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FOCUS

THE UNDOCUMENTED ALIEN FLOW



Joint Center For Political Studies

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We are confident that our readers will understand this decision and respond to our appeal.

This issue, as you will note, is accompanied by a letter and a subscription card. We have even enclosed a self-addressed postage free envelope for your convenience.

We urge you to complete the subscription card and return it to us immediately so that you will not miss the next FOCUS issue.

Those who subscribe before April 1, 1978, will receive a complimentary copy of the Joint Center's forthcoming publication, *The State of Black Politics.*

In conclusion, I can only say that if FOCUS is as useful and informative as our readers have led us to believe, then it is certainly worth paying for to continue receiving the only newsletter-magazine of its kind in the nation.

Eddie N. Williams
President

FOCUS

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JCPS drug abuse survey

by Ellen Scudder

Ms. Scudder is a research consultant for the Joint Center for Political Studies.

Minorities appear to be disproportionately affected by laws pertaining to drug abuse in this country.

In most communities across the nation, minorities are overrepresented in admissions to drug treatment facilities and in arrests for drug violations. Yet, there seems to be little evidence that local elected officials who serve these communities are involved in the formulation of drug abuse policy.

The Joint Center for Political Studies (JCPS) completed a survey in 1977 which gathered the opinions of over 200 local elected officials in communities of at least 100,000 people where minorities comprise at least 10 percent of the total population. The purpose of the study was to determine:

- The extent of participation by local elected officials in drug policy formation.
- The perceptions of local officials relative to drug abuse problems.
- The officials' attitude toward current drug enforcement problems.
- The priority given to drug abuse problems at the local level.

The survey findings are not definitive since the 200 respondents constitute a small percentage of the local elected officials who serve the aforementioned communities. However, the results of the survey indicate that the process of drug policy and program formulation has ignored local elected officials and their potential role in the community as a critical link for successful implementation of drug abuse programs.

Attitudes and Perceptions

Almost half of the respondents to the JCPS survey felt that alcohol abuse was more serious than abuse of heroin or cocaine in their communities. Alcoholism is the most extensive type of drug addiction in the U.S., according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). Unfortunately, alcohol is not perceived to be a drug by most Americans. While 95 percent of the population is aware that heroin is a drug, less than 40 percent of Americans know that alcohol and tobacco are also drugs, according to an NIAAA study. These statistics belie a basic problem with the definition of drug abuse.

The term "drug abuse" has come to mean the *use* of any drug, other than alcohol, for the purpose of intoxication. It is indicative of a moral position, rather than an objectively defined condition. The National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse has said that, ". . . drug abuse must be deleted from official pronouncements and public policy dialogue. The term has no functional utility and has become no more than an arbitrary codeword for that drug use which is presently considered wrong."

While the term "drug abuse" is applied to the use of a wide range of socially proscribed drugs, the primary institutional and political drug abuse thrust focuses on narcotic addiction. This emphasis has served to hamper drug education efforts.

The emphasis on narcotic addiction has also fostered a racial stereotyping of the population of users. Narcotic addiction has become a code word for blacks and other minorities who now inhabit inner cities. Almost three-quarters of the officials responding to the JCPS survey associated heroin use with blacks.

Heroin addicts are heavily concentrated in inner city communities, primarily in New York, Detroit, Chicago and Los Angeles, But narcotic addiction is an inner city problem, not a racial one. A number of researchers have offered evidence showing that the typical addict historically has exhibited the ethnic characteristics of the typical inner city resident. As the color of the inner city dweller has changed, so has the color of the typical addict.

Elected Officials and Drug Enforcement Policy

An extraordinary amount of manpower and paperwork is involved in enforcing drug laws against users, especially marijuana users. This may be at the expense of greater control of heroin trafficking, or prevention of other more serious crimes. It is not unreasonable, in light of the evidence, that in the JCPS survey local officials support policies that would reduce the amount of police time spent on marijuana cases.

Three-quarters of the officials surveyed by the Joint Center felt that young people and blacks were disproportionately represented in arrests for drug law violations. The 1976 *Uniform Crime Reports*, published by the FBI, showed that 72.4 percent of all arrests for narcotic drug law violations involved marijuana. Only 9.9 percent of all arrests for drug charges involved heroin or cocaine. Well over half of those arrested on marijuana and heroin charges were charged with possession and not with sale. Of persons arrested for drug law violations, 76.1 percent were under the age of 25. Twenty-two percent of those arrested were black.

It is significant that while narcotic addiction has been emphasized by drug abuse institutions, the bulk of the effort on the part of the law enforcement establishment has involved marijuana, which is not a narcotic.

Local Officials and Drug Policy Formulation

It is clear from the survey findings that many local elected officials are uninvolved in local drug abuse policy making and possibly are uninformed about community drug abuse programs. Part of the problem is indicated by their widespread unfamiliarity with the Single State Agency (SSA) responsible for drug abuse programs.

- Almost half of the officials did not know of the Single State Agency charged with coordinating state-wide drug abuse programs.
- Two-thirds of the officials had never served on a drug abuse task force.
- Two-thirds had not served on a governing body which has held hearings on drug abuse matters within the last two years.
- Almost three-quarters did not know how much money was being spent on drug abuse programs in their communities.

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The undocumented alien flow

Editor's note: On August 4, 1977, President Carter submitted to the Congress proposed legislation for dealing with what has become one of the country's most troublesome domestic problems — the flow of large numbers of undocumented or "illegal" aliens into the country.

Public officials and informed commentators directly concerned with the issue have held and continue to hold widely differing views on the extent and character of the problem, the kinds of remedies that are likely to be effective, and the likely consequences for the society of the major remedies proposed. This article reviews some of the difficulties the problem poses for policymakers and the dangers, especially to minorities, that could result from efforts to deal with it.

Some public officials have expressed concern over four alleged effects of the undocumented alien flow. One, is the displacement of American workers in the labor market by undocumented aliens willing to accept wage levels and working conditions that are unacceptable to American workers. This concern has become prominent as the country's unemployment levels, especially among youth and minorities, soar and show little evidence of declining. Some public officials have suggested that the presence of undocumented aliens is a major contributor to high unemployment and that controlling the flow of these aliens might be vital to solving the unemployment problem.

Second, undocumented aliens allegedly impose heavy demands on already overburdened local health care, law enforcement, and social service systems. Officials of some local governments, mostly in the Southwest, have complained about these added costs they are forced to absorb, especially for health care, and have sought reimbursement from the federal government. Third, undocumented aliens are believed to be undermining this country's otherwise successful effort to drastically limit population growth. Finally, the undocumented alien is believed to be a frequent victim of exploitation and inhumane treatment by unscrupulous employers, landlords, and petty criminals because of the limitations imposed by his illegal status.

Many informed observers have been skeptical of these allegations, pointing to the absence of supporting evidence in very limited studies on the impact of undocumented aliens. To some, the undocumented alien flow is not a serious problem, merely a continuation, outside current laws, of long established migratory patterns in which the enterprising and hardworking enter the country by whatever means they can to improve their lot. To these observers, this alien flow is mutually advantageous. It provides those who come with jobs, incomes, and opportunities they would not otherwise get. On the other hand, the aliens provide a service by filling mostly jobs that are unattractive to those persons who are free to compete on the labor market or to benefit from some form of public support while seeking a desirable job. Furthermore, those who deny the severity and urgency of the problem of undocumented aliens argue that historically the United States has welcomed cheap foreign labor during periods of economic growth only to make the foreigners scapegoats in times of economic downturn. Indeed, some suggest, the phenomenon has reached its present dimensions in large part because of deliberate non-action by public officials content to permit this much needed labor flow.

The Information Problem

The divergent views on the undocumented alien flow reflect in part the differing interests at stake. Representatives of labor organizations, public officials in areas heavily impacted by undocumented aliens, and others directly concerned with problems like the high rate of unemployment tend to perceive it as an urgent problem. On the other hand, many small employers, international religious and humanitarian organizations, and some ethnic groups, are inclined to be less exercised by and even supportive of the presence of undocumented aliens. To an even greater extent than their differing interests, however, the divergent views are a product of inadequate information about the number of people involved, their activities, or their impact on the communities in which they reside.

We do not know how many undocumented aliens enter the country each year. We do not know what percentage of those who enter do so on a seasonal basis only, returning home after six or eight months. Nor do we know how many people now reside illegally in the country. Most of the numbers used in current discussions of this issue are based on admittedly rough estimates or guesses by officials of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Between 800,000 and two million undocumented aliens enter the United States each year and from three to twelve million undocumented aliens now reside here, according to the INS estimates. The great disparities between the high and low estimates in each case reflect the measure of current uncertainty about these two basic statistics. Estimates of the Mexican component of the undocumented alien flow are based on the number of persons apprehended at the Southern border who entered without proper documents. Total apprehensions increased from 138,520 in 1967 to nearly 1.1 million in 1976, the overwhelming majority of these at or near the Southern border. This sharp surge reflects rapidly increasing pressures for admission and suggests the general magnitude of the flow, but is an unreliable basis for firm estimates of either total annual flow or resident population of undocumented aliens.

Even more difficult is the task of determining the kind of impact undocumented aliens have on the localities in which they live. The racial and ethnic diversity of the society provide easy anonymity for the undocumented alien. Furthermore, policies and practices aimed at protecting the privacy of the individual in this society serve to protect all but a few from being identified. Interviews with apprehended undocumented aliens provide one of the most revealing sources of information, but only about those apprehended, not about those still residing in the country — where they come from, what kinds of jobs they occupy, what kinds of services they consume, or what kinds of special problems they encounter as a result of their status. Under these circumstances, exaggerated or self-serving claims about the impact of undocumented aliens are easy to make.

Finding a Solution Less Costly Than the Problem

The main elements of Carter's proposal seek to:

- make it illegal for employers to knowingly employ undocumented aliens, or for others to assist, for compensation, these aliens in finding or keeping employment;
- provide additional resources for securing the Southern border and other points of illegal entry;
- extend limited amnesty or adjustment of status to undocumented aliens already in the country, with those here prior to 1971 receiving full resident alien status and those here between 1971-1977 receiving the status of "temporary workers."

The main elements of the administration's legislative proposal are not entirely new or surprising. Proposals for penalizing employers of undocumented aliens and improving the security of the Southern border have been extensively discussed in Congressional hearings and in the popular press. What is new about the Carter administration's proposal is its call for a limited amnesty to undocumented aliens already in the country. Moreover, for the first time it brings the full weight of the presidency to bear on a specific approach to dealing with the undocumented alien flow.

Divergent views and a paucity of essential information notwithstanding, the undocumented alien flow represents a challenge to which federal policymakers must respond. That large numbers of people enter the country without proper authorizaton or, having come legally for a limited time and purpose, abandon these limitations and remain in violation of the law, is sufficiently important to require corrective government action. Even if it is impossible to determine definitely whether the presence of undocumented aliens injures the economy more than it helps, the flow imposes some important non-economic burdens. One such burden is that it threatens to make more difficult the integration into the society of properly admitted aliens by placing on them the suspicion of illegal status.

Pitfalls for Policymakers

The policy dilemma appears to be not so much one of whether action is necessary or desirable but what kind of action, with what end in view, and with what consequences for the society. Policymakers have particularly compelling reasons for prudent action on this issue because hasty or short-sighted remedies could adversely affect vital segments of this country as well as several friendly neighboring countries. Several possible pitfalls seem especially deserving of attention in this regard.

One pitfall is the temptation to attribute the phenomenon to simple or trivial causes. It is easy to blame the undocumented alien flow on inadequate law enforcement or on the greed of some business people. With these as the causes, quick remedies come readily to mind — more money and improved enforcement procedures to prevent the entrance of undocumented aliens and sanctions against those who permit them to stay by providing work. Although inadequate law enforcement and greedy employers may contribute to the flow, indications are that the phenomenon is a product of considerably larger and more powerful forces.

Outside of the United States the undocumented alien flow is pushed by processes of modernization that have heightened the aspirations of people from developing countries and provided them with the means to migrate in order to fulfill those aspirations. It is also encouraged by the great and still growing disparities between the level of economic opportunity and standard of living in the United States and in those developing countries, graphically illustrated by the gap between the per capita annual income of Mexico and the United States. On the other hand, the apparently great demand for the labor of undocumented aliens in this country alongside severe unemployment suggest important weaknesses in the operation of the domestic labor market. Attempts to deal with the undocumented alien flow require attention to these fundamental and more difficult aspects of the problem.

A second pitfall is to view the undocumented alien flow as a Southern border problem involving Mexicans who pour into the Southwest and Midwest. The Mexican component is obviously the largest and most visible part of the flow but there is also a large and diverse non-Mexican component in the major cities of the Northeast. (INS officials once estimated this population in the New York metropolitan area alone to be 1.5 million). Such a limited view ignores both the likely differences in local impact and the need for solutions that go beyond improved border protection as the primary means of stemming the undocumented alien flow.

A third pitfall is that the remedies adopted could undermine adherence to important values and place a severe hardship on some of the most vulnerable Americans — minorities and the poor. Imposition of sanctions on employers who knowingly hire undocumented workers, for example, has long been viewed as one of the more effective domestic actions that might be taken to discourage undocumented aliens from entering the country. Unless designed with great care and accompanied by major qualifications, however, such a remedy appears likely to facilitate widespread discrimination against most foreign born Americans, bona fide resident aliens, or even native Americans of Hispanic parentage.

Though highly commendable in several aspects, the partial amnesty proposal, by providing for a large population of long term temporary workers without access to basic social services (as the Carter administration's proposal now contemplates) could create a large new underclass with a wide range of disturbing consequences. Moreover, removing the impediment of illegality from unknown numbers of undocumented aliens, while likely to solve some problems, might, in the absence of special provisions, add to the unemployment problems now plaguing some segments of the population as the temporary workers compete for better jobs than they were able to hold previously.

What these concerns suggest is not that the federal government refrain from acting to deal with the undocumented alien flow, but that in pursuing a practical and humane solution to this complex problem every effort be made to protect the rights and interests of the poor, minorities, and others who are likely to be adversely affected by the proposals now being considered.

Milton D. Morris

NBC/LEO conference

The seventh annual conference of the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC/LEO) was held in San Francisco, California on December 2-6. The conference was held in conjunction with the 57th annual Congress of Cities of the National League of Cities (NLC).

NBC/LEO was formed at the 1970 meeting of the NLC. The organization operates both as an independent coalition devoted to the interests of black constituents and as a caucus of the NLC.

Items of major interest on the NBC/LEA agenda included the election of new officers and the second annual Liberty Award Banquet. In addition, workshops dealing with media relations, the flow of federal dollars, the acquisition of federal resources and international affairs were conducted by the Joint Center for Political Studies.

Herman P. Starks, a member of the Youngstown, Ohio city council since 1975, was elected president of NBC/LEO. Starks succeeds Jessie M. Rattley, vice mayor of Newport News, Virginia as president.

Starks called for an expansion of NBC/LEO programs to meet the ever increasing needs of black elected officials. Other NBC/LEO officers elected were: Mayor Maynard Jackson, Atlanta, Ga., vice president; Odell Barry, councilmember, North Glenn, Colo., secretary; and Willie Dell, councilmember, Richmond, Va., treasurer.

Tom Moody, mayor of Columbus, Ohio, was elected president of the National League of Cities.

Liberty Award Banquet

The second annual Liberty Award Banquet, a combination fundraising and award event, honored A. Phillip Randolph, president of the A. Phillip Randolph Institute. Norman Hill, executive director of the Institute, accepted the award on behalf of Mr. Randolph. The award is given annually to an individual who has distinguished himself in the cause of protecting human rights and advancing the struggle of black Americans.

Funds received from the banquet will be used to establish and maintain a full-time NBC/LEO staff office in Washington, D.C. According to Starks, the office will alert members of pending legislation of interest to them, serve as a public relations arm of the organization and help coordinate NBC/LEO efforts to influence the legislation and executive branches of government.

Impact on the NLC

Ms. Jessie M. Rattley, the outgoing president of NBC/LEO, was elected vice president of the National League of Cities. The election puts Rattley in line to succeed to the presidency of NLC in 1980. The NLC represents some 15,000 cities.

NBC/LEO officials played a leadership role in persuading the NLC to approve resolutions in several areas including: support for a national urban policy; and support for full voting representation for the District of Columbia in the U.S. Congress.

NBC/LEO Resolutions

In addition to the above resolutions, NBC/LEO officials circulated a set of proposed resolutions which were passed by the Caucus membership. NBC/LEO called on President Carter to "meet with a group of individuals selected and authorized by this assemblage, to discuss unemployment among blacks and the urgency of implementing programs in an effort to alleviate this most serious problem."

The Caucus also became one of the first major black organizations to endorse President Carter's proposed Panama Canal Treaties. A resolution which called for military, economic and political sanctions against the minority ruling government of South Africa was also approved by the NBC/LEO membership.

The Caucus also voiced support for the Equal Rights Amendment and the Housing and Community Development Act of 1977. And the Caucus called on the President to "prohibit discrimination against non-profit organizations which conduct research, training and technical assistance programs." Such organizations are frequently overlooked in the awarding of federal grants or contracts in favor of white non-profit groups.

In the area of education, the Caucus proclaimed its support of black institutions of higher education and urged the Carter Administration "to take action to ensure the continual existence of these major institutions."

The Caucus also passed resolutions calling for a public awareness program to educate citizens on the energy crisis and environmental problems.

Noting that almost 40 percent of minority youth are unemployed in our cities, the Caucus urged the President and Congress to establish a comprehensive program for youth services and urban revitalization. The Caucus also voiced its continuing support for the Small Business Administration Section 8 (a) program.

NBC/LEO Regional Heads

The following individuals were elected to head NBC/LEO's ten regional programs and will serve one-year terms on the Board of Directors:

Region 1 (Conn., Mass., Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont) — John Daniels, alderman, New Haven, Conn.

Region II (New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands) — Donald Tucker, councilmember, Newark, N.J.

Region III (Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Penn., Virginia, W. Va.) — Arrington Dixon, councilmember, Washington, D.C.

Region IV (Ala., Fla., Ga., N.C., Kentucky, Miss., S.C., Tenn.) — Ludye Wallace, councilmember, Nashville, Tenn.

Region V (Ill., Ind., Mich., Minn., Ohio, Wisconsin) — John Barnes, councilmember, Cleveland, Ohio.

Region VI (Ark., La., N. Mex., Oklahoma, Texas) — Avalon Reece, councilmember, Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Region VII (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska) — Michael Roberts, councilmember, St. Louis, Missouri.

Region VIII (Colo., Mont., N.D., S.D., Utah, Wyoming) — acting director, Odell Barry, councilmember, North Glenn, Colo.

Region IX (Ariz., Calif., Hawaii, Nevada, Guam) — David Cunningham, councilmember, Los Angeles, California.

Region X (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington) — Sam Smith, councilmember, Seattle, Washington.

Oliver W. Cromwell

Telescope

JCPS To Hold First Fundraising Dinner

The Joint Center for Political Studies will hold its first annual fundraising dinner Thursday, March 9, 1978, at the Shoreham-Americana Hotel in Washington, D.C. Tickets for the dinner are $100 per person and $1,000 per table.

The fundraising dinner will honor Mervyn Dymally, lieutenant governor of California; Richard Hatcher, mayor of Gary, Indiana; Carl Stokes, former mayor of Cleveland, Ohio; and Percy Sutton, former Manhattan borough president, for their efforts to increase the level of black political participation during the last decade.

George Meany, president, of the AFL-CIO and Reginald H. Jones, chairman of the board of General Electric, will serve as co-chairpersons of the dinner.

Other participants in the program will include: McGeorge Bundy, president of the Ford Foundation; Coretta Scott King, president of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change; Tyrone Brown, FCC commissioner, and Ernest N. Morial, mayor-elect of New Orleans.

A National Dinner Committee will include: Dr. Andrew Brimmer, economist; Bill Brock, chairman of the Republican National Committee; William Coleman, former Secretary of Transportation; Joan Ganz Cooney, president and producer of Children's Television Workshop; Norman Cousins, editor of The Saturday Review; Katharine Graham, publisher of The Washington Post; Earl Graves, editor-publisher of Black Enterprise; Daryl F. Grisham, president of Parker House Sausage; Patricia Roberts Harris, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; Carl T. Rowan, columnist-commentator; Marc Stepp, vice president of the UAW; Garry Trudeau, cartoonist; John White, chairman of the Democratic National Committee; and Andrew Young, Ambassador to the United Nations.

Various organizations of black elected officials will serve as the sponsoring committee for the dinner.

For tickets or further information, write or call Kathy Vander Horst, JCPS, (202) 638-4477.

JCPS Announces 2nd Year of Human Resources Fellowship Program

The Joint Center for Political Studies is beginning the second year of its Human Resources Fellowship Program.

The program, which is funded by a $500,000 two-year grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, is seeking at least 10 new Fellows for the 1978-79 year. The Fellows will be chosen from across the country and will serve a 12-month residency in the Washington, D.C. area with the Joint Center as the base for many of their activities. The Fellowship Program coordinator is Dr. Milton D. Morris.

Applicants for Fellowships should hold at least an M.A. degree or equivalent training, some professional experience or a demonstrated interest in human resources program areas such as juvenile justice and delinquency, energy policy, economic development, manpower training and youth employment.

Applications are now being accepted for Fellowships beginning May 1, 1978. The deadline for applications is March 1, 1978. A second group of Fellows will be chosen to begin September 1, 1978. The deadline for applications for the second group is July 1, 1978.

Interested persons may send their resume to Dr. Milton D. Morris at the Joint Center.

JCPS Fellows on the Move

Dr. Jean Sharp, a JCPS Human Resources Fellow, has been appointed by the Montclair, New Jersey Board of Education as assistant superintendent for administrative services. Dr. Sharp will join the staff on a full time basis in March 1978.

She will be involved in the delivery of special services to students, school-community relations and the operations of funded programs.

As one of the original Fellows in the JCPS Human Resources Fellowship Program, Sharp served as a special assistant to the assistant secretary of the Office of Human Development Services in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW).

Another JCPS Fellow, Gloria Cousar, who is assigned to the Office of the Secretary for Housing and Urban Development (HUD), will represent HUD Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris on a newly formed task force that will study the needs of small towns and rural America and determine if housing and community development funds are adequate to small localities.

The task force will also study whether small communities with limited resources are spending too much money and going through too much red tape to get HUD community development grants. HUD funds are available to communities with fewer than 50,000 people through discretionary grants.

The recommendations from the task force will be made by March 1.

HUD Programs to Benefit Small Cities

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has released proposed regulations for two programs to provide community development assistance to small cities. The Urban Development Action Grant Program (UDAG) has 25 percent of its funds set aside for small cities with populations under 50,000. Severely distressed cities with declines in population and income, as well as those with high poverty and unemployment levels may qualify for funds. Projects may include land improvements, residential, commercial and industrial construction and private development projects. Cities must have financial assistance from the private sector before projects can be funded.

The HUD Area Office should be consulted for decisions on eligibility. Additional information may also be obtained by contacting: David Dresser, the UDAG Task Force, Room 7144, Office of Community Development and Planning, HUD, Washington, D.C. 20410, (202) 755-6032.

The Community Development Block Grant Small Cities Program will fund comprehensive programs for cities with populations of at least 2,500 and single-purpose programs. Applications will be rated on the cities' need, past experiences, program impact and how much the program will benefit low and moderate income groups. More information can be obtained from: James Forsberg, Program Standards Division, Office of Community Development, Washington, D.C. 20410, (202) 755-6306.

Continued from page 3

Despite their lack of knowledge about drug abuse funding and lack of participation in the planning process, our survey indicated that most elected officials do feel that more money should be spent on drug prevention. More importantly, these officials indicate a willingness to appropriate local funds for such programs.

- Over two-thirds of the officials thought that specialized planning in drug prevention and education was a priority need.
- Over half of the officials would vote for increased funding for drug abuse programs at the local level in the coming fiscal year.

A vast majority of responding officials (90 percent) think that drug abuse should be among the top five concerns of their communities even if it is not currently considered as one of the top priority items.

It might be concluded that although many officials surveyed considered drug abuse to be a serious problem in their communities, it is evident that drug abuse must compete with a number of other serious concerns for priority attention.

A Comprehensive Response

Officials' perceptions of drug abuse as a competing priority do suggest some policy initiatives that merit further investigation.

In cities where drug abuse is a serious problem, but where other issues are of higher priority, it might be useful to link drug rehabilitation projects with programs targeted to other community development issues. For example, a rehabilitation effort may be linked to a youth employment program.

It may also prove useful to develop or augment linkages between education and treatment programs and established community-based organizations so as to connect drug abuse prevention and treatment with efforts to improve the quality of urban life generally. Such a focus may serve to involve the abuser in a more comprehensive approach to the problem of abuse and/or addictions, and encourage treatment programs to focus on more than "drug-taking." The current treatment emphasis on getting the addict off drugs entirely, over-simplifies both the addict's mental health problems and the relationship between heroin addiction and other social problems.

Drug Policy Implementation

These kinds of policies could prove difficult to implement for two reasons. The first reason is that existing structural mechanisms have not been successful in bringing elected officials into the policy making process. The Single State Agencies charged with coordinating state wide programs have failed to establish working relationships with local officials despite the existence of a few mechanisms, including regional planning councils, which are supposed to serve that purpose. Greater effort should be made by the SSAs to bring local officials into the process by emphasizing local elected officials participation in the planning and evaluation of community drug abuse programs. This may be done by merely publicizing to a greater degree existing mechanisms, or by establishing, at the local level, community advisory panels which could feed into the process.

The second reason is that local officials lack information about drug programs in their jurisdictions. If they are unaware of current policy and program responses to drug abuse, it might be inferred that they are also uninformed about the nature and extent of the problem itself.

One way to overcome this information gap is to provide funds for localities, perhaps through local drug abuse advisory panels, to undertake research with respect to local drug abuse problems.

While it is imperative that minority elected officials and administrators be brought into the planning process, it is equally important that they be fully and objectively informed.

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Joint Center for Political Studies

1426 H Street, N.W., Suite 926
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 638-4477

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