

A PLAN OF ACTION

Day after day, newspaper headlines attest to the bitter truth of what every American knows: that crime in this country is increasing. Despite our wealth, our technological advances, our enlightened social legislation, we are failing to meet the first responsibility of government—the maintenance of law and order and of personal security. Today fear is a part of the daily lives of many Americans—whether they are walking alone on a dark street, or working in a shop, or driving a cab, or even sitting in their own homes.

If we are to make progress in combating crime, we must stop talking about it as if it were one simple problem, which we could solve with one simple solution. We must recognize that crime has many faces.

Crime is the 17-year-old boy who was thrown out of school for being rowdy, then refused a job because he couldn't read, and finally turned to rolling drunks and snatching purses.

Crime is the anti-Semite who bombs a synagogue, or the white man who breaks a Negro schoolboy's leg in defense of segregation.

Crime is the drug addict who steals to finance his demanding habit.

Crime is the rioter, the arsonist or the looter—products of a ghetto's racial explosion.

And crime is the habitual criminal whom prison has failed to rehabilitate.

Each of these examples represents a different type of social problem. If we are to deal effectively with crime, therefore, we must reject pat answers and instead seek a program of crime control—a blueprint for action—that gives special attention to each different problem.

Consider, for example, the very special problem of drug addiction. For far too long we have treated addicts as if they were ordinary criminals, rather than victims of a serious disease. Because of our ignorance and indifference, we have failed both ourselves and the addicts, while their numbers have multiplied until there are today an estimated 100,000 addicts in the United States.

A new approach to this growing malignancy has long been required. Following California's pioneer program initiated in 1961, Congress passed legislation last session which would permit addicts in federal cases to be placed under medical treatment rather than sent to prison. Because about half of those committed under the California program have subsequently returned to their communities and have not gone back to narcotics, there is good reason to believe that this federal program will return many addicts to a normal life. If other states will follow this lead, medical treatment for addicts could make a significant contribution to our national fight against crime.

An equally significant part of any anti-crime program, I feel, must be legislation to control the sale of firearms. Our Senate Juvenile Delinquency Subcommittee heard testimony indicating overwhelmingly that the present mail-order business in guns makes it ridiculously easy for juveniles, criminals, even lunatics to obtain firearms for less than the price of a pair of shoes. I know of no other country where it is as easy for dangerous and misguided members of society to obtain fire-

arms as it is in the U.S. Each year about a million weapons are sold by mail order, thousands to persons with criminal records. J. Edgar Hoover has stated that the "easy accessibility of firearms is a significant factor in the murders committed in the United States today." Nothing could testify more vividly to the truth of this warning than the example of Charles Joseph Whitman, who stood on top of the Texas University tower one horrible day last summer and shot 15 people to death, wounding 31 others.

In the aftermath of that terrible tragedy some voices were heard calling for an end to easy accessibility of guns. But the outcry was short-lived, and without strong public support the proposed federal legislation did not pass. Those of us in the Congress who are concerned about the need for effective gun controls require the active support of the American people, if we are ever to realize this goal, and I urge all Americans to demand effective new laws.

Our failure to fight crime successfully can be attributed only in part to such factors as the absence of gun controls and the lack of effective treatment programs for drug addiction. There is a much larger failure: Despite the dedicated efforts of many thousands of individuals, the traditional processes of our criminal justice system—the police, the courts, the correctional agencies, the probation and parole services—simply are not performing adequately.

Almost everyone will agree that the job of the policeman is more difficult today than it has been at any other time in our history. Even as the crime rate continues to grow, our concern for the protection of individual rights increasingly restrains the policeman's freedom of action. Unfair charges of police brutality are often made, and in many communities the policeman is treated abusively and contemptuously. In addition he is now often called upon not merely for police duties but also for the dangerous and strenuous job of riot control. Yet the sad fact is that police departments almost everywhere are understaffed and ill-equipped, and the low pay levels fail to attract enough of the high-quality personnel we need.

If this diagnosis is correct, then the prescription seems obvious: Devote the resources and attention necessary to hire more policemen, attract highly qualified men to police work, develop new techniques of police administration, apply the advances of modern science and technology to crime prevention and crime detection, and improve public understanding and support of our law-enforcement agencies.

There is every indication that, if we follow this prescription, we can make significant progress in combating crime. Take, for example, the experience of Chicago over the last six years under the outstanding leadership of Police Chief O.W. Wilson. Chief Wilson is a perfect example of the kind of man we must attract to police work in greater numbers. A former dean of the school of criminology at Berkeley, he is the author of *Police Administration*, the classic work in the field. When Mayor Daley brought Chief Wilson to Chicago

in 1960, criminal activity was rising sharply in Chicago as it was in most large American cities. But whereas the trend has continued upward elsewhere, it has been on the downgrade in Chicago since Wilson took over.

How did he do it? To begin with, he had the unqualified support of the mayor and the city. With this kind of backing, both financial and political, Wilson introduced business-administration techniques and modern computer technology to police work. The computer system gives Chicago police almost instantaneous access to a vast range of important information on wanted persons and stolen property, and also keeps track of the kind and amount of crime going on in various parts of the city so that more policemen can be allocated to the areas most in need of protection.

This kind of information system made it possible for Wilson to implement his theory of aggressive preventive patrol, which actually minimizes the opportunity for crime by making police patrols as frequent and as conspicuous as possible, particularly in the areas of highest criminal activity.

In addition Wilson raised pay scales and substituted civilians in a host of office jobs, thus releasing over a thousand policemen for patrol work. He also encouraged Negro recruitment, stressed community-relations training, and impressed upon Chicagoans the fact that, if the police are to be successful in combating crime, they need the aid of the average citizen.

On April 13, 1964, he launched "Operation Crime Stop." The program is keyed to a card which reminds the holder that the police need the eyes and the ears of private citizens, provides a central number to call if a suspicious person or incident is seen, and indicates the information the police will need to respond effectively. The program has been remarkably successful. Some 7,600 offenders have been arrested by the Chicago police as a result of Crime Stop calls.

I believe this kind of program should be adopted in cities throughout the country; it would remind Americans that crime prevention is not solely the responsibility of the police, and it would serve to refute the notion, which I dispute, that Americans are not willing to involve themselves in the safety of others. Programs like Operation Crime Stop demonstrate that, though the problems of crime are massive and complex, citizens and communities can play an effective part in solving them.

Sometimes even such a simple thing as increased street lighting can be very effective. All available evidence indicates that better street and park lighting deters crime by reducing opportunities for criminal activities. Yet many of our communities simply do not have adequate street lighting. For this reason I have proposed legislation to provide federal assistance to communities desiring to improve their lighting facilities. Such money would be well spent. As one police chief put it, "A good street light is as valuable as a good policeman and a lot cheaper."

Chief Wilson's success in Chicago proves that good men and good ideas can greatly improve the quality of law enforcement. Wilson's kind of

By SEN. EDWARD M. KENNEDY

The senior senator from Massachusetts calls for legislative reforms.

operation is expensive (Chicago's police budget has gone up almost 45 percent in the last six years), but considering that crime costs run into billions of dollars annually—more than we are spending on Vietnam—money spent on effective crime prevention is definitely money well spent.

The same sort of diagnosis and the same sort of prescription can be made for our state prison systems. These systems have been too long ignored and denied the resources they need to modernize and to attract high quality personnel. A correctional system cannot live up to its name unless it can rehabilitate as well as confine. Criminal correction should be viewed as a process, beginning as soon as the lawbreaker is apprehended, which treats a criminal as an individual, teaches him the skills of a trade and the duties of citizenship and assists him materially in finding a job and returning to his community. To do this effectively requires large numbers of skilled personnel working in the field of correctional rehabilitation. It also requires construction of new kinds of facilities and emphasis on programs which seek rehabilitation through skill-training and participation in community life.

For the most part our present correctional systems are ill-equipped to accomplish these tasks. A national survey recently completed by the President's Crime Commission indicates how badly the existing jails and prisons fall down on their job of rehabilitation. It shows there is an appalling shortage of skilled personnel in this field. Of the 20,000 employees in local correction institutions, only about five percent are involved in training and treatment—the vast majority of personnel are capable of performing only custodial functions. Thirty percent of the state-operated adult institutions provide no vocational training.

I do not cite these statistics because I favor the "coddling" of criminals; I cite them because I believe our generally impoverished state and local correctional systems are not contributing enough to our war against crime, and I think the facts bear me out. One third of all those paroled revert to crime, and almost one half of our present prison population of over a million will go on to commit further crimes after they are released.

As in the area of law enforcement, however, there are some places where progress is being made. Available evidence indicates that the longer you keep a man in prison, the more likely he is to revert to crime when he is released. So several states and communities are experimenting with ways to return the individual to community life earlier. In New England, both Vermont and the federal prison at Danbury, Conn., have instituted successful programs which release prisoners into the community for work, under careful supervision; Wisconsin, North Carolina and California have pioneered similar techniques.

And in California, Richard McGee, who heads the state's Youth and Adult Correction Agency, has demonstrated that imaginative thinking, coupled with additional resources and personnel, can help enormously in our war against crime. When McGee came to California in 1944, the state's

prison system comprised little more than several maximum-security prisons, such as San Quentin and Folsom, run by their wardens as independent empires. The emphasis was on custody, not on treatment. McGee has changed things dramatically. Now there is a whole range of facilities, from maximum-security prisons to open institutions like the California Institution for Men at Chino, where inmates live on an honor system without the constraints of prison walls.

Recognizing the importance of building bridges between inmates and community, McGee also set up trade-advisory councils, whose members are representatives of business and labor in those occupations for which inmates are being trained. These representatives visit correctional institutions, advise on the type of equipment, training facilities and programs needed, and assist the inmates in getting jobs after they are released.

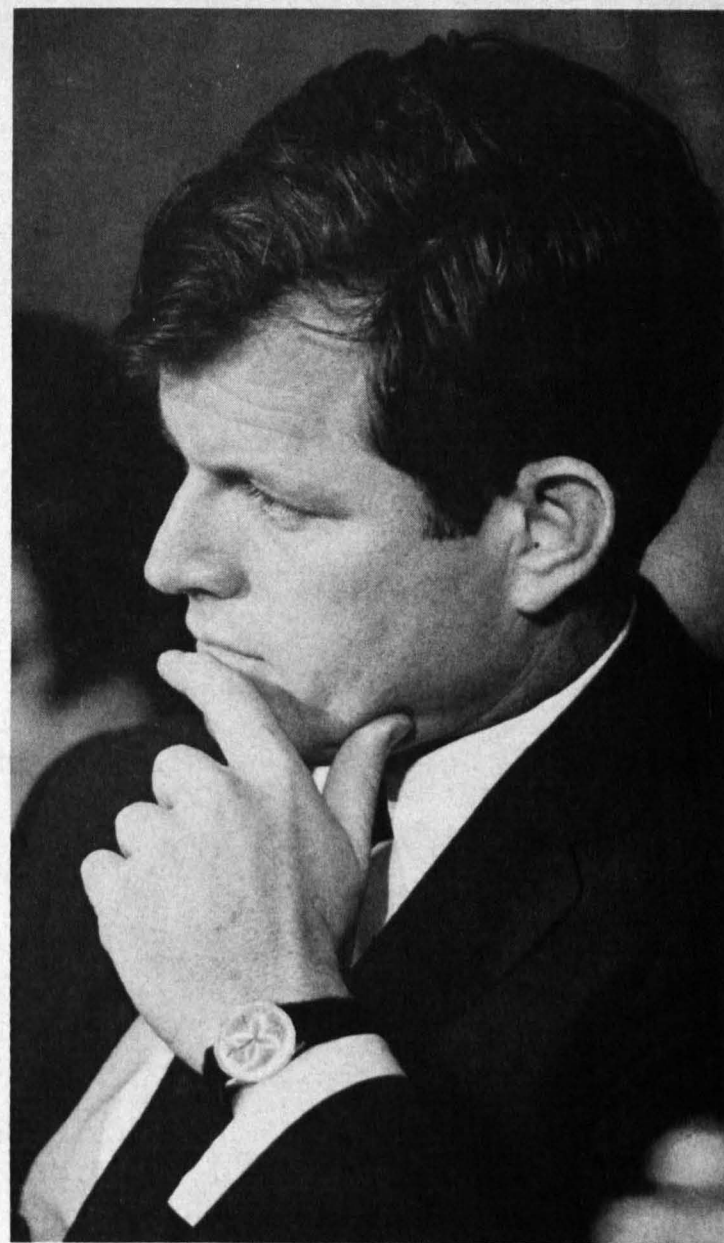
Another California experiment involved paroling youthful offenders immediately upon conviction under careful community supervision. In an effort to test the project's effectiveness, a control group of delinquents similar to those returned to the community was sent through the conventional process. The behavior of each group following discharge was watched closely. The amazing finding: The boys treated in the experimental project have returned to criminal activity at a rate almost 50 percent lower than that of the boys treated by the more conventional methods. I think, however, that the real significance of this project is California's determination to actually test these new methods—to find out what works and what does not work. This kind of willingness to search for new and better techniques and to test their effectiveness has not been the hallmark of our criminal justice system.

The United States has developed the most advanced and sophisticated techniques of market research in the world—when it comes to selling soap. But we have failed miserably at the job of research into crime. The reason, I believe, is that until now we have not given the problem of crime the priority attention it deserves.

I recommend that we establish a National Institute for Crime Research, providing in the field of criminal justice—as the National Institute of Mental Health provides in the mental-health field—a center where national crime problems, such as the rising rate of juvenile crime and the continued success of organized crime, can be identified and studied, where people from all over the country can come to work and to seek advice and to plan programs for our war on crime.

I also recommend that this institute operate a criminal justice extension service to make available to all American communities, as our agriculture extension service makes information available to the farmer, the best techniques thus far developed by police departments, courts and correctional agencies, and the fruits of future research.

Finally, I recommend that we establish grant programs in selected universities around the country to foster training and research—criminal justice academies, I call them in the legislation



I have introduced. This idea is the brainchild of Sheldon Glueck, the eminent Harvard criminologist, and in my judgment it makes good sense. The establishment of such regional centers would help show the nation the importance we place on work in this field; it would raise the status of our nation's effort to combat crime; and it would attract more able people to careers in criminal justice.

In addition to these specific anti-crime programs, we must intensify our attack on the roots of crime—poverty, neglect, ignorance and social injustice. For the mainstream of criminal activity flows from the deprivation, alienation and discontent of wasted lives—of lives lived without family guidance, without education, without jobs and, most terrible of all, without hope.

If we are seriously concerned about crime, we must acknowledge our responsibility to do something about the crumbling slum schools and poor housing, and the shocking unemployment rates for the young Negroes, Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans. Indeed, with crime most prevalent among young people, every community must focus special attention on its youth, particularly the disadvantaged. Today's delinquents will be tomorrow's criminals—unless the community, through education, job training and treatment programs, prepares these youngsters for the productive tasks of adulthood.

Most of us who share in the good life of our rich nation are law-abiding citizens. The promise of America is that someday all may share. In our work to fulfill that promise lies one of our most effective weapons against crime. □