says Scott.

A by-product of the "get-tough" approach is the vastly disproportionate numbers of incarcerated minorities, especially black males. Today, more than 25 percent of black males between ages 20 and 29 are under some form of penal supervision nationwide, and in much greater proportions in cities like Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. And the proportion of African Americans in prison is growing. The nation's black prison population was 47.9 percent in 1991, up from 35 percent in 1985, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. In Minnesota, whose minority population is about 7 percent, the minority prison population is approaching 50 percent.

Inequities in drug laws have contributed to this disproportionate growth of black incarceration. For example, federal law requires a mandatory minimum sentence of five years imprisonment without parole for a first-time conviction for the possession of five grams of crack-cocaine, the substance in greater use among blacks. By contrast, a sentence of equal severity is not mandatory for the possession of powder cocaine, more often used by whites, unless the amount in the possession of the offender is at least 500 grams. In 1992, all of the defendants sentenced in federal courts for possession of crack were black, according to the Washington, D.C.-based Families Against Mandatory Minimums Foundation. Many states have enacted laws that perpetuate similar inequities.

Alternatives to Prison Do Work

While those convicted of the most serious crimes should be separated from society, for many nonviolent first-time offenders, the primary goals of sentencing, such as just punishment, public safety, victim restitution, and rehabilitation, can often be met without imprisonment. To fully achieve these goals, judges must have at their disposal a broad spectrum of sentencing options to ensure that in each case the punishment fits the crime. An array of cost-effective, community-based sentencing alternatives that hold offenders accountable for their crimes without removing them from their families and neighborhoods are proving effective. Some of these alternatives include day reporting and work-release, coupled with education and job training, as well as drug testing and treatment designed to keep offenders free of the addictions that drive some of them to criminal behavior. Such programs hold out opportunities which may, in the long run, enable many offenders to lead responsible, productive lives.

In Delaware, the state sentencing commission has convinced the state legislature to provide more funding for drug treatment for offenders and for the state's first day-reporting center. The latter is a community-based program to which offenders report daily, typically to file a daily "itinerary" detailing their activities (employment, school, etc.). In addition, they may be required to submit to drug testing or participate in counseling or treatment programs. Other alternatives to incarceration employed across the nation are described here. Each of these options is far less

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POLITICAL TRENDLETTER

Inside This Issue:

- Black policymakers meet in Washington to develop crime prevention strategies.
- C. Delores Tucker leads a campaign against "gangsta" rap music, charging it promotes violence and is degrading to women.
- Swapping guns for toys and other commercial items is catching on in cities around the country.
- Across the Nation: Doug Jamerson was appointed Florida commissioner of education; Ohio Republican State Treasurer J. Kenneth Blackwell is running for a full term in that post and will be opposed by Democratic Summit County Deputy Auditor Barbara Sykes; in Philadelphia, Congressman Lucien Blackwell faces a primary election challenge from State Senator Chaka Fattah, and an incumbent white Congressman is being opposed by a former black journalist.

Black Leaders Hold Summit on Crime Prevention

"I tell you, unless we do something about the crime and violence and drugs that are ravaging the community, we will not be able to repair this country," President **BILL CLINTON** declared from the pulpit of a Memphis church last November. Some of the black ministers, politicians, entertainers, and civil rights leaders who have been dealing with these issues came together last month in Washington D.C., for a three-day anti-crime conference focused on black-on-black crime and youth violence. The conference was sponsored by the National Rainbow Coalition.

Among the shocking statistics presented was the FBI report that nearly 8,000 black males are murdered each year in the United States, and 90 percent of these victims are killed by other blacks. Federal statistics also reveal that nearly 60 percent of the juveniles arrested on homicide charges last year were black. If current trends continue, by the mid-1990s shootings will surpass traffic accidents as the nation's leading cause of death by injury, according to a new study by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control.

Led by the Rev. **JESSE JACKSON**, participants at the summit included Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) chair Rep. **KWEISI MFUME** (D-Md.), entertainer **BILL COSBY**, Rev. **AL SHARPTON**, U.S. Surgeon General **JOYCELYN ELDERS**, U.S. Attorney General **JANET RENO**, NAACP Executive Director **BEN CHAVIS**, District of Columbia Mayor **SHARON PRATT KELLY**, and the Joint Center's Urban Policy Institutes Director **YVONNE SCRUGGS**. All agreed that the problems of violence and crime are wreaking havoc on the black community, and African Americans must take the initiative to do something about it. "We have been doing too little, too late," said Elders, who views violence as a public health issue. "Our children are dying." The participants endorsed a variety of measures such as encouraging Congress to enact job creation programs and urging schools and universities to establish mentoring, technical training, and conflict-resolution classes in jails and prisons.

The Rainbow Coalition's main strategy for preventing crime is its church-based "Reclaim Our Youth" project, a mentoring program for troubled youth in cities across the country. When young people are arrested and placed in the criminal justice system for first-time, nonviolent criminal offenses, this program gives courts the option of remanding them to trained mentors who are selected from participating local congregations. The "Reclaim Our Youth" program in Washington, D.C., involves a partnership with local judges, police officials, social service agencies, and 25 churches. "For too long, churches have conducted their worship services, said their prayers, supported fellowship societies, and closed their doors to the world outside," says Rev. **GRAYLAN ELLIS-HAGLER**, senior minister at Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ in Washington. "As a consequence of shutting out the world, an underclass has developed that has been invisible to the church." Five male mentors

from Plymouth Congregational have been selected and trained to be counselors, guides, and friends to the young people in their charge. Among them are a retired teacher, three businessmen, and a college student. Another 15 mentors are in the pipeline. "The work in the redemption of our youth will ultimately redeem the church that has generally been irrelevant, class conscious, and has abdicated its responsibility to our neighborhoods and the children in them," says Ellis-Hagler. "Because of that abdication, we have become the victims of our own children."

Jesse Jackson and other black leaders plan to meet with President Clinton to discuss this and other new approaches to preventing criminal activity through youth development. With anti-crime summits scheduled for other cities, Jackson expressed optimism about the fight against crime and violence: "There is no quick fix—but there is a fix." Regional crime prevention summits will be held in Oakland, California, March 3-5; Atlanta, Georgia, March 11-12; and Detroit, Michigan, March 18-19.

"If Music Be the Food of Love," Some Rap Isn't

The plaintive line, spoken by the lovesick Orsino in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*—"If music be the food of love, play on"—could have been the credo of the Motown lyricists who wrote romantic love ballads in the 1960s. But many of the rap songs aired on the radio and music videos today are far from romantic. Some policymakers believe these songs promote violence and constitute an assault against women. The following lines are an example:

> So if you at a show in the front row
> I'm a call you a bitch or a dirty-ass ho
> You probably get mad like bitch is supposed to...
> ...So what about the bitch who got shot?
> F__k her
> You think I give a damn about a bitch...
> — *"Straight Outta Compton," N.W.A.*

Explicit and violence-tinged lyrics of "gangsta rap" are considered by a growing number of black leaders to contribute to the exploding violence in America, and Dr. **C. DELORES TUCKER**, national chair of the National Political Congress of Black Women, Inc. (NPCBW), and a long list of black civic leaders and other supporters have had enough. "Our crusade is against gangsta rap and misogynist lyrics—rap that glorifies violence with guns, knives, or drugs and denigrates and defames women," says Tucker, a veteran civil rights activist and former secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. "We cannot stand by and permit the continuation of an art form that teaches children that rape, hate, and disrespect are okay, despite the fact that it threatens the safety of our communities and ensures that this nation remains the most violent nation in the world."

In a declaration at the Rainbow Coalition's crime summit in Washington last month (see above), Tucker "put the nation on notice" that the NPCBW would conduct a major national campaign against the rap music industry. Among the groups that have joined the anti-gangsta rap effort are the Black Leadership Forum (BLF), the Congressional Black Caucus, the National Association of Black-Owned Broadcasters, the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, the National Newspaper Publishers Association, and the NAACP. The BLF whose officers include president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference Rev. **JOSEPH E. LOWERY**, chair, and Joint Center President **EDDIE N. WILLIAMS**, secretary-treasurer, issued a press release that declared: "The black community and its leadership are making greater efforts to reclaim the lives and futures of our youth. Misogynist rap and videos fly in the face of these efforts and present a destructive, unhealthy, and unacceptable model of black male and female interaction. An entertainment industry which grows wealthy through verbal and visual assaults on African American mothers, daughters, and sisters—the primary transmitters of our culture and the principal guarantors of our future generations—can only be viewed as a participant in black genocide." Black Entertainment Television has agreed not to air any videos that show handguns or depict violence, and *Billboard* magazine, a major music industry weekly, has agreed not to print any ads that degrade women. Radio stations WBLS-FM in New York City and Los Angeles' KACE-FM that have contemporary urban formats have banned gangsta rap songs from their programs, and others are expected to follow their example.

Critics of gangsta rap also point out that some artists are actually living their violent lyrics: Rapper **TUPAC SHAKUR** was arrested in Atlanta after allegedly shooting two off-duty police officers last October. Later, he was

arrested in New York on suspicion he and two others raped a young woman. Last November, **SNOOP DOGGY DOGG**, whose latest album, "Doggy Style," has sold more than three million copies, was arrested for murder in the death of a man the rapper claims meant to kill him. And **FLAVOR FLAV** of the group Public Enemy was arrested last November after he allegedly fired his pistol at a Bronx, N.Y., neighbor.

But it's the lyrics that have incensed Tucker. She took her crusade to the streets of Washington, D.C., last December to protest the sale of gangsta rap at The Wiz record-store chain. Tucker was arrested with activist **DICK GREGORY** and others for blocking a downtown store's entrance while fellow protesters marched and carried signs. They were later released. Plans are underway to extend the protests to other record chains and to other cities. Tucker's views are not shared by some in the music industry who feel she is trying to stifle rap musicians' rights to free expression. "We, as a company, think it would be unfortunate if the censorship of artistic freedoms became prevalent in our society," said a spokeswoman for Musicland Stores Corp. which owns the Sam Goody chain of record and tape stores. It is no small matter that CD and tape producers have made millions of dollars in profits from gangsta rap.

EDWARD GOMEZ, public education specialist for the American Civil Liberties Union's Arts Censorship Project, echoed the Musicland comment: "It's really about the right to express oneself, and everyone's right is protected by free speech under the First Amendment. This discussion in recent months about the content and influence of gangsta rap has often been related to the broader discussion of the violent nature of society. From where we observe this multifaceted debate, essential points are being lost. The real discussion should be focused...more on root causes [of violence] — poverty, unemployment, lack of support for families."

Gomez also stated that the ACLU does not support the labeling system introduced by the Recording Industry Association of America in 1990. He charges that the system, which uses the logo "Parental Advisory-Explicit Lyrics," is "a red flag for would-be censors who want to see the content of popular music regulated as much as possible."

Despite the advisory labeling system and the NPCBW's crusade, gangsta rap sales keep growing, with new artists emerging and adding their own beat from the street. Says **LUTHER CAMPBELL**, leader of the rap group 2 Live Crew, "No way we're backing off." But Tucker is determined: "This is our declaration of war! We cannot and will not allow this [gangsta rap and misogynist lyrics] to become the norm for our society, especially for African Americans."

Checking Guns Goes National

As 1994 shapes up as the year to focus on violence, law enforcement officers, celebrities, and private citizens are joining forces to rid U.S. cities of guns. Last Christmas, a New York City businessman, **FERNANDO MATEO**, and his 14-year-old son thought of a way to get guns off the city's streets: swap guns for toys. Mateo purchased $2,500 worth of gift certificates from Toys "R" Us, consulted with police, and then offered a $100 gift certificate for every gun turned in to a Manhattan police precinct—no questions asked.

With some people standing in line on Christmas day waiting to turn in their guns, more than 1,000 firearms were traded for toy gift certificates. The success of the program has prompted national chains—Foot Locker, Dial-A-Mattress, and Kay-Bee Toys—to pledge a total of $70,000 in merchandise for the gun exchange program and local retail stores are following suit.

Gun exchanges are gaining momentum in other cities and the swaps have a variety of sponsors. Ex-heavyweight champion **RIDDICK BOWE** last month offered $100 for every gun turned in at a church in Southeast Washington, D.C. Held on Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, the trade-in netted more than 2,000 guns. A gun-swap program in Hartford, Connecticut, brought in more than 1,000 weapons over a three-day period, while more than 600 guns were turned in as a result of a program in Chicago. One of the more creative approaches was a gun-swap concert sponsored by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Atlanta, featuring **JANET JACKSON**, that drew thousands. Gun swaps have also been organized in Los Angeles, Santa Rosa, Savannah, Suffolk County (New York), and the New Jersey communities of Paterson, Neptune, Long Branch, and Camden. Says D.C. Mayor **SHARON PRATT KELLY**, "It is a little disquieting to see how many guns we have, but it is encouraging to see how many people are coming forward."

Across the Nation

FLORIDA: When veteran educator **DOUG JAMERSON** was sworn in as Florida's state commissioner of education on January 3, he became the first black to serve on the state cabinet since 1978, when **JESSE J. McCRARY** served as secretary of state. Governor **LAWTON CHILES** appointed Jamerson to fill the unexpired term of **BETTY CASTOR**, who had stepped down to become president of the University of South Florida. Jamerson, 46, was assistant director of the Criminal Justice Institute at St. Petersburg Junior College from 1988 to 1993, and from 1982 until last year represented Pinellas and Manatee counties in the Florida House of Representatives where he chaired the House Education Committee.

OHIO: **J. KENNETH BLACKWELL**, who was appointed Ohio state treasurer on January 10 by Republican Governor **GEORGE V. VOINOVICH**, is seeking the GOP nomination to run for a full four-year term in that post. Blackwell was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Democrat **MARY ELLEN WITHROW**, who has been tapped by President Clinton to be U.S. treasurer. In addition to managing 180 state employees, Blackwell will be responsible for collecting state taxes and overseeing state government investments when he assumes his duties in the beginning of March. To keep the post beyond 1994, he must win election in November. No stranger to politics, Blackwell was elected to six two-year terms on the Cincinnati city council between 1977 and 1989 and served as vice mayor and mayor of the city. He was also deputy under secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) during the Bush administration, resigning from that position to launch an unsuccessful bid for Congress in 1990.

Blackwell faces two obstacles to his goal of remaining state treasurer. First he must face **JOHN DAMSCHRODER** to win the Republican nomination in the May 3 primary. Damschroder recently resigned as director of special projects at the Ohio Department of Development. If Blackwell clears that hurdle, he will meet black Deputy Auditor **BARBARA SYKES**, 38, of Summit County (Akron), in the November general election. Sykes, the Democratic nominee for state treasurer, was a member of the Akron city council for six years. Earlier in her career, she worked as a citizen-activist to promote positive police-community relations in Akron.

PENNSYLVANIA: When State Senator **CHAKA FATTAH**, 37, announced that he would be a candidate for Congress in the May 10 Democratic primary, it meant that incumbent Philadelphia Congressman **LUCIEN BLACKWELL**, 62, was in for the third major fight for his 2nd district House seat in two and a half years. The majority-black 2nd district is located in the Northwest section of Philadelphia. Exploiting the political base he developed as a city councilman for 17 years, Blackwell had defeated Fattah and two other candidates in a special election in November 1991 to fill the vacancy left by **BILL GRAY**, who resigned from Congress to head the United Negro College Fund. In the April primary the following year, just five months after his victory, Blackwell fended off a challenge by **C. DELORES TUCKER**, a civil rights activist and former secretary of the commonwealth. He won again, with 54 percent of the vote to Tucker's 46. In Congress, Blackwell has been an advocate of full employment and has introduced legislation designed to create more employment opportunities by reducing the standard work week from five days and 40 hours to four days and 30 hours. He has also supported school-to-work initiatives, alternative sanctions to incarceration, and programs to reduce domestic violence against women.

Fattah is a second-term member of the state senate where he chairs the Senate Education Committee. He previously served six years in the state house of representatives. In 1987, Fattah sponsored comprehensive training legislation to prepare welfare recipients for employment. In 1992, he secured state funding to establish "Read to Lead," a summer reading tutorial program in 40 sites around Philadelphia. That program was followed by "Drug Free in '93," an effort that sponsored community rallies and offered a treatment hotline to people with drug dependencies.

Blackwell is not the only Philadelphia congressional incumbent facing a challenge this May. **HARVEY CLARK**, 49, a black former television journalist with experience as a public relations official in the administration of Philadelphia Mayor **EDWARD RENDELL**, is running against white seven-term Rep. **THOMAS FOGLIETTA**, 65, a member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee. Foglietta's 1st district is the nation's only majority-black congressional district (51 percent) that is not represented by an African American.

Clark spent 13 years as a television news reporter for the CBS station in Philadelphia, WCAU. He also hosted a local TV news magazine program, "Channel 10, The People." He was most recently Philadelphia's city representative, a position that put him in charge of marketing the city and special events. According to Clark, Foglietta has poorly represented the district. Clark says that "two-thirds of all reported violent crimes in Philadelphia occur in the 1st congressional district and little has been done to address its high unemployment; after 10 years of enterprise zones, only 3,100 jobs have been created."

Since the voters in both of these congressional districts are overwhelmingly Democrats, winners in the May 10 Democratic primary are favored to win in the November general election.

One to One

A New Jersey Mentoring Program Reaches Out to At-Risk Children to Turn Their Lives Around

by William D. Payne

"All that fun stuff—going to the movies, amusement parks, and ball games—is all right, but I need some help with my math," 12-year-old Joshua told his mentor, J. Barry Washington, the CEO of a telecommunications company. After having worked with Joshua for eight weeks, Barry was pleasantly surprised when Joshua opted for help in his school work, instead of just wanting to play games. Joshua, a sixth-grader at Newark's South Seventeenth Street School, had been having difficulty developing a sense of security because his family, headed by his mother, was homeless and constantly being shuttled from one temporary shelter to another.

As if that wasn't enough, Joshua had poor self-esteem as his height (6'4") caused him to stick out among his peers. Frequently taunted by his classmates, he became withdrawn and even hostile. The challenge for the Newark-based One to One mentoring program was to find a volunteer mentor with the skills and background that best fit Joshua's special needs. Washington, who has an easy manner and is 6'5," was a good match since he too had been self-conscious about his height as a youth.

Ever since their initial meeting, Washington has played a major role in Joshua's life. In addition to tutoring him academically, he has sponsored Joshua at a summer basketball camp. But perhaps the most valuable thing Washington has done for Joshua has been to help his family find a stable home. In November, he assisted Joshua's mother in applying for a public housing unit and the family was placed in their own home one week before Christmas. Washington, who spent Christmas with Joshua and his family, says it was the best he can remember. And in a real sense, Joshua's life has been turned around. This year he was elected president of his student council.

The philosophy behind the One to One program is based on an oft-quoted African proverb: "It takes a whole village to raise a child." Many people can recall how their extended family—aunts, uncles, and even neighbors—took an interest in their lives and helped guide them during their upbringing. The whole "village" had a hand in raising and molding them into adults. But our society has changed, we now have a major crisis, and the "village" is threatened. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, 13.6 million "at-risk" American children between the ages of 10 and 17 are living in poverty. These are also the ones who are most frequently victims of violent crime and homelessness. They are disproportionately drug and alcohol abusers and are more likely to become pregnant as teenagers than others in this age group. Many of these children are African Americans living in urban environments.

Mr. Payne is the executive director of One to One/New Jersey, 33 Washington St., second floor, Newark, New Jersey 07102, (201) 242-1142.

Caring Intervention

One to One is a community of high-caliber adult mentors from a variety of professions—attorneys, social workers, police officers, physicians, entrepreneurs, and teachers—who are offering their time, experience, and concern to take the place of extended families for at-risk children. One to One mentors believe that these children are the hope for our future and should not be written off. And although many of the young people they mentor come from socially and economically depressed homes and neighborhoods, early intervention by caring, committed adults can help them develop into stable, productive members of society.

Inspired by President Bush's effort to encourage American volunteerism, New Jersey's former Republican governor Thomas Kean and philanthropist Ray Chambers began One to One/New Jersey in 1989 as a statewide volunteer organization. The mentoring component of One to One was launched in September 1992 to curb the growing incidence of delinquency among Newark's youth who were dropping out of school at accelerating rates.

In partnership with the Newark Board of Education and the consulting firm Educate America, the founders of One to One based the program within the seven elementary schools clustered around Central High in a predominately black, low-income Newark community with a high crime rate. The schools serve as the link through which the mentors are matched with the students, who range in age from about 7 to 18. The program receives funding from local corporations like New Jersey Bell and the Amelior, Schumann, Prudential, and Victoria foundations.

Building broad-based community approval for school-centered mentoring is critical to recruiting effective mentors. All of the mentors who participated in the 1992-93 school year were recruited from Newark and the surrounding area, and each agreed to a police background check. Before working with the students, each mentor receives six hours of training including videos, role playing, and presentations where mentors and students share their

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One to One

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experiences. Adult recruits are made to understand that a mentor occupies a position of trust, but also that they must inform their young charges that not all confidences can be kept. If a child confides that he or she is being physically or sexually abused at home, mentors are obliged to report that information to the appropriate social service agency. Once mentoring pairs are tentatively established, both parties must meet weekly over a two-to-three month trial period before agreeing to a long-term commitment.

Being There

The mentors participating in the program are having a significant, positive impact upon many of the students and their families, and many mentors and students form special bonds. For a year, Assistant U.S. Attorney Jean D. Larosiliere, whom everyone calls J.D., mentored DaShawn, a 13-year-old boy who had been classified by school officials as emotionally disturbed. J.D. discovered that DaShawn is a highly intelligent child with a creative imagination who had been abandoned by his mother, a drug abuser, never knew his father, and was passed on from one relative to another until he ended up living with an aunt. As a result, DaShawn had a short attention span and grew bored quickly in class.

"The main thing I was trying to do was to be there for DaShawn—to be a constant in his life," says J.D. DaShawn began to depend on J.D., showing up every Saturday at 11 a.m. and calling him on Wednesday evenings. J.D. even made unannounced visits at school when DaShawn's teacher gave him progress reports. J.D.'s bargain with his charge was that, if DaShawn had a successful school week, DaShawn would choose the activity for their meeting (usually movies or video arcades), but if the week didn't go so well, J.D. would choose (trips to a museum, a library, the planetarium).

When a fire destroyed their apartment building, DaShawn, his sister, and aunt lost everything they owned and had to move in with a friend of the aunt. When J.D. learned that drugs were being used in that household, he intervened and, through the head of the local emergency housing agency (another One to One mentor), found safe, temporary housing for DaShawn's family. Clothes were donated by J.D.'s in-laws and families of other mentors. When the aunt moved DaShawn and his sister to Ohio, J.D. felt a sense of loss. "Over the course of a year, this kid had become a part of my life, I looked forward to our meetings as much as he did," says J.D., who has volunteered to mentor another emotionally troubled child.

A Third Parent

Michelle James, an attorney at the law office of R. Wesley Agee in East Orange, always attends school conferences on behalf of 11-year-old Kamisha. James, who often slips and refers to Kamisha as "my child," has taken the role of a much-needed third parent, because Kamisha's mother and father both work and are seldom home when she returns from school, leaving the young girl to take care of her infant sister. "Kamisha lacked focus, she wasn't receiving structure or supervision at home," James says. "She was performing one grade level below normal in reading and two levels in math, and her teachers said that was normal. Kamisha lost her glasses and a semester went by in fifth grade when she couldn't see well enough to fully participate in class."

James began to impose a discipline on Kamisha by demanding that she have her parents buy her glasses and explaining to her that academic excellence was expected. "No one had ever expected anything of Kamisha before," says James. She took Kamisha on excursions to visit African American museums in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., and historic sites in Philadelphia like the Mother Bethel AME Church and the Liberty Bell to expand the child's awareness of her heritage. More than anything else, James is a role model. "I take Kamisha a lot of places, even shopping, and I know she's watching and listening to everything I do and say." Since participating in the One to One program, Kamisha is more self-confident, her grades have gone from Ds and Fs to As and Bs, she's joined a school choral group, and she aspires to attend college. Michelle James sums it up this way: "Kamisha wanted to do better but she never had anyone to rejoice at her accomplishments."

This One Really Works

Hattie Black, the principal at South Seventeenth Street School, has seen firsthand the impact of One to One on her students. "This is the best program for our children," Black says. "I can always identify the students who are in the program. They hold their heads higher now, they have a feeling of self-pride and they perform better in class." One to One mentors are often invited to speak to civic, community, and professional groups about the program, and these presentations have spurred interest in One to One and attracted recruits.

To date, more than 225 adult volunteers have been recruited into the program, 175 have been trained to be One to One mentors, and 165 student-mentor matches have been formed. Half of the mentors are men and more than 90 percent of the mentors and students are African Americans. Fifty more matches are planned at two additional schools before March 1994.

While One to One is not a panacea for all problems at-risk youth face, it is one effective strategy for reaching hundreds of troubled children. Furthermore, the program has provided a vehicle for adults who want to help improve the life chances of young people. Many of the current mentors had not previously participated in volunteer programs. But J.D. Larosiliere, who has, says: "I've participated in several other mentoring programs—this one really works." ■

Is America the World's Beacon of Freedom?

United States Information Agency Director Joseph Duffey Discusses Rethinking Old Assumptions of U.S. World Leadership

Dr. Joseph Duffey was confirmed by the Senate in May 1993 to be the director of the United States Information Agency (USIA). Before his appointment to this post by President Clinton, Duffey distinguished himself as a scholar and university administrator who served as president of American University, and chancellor and president of the University of Massachusetts system. He also served under persidents Carter and Reagan as the Assistant Secretary of State for Education and Cultural Affairs and chaired the National Endowment for the Humanities.

On January 11, as part of our Leadership Discussion Series Dr. Duffey shared with the Joint Center staff his vision of how the USIA is responding to a changing world order. This article has been excerpted from his remarks.

During the Cold War, United States foreign policy was set in the context of a global, bipolar struggle with totalitarianism. That perception defined, to a major extent, how we projected America's image to the world. As a result, an enormous foreign affairs apparatus was built up. The United States Information Agency (USIA) was created 40 years ago this year partly as a response to that struggle.

Now that the Cold War is over, I am not as uncomfortable as some are with the fact that this administration is being criticized for not having yet formed a comprehensive foreign policy. We should keep the discussions open for as long as we can while we try to think about what we want to be as a nation. We are taking advantage of this opportunity to redefine and reorganize the USIA and plan to reduce our spending. Perhaps the USIA, working as it does—trying to help tell the American story—might play some role in rethinking what the nation is and reconsidering what our role should be in the post-Cold War era.

One thing that has to be understood is that the American public will no longer regard foreign policy and decisions about the definitions of national interest as a topic to be turned over to a small group of wise men. It is important that we communicate to the rest of the world why we are turning inward and why we feel the U.S. can no longer play the role of being everywhere in the world. I do not believe that we have the fiscal resources, and I am sure this nation does not have the will to take responsibility for as many issues around the world as was the case during the Cold War.

James Chace, who is editor of the *World Policy Journal* in New York, recently reminded us that anybody who deals with American foreign policy has to reckon with the American sense of idealism and the way we have always thought of ourselves as a light to the nations of the world, a "beacon of freedom and hope." We have done the greatest good and the greatest mischief in the world with that notion. I still happen to think that this is a very special nation in its origins, its values, to say nothing of its power and riches.

At the same time, I think we have to convey to the rest of the world the complexity of building and maintaining democratic institutions. We now realize that it takes more than majority elections to have a democratic system. It takes civil institutions. It takes habits of tolerance. One way to convey these ideas is by acknowledging that the importance of the American example goes beyond our preachments: civilian control of our military, respect for individual freedom of expression, maintenance of a sector of private institutions that are neither business nor government but voluntary and "mediating" between commerce and culture. We have a fairly rich experience in the traditions of a free press, often abused, but still a model—even to many European countries. All of these things we have to share with nations that are working to evolve into freer societies with representative governments and open markets.

Sharing goes two ways, and we should proceed here with the expectation of mutual learning. We often understand our own society best from the perspective of another society. For example, there are places in the world where people have a larger sense of obligation to community than we seem to have here in America.

The exchanges which USIA's programs make possible often focus on identifying emerging leaders in other countries. When President Clinton was at the Asian Pacific Economic Community Summit in Seattle in December, it was noted that a high percentage of the men and women he met with there representing other countries as heads of state, foreign ministers, or finance officials had been to the United States early in their career because they had been picked by a USIA officer as somebody who should be invited here.

Other USIA programs, Voice of America (VOA) and Radio Free Europe, are also undergoing changes. The listenership for short-wave broadcasting has diminished dramatically in some regions of the world. Our future lies much more in producing programming that is placed in local stations than in being a direct broadcaster. I am in favor of more English-language broadcasting around the world. It seems to be the language of the future since young people in nations across the globe are seeking to learn it. It is a different kind of communication environment now, much more open. To continue some of the habits developed during the Cold War or the period of earlier technology, I think, would be a mistake. ■

Prisons

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expensive than imprisonment.

Drug treatment. Many low-income Americans who have drug dependencies often wind up in the criminal justice system for drug possession. Instead of imprisonment, residential drug therapy is often more appropriate and cheaper. Unfortunately, the country is spending more on prison beds than beds in drug treatment centers.

Victim restitution. Judges in a number of jurisdictions are requiring offenders to make monetary payments to their victims to compensate for a financial or property loss when no violence took place. One form of victim restitution is day fines, which are scaled to reflect both the gravity of the criminal offense and the ability of the offender to pay based on his or her daily income.

Community service. Unpaid work can serve as a constructive way for offenders to pay society for their crimes. This kind of service is most effective when it is related to the crime committed and conforms to the skills and abilities of the offender.

Remedial education and vocational training. In conjunction with counseling, remedial education and specialized job training can be effective in reducing recidivism rates among offenders who, typically, have dropped out of school and have few skills that would enhance their employability. Several successful models for vocational education are in operation, including state vocational rehabilitation programs, corporate on-the-job training arrangements, and the Job Corps.

Playing Politics?

There is wide agreement on two of the publicly stated goals of incarceration: A society may use punishment to demonstrate its outrage at serious crimes, and the most violent criminals should be incapacitated. However, there is little statistical evidence to support another often repeated goal of incarceration, that the threat of imprisonment is a deterrent to criminal activity. "Politicians advocating more mandatory sentencing laws are saying, 'We have to send criminals a message,' but it doesn't appear that the message is being received," observes Malcolm Young, executive director of the Sentencing Project.

Weighing the ineffectiveness of "get-tough" policies against their high costs, advocates for reform are seeking new approaches to carrying out criminal justice that are both humane and effective and also ensure public safety. But Congressman Scott asserts that the *real* issue is prevention—investing more resources in long-established, cost-effective youth development programs. "We have reached a threshold question in this country," says Scott: "Are we trying to reduce crime, or are we playing politics? If we're serious about reducing crime, we should put more money into programs that we know to be effective: Head Start, quality education, recreational programs, drop-out prevention, summer jobs, the Job Corps, and guaranteed college scholarships." ■

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