

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE CAUSES AND PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
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The National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence today released the Progress Report which it submitted to President Johnson January 9, 1969.

Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, Chairman of the Commission, stated: "This Report describes the progress that the Commission and its research staff have made in assessing the problem of violence in America. During the next few months we shall study the research data and findings and develop our conclusions. This Report, therefore, contains no recommendations, but it does include a brief analysis of the dimensions and complexity of the problems we are examining."

Attached to the Commission's Progress Report is a staff memorandum signed by Lloyd N. Cutler, Executive Director of the Commission, which describes in detail the scope of the studies being conducted by the Commission's seven research Task Forces, and the current status of their work.

The Commission was established by President Johnson on June 10, 1968 "to undertake a penetrating search for the causes and prevention of violence -- a search into our national life, our past as well as our present, our traditions as well as our institutions, our culture, our customs and our laws."

The Commission is required to complete its Final Report before June 10, 1969.

**PROGRESS REPORT
OF THE
NATIONAL COMMISSION
ON THE
CAUSES AND PREVENTION
OF VIOLENCE
TO
PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON**

JANUARY 9, 1969

*NOTICE: For release in Friday morning newspapers, January 31, 1969.
For use on radio and TV at 6:30 p.m. EST, Thursday, January 30, 1969.*

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Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower
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Judge A. Leon Higginbotham
Vice Chairman
Congressman Hale Boggs
Archbishop Terence J. Cooke
Ambassador Patricia Harris
Senator Philip A. Hart
Eric Hoffer

Senator Roman Hruska
Leon Jaworski
Albert E. Jenner, Jr.
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(A complete staff listing will appear in the Final Report)

Introduction

Mr. President, your charge to this Commission was, in your words, "simple and direct." It was also demanding. You said:

I ask you to undertake a penetrating search for the causes and prevention of violence—a search into our national life, our past as well as our present, our traditions as well as our institutions, our culture, our customs and our laws.

We submit this progress report not as the mature product of our deliberations, with findings and recommendations, but rather as a first look at the multifaceted problem of violence in our nation.

This report will tell you how we have conducted, and are continuing to conduct, our search into the causes and prevention of violence. The organized research effort that we have mounted under your auspices is one which has never before been made in the area of violence by a single entity on a comparable scale.

Our labor is far from finished, and we offer no final judgments or conclusions at this time: the contents of this report are entirely tentative in nature and subject to later revision in light of fuller consideration. But we can at least share with you some of the knowledge we have gained about violence, and we can reaffirm our commitment to carry on our work in a manner consistent with your trust. ✓

Violence In America Today

The people of America are deeply concerned about violence. They have seen a President struck down by an assassin's bullet, and then seen the assassin himself slain while in police custody. They have seen other assassinations of national figures, and none more devastating than the killings earlier this year, first of a major leader of the civil rights movement, and then of the brother of the dead President.

Americans have seen smoke and flames rising over the skylines of their cities as civil disorder has spread across their land—holocausts of rioting, looting, firebombing, and death—a pattern of disorder and destruction repeated in city after city.

Americans have seen students disrupt classes, seize buildings and destroy property at institutions of learning. They have seen young people confronting police at the Pentagon and at draft induction centers across the country. They have seen them heckling, vilifying and even physically abusing public officials. They have heard them shouting obscenities and the strident rhetoric of revolution.

Americans have also come to know the fear of violent crime. They know that robberies and assaults have increased sharply in the last few years. They know that only a small fraction of all such crimes is solved.

For many Americans this is the sum and substance of violence.

But many Americans see additional kinds of violence. They see the violence of overseas war. At home, they see the violence of terrorist murders of civil rights workers, of four little black girls bombed to death in a Sunday school class, the violence of police dogs, fire hoses and cattle prods; others see "violence" in discrimination and deprivation, disease, hunger, and rats. They see the violence of capital punishment, of slaughter on the highways, of movies, of radio and television programs, of some professional sports.

In the minds of some Americans all these different sorts of violence overlap. To some, the scourge of rats excuses robberies and riots. To others, the Vietnam War justifies attacks on Selective Service facilities. Others say looting justifies shooting those who seek to escape arrest.

We as a Commission must take into account all these kinds of violence. There are, of course, moral, social, and legal distinctions which can and must be drawn among the different kinds of violence. We cannot intelligently make these vital distinctions by studying only what we would personally regard as "illegitimate" violence. We have thus had to find a vantage point from which we can see all the forms of violence and their causes in a perspective broader than that of our individual day-to-day concerns.

Violence In Perspective

Man, said Aristotle, is a social animal. Man's ability to create social order has enabled him to embrace for human purposes the challenges and opportunities of the environment. The condition of social order came in time to be known as the state, and the rules of its maintenance, the law.

But interwoven in human history with the strand of social order and cooperative behavior is the strand of violence. From *Genesis* and the *Iliad* to this morning's newspaper, the story of civilization has also included the story of man's violence toward other men.

Historically men have not acted on the principle that all violence is to be avoided. Our nation is no exception. Like all others, our society has recognized some uses of violence as necessary and legitimate and some as unacceptable and illegitimate.

All societies must draw moral and legal distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate violence. One traditional and vital function of social order, of the state and its laws, has been to determine in particular cases when violence is legitimate (as in self-defense, discipline of children, maintenance of public order or war against an enemy) and when it is illegitimate (as in violent crime, civil disorder, rebellion or treason).

History records a persistence of challenge to any given social order's determinations of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of violence—sometimes by other social orders, sometimes by individuals within the social order. To most of our forefathers and to virtually all of us today, for example, the American revolution was an act of courage, patriotism, and honor. To most of the English at that time, however, it was treason and revolution. Even the phenomenon of assassination is subject to this relativity of values: our judgment of the wartime plot to murder Hitler is utterly different from our reaction to the murder of the Head of State in our own open and democratic society.

There is, therefore, no universal agreement on a definition of the term "violence" which makes it mean something that is always to be condemned. For purposes of commencing our study, we have defined "violence" simply as the threat or use of force that results, or is intended to result, in the injury or forcible restraint or intimidation of persons, or the destruction or forcible seizure of property.

There is no implicit value judgment in this definition. The maintenance of law and order falls within it, for a policeman may find it necessary in the course of duty to threaten or use force, even to injure or kill an individual. Wars are included within this definition, as is some punishment of children. It also includes police brutality, the violence of the Nazis, and the physical abuse of a child.

This definition has important implications for our understanding of the causes and prevention of the illegitimate violence that our society condemns. For example, it helps us to recognize that illegitimate violence, like most deviant behavior, is on a continuum with and dynamically similar to legitimate violence. The parent who spans a child may be engaging in legitimate violence, but for the parent to break the child's arm would be illegitimate violence.

A neutral definition of violence also helps us to recognize that some minimum level of illegitimate violence is to be expected in a free and rapidly changing industrial society. Maintaining a system of law enforcement capable of eliminating all illegitimate individual and group violence might so increase the level of legitimate violence that the harm to other values would be intolerable. A totalitarian police state, however efficient its use of violence might be in preserving order, would destroy the freedom of all.

The elimination of all violence in a free society is impossible. But the better control of illegitimate violence in our democratic society is an urgent imperative, and one within our means to accomplish.

These observations return us to a basic point about violence. Violence is but one facet of man living with his fellow men. Throughout history men have sought to control violence, to institutionalize it and to regulate the forms it takes, to make some forms of violence serve their collective needs and desires and to place other forms of violence beyond the pale. Violence becomes sharply separated into the basic categories of "legitimate" and "illegitimate" primarily in the context of a particular human society or cultural tradition.

Man's effort to control violence has been one part, a major part, of his learning to live in society. The phenomenon of violence cannot be understood or evaluated except in the context of that larger effort.

The wisdom of your mandate to us, Mr. President, is confirmed: this Commission's study of violence in contemporary America must, if it is to reach meaningful conclusions, include the study of American society itself, past and present, and the traditions and institutions which accept or condemn the various forms that violence takes in our society.

The National Commission

In planning our work we have thus acted on the premise that to reach an understanding of the social context of contemporary domestic violence, we must conduct a broad-ranging inquiry into many seemingly unrelated subjects. Aware of the dangers of an over-ambitious

approach, we have nonetheless concluded that this broad inquiry is the only way to achieve an appropriate perspective on violence in America and a national consensus about the means of its control. That is our task, and our effort must be commensurate with it.

We wish we could promise solutions to all of the problems of illegitimate violence. We cannot. There is no simple answer to the problem of illegitimate violence: no single explanation of its causes, and no single prescription for its control.

The phenomena of illegitimate violence—from robbery to murder, from civil disorder to larger conflicts, from child abuse to suicide—are enormously complicated.

An awesome complexity is concealed in such simple questions as who is violent, when, why, under what conditions, and with what consequences. Recognizing this complexity, however, may well be the first step toward understanding—and toward convincing the American people that they must be uncommonly thoughtful, open-minded, and persevering if the challenge of illegitimate violence in our society is to be met.

Accordingly, we have divided our research work into seven basic areas of detailed inquiry. We have created a staff Task Force to conduct the research effort and produce a staff report in each area. Our Task Forces are:

- (1) **Task Force on Historical and Comparative Perspectives.** An overview of the causes, processes and consequences of violence in American history and in other societies.
- (2) **Task Force on Group Violence.** An analysis of the nature and causes of the violence accompanying contemporary student unrest, opposition to overseas war, and racial militancy, together with a consideration of the responses of social and political institutions to these phenomena.
- (3) **Task Force on Individual Acts of Violence.** A study of the patterns of violent crime and other individual acts of violence and of the role of biological, psychological, and socio-cultural factors.
- (4) **Task Force on Assassination.** A world-wide study of violence directed toward politically prominent persons.
- (5) **Task Force on Firearms.** An investigation of the role of firearms in accidents, suicides and crime, and an evaluation of alternative systems of firearms control.
- (6) **Task Force on the Media.** An investigation of the effects of media portrayals of violence upon the public and of the role of the mass media in the process of violent and non-violent social change.
- (7) **Task Force on Law and Law Enforcement.** An assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of our system of justice, and of the steps that can be taken to increase respect for the rule of law.

The dimensions of the research are suggested by the fact that the personnel of the Task Forces and the central staff numbers approximately 70, and that more than 140 research projects and special analyses have been undertaken for the Task Forces by outside experts and scholars.

In addition to these seven basic Task Forces, an eighth Task Force, consisting of a number of Study Teams, has been investigating recent violent events on which no other adequate factual record has yet been made. The reports of these Teams become part of the research base of the relevant Task Forces and ultimately of the Commission itself.

While the work of the Task Forces has been proceeding, the Commission has met almost weekly, has studied scores of reports and articles, and has held a series of hearings and conferences in which we received the views of more than 150 public officials, scholars, experts, religious leaders and private citizens. The testimony and discussions have been valuable; from them we have gained a deeper understanding of attitudes and motivations than we would otherwise have had.

Themes of Challenge

Attached to this progress report is a staff memorandum describing the work of our Task Forces in carrying out the research assignments we have set forth. The final reports of our Task Forces are now becoming available for study by the Commission along with other materials. We will present our final conclusions and recommendations in the spring of the year. Meanwhile, however, from preliminary reports, testimony, and consultation, we have identified certain themes of challenge for the leaders and the people of America. Among these are the following:

First: As we have noted, not all violence in our society is illegitimate. Indeed, a major function of society is the organization and legitimation of violence in the interest of maintaining society itself. Unfortunately, however, the existence of legitimate violence—from a shooting in lawful self-defense through international violence in the form of warfare—sometimes provides rationalization for those who would achieve ends or express grievances through illegitimate violence.

Second: Violence by some individuals may result in part from a deranged mind or abnormal biological make-up. Experts agree, however, that most persons who commit violence—criminal or noncriminal—are basically no different from others, and their behavior is the result of the complex interaction of their biology and life experience. Scholars observe that man has no instinct or trait born within that directs aggression in a specific way. He does have, from birth, the potential for violence. He also has the capacity for creative, constructive activity and for the rejection of violence. Insofar as life experience teaches individuals violence, the incidence of violence is subject to modification, control, and prevention through conscious changes in man's environment.

Third: Historically, when groups or individuals have been unable to attain the quality of life to which they believe they are entitled, the resulting discontent and anger have often culminated in violence. Violent protest today—from middle-class students to the inhabitants of the black ghettos and the white ghettos—has occurred in part because the protesters believe that they cannot make their demands felt effectively through normal, approved channels and that "the system," for whatever reasons, has become unresponsive to them.

Fourth: Progress in meeting the demands of those seeking social change does not always reduce the level of violence. It may cause those who feel threatened by change to engage in counter-violence against those seeking to shift the balance. And the pace of change may be slower and more uneven than the challenging group is willing to tolerate. We see these social

forces at work in our country today. After several decades of rapid social change, we have better housing, education, medical care and career opportunities for most groups in our society than at any time in the past. Nonetheless, these advances have been uneven, and what we have so far achieved falls short of the needs or expectations of many. Impatience is felt on all sides, and our social order is subjected to escalated demands both from those who desire greater stability and from those who desire greater social change.

Fifth: The key to much of the violence in our society seems to lie with the young. Our youth account for an ever-increasing percentage of crime, greater than their increasing percentage of the population. The thrust of much of the group protest and collective violence—on the campus, in the ghettos, in the streets—is provided by our young people. It may be here, with tomorrow's generation, that much of the emphasis of our studies and the national response should lie.

Sixth: The existence of a large number of firearms in private hands and a deep-seated tradition of private firearms ownership are complicating factors in the task of social control of violence.

Seventh: Additional complications arise from the high visibility of both violence and social inequalities, resulting from the widespread impact of mass communications media. The powerful impact of the media may aggravate the problems of controlling violence; on the other hand, the media may be one of our most useful social agents for explaining all elements of our society to one another and achieving a consensus as to the need for social change that may help to reduce levels of violence.

Eighth: Social control of violence through law depends in large measure on the perceived legitimacy of the law and the society it supports. Persons tend to obey the law when the groups with which they identify disapprove those who violate it. Group attitudes about lawful behavior depend, in turn, on the group's views of the justice provided by the legal order and of the society which created it. The justice and decency of the social order thus are not simply desirable embellishments. On the contrary, a widespread conviction of the essential justice and decency of the social order is an indispensable condition of civil peace in a free society.

Ninth: Our system of criminal justice suffers from an under-investment of resources at every level—police, courts and corrections. Partly because of this accumulated deficit, the criminal justice system is neither as strong nor as fair as it should be—and consequently it has failed to control illegitimate violence as well as it should.

Tenth: The social control of violence does not depend merely on the conduct of those who attack or defend the social order. It depends also on the attitudes, cooperation, and commitments of the community—of our political, religious, educational, and other social institutions and of citizens in every walk of life. Violence in our society affects us all. Its more effective control requires the active engagement and commitment of every citizen.

Steps Toward Control

Facing these challenges, we as a nation have been taking important additional steps to improve the ability of our social order to control violence. Previous commissions and study groups which you appointed, Mr. President, have provided much of the knowledge the nation needs to move ahead. Fundamental contributions have already been made by the President's

Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice and the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. Moreover, acting in response to your initiatives, the Congress has begun to lay the legislative foundation for effective action on a number of fronts critical to the complex problem of violence.

Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 provides the groundwork for substantial research and financial assistance in aid of local law enforcement. The Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act will stimulate and support expansion of youth opportunity and youth rehabilitation programs. The Gun Control Act of 1968 makes a necessary contribution to effective firearms control. The Model Cities Act, the Housing Act of 1968, the Civil Rights enactments of recent years and the employment program of the National Alliance of Businessmen have accelerated the process of social change believed necessary to remove some of the causes of violence in our midst.

All these measures are important steps along the road to a more peaceful, prosperous and equitable society. They confirm the judgment of the Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice that the Nation can, if it will, take steps to control crime and other forms of violence. Much more, of course, remains to be done. We hope the work of our Commission will make an equally significant contribution toward the completion of this unfinished task.

Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower
Chairman
Judge A. Leon Higginbotham
Vice Chairman
Congressman Hale Boggs
Archbishop Terence J. Cooke
Ambassador Patricia Harris
Senator Philip A. Hart
Eric Hoffer
Senator Roman Hruska
Leon Jaworski
Albert E. Jenner, Jr.
Congressman William M. McCulloch
Judge Ernest W. McFarland
Dr. W. Walter Menninger

MEMORANDUM

for

THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

This memorandum describes the scope of the studies being conducted by the Commission's seven research Task Forces, and the current status of their work.

The full reports of the Task Forces will be available for consideration by the Commission during January and February. The attached memorandum is intended only to describe the problems which the Task Forces are examining and their methods of attack. It contains no conclusions or recommendations, and sets forth only the minimum factual data necessary for a thoughtful discussion of the subject.

Lloyd N. Cutler
Executive Director

January 9, 1969

Attachment:
Chapters I-VII

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I. HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES

In periods of great social stress, when the demands of opposing groups seem beyond peaceful reconciliation, there is a tendency to conclude that the times have never been so bad. History suggests that many past generations have expressed this same sentiment about the America of their day, and that our nation has experienced many upheavals of the most violent sort.

There are useful lessons in our history. By studying antecedents and counterparts, we can learn a good deal about the causes of violence, and how to cope with violence and with the conditions that bring it about.

The Task Force on Historical and Comparative Perspectives is seeking to provide a general framework in which we can interpret contemporary violence. This Task Force is under the joint direction of Hugh Davis Graham, Associate Professor of History at Johns Hopkins University, and Ted Gurr, Assistant Professor of Politics at Princeton University. It has commissioned a number of significant studies. Some of these identify specific aspects of American history and character that have contributed to our present conditions. Others assess the American experience with violence and compare it with that of other nations. A number analyze general patterns of the historical causes, processes, and consequences of resort to violence.

The studies of the Task Force suggest that two general themes have provided motivation and justification for group violence in American history: (1) progressive demands for change by groups that have felt themselves excluded from a fair share of the social, economic and political privileges of the majority; and (2) defensive responses by groups whose members felt their ways and conditions of life threatened by these demands. Progressive and defensive sentiments for and against change have not always led to violence. Violence seems to have been a consequence of the intensity with which those sentiments were felt, the availability of nonviolent means of achieving change, and the extent of the threat perceived by those resisting change.

"Progressive" demands have led to violence in several instances, particularly involving workers and ethnic groups.

Labor violence was chronic in the United States for over half a century, from the 1870's to the 1930's, and has been sporadic in more recent decades. It appears to have reached its peak early in the 20th Century. In some instances—as in the railroad strike of 1877 and the Colorado mining strikes of 1913-14—it exceeded in pervasiveness and intensity the recent violence within the city ghetto. Violence was initiated on some occasions by workers, on others by employers or by the forces of public order. Violence occurred most frequently during periods when strikes, picketing and other forms of protest or economic pressure were regarded as illegal; it diminished as the legality of such activities became defined and accepted, and as governmental rules of conciliation and adjustment were devised and brought into use.

Ethnic and religious violence has also occurred frequently in the United States, involving the Irish, Italians, Orientals, and—far most consequentially—Negroes. Only in the last decade, however, has it become common for such ethnic groups to initiate violent conflict. Historically the violence resulted when groups farther up the socioeconomic ladder resisted the peaceful upward progress of particular ethnic and religious groups toward higher positions in the social order. Those who felt threatened by the prospect of the new immigrant or the Negro getting "too big" and "too close" resorted to defensive violence.

Defensive sentiments are almost inextricably interwoven in most group violence in American history. The demands of workers, immigrants, and Negroes were usually expressed in violence only when other groups violently resisted satisfaction of their demands. Our studies suggest that at least three outstanding examples of substantially defensive violence can be identified: those of farmers, vigilantes, and employers.

Agrarian protests and uprisings have characterized both frontier and settled regions since before the Revolution. They have been a blend of both progressive and defensive sentiments, including demands for land reform, defense against more powerful economic interests, and relief from onerous political restrictions. Some major examples include Shays' Rebellion in Massachusetts, 1786-1787; Fries' Rebellion in eastern Pennsylvania, 1799; some of the activities of the Grangers, Greenbackers, and Farmers' Alliance after the Civil War; and the "Green Corn Rebellion" of Oklahoma farmers during World War I.

Vigilantism has been a recurrent defensive response of middle- and working-class Americans to threats to their security. The most widely-known manifestations have been the frontier tradition of citizen enforcement of the law and Ku Klux Klan efforts to maintain class lines and their moral code by taking their version of the law into their own hands. Less well known were the "Regulators" of pre-Revolutionary South Carolina, the Bald Knobbers of the Missouri Ozarks in the late 1880's, and the nation-wide activities of the White Cap movement of the 1880's and 1890's, a spontaneous movement for the moral regulation of the poor whites and ne'er-do-wells of rural America. There are many other manifestations of vigilantism as well; no region and few historical eras have been entirely free of it.

As noted earlier, much labor violence in American history occurred as a result of violent resistance by employers to worker organization and demands. Apart from the assistance they received from troops and police upholding the laws of the times against strikes, boycotts and picketing, employers repeatedly resorted to private coercive and sometimes terroristic activities against union organizers and to violent strike-breaking tactics. Whether company resistance and violence provoked or merely responded to violence by workers, it led in many situations to an escalating spiral of violent conflict to the point of mutual exhaustion.

Comparative studies of levels and characteristics of civil strife in the United States and other countries have been developed in recent years, and have been analyzed by the Task Force. They suggest that in the past five years the United States has experienced strife of greater intensity and greater duration than all but a few other Western democracies. For the purpose of this cross-national comparison, the term "civil strife" includes all collective protests, legal or illegal under the applicable national law, violent or non-violent in their consequences. Three general levels of civil strife are distinguished. The lowest level is "turmoil"—relatively spontaneous, partially organized or unorganized strife with substantial popular participation and limited objectives. The middle level is "conspiracy"—intensively organized strife with limited participation but with terroristic or revolutionary objectives. The highest level is "internal war"—intensively organized strife with widespread participation, almost always accompanied by extensive and intensive violence and directed at the overthrow of political regimes. The studies suggest the following:

1. In roughly comparable 5-year periods during the 1960's,* about 11 of every thousand Americans took part in civil strife, almost all of it at the turmoil level, compared with an average of seven per thousand in 17 other Western democracies. Six of these 17 had higher rates of participation than the United States, including Belgium, France, and Italy. About 9,500 injuries including some deaths resulted from American strife. This is a rate of 48 per million population, compared with an average of 12 per million in other Western nations. In total magnitude of civil strife, measured by these factors, plus the total duration of strife, the United States ranks first among the 17 Western democracies.

2. Civil strife in the United States has been much less disruptive than in many non-Western countries, however. Most American civil strife has consisted of lawful protest with relatively non-violent consequences. For example, the nation has experienced no internal wars since the Civil War

*The periods are June 1963 through May 1968 for the United States, and 1961-1965 for the other Western democracies.

and almost none of the chronic revolutionary conspiracy and terrorism that plague dozens of other nations. Although about 220 Americans died in violent civil strife in the past five years, the rate of 1.1 per million population is infinitesimal compared with the world-wide average of 238 deaths per million. These differences reflect the comparative evidence that from a world-wide perspective Americans, with few exceptions, have not organized for collective violence. Most demonstrators and rioters are protesting, not rebelling. If there were many serious revolutionaries in the United States, levels of collective violence would be much higher than they are. However, the tumult of the United States contrasts unfavorably with the relative domestic tranquility of developed democratic nations like Sweden, Great Britain, and Australia, or with the comparable current tranquility of nations as diverse as Yugoslavia, Turkey, Jamaica, or Malaysia. In total magnitude of strife, the United States ranks 24th among the 114 larger nations and colonies of the world. In magnitude of turmoil alone it ranks sixth. ✓

3. Civil strife in the United States is about the same *in kind* as strife in other Western nations. The anti-government demonstration and riot, violent clashes of political or ethnic groups, and student protests are pervasive forms of conflict in modern democracies. Some such public protest has occurred in every Western nation in the past decade. People in non-Western countries also resort to these limited forms of public protest, but they are much more likely than citizens of Western nations to organize serious conspiratorial and revolutionary movements.

4. Strife in the United States and other European countries is quite likely to mobilize members of both the working class and the middle classes but rarely members of the political establishment such as military officers, civil servants, and disaffected political leaders. Strife also is likely to occur within or on the periphery of the normal and open political processes in Western nations, rather than being organized by clandestine revolutionary movements or cells of plotters within the political and military hierarchy.

The Task Force has also been examining the history of how discontented groups have sought to improve their lot. Three kinds of group response to intense discontents can be examined.

One is the resort to violence itself. In some instances violence occurs as a direct and unstructured outpouring of rage against sensed injustice that is satisfying in and of itself for its participants. In other cases violence is manifest in carefully organized forms and has specific tactical objectives. Both anger and hope of gain appear to be present in almost all outbreaks of civil strife and in most of their participants.

A related question being studied by the Task Force is the extent to which violence has been a successful means of achieving change and the effects of success on subsequent violence. A study of American labor violence suggests that violence was almost always ineffective for those seeking the change. The more violent the conflict, the more disastrous the consequences were for the workers who took part. It is true that the ultimate effects of the struggle were beneficial for workers as a group. But whether the violent aspects of the conflict accelerated or delayed the ultimate beneficial resolution is an open question. It may well have been a general consensus that violence and counter violence were unproductive that led to more conciliatory action by both union leaders and employers, and to the establishment of peaceful means of conflict resolution.

In the case of the labor movement, the long-range consequence of conciliatory responses by the social order was thus a decrease, not an increase in violent conflict. Violence was chronic so long as recognition was denied; during this period state or federal troops were employed at least 160 times in labor disputes. Violence diminished sharply after a peaceful system of conflict resolution became a part of our law.

For remedial social change to be an effective moderator of violence, history also suggests that the changes made must command a wide measure of support throughout the community, as was true when labor finally succeeded in establishing its rights. Official efforts to impose change resisted by a dominant majority, as in the South during the Reconstruction period, have acted as a spur to counter-violence. Effective change

has depended not only on decreeing the reforms advocated by a discontented minority, but also on persuading the community at large that these changes are just and necessary.

On the other hand, historical and comparative evidence indicates that primary emphasis on repressive measures, instead of remedial action, has frequently led to a decaying cycle in which resistance takes the form of increasingly organized and targeted armed attacks, countered by escalating repression, sometimes resulting in coup d'etat or revolution. The French and Russian Revolutions are notable examples of such an outcome.

A second kind of group response to intense stresses and discontents is what anthropologists call "defensive adaptation." It is essentially an inward-turning, nonviolent response characterized by centralization of authority in the group, attempts to set the group apart by emphasizing symbols of group identity and minimizing contact with other groups, and maintenance of the group's cultural integrity. It is an especially common reaction among ethnic and religious groups whose members perceive their social environments to be permanently hostile, deprecatory, and powerful. Such adaptations are apparent among some American Indians, ethnolinguistic enclaves in Europe, Jewish "shtetl" communities, and also among groups like the Black Muslims. Defensive adaptation provides some essentially social and psychological satisfactions; it seldom can provide members with substantial economic benefits or political means by which it can promote their causes vis-a-vis hostile external groups. This kind of defensive withdrawal may also lead to violence when outside groups press too closely on the defensive group, but it is typically a response that minimizes violent conflict.

A third general kind of response is the development by the discontented group of political means for the satisfaction of members' felt needs. This more constructive response has characterized most discontented groups throughout Western history.

In England, social protest was institutionalized through the trade unions, cooperative societies, and other self-help activities. In continental Europe, the discontent of the urban workers and *petit bourgeoisie* led to the organization of fraternal societies, unions, and political parties, which provided some intrinsic satisfactions for their members and which could channel demands effectively to employers and into the political system. In the United States the chronic local rebellions of the late 18th and the first half of the 19th century were superseded by organized, conventional political manifestations of local, regional, ethnic and economic interests. Labor violence similarly declined once trade unions were organized and recognized.

The organization of such functional and community groups for self-help has sometimes increased violent conflict, especially when the Government or adverse elements of the community have opposed such efforts. But when these new organizations have received public and private cooperation and obtained sufficient resources to carry out their activities, violence has been substantially reduced.

The contemporary efforts of black Americans to develop effective community organizations, and their demands for greater control of community affairs, may be in this self-help tradition. So also may be the attempts of white urban citizens to create new neighborhood organizations, and the demands of student protestors for greater participation in university affairs.

The foregoing discussion suggests some of the subjects being examined by our Task Force on Historical and Comparative Perspectives. A more complete idea of the scope of our work in this area can be gained from the research summary below.

Research Summary

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|--|--|
| Robin Brooks Department of History San Jose State College San Jose, California | An Historical Interpretation of Violent Domestic Responses to American Military Involvement |
| Richard Maxwell Brown Department of History William and Mary College Williamsburg, Virginia | (1) Historical Patterns of Violence in America and (2) The American Vigilante Tradition |
| George M. Carstairs Department of Psychiatry Royal Edinburgh Hospital Edinburgh, Scotland | Overcrowding and Human Aggression |
| James P. Comer Yale Child Study Center New Haven, Connecticut | The Psychological Dynamics of Black and White Violence |
| James Davies Department of Political Science University of Oregon Eugene, Oregon | The J-Curve of Rising and Declining Satisfaction: Its Appearance before Some Great Revolutions and Some Contained Rebellions |
| Ivo K. Feierabend Rosalind L. Feierabend Betty A. Nesvold Department of Political Science University of Oregon Eugene, Oregon | Social Change and Political Violence: Cross-National Patterns |
| Joseph B. Frantz Department of History University of Texas Austin, Texas | The Frontier Tradition: An Invitation to Violence |
| Fred P. Graham Reporter, New York Times Washington, D.C. | A Contemporary History of American Crime |
| Edward Gude Department of Political Science Dartmouth College Hanover, New Hampshire | Batista and Betancourt: Alternative Responses to Violence |
| Ted Gurr Center of International Studies Princeton University Princeton, New Jersey | Civil Strife in the Contemporary World: A Comparative Survey of its Extent and Causes |
| Louis Hartz Department of Government Harvard University Cambridge, Massachusetts | A Comparative Study of Immigrant Cultures |

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|---|--|
| Sheldon Hackney Department of History Princeton University Princeton, New Jersey | Individual Violence and the Southern Tradition |
| Michael C. Hudson Political Data Program Yale University New Haven, Connecticut | Violence and Political Stability in the United States: A Comparative Analysis |
| Morris Janowitz Department of Sociology University of Chicago Chicago, Illinois | Social Control of Urban Turmoil |
| Roger Lane Department of History Haverford College Haverford, Pennsylvania | Urbanization and Criminal Violence in the Nineteenth Century: Massachusetts as a Test Case |
| Kenneth Lynn Department of English Literature Federal City College Washington, D.C. | Violence in American Literature and Folk Lore |
| August Meier and Elliott Rudwick Department of History Kent State University Kent, Ohio | Black Violence in the Twentieth Century: A Study in Rhetoric and Retaliation |
| Ben Roberts Department of Industrial Relations London School of Economics and Political Science London, England | The Origins and Resolution of English Working-Class Protest |
| Bernard Siegel Department of Anthropology Stanford University Stanford, California | Defensive Cultural Adaptation |
| Philip Taft and Philip Ross Department of Industrial Relations University of Buffalo Buffalo, New York | American Labor Violence: Its Causes, Character, and Outcome |
| Raymond Tanter Department of Political Science University of Michigan Ann Arbor, Michigan | Some Contemporary Patterns of External Conflict and Domestic Disorder |
| Charles Tilly Department of Sociology Center for the Advance Study of Behavioral Sciences Stanford, California | Collective Violence in European Perspective |

II. GROUP VIOLENCE

Consider the dimensions and the forms of the protest and response that have swept our society during the past five years:

- 370 civil rights demonstrations have occurred, involving more than a million participants; 80 counter-demonstrations have been held in opposition to civil rights demonstrators and school integration; confrontation between demonstrators and police and between opposing groups has often led to violence.

- Some 200 private acts of violence toward Negroes and civil rights workers have caused more than 20 deaths and more than 100 injuries. (These figures are derived only from those incidents reported in the *New York Times* Index; many others may also have occurred.)

- Nearly every major city in the United States has experienced riots and civil disorder, arising, as the Commission on Civil Disorders found, from widespread Negro discontent and frustration over the conditions of life in the black ghetto; 239 violent urban outbursts, involving 200,000 participants, have resulted in nearly 8,000 injuries and 191 deaths, as well as hundreds of millions of dollars in property damage and economic losses.

- Hundreds of student demonstrations have occurred on campuses across the land; some of the conflicts arising between demonstrators and authorities have resulted in seizure of university facilities, police intervention, riot, property damage, and even death, and several institutions have been brought to a temporary halt.

- Anti-war and anti-draft protests have involved some 700,000 participants in cities and on campuses throughout the country; some of these protests either were violently conducted or resulted in a violent official response; some were marked by violence on both sides.

This Commission was not formed to study dissent or protest as such. Its concern is violence. Most manifestations of dissent, demonstration and protest in our society have not been and are not today violent or productive of violent responses. But protest and other expressions of discontent result in violence with sufficient frequency so that it becomes necessary to understand the purposes and tactics of group protest and the social response to protest in order to understand the causes and prevention of collective violence. Accordingly, the Task Force on Group Violence, under the direction of Jerome Skolnick, Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago, is examining the major forms of group protest and the responses of the social order. It is considering the circumstances and the tactical decisions of the contending forces that make the interaction of protest and response conducive to violence.

Group protest and collective violence are familiar themes in American history. As the preceding chapter shows, illuminating historical and comparative parallels may be found. But there appear to be some dynamic new elements in the most frequently violent protest movements of today. Identifying and understanding these new elements is a difficult task, because the process of research and investigation necessarily lags behind the rapidly unfolding current events that we are attempting to study. The Task Force is systematically reviewing all the research that has been done, and it is obtaining the views of a wide variety of persons participating in or responding to current protest activities. The Commission has also created a series of investigative study teams to conduct detailed field studies of important instances of current disorder for

which no other adequate factual record is available. These study teams have been at work compiling detailed factual accounts of the events which occurred in Chicago, Cleveland, and Miami during the summer of 1968, and a study of recent campus disruptions is now getting underway.

On the basis of these investigations and other major studies such as the Report of the Commission on Civil Disorders and the Cox Commission Report on the Columbia University disturbances last spring, the Task Force is analyzing the activities of protesting groups and the responses of the social order, to determine how and why some protest becomes violent, and how to prevent violence from occurring.

Our study of group protest as a source of collective violence concentrates on four main areas: anti-war and anti-draft protest; campus unrest; protest by the black community and other ethnic groups; and official response to protest.

Protest against foreign war is not new in the United States, but the current opposition to the Vietnam War appears to be among the highest in scale and intensity. The Task Force is trying to understand what factors are contributing to this opposition and what forces make it different from protests against previous wars. It hopes to ascertain more precisely the nature of the protest itself, the specific segments of the population which have actively opposed the war, the varying reasons for their opposition and the forms that opposition has taken. In particular, the Task Force is studying the question of why anti-war protest, which began peacefully with "teach-ins" and similarly traditional forms of dissent, has in some more recent instances involved violent confrontations between the protesters and the police.

Some obvious features of the anti-war protest movement command attention. One is that the impetus of the anti-war movement seems to come basically from young, middle-class, white liberals and radicals. Although white student activists were deeply involved at an earlier time in the Negro protest movement and although the anti-war protesters often imitate many of the tactics of that group, anti-war protest appears to be more often an activity of white protesters.

Another salient feature of anti-war protest is its apparent "fractionation." The anti-war movement as a whole is not organizationally or ideologically united, but instead appears to be consciously fractured into many small groups. Each of these groups tends to be responsible to no higher authority than its own immediate and often transitory membership.

A third important feature of the anti-war movement is that the violent aspects of anti-war protest often involve confrontation over symbolic acts such as the destruction of flags or the use of language and gestures which the larger community considers obscene. Much of its activity seems mainly designed to dramatize the difference in life style between the "establishment" and the young people who are the core of the movement. Whether or not these tactics are intended to provoke a violent response, there is evidence to suggest that public distaste for the personal conduct of demonstrators, widely shared by the police, has sometimes led the police to respond more violently than necessary to restore order.

There are a number of other factors which may also have had an impact on the course of anti-war protest. The sharp dissent to the Vietnam War in the academic community, together with opposition from conservative and apolitical sources as well, may have had a stimulating effect. The proliferation of media coverage has been another stimulus; no previous war has ever been reported to the American people in such depth and such vivid detail as the conflict in Vietnam. Moreover, the length and indecisive status of the war may also have been important factors in the extension of the anti-war movement and in the intensity of protest.

The Berkeley student rebellion of 1964 (the "Free Speech Movement") aroused the concern of the academic community and puzzled the nation. Today, the large campus that has not experienced some form of active student protest is exceptional. In many cases the protests have been both violent and forcefully disruptive of university activity.

Much current campus protest is closely related to the anti-war movement. Surveys of students indicate that opposition to the Vietnam War probably has been the most common reason for recent campus demonstrations. There are, however, other important sources of campus discontent we are studying. In the early years of this decade, American students channeled most of their activism toward "off-campus" social issues such as the civil rights movement. Student concern was expressed over the nuclear arms race and civil defense, and the first national student demonstration in several decades, the Washington Peace March, occurred in February of 1962. As in the case of student civil rights activities, this early anti-war demonstration was in support of official policy—the Test Ban Treaty—rather than anti-government in character.

These and other similar experiences seasoned students politically and honed a cutting edge to their idealism. Many returned to the campuses with their activism intact and with a distrust of "reactionary" elements in what they called "the establishment." They brought with them the nonviolent direct action tactics of the civil rights movement, and they became increasingly attracted to social criticism and the prospects of a new movement in American politics. It was at this time that the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) was formed. SDS has since come to overshadow other "New Left" student organizations in size and influence.

The Berkeley rebellion in the fall of 1964 marked the beginning of a new phase in American student protest. This event represented the first major attack by the student movement on a university administration for its on-campus policies, and the first concerted use by students of direct action techniques to disrupt the processes of a university. Although there were some precedents for this kind of activity, student activists before the Berkeley rebellion had focused their protest on events off the campus and had sought to embrace the campus as a home base. The Berkeley struggle apparently was not simply a protest against what was thought to be particular violations of student rights, but seems rather to have been an expression of a deeper conflict between the interests of students as a class and the other interests of the "multiversity" itself. On-campus issues were no longer regarded as trivial, and the campus itself became the front line of confrontation with the "system."

Of more recent origin is the black student movement. Black Student Unions and Afro-American Associations now exist on most of the campuses that have a significant number of black students. Task Force studies indicate that until a few years ago, the extremely small minority of black students tended to be individualistic and on most campuses politically inactive. The Black Power Movement, however, coupled with substantial increases in the number of black students, has offered some black students a vehicle for giving collective expression of their particular grievances and at the same time to identify them with the larger black community. Black student spokesmen are at least as militant as white radicals, especially in terms of tactics advocated, but at least in interracial colleges, black student organizations seem to have been more oriented toward negotiating specific race-related reforms and concessions than white radicals. At the same time, the militant stance of some black students may be a major factor in increasing the militance of white students, whose commitments to racial justice and equality have been greeted with skepticism by blacks. At Columbia, for example, the white student seizure of some campus buildings may have resulted in part from overtly expressed doubts by black students that the whites were really prepared to do what both groups felt was necessary to challenge the university and resist the police.

It is important to observe that the majority of students have not been radicals or organizers of protest movements. Radical student groups, most notably the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), have usually been most successful in rallying non-radical students to their cause by finding a popular issue that provokes university administrations into unyielding defiance or over-reaction. Conversely, sympathetic and conciliatory responses by flexible university administrations—including changes in unpopular university rules and policies—have so far tended to isolate the nucleus of student radicals. As President Brewster of Yale University observed in testimony before the Commission, "Once you leave out the small pathological or malevolent fringe, I am convinced that the urge to violence rises in proportion to the frustration of peaceful change."

The Task Force is examining the characteristics of the activist students: who they are, where they come from, what they profess to believe, what motivates them. It is also studying their organizations, and

the activities and influence of these organizations in campus protests. It is attempting to see the student movement in the broader social context of the larger community. Finally, it is assessing the nature of the response to campus protest by university administrators and faculties in specific instances, and its bearing on the escalation of campus protest into violence.

Within the category of community protest, the Task Force is examining two distinct phenomena. The first is the Negro protest movement, which was only recently spoken of as the "civil rights movement" but which is increasingly referred to in terms of "black militancy" or "black power." The second phenomenon is that of the "white backlash," the private response of white communities and groups which feel threatened by Negro efforts to alter the status quo. Both the Task Force on Group Violence and the Task Force on Assassination are examining this white response to Negro demands, its manifestations in extremist organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, its racist rhetoric, and its occasional resort to vigilante-like techniques of self-help.

The monumental report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (the Kerner Commission) is still only ten months old. Our own examination of Negro protest and its relationship to violence is profoundly affected by the work of that Commission. Not only does the Commission identify in detail the main ingredients of "the explosive mixture which has been accumulating in our cities since World War II," it also traces the history of Negro protest up to the time of the Report's publication in March of last year. The Report tells how the non-violent civil rights movement of the 1950's led to federal court decisions and legislation eliminating the most flagrant instances of legal segregation in the South. It notes that in the early 1960's civil rights groups began to employ similar nonviolent direct-action tactics in Northern cities in an enthusiastic effort to remove all the burdens of racial discrimination throughout the nation. In August of 1963, a quarter of a million people, 20 percent of them white, participated in a dramatic and nonviolent March on Washington, which provided a major impetus for the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The March seemed to symbolize both the achievements of the past years of struggle and new hopes and challenges for the future.

But on July 16, 1964, only two weeks after Congress had passed the Civil Rights bill, an off-duty policeman in Manhattan shot a 15-year-old Negro who was attacking him with a knife, and in Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant this episode triggered the most serious rioting in two decades. There were other riots that summer in Rochester and Philadelphia, but it was still possible to think that these disorders were just a single summer's deviation from the essentially nonviolent efforts of Negroes to achieve an equal place in American society. In August of 1965, however, the Watts riot, in which 34 died, hundreds were injured and approximately \$35 million in property damage was inflicted, shocked all who had been confident that race relations were improving in our cities, and evoked a new mood in Negro ghettos across the country. Many more riots followed in other cities, some of the same magnitude as Watts: in the Newark riot of July, 1967, 23 died and in the Detroit riot in the same month, 43 persons were killed.

Meanwhile, the rhetoric of black power was first heard in mid-1966, and from it a new mood of "black consciousness" has developed. Increasingly, black spokesmen are demanding control on a local level of public services such as schools, police and welfare which affect their daily lives, and some black radicals are describing their communities as "occupied countries" and as "colonial outposts." Among these black radicals the emphasis extends beyond the self-help and racial unity that most black leaders espouse to notions of retaliatory violence and, in some instances, even urban guerilla warfare.

Since the publication of the Report of the Commission on Civil Disorders, the country has seen the second worst month of rioting in recent years in the aftermath of the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King. This was the first time—and the only time to date—that disorders in different cities have been touched off by a single national event. In the Glenville district of Cleveland last July an even more ominous event occurred—an armed "shoot-out" between a group of militant Negroes and white police—thus raising the spectre of interracial, person-oriented rioting of the kind that wracked East St. Louis in 1917, Chicago in 1919 and Detroit in 1943. Also newly prominent were small black extremist groups such as RAM, apparently seeking

violent confrontations and reportedly employing terrorism against other black leaders. Against these disturbing developments, however, is the fact that the number of major urban disorders in the summer of 1968 is reported to have declined to 25 from 46 the previous year, while the number of minor disturbances remained approximately the same (92 as compared to 95).

The Task Force is examining these developments that have occurred since the Kerner Report. It is studying the phenomenon of radical black militancy as it affects urban institutions and, increasingly, the nation's schools and universities. It is interested in the activities of urban gangs and radical militant organizations. It is examining the detailed factual account of the Cleveland incident compiled by our Investigative Task Force, to ascertain whether it is the harbinger of a new kind of urban disorder. And as indicated in the next section of this chapter, we are examining the tactics of police and other city officials that may cause or deter violent outbreaks, and the tactics that are followed after an outbreak begins.

In the area of social response to group protest, the Task Force is studying a range of issues falling into two broad categories. Political systems can respond to violent protest in two basic ways: (1) systems of social control can be strengthened to deter the violence, and (2) efforts can be made to alleviate the conditions giving rise to the protest. The Task Force is seeking to determine which of these two approaches, or which mixture of the two, is more likely to succeed in particular circumstances and in maintaining a stable society in the long run.

Although the Task Force on Group Violence will be considering a variety of social responses to protest, it is concentrating especially on the response of one particular institution—the police and the related authorities who are charged with the complex duty of maintaining public order while permitting and protecting lawful protest.

At the level of police tactics, a wide range of responses has been employed by public authorities faced with mass protest activities. When given sufficient advance warning, they have deployed massive police forces, augmented by military reserves, and such a show of unused force has in some cases helped to prevent violence. Some public authorities have cooperated with the efforts of protesting groups to exercise their legal rights of assembly and petition, granting permits for meetings and parades in public places and resorting to force only when necessary to prevent illegal obstructions of public movement. In other cases, authorities have strictly confined the exercise of the rights of petition and assembly, and have resorted to early and vigorous use of physical force for the purpose of discouraging and dispersing the crowd before it has built up its momentum toward violence.

Choosing among these strategies is difficult. No single answer will suffice for all cases. The choice depends upon identifying correctly the motives and strategies of the protesting group, upon the strength and discipline of the protestors, and upon how the public is likely to judge the vigor of the official response. The Task Force is seeking to determine what lessons can be learned from the different responses of civil, military, and university authorities to substantially similar acts of protest and the different levels of violence that resulted.

Tactics cannot, however, be considered apart from the question of who is to execute them. The Task Force is also examining law enforcement agencies themselves and how their organization bears on the successful discharge of their responsibilities. It is studying the social and economic status of policemen, the content and level of their training, the way they function in different situations, their attitudes toward those who engage in collective protest, and the way in which they are viewed by protesting groups. Fears have recently been expressed as to a growing politicization of police, and the effect of such a development upon police responsiveness to superiors and community officials and upon their ability to fulfill their function as objective instruments of social control. The Task Force is therefore looking carefully into the attitudes, actions, and responsibilities and training of police, and is reviewing and evaluating a number of proposals to increase the effectiveness of local police forces and to encourage community understanding and respect for police. As one aspect of this study, the Task Force is examining the allegations and evidence as to the use of

excessive force by some police in dealing with particular disturbances, the extent to which segments of the protesting group have physically and verbally abused the police and deliberately sought to provoke such an over-reaction, and the types of police response that are appropriate in the face of such tactics.

Research Summary

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|---|---|
| Isaac Balbus Department of Political Science University of Chicago Chicago, Illinois | Judicial Response to Protest |
| Herman Blake Department of Sociology University of California Santa Cruz, California | Black Protest |
| Robert Blauner Department of Sociology University of California Berkeley, California | Black Protest |
| Charles Carey Department of Sociology University of California Berkeley, California | Black Protest |
| David Chalmers Department of History University of Florida Gainesville, Florida | History of Vigilantism in the United States |
| Price Cobbs Department of Psychiatry University of California Medical College San Francisco, California | Black Protest |
| Edward Cray ACLU, Southern California Los Angeles, California | Abusive Police Conduct |
| Thomas Crawford Department of Psychology University of California Berkeley, California | Racial Attitudes in the United States |

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|--|---|
| Frederic Crews Department of English University of California Berkeley, California | Anti-War Movement |
| Harold Cruse University of California Medical College San Francisco, California | Black Protest |
| Elliott Currie Department of Criminology University of California Berkeley, California | Black Protest |
| Amitai Etzioni Bureau of Social Science Research Inc. Washington, D.C. | Demonstration Democracy |
| Richard Flacks Department of Sociology University of Chicago Chicago, Illinois | Campus Protest |
| Joseph Gusfield Chairman, Department of Sociology University of California San Diego, California | Campus Protest |
| Max Heirich Department of Sociology University of Michigan Ann Arbor, Michigan | Campus Protest |
| Irving Louis Horowitz Department of Sociology Washington University St. Louis, Missouri | Anti-War Movements: The Struggle Is The Message |
| Marie-Helen LeDivelec Department of Anthropology University of Paris Paris, France | Comparison with French Student Protest Movement |
| Martin Leibowitz Department of Sociology Washington University St. Louis, Missouri | Counter-Insurgency Theory |

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|---|---|
| Samuel McCormack Department of Criminology University of California Berkeley, California | Police Interviews re Responses to Demonstration and Protest |
| Sheldon Messinger Center for the Study of Law and Society University of California Berkeley, California | Judicial Response to Protest |
| Gordon Misner Department of Criminology University of California Berkeley, California | Police Response to Demonstration and Protest |
| Thomas Pettigrew Department of Psychology Harvard University Cambridge, Massachusetts | Racial Attitudes in the United States |
| Anthony Platt Department of Criminology University of California Berkeley, California | Judicial Response to Protest |
| Michael Ross Department of Sociology University of California Santa Barbara, California | Racial Attitudes in the United States |
| Richard Rubenstein Adlai Stevenson Institute Chicago, Illinois | History of Violence in the United States |
| Peter Scott Department of English University of California Berkeley, California | Anti-War Movement |
| Charles Sellers Department of History University of California Berkeley, California | Anti-War Movement |
| Rodney Stark Survey Research Center University of California Berkeley, California | Police Response to Demonstration and Protest |

III. INDIVIDUAL ACTS OF VIOLENCE

To most Americans, the term "individual acts of violence" means crime. Particularly, it means a crime involving personal harm or the threat of harm, perpetrated by a stranger who is either warped in his upbringing or emotionally disturbed.

Violent individual conduct is not restricted to violent crime. We know that under given circumstances, every person has a potential for violence, a point at which he may engage in violent behavior in response to a complex combination of internal psychological and biological forces and external social, cultural and environmental influences. There is a wide range of such behavior, ranging from the unintentional and impulsive to the intentional and malicious.

This potential for violence erupts not only in individual violent crimes, but also in wars, riots, other group disturbances, and in a host of other human activities, public and private. Violent individual crime must be viewed in this broader context, along with such semi-criminal activities as suicide, child abuse and some types of "accidents."

The Task Force on Individual Acts of Violence, under the direction of Donald J. Mulvihill, Esq. and Melvin M. Tumin, Professor of Sociology at Princeton University, has sought to collect information about the factors in individuals and their environment which prompt all these forms of violent behavior. Because of its high visibility and importance, major attention is being devoted to violent crime.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, in its 1967 Crime Report, suggests that violent crime is at an all-time high. It states that rates for crimes of violence per 100,000 of the population are up 57 percent over the levels of 1960.

These statistics should be viewed with caution. Criminologists raise questions about the validity and consistency of crime rate statistics because they do not reflect important qualifications about reporting and recording problems. Criminologists tell us that reporting agencies are dipping deeper each year into the well of unreported crimes which recent victimization studies indicate may be anywhere from three to ten times larger than official reported police statistics suggest. If these studies are correct, the increase in reported rates may not reflect an increase in the total number of reported plus unreported occurrences. The sharp increases in reported rates of armed robbery, forcible rape and aggravated assault over the past few years do suggest, however, a considerable increase in the actual number of such crimes, especially robberies.

To the extent there has been a recent sharp rise in the actual number of violent crimes, two factors may explain it. First, the proportion of young people in the total population has increased, and because this age group has always accounted for a large share of most violent crimes, the increase in the proportion of young people tends to explain part of the increase in reported violent crime. On this basis, increases from 1950 to 1965 in the percentage of the population aged 10 to 24 would account for fully 47 percent of the increase in rape arrests over this period. Second, crime rates have usually been higher in our cities, and our society is becoming increasingly urbanized. Shifts in population from rural to urban areas may account for substantial proportions of recent increases in rates of reported violent crimes; in the case of robbery, such shifts could explain 25 percent of the increase between 1950 and 1965.

Regardless of actual crime trends and their causes, it is clear that a great deal of crime now exists in our society. In 1967, according to the FBI, more than 12,000 Americans were victims of criminal homicide.

Police reported 253,000 aggravated assaults, 27,100 forcible rapes, and 202,050 robberies. This volume of violent crimes compares unfavorably, both absolutely and on a per capita basis, with other industrial nations. A dramatic contrast may be made between Manhattan Island, with a population of 1.7 million, which has more homicides per year than all of England and Wales with a population of 49 million. And New York's homicide rates are by no means the highest among American cities.

Yet, it is possible to read these same figures in another way, with a different baseline for a perspective—namely, the number of Americans who do not commit violent crimes. We might note that despite the recent trends 99 percent of the population do not engage in crimes of violence.

The intricacies of crime statistics have little meaning for the average citizen. He measures crime in other ways. He appears less impressed with numbers and rates and trends than with the fact that there seem to be increasingly large sections of his city where he cannot walk safely even in daylight, much less at night, and that it is now dangerous in many communities for bus drivers to carry cash or for taxis to pick up fares in certain parts of town after dark. The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice made the important point: "The most damaging of the effects of violent crime is fear, and that fear must not be belittled. . . . This kind of fear has impelled hundreds of thousands of Americans to move their homes or change their habits." It has also prompted many citizens to arm themselves for self-protection.

Because of the extensive and valuable work already done by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, we have been focusing our attention on specific areas of inquiry that the earlier Commission did not exhaust. We are concerned with the human dynamics behind the statistical portrait of violent crime. We hope to learn more about who commits crimes and who its victims are. We are trying to assess the social costs and consequences of crime and to examine the potential returns on investment in alternative methods of controlling violent crime. From the studies of our Task Force on Individual Acts of Violence and from the work of earlier commissions, we are beginning to form partial answers to these critical questions.

Studies over the past decade show that the heavy concentration of crime is among the poor, the ethnic minorities who dwell in the city ghettos; that the areas of lowest per capita income and highest unemployment, of lowest level of average educational attainment, of poorest housing, and of highest infant mortality rate are also areas of high crime. A recent survey in Chicago indicates that the annual risk of physical assault for the black ghetto dweller is 1 in 77; for the white middle class citizen, the odds are 1 in 2,000; and for the upper middle class suburbanite, the odds are 1 in 10,000. Some 15 percent of the people in Los Angeles live in the 45 square mile area that was included in the curfew during the Watts riots, but in the year preceding the riots 60 percent of all arrests in the city occurred in that area.

As the Crime Commission found, existing criminal statistics do not tell us as much as we need to know about victim-offender relationships. Accordingly, the Task Force on Individual Violence is collecting statistics on victimization patterns for the major crimes of violence for the year 1967 from 17 of our largest cities throughout the United States. Our 17-city survey is designed to obtain many significant details about crimes of violence, to ascertain under what conditions violence occurs, to measure the extent of the presence of alcohol and drugs, to determine where and when these acts usually occur, and to determine what the role of the victim is in each of these crimes. No such nation-wide survey has previously been undertaken. The data from the survey should enable us to understand better the causes and consequences of violent crimes and better equip us to deal with the prevention of such violent crime.

Why are some people more likely to commit violent crimes than others? There appears to be no single cause of individual violence; rather, a variety of factors seem to trigger violent behavior, each operating differently with different people. Genetic makeup may be involved, as are intelligence, emotional state, attitudes, and values. The social and economic deprivations which press so heavily on some segments of our society also play a significant role in stimulating violent crime. The Task Force is examining various theories of aggressive behavior and criminality, in an effort to identify the particular aspects of aggressive behavior and violence that are likely to be accounted for by each of these factors. For example, genetics may account

for differentials in nervous stabilities; individual psychology may explain differences in the organization of genetically-given potentials into personality or temperament systems which then give individuals predispositions to behave in various ways; and sociological variables may affect the different ways in which norms are responded to, observed or violated. Better understanding of how these variables interact may provide the reasons for the overwhelming involvement in violent crime of men over women, slums over suburbs, youth over age and urban over rural life.

The young have always played a dominant role in the nation's crime, and the young now account for a much larger proportion of the total population than 20 years ago. But our young today account for a greater proportion of crime than the increase in their numbers alone can explain. Arrests of juveniles for violent crimes have doubled since 1960, while their share of the population has increased only 22 percent. Minors account for nearly all of the increase in arrests for serious crimes in this decade. Some 73 percent of the persons arrested for robbery are under age 25, and 54 percent are under 21. Persons under 25 account for 64 percent of all arrests for rape and 37 percent of all arrests for murder. As the Crime Commission found, the peak years among arrests for crimes of violence are from 18 to 20, followed closely by the 21 to 24 age group.

Because juvenile arrest rates for crimes of violence are rising so rapidly, the Task Force is investigating with particular care the many elements associated with juvenile delinquency, such as the familial and social environment, the failures of schools, and the lack of adequate job training. It is considering the problem of children growing up in neighborhoods where violence is a common means of solving problems among the adult models that the young emulate. The Task Force is also exploring peer group influences, particularly youth gangs, which may lead to violent or antisocial behavior in the young.

Recent research suggests the possibility of identifying the youths most prone to violent or antisocial behavior, especially those prone to commit the more serious crimes. An ongoing study of boys born in 1945 who grew up in Philadelphia has developed such a technique, which may make it feasible to establish priority targets in programs for crime prevention and rehabilitation of offenders. Of nearly ten thousand boys in the study, 3,475 became juvenile delinquents, together committing a total of 10,214 delinquent acts, from petty offenses to homicide. Half of these boys were only one-time offenders. More significantly, 627 were chronic offenders (five or more delinquent acts) who together accounted for 5,305 crimes, or 52 percent of all offenses committed by the entire cohort. Moreover, their offenses tended to be the more serious ones, including the majority of the homicides. Although a small minority (18 percent of the juvenile delinquents, 6 percent of the total group), these 627 youths accounted for the major cost to society from juvenile crimes. Clearly these chronic offenders merit special attention and study, especially as a means for judging when and how society might best take preventive and therapeutic action.

The Task Force is assessing the factors that motivate and stimulate the young to act, either peacefully or violently, and the manner in which factors that motivate peaceful behavior might be encouraged. One focus of study is the family—not only on the goals that parents consciously impart to their children, but also on how parents' actions influence child motivation and behavior.

The Task Force is also examining the relationship of organized crime to individual crimes of violence in our society, and is studying the actions of the American public that tend to finance organized crime. The extent of corruption and collusion between law enforcement agencies and organized crime will be examined in relation to patterns of violence traceable to organized crime. The Task Force is also examining evidence that implicates drugs, particularly heroin, as precipitants in certain types of violent crime.

The Task Force is giving careful attention to relationships among alcohol use, violent crimes, suicide, and automobile accidents. Although the relationship between alcohol use and assaultive behavior is well documented, we are exploring whether, for certain groups, the abuse of drugs or alcohol and involvement in accidents is part of a violent life pattern.

Another subject under investigation is the relationship of space, design and architecture to crimes of violence. Do the ways in which the location of people in social space, and in environments such as housing and cities, generate certain types of social relationships that are more criminogenic than others? The Task Force convened a conference of top urban designers, regional scientists, planners, sociologists, psychiatrists, and police officials to discuss this question.

The Task Force is giving special consideration to the corrections system and the rehabilitation of convicted offenders and adjudicated delinquents. The theme of the inadequacy of penal institutions as agents for rehabilitation has been reiterated by many of the witnesses appearing before the Commission. We have been told of over-crowding in county jails and some larger state penitentiaries, and the appalling lack of even the most basic resources for diagnosis, treatment and training of incarcerated convicts.

Beyond the lack of manpower and financial resources in the corrections system, there is a need for rethinking the basic concept underlying much of modern corrections, namely, that good behavior within the institution has a high predictive correlation with good behavior after release. Scholars and administrators now question whether any system which keeps the offender in an isolated atmosphere, so different from the normal environment into which he will be released, can possibly improve his ability to cope with the day-to-day problems which he originally tried to solve by criminal behavior. In an FBI survey of a large number of arrestees in 1966 and 1967, approximately 75 percent of those arrested for violent crimes were "repeaters" who had been convicted previously.

The Task Forces studies indicate a great need for expanded financial support of the whole system of corrections. But even more important, they indicate a need for careful, controlled research to determine which approaches are most successful in rehabilitating young offenders. If we are to make reliable conclusions regarding what is successful we must develop the kind of rigor in the area of correctional research and experimentation that we have in other areas of research.

It will always be difficult to rehabilitate the young person who has already been in trouble and been labeled a delinquent. The Commission has given a great deal of attention to the question of prevention of juvenile delinquency and violence before it happens. In a conference on Youth Development which brought together leaders of various social service organizations, churches, and government agencies, nearly all the participants emphasized the need to involve young people in the planning and administrative roles of programs designed to serve their needs. They also stressed that programs designed to reach all youth in an area should avoid labeling some as delinquent or pre-delinquent.

The Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act of 1968 is the first significant federal measure to provide support for state and local delinquency-prevention programs. It authorizes federal grants to public and non-profit private agencies for community-based preventive services for youths in danger of becoming delinquent, including parolees and probationers. The Act does not include language specifically calling for youth-involvement in planning and administration of such programs, but it does provide some hope that greater attention and support will be given the problem of reaching alienated youth and involving them in responsible roles in the community before they have struck out violently against a society which they perceive as unjust and unconcerned with their problems.

Not directly a question of crime prevention or control, but part of society's total response to crime is the question of victim compensation. The Task Force's research includes a detailed study of existing plans, including those in New Zealand, Great Britain, the Canadian Provinces, California, New York, Massachusetts, Hawaii and Maryland as well as legislation that is presently pending in the state legislatures of eleven states. With the cooperation of the University of Southern California, our Task Force on Individual Acts of Violence convened the first international victim compensation conference which brought together representatives of most of the foreign and domestic compensation plans.

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, there are forms of individual violence that are at worst semi-criminal. The Task Force is also exploring some of these forms, such as suicide, child abuse and some types of "accidents." Suicide, however performed, is a retreat from society; its rates vary by age, sex, and regional

patterns, and inversely with homicide rates for the same category. Better data are being reported on cases of battered children; it suggests that the frequency of this kind of violence may be increasing. Of the automobile accidents that account for 50,000 deaths each year in the United States, there is evidence that a substantial number result from the psychological and physiological effects of alcohol upon drivers, as well as from other factors in our culture and in the psychology of driving that promote an urge to violence. Similar factors may be present in other types of accidents.

Research Summary

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|--|--|
| Paul Bohannon Department of Anthropology Northwestern University Evanston, Illinois | Observations of Cross-Species & Cross-Cultural Comparisons of Aggression & Violence |
| Bernard Chodorkoff Seymour Baxter Detroit Psychiatric Institute Detroit, Michigan | Psychiatric & Psychoanalytic Theories of Violence & its Origin |
| Jose M. R. Delgado Yale University School of Medicine New Haven, Connecticut | Cerebral Basis for Violence and Peaceful Coexistence |
| Ithiel deSola Poole Massachusetts Institute of Technology Cambridge, Massachusetts | Trends of Public Opinion About Violence, 1937-1968 |
| Lawrence Dizmang National Institute of Mental Health Chevy Chase, Maryland | Suicide |
| LaMar Empey Department of Sociology University of Southern California Los Angeles, California | Contemporary Program for Convicted Juvenile Offenders: Prob- lems of Theory Practice & Research |
| Frank R. Ervin John R. Lion Harvard Medical School Boston, Massachusetts | Clinical Evaluation of Violent Patients |

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|---|---|
| Clinton Fink Center for Conflict Resolution University of Michigan Ann Arbor, Michigan | Violent & Nonviolent Modes of Conflict & Conflict Resolution |
| Mark Furstenberg 3970 Legation St., N.W. Washington, D.C. | Violence in Organized Crime |
| Gilbert Geis Department of Sociology California State College Los Angeles, California | Victim Compensation |
| David G. Gil Florence Heller Graduate School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare Brandeis University Waltham, Massachusetts | Physical Abuse of Children: One Manifestation of Violence in American Society |
| Eli Ginzberg Conservation of Human Resources Columbia University New York, New York | Perspectives and Policies on Employment Problems of Youth and Juvenile Delinquency |
| William Goode Columbia University New York, New York | Violence Among Intimates |
| Mark Haller Department of History Temple University Philadelphia, Pennsylvania | Theories of Criminal Violence & Their Impact on the Criminal Justice System |
| James Johnson Princeton University Princeton, New Jersey | Social & Economic Costs of Violence |
| Seymour Levine Robert L. Conner Stanford University Medical Center Stanford, California | Endocrine Aspects of Violence |
| Perry London Psychological Research and Service Center University of Southern California Los Angeles, California | Behavior Control |

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|--|--|
| Samuel Klausner Department of Sociology University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, Pennsylvania | The Invocation & Constraint of Religious Zealotry |
| Malcolm Klein Youth Studies Center University of Southern California Los Angeles, California | Violence in American Juvenile Gangs: Causes, Prevalence & Control |
| Edwin I. Megargee Department of Psychology Florida State University Tallahassee, Florida | (1) The Psychology of Violence: A Critical Review of Theories of Violence; (2) The Assessment of Violence with Psychological Tests |
| Gerald McClearn Institute for the Study of Behavioral Genetics University of Colorado Boulder, Colorado | Biological Basis of Social Behavior with Special Reference to Violent Behavior |
| Turner McLardy Department of Mental Health Boston State Hospital Boston, Massachusetts | Research Recommendations Bearing Upon Neurological Approaches to the Causes & Prevention of Violence |
| National Association of Mental Health New York, New York | Violence & Mental Health |
| National Institute of Mental Health Chevy Chase, Maryland | Individual Acts of Violence |
| Office of Education Washington, D.C. | Review of Education Legislation, Survey of Requirements Necessary to Improve Educational Environment |
| Leon Radzinowicz Institute of Criminology University of Cambridge Cambridge, England | Economic Conditions and Crime |
| Lawrence Razavi Harvard Medical School Boston, Massachusetts | Chromosomal Disorder & Social Maladjustment |
| Clarence C. Schrag Department of Sociology University of Washington Seattle, Washington | Critical Analysis of Sociological Theories |

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|---|---|
| Hans Toch School of Criminal Justice University of New York at Albany Albany, New York | Anatomy of a Violent Offender |
| Melvin Tumin Department of Sociology Princeton University Princeton, New Jersey | Socialization into Violence |
| William J. Turner Medical Division of the Dreyfus Charitable Foundation Huntington, New York | Diphenylhydantoin in the Prevention of Violence |
| James Vorenberg Harvard Law School Cambridge, Massachusetts | Implementation Instructions |
| Julian A. Waller Department of Community Medicine University of Vermont Burlington, Vermont | Accidents & Violent Behavior: Are They Related |
| David Ward Department of Sociology University of Minnesota Minneapolis, Minnesota | Crimes of Violence by Women |

A-27- They know who real
assassins were? no answers—
not even a trial

Level of political study, etc - no reference
to national policy

Intense assassination case US
folk, not particularly of
major political figures in South
A-28- is recent violence in South
"political violence" to them?

A-29- no ref to anti-black American
Kings & Evers?

Pres assassins not "determined"?

This whole part is a mixture
of ignorance, guessing, unimportant
conjecture presented as ~~fact~~ fact

IV. ASSASSINATION

Assassination strikes at the heart of the democratic system. It enables one man to nullify the will of the people in a single act.

There are other specific reasons to be concerned about assassination. The swiftness and complexity of events in this nuclear age make hazardous even the slightest lapse in political leadership. Moreover, the experience of other nations suggests that once assassination becomes part of a nation's political culture its eradication may be extremely difficult.

The tragic murders of several national leaders in recent years have made Americans painfully aware of the vulnerability of prominent figures and have raised fears that the United States may face a growing threat of political assassination. With the help of expert consultants and through original research projects, the Task Force on Assassination is attempting to understand the many complex elements of political violence and assassination. The Task Force, under the direction of James F. Kirkham, Esq., Sheldon G. Levy, Visiting Associate Professor of Psychology at the Lemberg Center of Brandeis University, and William J. Crotty, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Northwestern University, is focusing on four fundamental areas.

First, the Task Force is seeking to learn more about the nature and incidence of assassination throughout the world.

Second, it is studying the characteristics of both the assassin and his victim in an effort to learn more about who commits assassination and why, and whether there is a relationship between assassination and the office held by the victim.

Third, it is examining the social and political context in which assassinations occur or are likely to occur. This includes a study of the nature and level of political strife in the world generally and of individuals and groups whose philosophy, conduct, and rhetoric suggest that they would use or approve the use of assassination as a means to achieve their objectives.

Fourth, the Task Force is looking into the impact of assassination on the population at large and on the political system itself, and it is searching for ways to prevent or control assassination and political violence in the United States.

The main objective in the first area of research is to identify trends:

- What are the various types of assassination?
- Has the rate of assassination attempts on a worldwide basis been changing?
- Do the rates of assassination attempts differ by country and by the area of the world, and are the rates of assassination in countries related?
- Is the frequency of assassination attempts related to the rank or position held by the victim?

Although there appear to be various types of assassination, most seem to fall into two broad categories: (1) those committed by groups or individuals, perhaps in conspiracy, as a political tactic to accomplish a specific political goal (such as the World War II attempt on the life of Adolf Hitler); and (2) those assassinations

which are unconnected with any rational political objective and which are committed by deranged individuals to satisfy their psychotic drives (such as the attack on President Andrew Jackson by a man who believed himself to be Richard III of England). Distinctions of this type are relevant in a consideration of the motives of assassins and strategies to prevent or thwart them.

To understand the nature and to assess the incidence of assassination, the Task Force has undertaken historical and comparative studies of nations throughout the world. It is analyzing data on political strife in 84 countries from 1948 to the present, and on assassination attempts worldwide from 1918 to the present. In addition, it is seeking an historical overview through detailed studies of assassination in Germany and France, Eastern Europe and Russia, the Near East, China, Japan, Australia, and Latin America. Finally, it is seeking to determine changes in the level of political violence in the United States during the past 150 years, the types of political violence that have occurred, the nature of the individuals and groups involved, and the causes and consequences of past political violence.

The Task Force is also analyzing the 81 assassination attempts on the lives of public officeholders in the United States during the past 50 years in an effort to classify them, to discover trends, and to understand better the reasons for and results of assassination in the United States. For example, the Task Force is considering the implications of the fact that the greatest concentration of assassinations in the United States occurred in the South during the Reconstruction Period following the Civil War, when many people felt that the established governments in the South were illegitimate. It is also studying the unusual frequency of assassinations and plots in the New Mexico Territory from 1860 to about 1900.

The second major area of research deals with the assassins and victims. It concentrates on attempts on the lives of the United States Presidents. The assassinations during the Reconstruction Period appear to have been political in nature, whereas attempts to assassinate Presidents seem to have been the irrational acts of mentally and emotionally disturbed persons, with the exception of the attack on President Harry S. Truman by two Puerto Rican nationals in 1950. Presidential assassins also appear to have much in common, as has been pointed out in a recent study of the Committee on Violence of the Stanford Medical School's Psychiatry Department. Of the nine persons who made the eight assassination attempts, all were Caucasian males, smaller than average in stature, and obsessed with some cause or grievance that appeared to be almost delusional. Except for John Wilkes Booth, all were virtually unknown; five were born abroad but were United States citizens at the time of the attacks; and four had tried marriage only to fail within a short period. The socio-economic status of seven deteriorated during the year prior to the assassination attempt. All used firearms, and all but one used handguns, in their attacks.

Thus evidence suggests that Presidential assassins may fit a psychological pattern, and the Task Force is attempting to identify and describe that pattern in some detail. It is also considering the protection problems suggested by the probable increase in the number of such potential assassins as the nation's population has increased. It has been studying the efforts of the Secret Service to collect and store information on potential assassins, and is compiling data on the following questions:

- What has been the total number of threats of any form directed at key political figures within the United States during recent years?
- Does the number of threats differ according to the type of office that person holds?
- What are the characteristics of those who in some way direct a threat at a political officeholder in the United States?
- Do these characteristics differ depending upon the level or type of office held by the officeholder?
- In what form is the threat expressed, and how much potential danger does it represent?

Studies of the victims of assassination suggest that the danger is greater to elected rather than appointed officials, and that the risk rises with the level of the office. The office of the Presidency illustrates this point dramatically. The Task Force is examining possible reasons why assassins, particularly deranged

individuals, focus on the Presidency. The answer may lie partly in the fact that the President is one of two nationally elected officials, and that the Executive Branch is the only branch of government headed by a single person. Both in power and symbolic importance, the Presidency is a unique office, and the President is a unique figure whose role may have critical psychological implications for the assassin. American children learn history through the study of Presidents, and the Presidency is the first political symbol to have meaning for them. The mass communications media may be a factor in the assassin's choice of a victim, for they play an important role in projecting an image both of the importance of the office and the character and conduct of the man holding it. Also, since the United States has assumed an increasing responsibility in international affairs, the President has become a symbol of this country's world power: this may enlarge the pool of potential assassins to include both Americans and foreign nationals concerned with the President's conduct of foreign affairs.

The Task Force is studying these and other factors in an attempt to understand why threats and assassination attempts are so frequently directed at Presidents of the United States.

The degree to which the social and political environment influence the incidence of assassination is not clear. The Task Force is seeking to learn from cross-national studies whether political strife and violence in a nation increase the likelihood of either political or irrational assassination. It has noted that there are groups and organizations in the United States which seem to approve the use of violence and assassination as a political tool. The Task Force has interviewed the leaders of some of these organizations and has been studying the behavior, the rhetoric, and the stated goals of such groups.

The Task Force is also seeking to identify particular groups in the United States that may have a potential for resorting to political violence. Several groups in our society are impatient for, or threatened by, rapid social change. They tend to see the Government as indifferent to their needs and even as punitive towards them. The members of such groups are generally of lower socio-economic status than the rest of society. The Task Force is studying such groups—both black and white—and is paying particular attention to those who might be said to be part of a "white ghetto." The National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty has concluded that substantial numbers of white rural Americans are living in a state of poverty and cultural deprivation comparable to that experienced by many black Americans; a similar conclusion might be warranted for some white urban residents. It is from these "white ghettos" that many extremist and racist organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan recruit their members.

The Task Force is also attempting to assess the impact of assassination on the American people and their political institutions. It has conducted a portion of the National Violence Commission Survey in order to determine the reactions of citizens to the assassinations of President Kennedy, Senator Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Medgar Evers, and George Lincoln Rockwell. In addition, it expects to learn from the Survey how Americans feel about protest and political violence—to what degree and under what circumstances different groups in our society feel that illegal protest and violence are justified.

Finally, the Task Force is exploring ways to reduce the danger to prominent public figures, and is working closely with the Secret Service toward that end. As several of our Presidents have observed, it is difficult to prevent a determined assassin from killing a President, particularly when a mentally disturbed social isolate acts alone to avenge some real or imagined wrong. But it may be that Presidential assassins are not nearly so determined to carry out their attacks as has been commonly supposed. Zangara would not leave the warm climate of Florida to carry out his plan to assassinate President Hoover; Shrank chose not to attempt assassination in Chicago in order to protect the city's reputation; and Guiteau postponed his attempt to kill President Garfield because the President's wife was present. Efforts to increase the difficulty of attacking a President may therefore yield significant results even though they will not deter the strongly determined assassin.

The Task Force has also collaborated with the Stanford Research Institute in a research project that used gaming theory to project and assess strategies of assassination and defense. It is also considering

ways in which the mass media, particularly commercial and public television, could be used to reduce the exposure and thus the danger to high level officials. In addition, it is studying various technological means which might reduce the danger of assassination.

In sum, the research of the Task Force on Assassination involves a comprehensive consideration of the problem of assassination and violence directed toward prominent persons. It includes the rhetoric of violence on the part of extremist groups in the United States, assassination in this country and abroad, threats toward political figures, historical levels and types of political violence worldwide, and the attitudes of the American people toward political violence and assassination. These studies may help to illuminate the fundamental reasons why individuals and groups choose violence against prominent persons as the means of solving their political or personal problems, and point the way to more effective methods of control.

Research Summary

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|--|---|
| Jerome Bakst Anti-Defamation League New York, New York | Political Extremism and Violence in the United States |
| Joseph Bensman Department of Sociology City College of New York New York, New York | Social and Institutional Factors Determining the Level of Assassination |
| Harold Deutsch Department of History University of Minnesota Minneapolis, Minnesota | Assassination and Political Violence in 20th Century France and Germany |
| Ivo K. Feierabend Department of Political Science San Diego State College San Diego, California | Political Violence and Assassination: A Cross-National Assessment |
| Lawrence Z. Freedman, M.D. Department of Psychiatry University of Chicago Chicago, Illinois | Assassins of Presidents of the United States: Their Motives and Personality Traits |
| Clinton E. Grimes Department of Political Science University of Idaho Moscow, Idaho | Personalism, Partisanship, and Assassination |
| Feliks Gross Department of Sociology Brooklyn College New York, New York | Politics of Violence: Terror and Political Assassination in Eastern Europe and Russia |

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|---|---|
| Murray C. Havens Department of Government University of Texas Austin, Texas | Assassination in Australia |
| Lynne Iglitzin University of Washington Seattle, Washington | Violence and American Democracy |
| Carl Leiden Department of Government University of Texas Austin, Texas | Assassination in the Middle East |
| Seymour M. Lipset Department of Government and Social Relations Harvard University Cambridge, Massachusetts | Values and Political Structure: An Interpretation of the Sources of Extremism and Violence in American Society |
| Harold L. Nieburg Department of Political Science University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, Wisconsin | The Political Uses of Assassination |
| Richard E. Rubenstein The Adlai Stevenson Institute Chicago, Illinois | Assassination and Breakdown of American Politics |
| Karl M. Schmitt Department of Government University of Texas Austin, Texas | Assassination in Latin America |
| Rita J. Simon Department of Sociology University of Illinois Urbana, Illinois | Political Violence Directed at Public Office Holders: A Brief Analysis of the American Scene |
| James R. Soukup Department of Government University of Texas Austin, Texas | Assassination in Japan |
| Daniel Tretiak Advanced Studies Group Westinghouse Electric Corporation Waltham, Massachusetts | Political Assassinations in China, 1600-1968 |
| Seymour D. Vestermark, Jr. Human Sciences Research, Inc. McLean, Va. | Responses to Two Assassinations: John F. Kennedy, 1963, and Martin Luther King, 1968 |

Consultant

Peter B. Young
Summit, N. J.

Eduard A. Ziegenhagen
Department of Political
Science
Wayne State University
Detroit, Michigan

Project Title

Whose Law, Whose Order?

Systemic Constraints and Political Assassination

Contracted and Special
Staff Research

The Anti-Defamation League
study

The Leiden data

National Violence

Political Violence in
America

The Secret Service data

Stanford Research Institute
(Henry Alberts)

Topic

The ADL is collecting from its files information dealing with the rhetoric of violence from extremist groups in the United States

A team headed by Carl Leiden at the University of Texas has provided the Commission with data on approximately 1100 assassination attempts

Analysis is being made of public reactions of a representative sample of 1200 adults to political assassinations and their attitudes regarding use of legal and illegal protest. (This survey was designed by the Commission research staff with James McEvoy, III of the University of California and was conducted under contract by Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.)

Analysis of a sample of approximately 6000 newspaper issues over the past 150 years to obtain information about the extent and nature of political violence in the United States.

The Secret Service has agreed to make available to our Task Force certain information about letters and other forms of threats to prominent political figures within the United States

A study of how game theory and probability models are employed in the prediction and prevention of Assassination

V. FIREARMS AND VIOLENCE

Guns are part of the American fabric. They accompanied the settler across the continent, helping to protect him and to feed his family. They warded off the foreign invader, and they settled, at high cost, the great Civil War of a century ago. They have provided a popular motif for American literature and entertainment. Today, despite the fact that the United States is primarily and increasingly an urbanized society, there is still a widespread American ownership of guns.

There are legitimate, honorable uses of firearms and there are illegitimate uses. The illegitimate uses, however, have become a mounting problem for America. They demand deep study and rational remedial action.

Many causes of death are numerically more important than the gun. But during the first 66 years of this century, some 270,000 Americans were victims of gun homicide, another 360,000 committed suicide with guns, and well over 100,000 died in accidents involving firearms. All four United States Presidents who were assassinated were shot, and the four attempts that failed were also by gun. Guns are used in a high percentage of all violent crimes.

This toll, rising in recent years, has generated widespread popular concern and has increased public sentiment for more legislative control of firearms. Unfortunately, the arguments made to support or oppose specific kinds of gun control have often demonstrated how little reliable data we have on the subject. Some of the controversy about schemes to control firearms can perhaps be dispelled by further research. Building upon testimony before Congressional committees and recent studies of how guns are used and of the psychology of their users, the Task Force on Firearms has extended its research into five basic areas.

The Task Force is under the direction of George D. Newton, Jr., Esq., and Franklin E. Zimring, Assistant Professor of Law at the University of Chicago.

Patterns of Firearms Ownership: An essential first step is to obtain accurate baseline statistics about firearms ownership. The Task Force has been gathering data on the handguns, rifles, and shotguns manufactured or imported since 1900, how they are distributed and sold, and who owns them. Of importance are the patterns of ownership: by region, gun type, population density, income, and occupation. The Task Force is also studying patterns of gun use: by hunters, target shooters, collectors, and persons possessing guns for self-defense.

Task Force studies show that long guns tend to be concentrated in the rural areas and suburbs of middle-size and small cities, while handguns are concentrated in large cities and their suburbs. Firearms of all kinds, but especially handguns, are being sold today at unprecedented rates. Surveys show that about half of all firearms are purchased used, mostly through a person-to-person transaction between friends or strangers.

Firearms and Crime: The greatest public concern about firearms is their use in crime. With information supplied by the FBI and police departments in twenty cities, the Task Force has been studying the role of handguns, rifles, and shotguns in homicide, aggravated assault, robbery, and burglary since 1965, and the pattern of such crimes by region, race, sex, and density of population.

Its studies indicate that firearms increase the deadliness of serious attacks by at least 200 percent, and that, correspondingly, a decrease in the number of firearms used in serious attacks would decrease the homicide rate.

According to FBI reports confirmed by Task Force studies, the weapon most often used in reported criminal assaults is the handgun. Although handguns represent about 25 percent of all existing firearms in the United States, during 1967 they were used in 48 percent of all criminal homicides and in over 63 percent of all armed robberies involving firearms. Analysis of handguns confiscated by police in three cities discloses that approximately 50 percent are foreign made. Some were made in the 1800's. One-fifth of the domestic handguns which could be identified by their manufacturer are more than 50 years old. Nearly 20 percent are military weapons. Of handguns confiscated by the police in Los Angeles, more than half of those used in homicide, aggravated assault, and robbery had been recorded at some time under California law. But in only one-third of these cases was the suspect in the crime the last known owner or a member of his family.

Out of concern that they may be victims of crime, many Americans justify gun possession in self-defense. Surveys indicate that 37 percent of American households have firearms primarily for this reason. The Task Force is comparing sections of the country with high firearms ownership with sections where ownership is low, to test whether there is a relationship between firearms ownership, the number of robberies and burglaries and the number of deaths that result to victims as well as culprits. It is also seeking to determine whether firearms in the home save lives or cost lives and whether the rate of possession in the home is related significantly to the amount of crime in a community.

The Task Force is also concerned with the motivations that underlie the use of firearms and the situations under which a person decides to use a firearm. To gain insights about the psychological processes involved in the use of guns in violent crimes, it has undertaken a series of detailed psychiatric interviews of convicted criminals in California penal institutions.

Firearms, Accidents and Suicides: More and more Americans are buying firearms for the purpose of self-defense, despite the other potential consequences of owning a gun. In 1966, for example, there were approximately 2,500 accidental firearms deaths and 10,000 suicides by gun. The Task Force is analyzing both phenomena by age, sex, race, and other variables and is making comparisons with previous years. In addition, it is studying the relationship between all firearms death rates (accidental and otherwise) and the rate of possession of firearms in different communities.

Though many of the accidental deaths occur from hunting accidents, about 60 percent of the deaths occur in the home. The Task Force is studying the kinds of activities that lead to these deaths and measures that can be employed to prevent them.

Firearms are used in 46 percent of the 20,000 suicides each year in the United States. When a firearm is used in an effort to commit suicide, the chances that the act will be completed are inordinately higher than from any other method of committing suicide. Men much more commonly than women use guns in suicide, and adolescents seem especially prone to employ firearms for this purpose. Why these suicides are committed, and how they can be prevented, are subjects of Task Force study.

Firearms and Collective Violence: The increase in civil disorder in recent years lends a special significance to this area of our study. The Task Force is examining trends in sales of guns and ammunition in the United States and is analyzing market research data to determine who is buying weapons and for what reasons.

After more than a decade of relative stability, the annual sales of new firearms have more than doubled since 1963. Total production and imports of firearms was 2.7 million in 1963; if the rate for the first six months continues, the total will be more than 6 million in 1968.

Sales of handguns—most of which do not lend themselves to sporting use—increased 400 percent between 1963 and 1968. There are indications that this increase is largely due to continuing civil disorders and widespread fear of crime.

No hard data are available indicating how this increase in national firearms purchases is divided between urban and rural areas. There is some evidence to suggest that a large part of the increase is occurring in our major urban centers. In 1967, a major research organization studied the role of firearms in civil disorders in Detroit, Michigan, and Newark, New Jersey, two areas that experienced major civil disorders in 1967. In each case, a dramatic increase in pistol and revolver purchase was observed to occur after the disorders. Because the Detroit area has a larger population than Newark, the Task Force on Firearms elected to study the urban arms race and its consequences in the Detroit metropolitan area. Although caution must be exercised in generalizing for the entire country on the basis of our Detroit study, the Task Force hopes to provide a better understanding of the elements involved in increased firearms sales in urban areas, and the measurable effects of such increases on rates of gun accidents, gun suicides, and gun-related crimes.

Systems of Gun Control: The question of gun control legislation has strong emotional overtones, as debates on the subject in recent years have amply demonstrated. The Task Force seeks a thorough, factual basis for the decisions the American public must make concerning firearms control.

The Task Force is analyzing all the major and varying approaches to control: registration; prohibiting possession to felons, alcoholics, etc.; restrictive licensing, such as New York's Sullivan Law; other state, local, and federal laws now in effect; the use of scientific detection devices where firearms are prohibited; the establishment and regulation of private arsenals or gun club arsenals.

No recommendations for gun control legislation will be made until the data on the availability of firearms, and the relationship of firearms to crime, as well as the impact of recent Congressional actions to strengthen federal controls, have been thoroughly studied and evaluated.

Contract and Special Staff Research Summary

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|--|--|
| Historical Review | A study of the findings and recommendations of prior government commissions which studied firearms, crime, and violence. |
| Types of Firearms | Analysis of manufacturing data to describe firearms by type and usage. |
| Firearms Distribution and Ownership | Analysis of data furnished by the Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, the firearms industry, National Violence Commission survey, 1966 National Family Opinion Poll conducted for the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice, and marketing surveys conducted by firearms manufacturing companies in 1964 and 1966. |
| Firearms and Crime | Analysis of data supplied by the FBI, state and local police departments, University of Chicago Center for the Study of Criminal Justice, and Guy Tardiff ("Firearms and Crime") of the University of Montreal Department of Criminology. |
| Violence and the Role of Guns | Interviews with convicted armed robbers by Donald E. Newman, Director, Psychiatric Services, Peninsula Hospital and Medical Center, Burlingame, Calif. |
| Firearms, Accidents and Suicides | Analysis of data supplied by police departments, National Health Information Center, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and Los Angeles Suicide Prevention Center. |
| Collective Violence, Extremist Groups, and the Urban Arms Race | Analysis of information from police departments, Alcohol & Tobacco Tax Division of the Internal Revenue Service, FBI, and testimony presented to this Commission. |
| State and Local Firearms Laws | Summary of firearms laws in the United States, compiled by the staff from information supplied by the Library of Congress, the National Rifle Association, and states' attorneys general. |
| Foreign Firearms Laws | Summary of foreign firearms laws, compiled by the staff from information supplied by the Library of Congress, the Department of Justice, and the Department of State. |
| Firearms Controls | Review of the different types of firearms controls, the effectiveness and enforcement of firearms laws, and the Constitutional questions concerning such laws. Materials supplied by the Library of Congress, the National Rifle Association, and firearms manufacturers. Crime statistics supplied by the FBI and police departments. Study conducted for the Firearms Task Force by Research Associates, Inc., of Silver Spring, Md. ("A Preliminary Cost Analysis of Firearms Control Programs"). |
| Police Firearms Policies | An evaluation, based largely on a study ("Police Firearms Use Policies") by Samuel G. Chapman, Department of Political Science, University of Oklahoma, prepared as a reference document for the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, 1967. |

VI. MASS MEDIA AND VIOLENCE

The mass media may be the most powerful social force at work in America today. If, as some scholars contend, there now exists in the United States a "national culture," it has been shaped largely by the mass media. The media, in treating virtually every subject ranging from sexual customs to international monetary policy, may have an important influence upon a broad range of beliefs and attitudes of the American public.

Statistical evidence generates concern for the potential effects of exposure to the mass media and particularly television. For example, a typical middle-income American male devotes from one-fourth to one-third of his sixteen waking hours to the mass media. Every day, he watches television from two to two-and-one-half hours, listens to the radio for about two hours, and spends thirty minutes reading his daily newspaper. He reads one magazine regularly but does not spend enough time on it to alter his daily total of about five hours on the mass media. He goes to a movie only once every three or four months.

Low income adults rely less on the print media. Low income white adults spend almost five hours each day watching television. Low income black adults watch television almost six hours a day.

The media habits of teenagers show that they are even heavier users of television than their parents. Moreover, recent studies have indicated that 40 percent of the poor black children and 30 percent of the poor white children (compared with 15 percent of the middle class white children) believe that what they see on television represents an accurate portrayal of what life in America is all about.

There are many different kinds of effects of the mass media which might be explored, but the focus of the Media Task Force's research is the effect of media content and practices on the level of group and individual violence in our society. This research effort, which is being carried on under the direction of Robert K. Baker, Esq., and Sandra J. Ball, Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Alberta, has three goals:

First, it seeks to provide an overview of the contemporary media through an examination of their origins and the forces which have operated at various times in history to mold their present structure and practices. Such an examination is essential not only to an adequate understanding of what the media are and do today, but also to the intelligent formulation of what they might be tomorrow.

Second, it examines the effects of media portrayals of violence on the media audience. Our basic question is: do media portrayals of violence contribute to violent behavior or attitudes supportive of violence on the part of individuals, groups, and societies?

Finally, it considers the role of the media in the process of social change. The concern in this area is whether present media content and practices promote or retard the nonviolent resolution of the important social issues which divide our country.

The chief issues in each of these areas of inquiry are discussed below in somewhat greater detail.

The examination of the development of the media in American life is designed to elucidate the competing considerations that are relevant to our examination of violence and the media. No attempt will be

made to summarize our study here. But it may be noted that the media in this century, like other major businesses, are dependent on profits and vulnerable to pressures which may affect revenues. They are heavily influenced by their entertainment function and the show-business ethic which that function encourages. And they are a pervasive part of American life to a degree never before experienced.

Although heavily laden with entertainment, the media continue to perform the traditional functions of the press. They provide information and ideas. They report the events of the world. They provide a unique check not only on government operations, but also the operations of powerful institutions in the private sector. These are the functions which earned the press the express protection of the First Amendment. They are functions of great importance and should be preserved. Thus an overview of the media enables us to approach the problem of violence and the media with a sensitivity to the complex nature and vital social role of the institutions we are examining.

The research effort on the second basic question—whether media portrayals of violence in entertainment programming contribute to violent behavior or attitudes supportive of violence on the part of individuals, groups, and society—revolves around an attempt to identify the relationship between the fictional world of media violence and the actual world of violence in American society. (Although there may be a few questions relevant to both entertainment and news media, essential differences between the two have made it necessary to study effects of entertainment separately from the effects of news. A discussion of the issues relevant to the news media will follow in the next section of this chapter.)

Concern over the effects of media portrayals of violence is not new. In the 1930's, for example, public concern was aroused and mobilized against the motion picture industry's portrayals of violence. During the 1940's and 1950's considerable private and public attention was given to comic book portrayals of violence. Public opinion was mobilized when claims were made that the grotesque images and incidents of violence found in a number of comic books cause some children to commit brutal acts of violence. Today the concern is directed primarily at the television industry.

The assumption that media portrayals of violence cause real acts of violence is common to all of these concerns. It is easy to be concerned when an expert points to an incident in which an individual shoots someone immediately after he has watched media violence. It is easy because it then seems as though media violence was the single and most direct cause of that individual's violence against others.

We are learning, however, that the problem of effects of media violence is not this simple. Most persons will not kill after seeing a single violent television program. However, it is possible that many persons learn some of their attitudes and values about violence from years of exposure to television, and that they might be more likely to engage in violence as an indirect result of that learning. We need to learn the probable effect of daily exposure to media portrayals of violence from infancy to and through adulthood. Just as the family is not the only factor which shapes the attitudes and behavior of children but instead contributes to the molding of individuals along with the churches, schools, friends and other sources of learning and socialization, so the effects of years of exposure to media violence may be more important than the short-run effects of exposure to one or twenty violent media programs.

The Task Force is considering the whole gamut of potential effects of media portrayals of violence in entertainment programming. It is attempting to identify what short-run effects occur and for whom they occur. For example, can exposure to media portrayals of violence "trigger" violent behavior on the part of an individual? The Task Force is examining the studies of several clinical psychiatrists suggesting that a small number of maladjusted individuals have committed acts of violence soon after exposure to media portrayals of violence. Another possible short-run effect—the "catharsis" theory—is that individuals can vicariously release their anxieties and tensions by watching media portrayals of violence, thus making them less likely to engage in actual violence. Major opponents and the major proponents of the "catharsis" effect theory have submitted their conclusions and evidence for study.

Most effects-research has examined the short-run effects of exposure to "aggressive" media content. The experiments of one group of investigators under review suggest that individuals who were exposed to aggressive media content experienced a heightened emotional reaction and were more likely to be aggressive toward others immediately after exposure. Another group of experimental studies suggests that individuals can learn how to be aggressive from exposure to portrayals of aggression in the media. Both groups of investigators conclude that there are in fact short-run effects of exposure to aggression in the media. But critics of these experiments have warned that caution must be exerted in the application and use of these findings until it can be shown that the term "aggression" refers to the same phenomenon as "violence."

As to the long-range effects of exposure to media violence, the Task Force finds that much less research has been done. The central issue here is the extent to which the media are agents of socialization—the process by which we acquire standards for personal conduct. Concern for socialization revolves around the questions of who or what inculcates the norms, attitudes, beliefs, and values which, in important measure, determine how people conduct their lives. With regard to violence, we need to know from what sources people learn that violence is or is not acceptable behavior. Specifically, can the media set or affect the norms for violence in our society? Are the media thus, as has been suggested, a kind of "school for violence" in which the entertainment programming is the "curriculum?" If this can be so, for whom is it so, and under what conditions?

As one step in investigating this crucial question, the Task Force is carrying out two major research projects.

One is a "content analysis" of a week of entertainment television programming in 1967 and a comparable week in 1968. This analysis will go well beyond a simple enumeration of the number of shootings, knifings, muggings and other acts of violence in media content, which tells us little about the way violence is presented, whether violence is rewarded or punished, or if the violence exceeds normative levels of acceptance. Instead this content analysis is seeking a broader range of more relevant information: (1) the extent of violence in adult and children prime time viewing hours for the three major television networks; (2) the way violence is portrayed—who initiated what act of violence towards whom in what context and with what result; (3) the norms for violence that are implicit or explicit in adult and child media programming; (4) how law enforcement officers are portrayed; (5) network comparisons of extent and nature of violence portrayed; and (6) comparison of the extent and nature of violence between 1967 and 1968.

In addition to this systematic assessment of television violence, we need to know more about the real world of violence that television viewers experience. Accordingly, the Task Force has also undertaken a national Survey of the American public's actual experience with violence and its norms for violence. Actual experience with violence was assessed by asking the respondents how often, when and in what context had they directly observed, been the victim of, or been the initiator of, a series of violent acts, including low level violence (e.g., slapping or kicking), medium level violence (e.g., punching), and high level violence (e.g., knifing or shooting). From the subjects' responses, it will be possible to construct a profile of the patterns of violence experienced by individuals, by significant subgroups in the society, and by the general teenage and adult population of the United States. A similar set of questions will give a good picture of the conditions in which low, medium and high levels of violence are acceptable behavior for the respondents. Some of the questions which can thus be answered are: (1) What, if any, segments of the American public generally support the use of violence? (2) Do subgroups with high experience with violence have different norms for violence than those who have little or no experience with violence? (3) Do subgroups who have norms generally supportive of violence prefer violent media programs?

The Task Force anticipates that the content analysis and the National Violence Commission Survey will provide new information vital to the problem of assessing effects of media violence and, in particular, understanding the media's potential for socializing segments of the audience into the media's norms for violence. To assist in analyzing this new information in light of existing knowledge, the Task Force has enlisted the aid of consultants from a broad variety of academic disciplines—psychiatry, psychology, social psychology, communications and sociology. For it is clear that this new information from the content analysis and the

Survey will not be sufficient by itself to draw definitive conclusions or to resolve the question of media effects. This information will give us knowledge of two worlds of violence, but the relationship between those two worlds can only be inferred on the basis of the general principles that appear to operate in the process of socialization. The interdisciplinary approach of our consultants, combined with the Task Force research data, should provide the most thorough analysis of the problem of effects of exposure to media portrayals of violence that has been accomplished to date.

Apart from the problem of the effects of media portrayals of violence in entertainment programming, there is a broader question which is receiving our attention: What is the effect of media content and conduct on the amount of violence which is used in attempts to resolve the social issues which divide this nation? There has been very little systematic study of this question, and the Task Force will not be able to examine all of the actual and potential effects. Instead, its work will be directed toward the ways in which the media, as an important institution in a changing society, can promote or retard the non-violent resolution of social issues which have a potential for violence. In particular, it is examining three central questions: (1) the effect of media portrayals of significant groups upon the nature of inter-group relations; (2) the extent to which limitations on access to the media may generate potential or actual violence; and (3) the practices and policies of news coverage, presentation, and dissemination and their relationship to violence or the threat of violence in our society.

As to the first question, race relations constitute one area where media portrayals may have had an important role. What part have the media played in the past in the formation and maintenance of a Negro stereotype? The media have been accused of contributing to the maintenance of the subordinate position of the Negro through stereotypic portrayals. What role are the media now playing by their portrayals of blacks and whites to each other, and what are the effects? Are the media portrayals promoting inter-group conflict or cooperation between blacks and whites? These are questions which the Task Force hopes to be able to illuminate, at least in some degree.

The second question it is addressing in this area is the thorny problem of "access" to the public through the mass media. The media in this country have developed a tradition of being a forum for the presentation of divergent views, a market place of ideas. What are the criteria for access to the public through the media today? The question is important for the study of violence, because one of the minimum requirements for non-violent resolution of divisive social issues is that interested parties be given an opportunity to be heard. In a democratic society where ultimate power resides in the people, access to the mass media is essential for groups desiring peaceful social change. If important, discontented segments of our society are denied the right to be heard, subsequent resort to violence by these groups may perhaps be expected. Moreover, if a high value seems to be placed by the media on conflict and drama, perhaps to attract the large audiences necessary to economic well-being, this may be a positive incentive for groups to engage in violence. Violence itself may thus become a medium of communication, a means of access to the market place of ideas.

These observations lead to a third question: If conflict or drama are highly-valued criteria for determining what is news, how accurate are our perceptions of the world as reflected by the news media? If the principal occasions on which blacks, or police officers, for example, make "news" are when they have engaged in unlawful or violent behavior, then the public's perceptions of these two groups and their attitudes toward them will be quite different from what it would be if the presentation were not so heavily weighted with violence—if it were instead a balanced portrayal of their total normal behavior. If what a young person knows about the police comes primarily from reports portraying them as brutal, corrupt, or vengeful, what will be his response during his next encounter with police officers? Will he call them "pigs"?

Related to this question is whether it is possible that the very act of reporting an event alters its character, perhaps indirectly through over-emphasis on its dramatic qualities, perhaps directly as the result of the actors' realization that conflict will insure coverage? If this is one of the effects of news reporting, does

the effect vary according to the method of coverage? Do photographers with cameras and lights, for example, invite responses which a lone reporter with pad and pencil does not?

Is it possible that public television, whose expansion and improved programming were recently recommended by the President and approved by Congress, may be especially beneficial by supplementing the commercial media with programs that delve deeply into all critical public questions, that give majority and minority groups an opportunity to be heard, and that create a heightened public taste for music, the arts, good books, and other nonviolent, constructive aspects of American life? In other words, if commercial programming lowers the public taste and attitudes, as some claim, can public television raise them?

These questions, though not exhaustive, do suggest the focus and scope of our study of the role of media on the interacting processes of violence and social change.*

*The Executive Director and Deputy Director did not participate in the formulation of this report on the work of the Media Task Force.

Research Summary

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|---|---|
| Monica Blumenthal Mental Health Research Institute University of Michigan Ann Arbor, Michigan | Conscience Formation and the Mass Media |
| Leo Bogart Bureau of Advertising, ANPA New York, N. Y. | How the Mass Media Work in America |
| William R. Catton, Jr. Department of Sociology University of Washington Seattle, Washington | Effect of Media Portrayal of Violence on Societal Values |
| Peter Clarke Communication Research Center University of Washington Seattle, Washington | The Problem of Access to the Media |
| I. William Cole Dean, Urban Journalism Center Medill School of Journalism Northwestern University Evanston, Illinois | Programs of Urban Journalism Schools Relating to the Media in the Process of Social Change |
| Seymour Feshbach Department of Psychology University of California Los Angeles, California | The Catharsis Principle, Including a Review of Relevant Research Literature |
| Walter Gerson Department of Sociology University of Toronto Toronto, Canada | Portrayal of Minority Groups by the Media & the Effect of Such Portrayal on the Way Different Segments of Society Respond to Each Other |
| Bradley Greenberg Department of Communication Michigan State University East Lansing, Michigan | The Content and Context of Violence in the Mass Media |
| Richard Goranson Department of Psychology York University Toronto, Canada and Leonard Berkowitz Department of Psychology University of Wisconsin Madison, Wisconsin | Review of Recent Literature on Psychological Effects of Media Portrayals of Violence |

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|---|--|
| Jack Haskins School of Journalism Syracuse University Syracuse, New York | Social Effects of Exposure to Violence in the Printed Media |
| Harry Kalven Professor of Law University of Chicago | Violence, the Media, and the American Traditions of Free Press |
| Jack Lyle Department of Journalism University of California Los Angeles, California | Contemporary Functions of the Mass Media |
| Marsha O'Bannon Television Consultant Washington, D. C. | Current Stated Media Policies Toward the Portrayal and Treatment of Violence and Current Media Policies Toward the Role of the Media in the Process of Social Change |
| Theodore Peterson and Jay Jensen College of Communications University of Illinois Urbana, Illinois | Historical Development of the Media in American Life |
| William Rivers Department of Communication Stanford University Stanford, California | The Role of the Press in the Process of Change and From Medium to Media |
| Alberta E. Siegal School of Medicine Stanford University Stanford, California | Effects of Media Portrayal of Violence on Interpersonal Relations |

Contracted and Special Staff Research Projects

Annenberg School of Commu-
nications
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Content analysis to determine the frequency of violence portrayal
in television and the context in which the violent act takes place.

National Violence Commission
Survey

Survey to determine the extent of the viewer's actual experience
with violence as a witness, victim, and instigator and the context
in which the violent act takes place.

Otto N. Larsen
Department of Sociology
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington

Consultation in connection with media portrayals of violence.

Eleanor Maccoby
Department of Psychology
Stanford University
Stanford, California

Consultation in connection with media portrayals of violence.

Milton Rokeach
Department of Psychology
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan

Consultation in connection with the content analysis and NVC
Survey to determine effects of media portrayals of violence.

Arline H. Sakuma
Department of Sociology
Syracuse University
Syracuse, N. Y.

Consultation in connection with the content analysis and NVC
Survey to determine effects of media portrayals of violence.

Conference on the Role of the
Media in a Changing Society

Conference with newspaper reporters and editors, networks, wire
service representatives, television and radio station operators and
newsmen, magazine editors and correspondents, advertising agency
representatives, and others connected with or affected by the
media.

Gary Amo
Washington, D. C.

Consultation in connection with Media Conference.

VII. LAW AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

When violence threatens the personal security of our citizens, when the price of assuming leadership in society is a substantial risk of injury or death, when force is used to influence the vital decisions of government, then the basis of social order is threatened.

Many people believe it is dangerous to "make violence pay" by responding quickly to effect major social changes. There is equal danger, however, in proceeding directly from the indisputable need for effective social control of violence to the conclusion that such control can be achieved solely by strengthening our law enforcement institutions or dealing more sternly with those who commit violent crimes. Major increases in coercive legal control, unaccompanied by other measures, could intensify the anger of people already discontented and lead to an escalating cycle of violence and repression. Law is most effective when those subject to it believe that it sustains and regulates a just social system and that the operation of the legal system is itself consistent with their concepts of justice.

In recognition of the principle that the law must be just as well as effective if public order is to be secure, the Task Force on Law and Law Enforcement, under the direction of George L. Saunders, Jr., Esq., and LeRoy D. Clark, Esq., is dealing with the relationship of our legal institutions to violence on two distinct but related levels: (1) to determine how law enforcement agencies can deal more effectively with violent crime and violent aspects of mass demonstrations and protests; (2) to determine how our system of law and law enforcement might be improved to bring about greater respect for the rule of law by those who now engage in violent conduct.

On the first level we are building on the invaluable contributions of predecessor commissions, particularly the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. That Commission found that throughout the nation, the whole system of criminal justice is being frustrated and crippled because law enforcement agencies are underpaid, undermanned and undertrained. Four of that Commission's general findings are particularly pertinent:

- We still have too few police, too often underpaid and ill-trained, with too many duties unrelated to crime; many police forces are ill-equipped to cope either with crime or collective violence; and the conduct of some exacerbates community tensions and sparks disorders.
- Our courts are still understaffed and mired in an enormous backlog of cases; persons awaiting trial either remain at large on bail for protracted periods, during which many commit additional crimes, or else they are detained in jails for long periods of time without having been found guilty of a crime.
- Our correctional system still lacks the trained manpower, the programs, and the physical facilities deserving of the name "correctional"; as now constituted it seems as likely to produce as to correct criminals.
- The technological revolution which has affected nearly every aspect of our life has largely bypassed law enforcement; the principal reason is the low priority we as a people have placed on crime prevention research compared to other technological goals.

These findings have not gone unheeded. Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 bears witness to the growing public recognition that state and local agencies dealing with crime indeed suffer from all of these inadequacies and that federal assistance to the states and localities is required

to repair them. Title I of the new Act establishes the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration in the Department of Justice and authorizes it to make planning grants to a state for the preparation of comprehensive plans for the improvement of the state's criminal justice system. The emphasis during this first year of the Administration's existence is on the planning function. After a state plan has been completed and approved, the Administration is authorized to make action grants to strengthen state and local law enforcement capabilities in accordance with the plan. The new Act also provides for the establishment of a national center for research into the causes of crime and their remedies, and it authorizes creation of programs of academic assistance for the benefit of law enforcement personnel.

Against this background of national study and planning for the future, the Task Force is endeavoring to contribute constructively to the effort that is now going forward. Necessary new investments are being made by our society in its system of criminal justice. The Task Force is examining how large these investments should be and how they can be used profitably. It is also studying possible administrative and substantive revisions of our legal system that might make it a more effective deterrent to violent conduct without impairing its fairness.

On the second level—how to improve our legal system to develop greater respect for law—we start with the proposition that systems of law are most effective when they are viewed as legitimate by those who live under them. Public order in a free society cannot rest solely on applications or threats of force by the authorities. Instead it must rest also on the general disapproval shown by the community toward those who violate the law. A member of a juvenile gang, for example, is not deterred from crime by the threat of punishment if the illegal conduct elevates the young man's prestige and status among those whose good opinion he values. Community disapproval will be expressed only if there is a widely-shared feeling of the justice and legitimacy of the legal order and of the society which maintains it. Since a foundation of peaceful order is widespread respect for the law, the law itself must be worthy of respect. The Task Force is studying attitudes toward law in black urban ghettos today. It is also examining the related phenomenon of the habitual adult offender who may be little influenced by heavy penalties for further offenses, because he has already suffered an apparently irreparable loss of social status and alienation from the community by reason of his earlier convictions.

If there is a declining sense of respect for the law among large groups of disaffected citizens' groups, defects in the fairness and efficiency of our system of criminal justice may bear some of the burden of responsibility. Many of these defects are ones which the President's Crime Commission brought to light and Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act makes a start toward correcting. The Task Force is studying other potential methods of improvement, and the size and direction of the investments required to achieve significant results.

The Task Force is also examining other elements of our legal system whose conduct has a profound impact upon respect for law. It is devoting particular attention to the police and to the extent of the force which police use in restoring order or in making an arrest. The Task Force is studying police tactics both in large demonstrations and in day to day law enforcement in the ghettos of our cities.

The policeman's job of maintaining order and preserving the peace is one of the most difficult in society: he exercises an enormous, fateful discretion in emotional and often dangerous situations. The policeman may find himself today, as the Kerner Commission observed, on the grinding edge of conflict between various groups in society. There are enormous pressures and provocations which he must handle with uncommon care. If police react with excessive force to these pressures, they destroy the moral authority of society's agencies of control.

Respect for law is also eroded when the law has a differential impact on the poor and the disadvantaged as compared to other elements of society. The criminal justice system can then be perceived as being "stacked against" the poor, the black, and the uneducated, who are more likely than other defendants to be held in jail awaiting trial because they cannot make bail, or to be sentenced after trial to a correctional institution which does not correct, rather than returned to their community on probation. The solution to the

bail problem may be much speedier trials, as well as the appropriate use of release on personal recognizance; the solution to the sentencing problem may be better rehabilitative resources in institutions, as well as careful use of probation. Whatever the solutions, the problem of differential treatment of the disadvantaged in the criminal justice system is a serious one that is receiving the Task Force's close attention.

Disadvantaged groups and many students of our legal system claim that the law fails to provide effective, affirmative redress for invasions of the legal rights of the poor and powerless. We are studying the basis of such contentions—for example, the claimed inadequacy of police protection for the poor. The Kerner Commission reported that a major complaint of ghetto residents is the apparent failure of the law enforcement apparatus to provide adequate police protection in the ghetto. There is some reason to believe that the police—rationing their limited manpower and facilities—maintain less rigorous standards of law enforcement in the ghetto, tolerating there activities such as narcotics traffic that they would not tolerate elsewhere and failing to respond to calls for help with the same urgency as in white areas.

Another area in which the law may fail the disadvantaged is the matter of practical, available civil remedies for abuses by landlords and exploitative merchants and for inaction or denial of rights by public officials. The studies of the Task Force suggest that our system has generally not performed this function very well. While the expense of legal counsel, the existence of procedural obstacles, the slowness of the civil justice system, and other like factors are frustrating for all classes of citizens, they fall with special impact on the disadvantaged who have the greatest need for legal protection. For the poor the rule of law may be seen as one-sided and oppressive. Making legal services widely available to the poor can in fact be an important part of the strategy of public order, for if the disadvantaged have little or no affirmative access to the courts, they may resort to other, more violent solutions of their problems.

The Task Force is also studying the question of whether the legal system fails the black community in enforcing the *School Segregation Cases*. If segregation is permitted to exist, then the law may well appear to many of the victims of segregation as powerless to achieve what justice and the Constitution require.

There are also broader social and political conditions which may have a particular effect on respect for law. The Task Force on Law and Law Enforcement is considering how respect for law may be affected by certain aspects of the political process such as the age requirements for voting, the convention system, political contribution practices, Congressional procedures, and the increasing concentration of decision-making power in larger government and quasi-government entities. Testimony before the Commission suggests that these are all focal points of criticism by many who, rightly or wrongly, are dissatisfied with the present governmental process.

The Task Force is also giving attention to the hypothesis that a relationship exists between the lack of respect for domestic law and the weakness of the rule of law in international affairs. It is further considering whether disrespect for law among young people may be affected by the existence and patterns of enforcement of some criminal laws which prohibit types of personal conduct in which large numbers of ordinary citizens take part, such as the laws against gambling, certain consensual sexual acts, and the use of milder narcotics.

Finally, the Task Force on Law and Law Enforcement has been studying one of the most perplexing types of disrespect for law—the idea that unlawful and perhaps even violent conduct is justified for the purpose of achieving a political goal. This view is shared and often acted on by many students, black citizens, and other groups pressing for social change in America today. |||

This view embraces far more than lawful methods of protest, such as the rights of petition and peaceable assembly guaranteed by the First Amendment. It goes beyond the violation of laws for the purpose of making a court test of their validity, such as laws or regulations forbidding peaceful assemblies, laws requiring segregation, or the use of the general trespass laws to enforce a public policy of segregation. This

method of appealing to a higher law to invalidate a lower law through a "test" case is a manifestation of respect for and faith in the legal processes of society.

A quite different problem is presented, however, when some advocates of social change purposely violate laws, not to challenge the validity of those laws, but rather to express their objection to some other policy they oppose. Examples are the blocking of streets, the seizure and occupation of buildings, or the destruction of property, not to challenge the validity of the laws prohibiting such conduct, but to protest against some unrelated policy of the existing social order.

It may be conceded that many of those who engage in such conduct sincerely believe they are performing acts of conscience to achieve a better social order. Thoreau, Gandhi and the suffragettes were widely admired for the peaceful practice of this tradition and for their willingness—indeed their eagerness—to accept the consequence of being jailed for their offenses.

But despite the bravery and sincerity that distinguish it, conscientious dissent must always compete against another value that makes dissent itself possible and potentially fruitful—the value of an orderly, representative society in which the rights of all are defined and enforced by law.

The Task Force is examining the legal and moral arguments on both sides of this controversy and is considering the kinds of official response which are appropriate. The Commission has heard testimony from student protest leaders who defend the legitimacy of such violent law-breaking, and who urge that the rightness of the ends they seek and the "illegitimacy" of the present social order entitle them to oppose both prosecution and punishment. It has also heard a distinguished academician say that from the standpoint of the social order it is unwise to prosecute and punish every act of civil disobedience.

The subject is a complex one, and shades of distinction between particular types of conduct may be critical. Set forth below are some of the hypotheses that have been advanced in an effort to isolate the relevant issues.

- There may be a difference between unlawful conduct that risks no injury or other harm to the public at large, and conduct which does risk such injury. Perhaps illegal sexual relationships between consenting adults risk no injury to the public, and such adults may claim a moral right to violate the laws against these practices. But clearly no one can logically assert a moral right to rape women in order to protest the laws against forcible rape.
- There may be a difference between unlawful acts of protest when committed by people who are denied the right to vote or to engage in peaceful protest, and when committed by voting members of a free and democratic society that guarantees the rights of lawful protest for all. By this standard, the followers of Gandhi and the suffragettes would fall on one side of the line, while American citizens who have an effective right to vote would fall on the other.
- Those who would violate valid laws to win rights they are now denied must stop to consider how those rights can be preserved in a society where their opponents are free to follow the same course. One must ask whether any society can survive if its members rely on genuine disobedience to law as a source of political energy.
- Those who believe in the rule of law cannot rest content with condemning those whose conscience commands them to defy the law. Law itself must be responsive to social change and to the correction of injustice. Our legal system has not yet corrected the injustices our society inflicts on minority groups, nor has it devised an acceptable method of permitting individuals to choose conscientiously not to fight in particular wars. Resolution of bitterly divisive issues like these is admittedly difficult, but it is not beyond us. If respect for law is to sustain the social order, we need to sharpen the ability of the law to clear the paths to peaceful change.

Research Summary

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|--|---|
| Jeffrey Albert George Washington University Law School Washington, D. C. | A Statistical Assessment of Disposition by the Supreme Court of Criminal Cases |
| Herbert E. Alexander Director Citizens Research Foundation Princeton, New Jersey | The Influence of Money in the Political Process |
| Gerald Anderson Department of Political Science and Bernard W. Marschner Vice President University Affairs Colorado State University Fort Collins, Colorado | Unfairness in the Selective Service System |
| David H. Bayley Graduate School of International Studies University of Denver Denver, Colorado | Non-Violent Civil Disobedience |
| Alfred Blumstein Institute for Defense Analysis Arlington, Virginia | Improving Police Performance Through Use of Technological Innovations |
| Albert Bottoms Director, Operations Research Task Force Chicago, Illinois | Present Capabilities of the Police in Handling Mass Disorders |
| Jerome Carlin Director of Neighborhood Legal Assistance Foundation San Francisco, California | Failures in the Court System Which Contribute to Disrespect For the Law |
| William Chambliss Department of Sociology University of California Santa Barbara, California | Defects in Law and Law Enforcement Which Contribute to Negative Attitudes Toward Law |
| Samuel Chapman Department of Political Science University of Oklahoma Norman, Oklahoma | Priorities for Improving Police Administration |

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
|---|--|
| Karl O. Christiansen Institute of Criminology Copenhagen, Denmark | The Cost of Administration of Justice |
| Christine Clark Attorney New York, New York | Denial of Legal Rights to Minority Groups |
| Thomas A. Clingan, Jr. George Washington University Law School Washington, D. C. and Linda R. Singer Kurzman and Goldfarb Washington, D. C. | Procedural Inadequacies in the Legal System and Their Effect upon the Poor |
| George A. Codding Department of Political Science University of Colorado Boulder, Colorado and William A. Scott Department of Psychology University of Colorado Boulder, Colorado | The Weakness of the Rule of Law in International Affairs |
| Fred Cohen University of Texas School of Law Austin, Texas | Improving Procedural Safeguards for Prisoners as a Deterrent to Recidivism |
| Herbert L. Costner Department of Sociology University of Washington Seattle, Washington | New Approaches to the Control of Juvenile Delinquency |
| Barbara Curran American Bar Foundation Chicago, Illinois | The Problem of Indigents' Access to Counsel |
| Roger H. Davidson Department of Political Science University of California Santa Barbara, California | Extent to Which Congress is Responsive to the Will of the Majority |
| Alan Dershowitz Harvard University School of Law Cambridge, Massachusetts | The Relationship Between Psychological Knowledge and the Concept of Legal Responsibility |

| <u>Consultant</u> | <u>Project Title</u> |
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| Norman Dorsen New York University Law School New York, New York | Official Interference with First Amendment Rights |
| Harvey Friedman Staff Attorney Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law Washington, D. C. | The Administration of Justice under Emergency Conditions |
| Albert C. Germann Department of Criminology California State College Long Beach, California | A Critical Evaluation of Police-Community Relations |
| John J. Guidici Captain, Oakland Police Department Oakland, California | Major Problems Faced by Police in Prevention of Violent Crime and Apprehension of Criminals |
| Robert Johnston Department of Social Science U. S. Military Academy West Point, New York | The Role of the Military in Handling Mass Disorders |
| Randolph C. Kent Sussex, England | The Wolfenden Report and Its Consequences |
| L. Harold Levinson College of Law University of Florida Gainesville, Florida | Refusals by Public Officials to Obey Supreme Court Decrees |
| Theodore Lowi Department of Political Science University of Chicago Chicago, Illinois | The Concentration of Decision Making Power in Governmental Institutions |
| Thomas Lumbard Assistant U. S. Attorney Washington, D. C. | Expediting Disposition of Criminal Trials |
| Donald McIntyre American Bar Foundation Chicago, Illinois | Development of Law Enforcement Policy: Prosecutor/Police Discretion |
| Charles Monson Associate Academic Vice President University of Utah Salt Lake City, Utah | An Analytical History of the Theory of Civil Disobedience and the Right of Revolution |

Consultant

Project Title

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Improving Police Effectiveness in Dealing with Violence Through
Better Recruitment Standards, Manpower Allocation, Pre- and
Post-Recruitment Training

The Problem of Recidivism in Corrections

Operation of the Police in the Ghetto

Major Problems Posed by Mass Disorders and Recommendations
for Their Solution

Organized Crime and Violence

An Analysis of Recent Anti-Crime Legislation

The Effect of Conventions on the Political Process