

FBI to Aid 4 Urban Areas In Citizen Crime Resistance

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FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley announced yesterday a cooperative program between the FBI and four urban police departments to seek citizen involvement in anticrime efforts.

The program, jointly announced and sponsored by the nonprofit Police Foundation, will be a planning effort, at least at first. There is no federal dollar commitment other than the salaries of eight FBI agents who will take part in the program and FBI participation is limited initially to four months, although it could be extended.

In Norfolk, the emphasis will be on crimes against women like rape and purse snatching; in Wilmington, Del., crimes against the elderly; in DeKalb County, Ga., (suburban Atlanta), youth-related crimes, and in Birmingham, the illegal purchase and sale of stolen property.

Two specially selected FBI agents will work with local officers in each of the four jurisdictions to develop recommendations for ways to reduce crime, including "ways to plan, organize and implement a continuing citizen crime resistance program," Kelley said.

"Our aim is to mobilize citizen involvement in efforts to resist crime," Kelley said.

... Citizen apathy is both partly responsible for and encourages much of the crime our society suffers."

The announcement of the program came one day after the FBI released statistics showing that reported crime in the United States went up 18 per cent in the first quarter of this year over the same period a year ago.

Kelley denied that the timing of the announcement was to take the edge off of the statistics or to redirect public attention from recently disclosed FBI involvement in burglaries and break-ins, primarily in "national security" cases.

The problem of citizens who do not wish to become "involved" with reporting crime or testifying in trials has bedeviled police and prosecutors for years. "The people must truly want, demand and be willing to actively support" countermeasures to crime, Kelley said.

There have been several examples nationwide of urban residents becoming so concerned about crime rates that they have organized neighborhood citizen patrols, taken notes on suspicious persons, and provided community support for crime witness who might otherwise have been too timid to testify.

Such efforts, occasionally have been effective in reducing crime locally, but are fragmented and have no national cohesion, according to Patrick V. Murphy, the president of the Police Foundation who has been the top police official in Washington and New York. "Now we will have both the FBI and the Police Foundation staff collection data on citizen involvement programs," Murphy said. "It's my belief they can be very effective."

Even though Kelley said the initial FBI commitment is "modest in size" it represents the first time in the memory of senior bureau officials that FBI agents to be assigned to local police forces. The local chiefs, all four of whom were present, will be in charge of the programs.

Kelley, a former police chief of Kansas City, said FBI participation is not an incipient national police force or an attempt to create neighborhood Big Brothers. "I see the prestige of the FBI... having the potential for gaining support" for greater citizen resistance to crime in a city, he said.

He also said he was not suggesting that "a citizen under the threat of a gun actually resist" a criminal.

Norfolk Police Chief A. J. Brown said, "We're hoping to get some innovative thinking from this team that will give us a new perspective on the problem" that can be used even if the FBI pulls out.

"We don't know that this effort will be successful," Kelley said, "but I do know that if we can get the cooperation of people it will be successful."