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New Strategies for Combatting Crime in New York City

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Cover Page Footnote

None.

NEW STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING CRIME IN NEW YORK CITY

William J. Bratton*

Good evening, Thank You. It is a real pleasure to be here with you this evening to talk about something that I spend a lot of time thinking about: how to make the City of New York a safer place. This evening's presentation, I hope, will be informative.

Before talking about why crime is down in New York City, and the national debate that is currently underway as to why it is down in New York and many other areas around the country, I think it is important to take a walk back through time to understand how we got to this point in time. A city that was once frequently cited as being the crime capital of the world¹ now has a singular honor and status as the nation's leading entity in the decline of crime.² This is a very significant turn-around in a two to three year period of time.

I have been in policing now for about twenty-five years. Born and raised in Boston, I joined the Boston Police Department in 1970. During that twenty-five year period of time, there has been several very significant change in American policing. I entered policing during the beginning of one phase and now, after twenty-five years, I find myself in a leadership position as another phase is taking hold. Of the two phases, I think the current phase is going to be the more productive and the more successful.

1970. America. The Vietnam War was still raging. Huge demonstrations. We had just come through the race riots of the sixties, the Civil Rights Movement, and we were at the beginning of a

* Commissioner, New York Police Department, January 1994-April 1996. These remarks were delivered at a lecture at Fordham University School of Law on January 31, 1996. Mr. Bratton is currently with First Security Services Corp.

1. Howard Kurtz, *Scribe Bids New York Trash Farewell*, WASH. POST, Aug. 19, 1990 at W12 ("Washington may have higher per-capita murder rate, but New York is, hands-down, the weird-crime capital of the world."); Robert Friedman, *Living in Fear: 1 of 2 is a Victim of Crime; City Losing the War on all Fronts*, NEWSDAY, Aug. 13, 1989, at 5 ("The perception of New York as the crime capital of the world is hardly new."); Ellis Henican, *City Takes Beating Over Attack*, NEWSDAY, Apr. 26, 1989, at 25 ("For as long as anyone can remember, New York City has been known as a crime capital . . .").

2. Eric Pooley, *One Good Apple*, TIME, Jan. 15, 1996, at 54; *Take Regional Approach to Solve City's Problems*, TIMES-PICATYUNE, Jan. 17, 1996, at B6 ("New York City, leading the nation in reducing crime, added 5,000 community police to its 32,000-person police force.").

more permissive society.³ American policing was moving into a new era—the professional policing era. We were going to take advantage of emerging technology, for example, the 911 system, computer-aided dispatch, and the increasing use of motorized patrol. The era was, I think, best emphasized by the old Jack Webb Dragnet Badge 714 series. The professional police officer—just the facts; no personality; no personal touch, if you will. Just the facts, man, just the facts. The era is best characterized by the three Rs and three P's. I will be talking about three Rs and three P's during the presentation. With my Boston accent the "R" may sound a little funny to you, so I apologize for that. (laughter)

The three Rs. What were they? What was the policing style of the 1970s that was going to be the end-all of policing, the professional era that was going to control crime and keep it reduced after the turbulent sixties and early seventies? One was the concept of rapid response. Those 911 calls, that allowed us to take police off walking posts and into cars so they could rapidly respond to the growing number of calls that 911 was creating. The second concept was the idea of random patrol. When not on calls, these cars would be preventing and deterring crime. Because of the random nature of the patrol, the police-driven cars could cover large areas. The third element was the Jack Webb type of reactive investigation after the crime occurred. The theme of that type of policing was largely reactive. Think of it, reacting to 911 calls, random patrol, riding around waiting for something to happen—hoping that you are preventing things from happening—and the reactive investigation.

What happened, however, was that type of policing was ill-prepared for the large volume of calls that was generated by 911. Most major American cities were overwhelmed as other city services were declining and police became the catch-all. Dial 911 and, like the fire department, we were the two that would always come. We were overwhelmed by it. So there was less and less time for man to patrol, more and more time chasing all those incidents, less and less time to solve the problems that were causing all those incidents. With more and more calls, and more and more crime being generated during the Seventies and Eighties, there was less time to investigate, less clearance, and less solving of crime. So, when we entered the turbulent 1980s, American police forces were very ill-

3. See generally William J. Bennett, *What's Wrong with America: Spiritual Decline Harms Nation*, GREENSBORO NEWS & RECORD, May 8, 1994, at F1 (comparing the differences of societal permissiveness in the 1970s with today).

prepared to deal with what began to occur. There were drugs, particularly cocaine, and then the emergence of crack-cocaine around 1984-85.⁴ And with crack-cocaine came guns, increasingly more powerful weapons, the nine millimeter semi-automatic, with fifteen, seventeen rounds instead of the old zip gun or the old thirty-eight with five or six.⁵ Then there was the new element that scared the hell out of everybody. That is the increasing involvement of youth in that drug-related, gun-involved violence and the element of random violence.⁶ In what we once thought were safe areas of our cities arose the random nature of crime. When New York experienced this particularly in the late Eighties and early Nineties, it began to scare everybody. American police forces really were not prepared for it. We were not prepared for it. We are an incident-oriented, reactive type of profession.

Fortunately, in the late 1970s, early 1980s, a number of police leaders, academics, criminologists, and political types began to think about what we could do differently. Clearly, what we were doing was not working. From that evolved the concept of community policing. It began all over the country in little bits and pieces here and there, culminating in a process at Harvard University where, with a federal grant over a several-year period of time, police leaders, academics and political types came together to talk about the issues.⁷ Ultimately from that came the concept of community policing.

Community Policing. You hear a lot about it. We now have an office in Washington that is there to dispense millions of dollars to support the concept.⁸ But what is it? Well, the definition of it is still very much in debate. I am going to give you my definition of

4. See, e.g., Philip Hagar, *Drug Cases Now Dominate Caseloads of Urbanite Courts*, L.A. TIMES, May 23, 1990, at 1 (“[I]n the five years after 1983, adult felony arrests for non-marijuana drug offenses rose . . . [to] a startling increase that closely parallels the emergence of crack-cocaine . . .”). See also Eric Lichtblau & Gaylord Shaw, *Problem in 46 States: It’s Not Just a ‘City Drug’*, Apr. 5, 1988, at 1 (“[In] late 1985, crack became a big problem in New York City.”).

5. See *id.* (“[L]aw enforcement officers across the country have detected a quantum leap in the arsenals of drug dealers. . . . Israeli-made machine guns, known as Uzis, American-made machine guns, known as Mac-10’s, a variety of sawed-off shot guns, . . . ‘every kind of hand gun you can imagine.’” (quotation omitted)).

6. See *id.* (describing incidents of violence in the nation’s cities involving youngsters and drug-related activities).

7. See Brian McGrory, *Community Policing as Bold Plan*, THE BOSTON GLOBE, Jan. 16, 1992, at 1.

8. See Marjorie Lambert, *State Getting Big Share of Crime Bill Aid*, SUN-SENTINEL FT. LAUDERDALE, Oct. 31, 1994, at 1B (“[The] Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 provides for a federal grant system to hire, train and equip

it. Joe Brown⁹ and I, on our way up in the car were talking about it. We have different definitions of it and that is symptomatic of people trying to come to grips with what is community policing?

Why is community policing so good? And what is it going to do? Quite simply, it is the three P's. Remember the three Rs? Well community policing, in its simplest form is three P's. It is the concept of partnership. In the 1970s and 1980s, police said, "Give us money, give us equipment, give us cops, we will take care of your problems." And it just did not happen. The problems overwhelmed even those police departments that were adequately staffed, and many of them were not during the 1970's and 1980's. So we were not prepared to do it alone.

But community policing says let us work together; You; the community; the other institutions of government; and the other entities in the criminal justice system. Let us work in partnership and with our united numbers, maybe, we can have impact. What are we going to work on? We have finally come to recognize, after chasing all those hundreds of thousands of 911 calls in the 1970s and 1980s, that those calls were only symptoms of problems. After going back time and again to kick the kids off the corner or going back time and again for that husband and wife fighting with each other, and each time seeing the problem escalate we realized that we were not taking effective action to solve the problem that was generating all those calls. Community policing said let us look at the issue differently. What can we do to deal with that husband and wife whose constant fighting eventually escalates into assaults and the kids on the corner whose drinking eventually escalates into the equivalents of guns and knives, assaults, random shootings and more violence.

In addition to working in partnership to deal with problems, the other focus, of community policing was something the American police forces and the criminal justice system lost sight of in the 1970s and 1980s: the basic reason for our being. The reason that police were created was to prevent crime. We are here to prevent crime, to reduce it where we can, but more importantly, to prevent it. What is effectively going on in the 1990s in many American cities, and I will speak very specifically now about New York, is not doing away with the three Rs. We can not get rid of 911. Yesterday we just unveiled a \$150 million enhanced 911 system that al-

new officers for community policing programs. States and local police agencies are eligible.")

9. Joseph Brown, Director of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

lows us to see the address and phone number the calls are coming from.¹⁰ So, 911 is here to stay. We can not do away with random patrol of cops and cars. We need them to respond to those 911 calls. And we definitely can not do away with reactive investigation. There is always going to be crime, and there will always be a need to investigate it as part of the way we would attempt to investigate it in the future. Rather, we are attempting to blend those three with the new concept of partnership, problem-solving and prevention.

What are we doing in New York to implement community policing? My predecessors Lee Brown and Ray Kelly are New Yorkers. They are very familiar with the safe streets initiative. They are very familiar with the 1990 headlines in *The New York Post*, "Do Something Dave"¹¹ and the front cover of *Time Magazine*, "The Rotten Apple"¹² pointing out all the things wrong with New York City at that time. The negative image of a city seemingly out of control, or going out of control. If you think back over the previous twenty years, as a result of the corruption scandals in the 1970s, the city consciously opted to remove its police from dealing with anything with potential for corruption. Police were precluded from entering licensed premises and from acting on many street conditions, for fear of corruption. The result of these restrictions were that the New York Police withdrew from the streets of New York, went into their cars, and were satisfied with chasing 911 calls. Street conditions worsened resulting from a combination of police inaction and governmental indifference. The first time graffiti was put up on a wall in New York some place back in the 1960s, this very liberal city immediately described it as some form of art—graffiti art.¹³ It was celebrated and encouraged to the extent that, by 1970, there was no subway car in the city that was not a roving art form. Then other things began to happen. There was progressive panhandling as the homeless types of situations became more prevalent and joblessness increased. There existed a sense of a

10. For a description of the "new" 911 system, see Vivian S. Toy, *Enhanced 911 System is Online Citywide*, N.Y. TIMES, Jan. 31, 1996, at B3.

11. See Alan Friedman, *New York's Decay Outpaces 'Do Nothing' Dinkins*, THE FINANCIAL TIMES, Oct. 25, 1990, at 6 (" 'Do Something Dave' screamed a recent headline in the New York Post . . .").

12. See *id.* ("[a]nd last month a cover story in Time Magazine ('The Rotten Big Apple') . . .").

13. See *Abstract*, N.Y. TIMES, Sept. 16, 1972, at 25 ("M.F. Donaldson . . . contends [that] graffiti is the primitive pop art of inarticulate people looking for recognition.").

permissive society allowing certain things that would not have been tolerated many years ago.

I can recall my first visit to New York in 1990 when I was being recruited to come down as Chief of the Transit Police from Boston. Many of you have visited Boston. Most New Yorkers think of it as "that great place up north." It is a beautiful city. It does not seem to have a lot of the problems of many major cities, definitely not on the scale of what New York is experiencing. But in 1990 I can recall coming in from the airport, flying into LaGuardia, and coming down that highway. It looked like something out of a futuristic movie in terms of graffiti on every highway wall, dirt on rubber tires that look like they have not been cleaned in years, burned-out cars, litter everywhere. "Welcome to New York!" Then when you reach the first stoplight in New York City, you see the official greeter for the City of New York. You know the guy out there in baggy dirty clothes with a rag. Or the more sophisticated would actually have a squeegee. Sometimes even with the squeegee they manage to scratch up your window. But that was a sense of how the city had stopped caring about itself. Then we came down Fifth Avenue, the very famous mile, if you will. There were unlicensed peddlers everywhere, and also dirt and filth everywhere. Then there were the subways. Upstairs was heaven, then you get to those subways. Incredible. I can remember going through the first turnstile array and watching people leap over turnstiles, crawl under them, anything but pay the fare. Every platform seemed to have a cardboard city on either end of it where the homeless had taken up residence. This was a city that had really lost control of its city and its subways. The turnaround in the last five or six years has been phenomenal considering what it looked like then, how it looks now and how it might look in the future.

In any event, into the 1990s Mayor Dinkins and the City Council, with the active support of the public, put through a process which allowed the hiring of 7,000 additional police in the three police departments along with an array of social agency enhancements and improvements.¹⁴ This was all designed to support Lee Brown's vision of a community policing initiative in the City of

14. See generally Todd S. Purdum, *Dinkins in Accord on Financial Plan for Hiring Police*, N.Y. TIMES, Dec. 6, 1990 at A1 ("Mayor David N. Dinkins and the New York City Council reached an agreement yesterday on a compromise anti-crime plan for hiring thousands of new police officers.").

New York.¹⁵ The focus would be on the three Ps, but its emphasis would be on 1500 beats throughout the city staffed by about 7,000 new young police officers who were going to go forth into the streets of New York to solve the problems of New York City. But when I came down in 1994, aware of the complexities of this great city, conscious of some of its limitations, and having watched the department for two years while the Chief of Transit, I changed very much the direction of the community policing initiative. I refocused the effort from concentrating on those 7,000 young men and women to the 76 precinct commanders.

Why the change in focus? Think about it. The average kid coming onto the New York City Police Department at that time was 22 years old.¹⁶ So of the 16,000 cops that you see in the streets of New York, the average age is 22. You only had to be twenty to join the NYPD, have a high school education on average or a G.E.D. Many never held a job until they became New York City Police Officers. Many had never driven a car until they became New York City Police Officers. Many, from Long Island, never had any interaction with a minority person until they found themselves assigned in Harlem, driving a car for the first time in their life, some not old enough to buy a drink legally in the City of New York. This was the individual we were going to count on to solve all those problems. That person was lucky enough that they could follow the six months of instructions we gave them in the academy and report to their first assignment. Recognizing that this is an incredibly politically connected and involved city with its political power and strong community involvement, we were setting these young men and women up for failure. They could not compete with all the people who wanted to get into the game to deal with the problems. We also have a phenomenally large bureaucracy. In a department of 38,000 cops and 6,000 civilians,¹⁷ the beat police were very little fish in a very big sea who were not going to be heard. So, recognizing that, one of the fundamental changes was to immediately change the focus of the problem-solving from that young officer to a more mature, fifteen years on average, college

15. For a discussion of Brown's "vision," see *Crime and Management: An Interview with New York City Police Commissioner Lee D. Brown*, HARV. BUS. REV., May/June 1991, at 339.

16. Statistics provided by the New York Police Department, Bureau of Public Relations.

17. See Pooley, *supra* note 2, at 54.

educated, veteran police commander who knew how to police the city.

Now, what else did we change in the New York City Police Department to arrive at the point in time we are now in 1996? Overall crime in the city is down by 27% in the last two years,¹⁸ over 40% in the last five years,¹⁹ with single digit declines in 1991, 1992, 1993, and accelerating in 1994 and 1995. More importantly, there are even more significant declines in the homicide and robbery rates; 39% in homicide, about 30% in robbery.²⁰ These have been the largest declines in 25 years to the extent that in robbery, we have fewer robberies now than we had in 1972.²¹ Homicides, in New York, have decreased from 2143 in 1990 to slightly under 1200 last year.²² A phenomenal decline in those categories. There are about 150 of you in this room. Last year we had 750 fewer homicides than the previous year.²³ Multiply by five and that is the number of people who are alive today that might not have been. On top of that, there were several thousand fewer shooting victims in the city.²⁴ So we have had a very significant plus. There were 115,000 fewer victims of crime in 1995;²⁵ murders, rapes, robberies, car thefts, larcenies reported, arguably. Not all crime gets reported; it is significantly under reported. But over time, the amount of reported crime has remained fairly constant to the point that we can accurately reflect whether it is up or down. 115,000 fewer victims, 115,000 fewer of you were the victims of violent crime. But all of you during that time were the victims of another type of crime. The key to what we are doing in New York City at this particular juncture, apart from changing the focus of where community policing is controlled and embracing community policing, is the way in which we are managing the department and responding to the Mayor's goal of a safer city. The key is to place dual emphasis on serious crime, as well as quality of life or signs of

18. *Id.*

19. NEW YORK CITY POLICE STATISTICS (Years-end 1990 and 1995) on file with the New York Police Department [hereinafter POLICE STATISTICS]. These statistics are collected and maintained under standards set by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Law enforcement agencies across the country collect and maintain crime statistics uniformly in accordance with these standards for national comparison studies.

20. Pooley, *supra*, note 2, at 54.

21. *See id.*

22. POLICE STATISTICS (Years-end 1990 and 1995).

23. POLICE STATISTICS (Year-end 1995).

24. *Id.*

25. *Id.*

crime. The squeegee pest—the symbolism of doing something about the squeegee pest. There were only 75 of them, yet the image they were creating, the fear they were generating as people tried to travel into the city was great. 75 people, 38,000, cops and the squeegees were winning. Incredible. One of the first things the Mayor demanded upon election was, “Get rid of them.” In as much as the acts they were committing were illegal, it required a few summonses, a few arrests, and pretty soon they were gone. Once in a while, you might see one that still pops up from time to time, but the department understands more clearly now that not only do we need to be more focused on reducing real crime, but we need to be focused, all 38,000 of us, on doing something about those quality of life signs of crime: the squeegee pests; people urinating in public; people drinking in public; illegal peddling.

All those things make this most complex of American cities, and indeed rural cities, such a tough place to live—tough in the sense that there are so many opportunities here and so many pluses in the city that were being overwhelmed for twenty years by the negatives. What we have now done as a police department is to embrace community policing to work with the other institutions of government, to be dual focused, and to have goals which are quite clear: to reduce crime, improve quality of life, and enforce quality of life offenses for the first time in twenty years.

We have begun to see the difference and we are not doing it alone. All of the city agencies are involved in cleaning up the graffiti and cleaning up the highways. Next time you are on one of the highways in the city take a look. There is not too much graffiti anymore and when it pops up, within a couple days it is painted over. In most of the city’s parks, graffiti is removed within several days. Many areas of the city are a lot cleaner because of the business improvement districts. There, the private sector is working with the city for enhanced security, improved lighting and improved cleanliness, particularly here in Manhattan, and certain areas in Brooklyn and Queens. Think of the area down around Bryant Park and the area right here on Columbus Circle. In 1990, in Columbus Circle, on any given day there would be 50 or 60 drug dealers working in and around that area, right adjacent to your campus. You do not see that anymore. Bryant Park, one of the drug capitals of the world in the back of the library, is now the site of a major fight between a restaurant and the fashion industry over

who gets to occupy that site.²⁶ It has become a very valuable piece of real estate again. The city has undergone some very significant changes. And this police department has undergone some very significant changes. These changes have resulted in the desired impact that the Mayor wanted: reduced crime; improved quality of life.

We have done it by re-engineering the organization. This is a term that you hear a lot about, reinventing or re-engineering government. What we have effectively done in the New York City Police Department is taken this very large bureaucracy, this very large wedding cake, if you will, with all of its levels. Think of it. Let us go up that little wedding cake from the police officer in a precinct to me just to give you a sense of how big that bureaucracy is. The police officer reports to his sergeant, who reports to his lieutenant, who reports to his captain, who then used to report to his division commander, who then reported to the borough commander, who then reported to control commander, who then reported to the chief of the department, who then reported to the deputy commissioner. Then you finally got to me. You can imagine how long, in that bureaucracy, a request going up or down would take. We were a very centralized, hierarchical organization in which the Police Commissioner had absolute control. Precinct commanders had very little authority to do anything unless headquarters demanded it. They were required to have only so many officers in plain clothes. They were required to have absolutely only so many officers in cars. They were required to have only so many officers in different functions. They had no discretion or authority by and large to respond to the changing issues in those 76 very diverse precincts.

Most of you who live in the city recognize that there are no two precincts in the city which are alike and no two neighborhoods which are totally alike. The NYPD, for most of its history, attempted to police the city as if it were one entity, police it with very tight control from headquarters. One of the things that we did, in re-engineering the department, was decentralize. We pushed the power down in the organization, not to the beat cop, as Lee Brown and Ray Kelly attempted to do with community policing, a system set up for a failure, but rather to that precinct commander level.

26. See Constance, C.R. White, *Patterns*, N.Y. TIMES, June 13, 1995, at B8 ("Michael Einstein, the president of Ark Restaurants has proposed that Seventh on Sixth be held responsible for any shortfalls of revenue to the Bryant Park Grill that might occur due to the presence of tents in the park during fall runway shows.")

To the extent I now have 76 miniature police departments, I expect them to focus on the dual goals to reduce crime and improve quality of life. And with the expectation, by and large, to respond to 911 calls. Because we have a pretty good idea of how many we need on each shift, they are given now a lot more discretion as to how many people in plain clothes, how many in uniform, how many on beats, so that they are able to respond to your needs—your concerns—in true partnership. What do you want addressed? In this precinct here, they want a lot of emphasis on quality of life because there is not a lot of serious violent crime in this precinct compared to East New York. There, they want a lot of emphasis on serious violent crime and shots being fired because that is the reality, unfortunately, in several of those precincts in East New York. Precinct commanders now have that discretion. And I firmly believe that the reason we are seeing such dramatic declines in crime, is not the weather, is not a lot of the socio-demographic issues that are being advanced, is not economic issues. These declines may have been impacted somewhat by the higher incarceration rates. But the drop in crime in the city has been so precipitous over two years. All those factors are longer term, in terms of their causal relationship. On January 1, 1994, all the young kids in the City did not suddenly become old, all the criminals did not suddenly march into jail. The weather? Arguably, the blizzard this year did kind of slow crime down a little bit. Although during the blizzard, we saw theft in autos go up. The weather did not stop them from stealing the air bags and computer chips out of cars. It just stopped them from stealing the cars because they did not want to shovel them out. But as soon as the snow melted, car thefts went back up. 1994, if you recall, was the worst winter in many years. Crime went down. Everybody said it was the weather. The next year we had the mildest winter in many years, crime went down even more. Well, maybe it was not the weather. In any event, we really believe that what has happened in New York City and what has attracted such national and international attention is that we have found a better way of policing. We are results-focused, we are decentralized, we are coordinated, and we have enough cops—38,000 police officers in the City of New York.²⁷ The luxury, the inheritance, if you will, from the David Dinkins era is that we are benefitting now from that seed that was planted a

27. Pooley, *supra* note 2, at 54.

while back. This is one of the causal factors that I think is making a difference. But more importantly, it is how they are being used.

Prior to 1994, 1995, and now in 1996, uniformed police were not allowed to make drug arrests for fear of corruption.²⁸ They were not allowed to deal with a lot of the license premises violations for fear of corruption. They were not encouraged, for a variety of reasons, to deal with many of the issues which have taken such a hold on the streets of this city. Now it is expected of them to be out on those streets, be active, and allow the public to see them taking charge. It is important that the public should see them dealing with all of the those issues that infuriated them, causing them to ask, "why doesn't somebody do something about this?" That has been controversial and much debated. Many criticize it and are concerned that citizens are being abused in great numbers, or that it would lead to a change in the flavor of the city. I, for one, have not seen that yet. I speak out quite frequently in the debate about, "We have a brutal department, we have a corrupt department, we have a department that is too assertive." I am comfortable speaking on behalf of the department. I am very comfortable speaking in support of it. I am also very comfortable speaking about the 115,000 fewer victims of crime that department has been able to help generate.

So, that is where we are. That is really a walk through time. There were very significant changes in policing from the reactive to a much more proactive community policing model in this city. The formula of a political will to take the streets back, enough police resources used very appropriately, focused on real crime and quality of life. We think we have, in some respects, found the right mix that will do two things: continue to reduce crime and, as importantly, keep it down. Crime now in the city is down about 40% from what it was in 1990.²⁹ Some categories higher, some lower, but on the average about 40%. The goal for 1996 is another 10% so that we will have had a 50% reduction. Consider the psychological impact of that and the image it projects of this city. Two years ago, this city on a per capita basis, per 100,000 population was rated, among the 180 largest cities, 116th in terms of overall

28. See generally Joseph McNamara, *Devastating Cost of Drug War*, THE DES MOINES REGISTER, Feb. 11, 1996, at 1 ("Police scandals are an untallied cost of the drug war. . . . The gravity of the police crimes is as disturbing as the volume." The article goes on to describe various drug-related corruption arrests of police officers in New Orleans, Washington D.C., Atlanta and New York.).

29. POLICE STATISTICS (Years-end 1990 and 1995).

crime.³⁰ This means even two years ago, there were 115 American cities that had more crime per capita than New York. Now, we are down to 136 over the last two years and I anticipate at the end of 1996, we will be beyond 150. This might seem strange when you pick up the papers everyday and you see these horrific actions. But keep in mind how many of us there are. There are 7.5 million who live in the city,³¹ 3 million more who come in to work here everyday, and 26 million tourists.³² There is always going to be, unfortunately, the crime of the day, the crime that is going to make the front page. But the reality is there are many more of you who are not the victims of crime, serious crime, than there were several years ago and the good news is we think we can continue to keep getting it down to at least that 50% reduction level.

Additionally, this year, as you may have heard, the Mayor has committed to even more aggressively attacking the drug problem in the City. We have been mandated by the Mayor to put together probably one of the most comprehensive assaults on the drug problem ever waged by any American Police Department. We benefit in New York from a very large police department, so I can throw a lot of resources at it. We will be identifying a major area of the city to go in, with about 1400 additional officers, and take that area back. Drug-related crime in the city is still what is generating the random violence, the fear, and a lot of the death toll. Many people live in this city in relative safety, but too many live in abject fear because their neighborhoods are still not safe and are still victimized by too much crime. We are going to commit ourselves this year, as a Department, to see if we can do even more. We will not sit back and rest on our laurels, but see if can we do even more. We are not talking about doing it here in Manhattan, we are talking about doing it in some of the toughest neighborhoods in the city. We will go where the problems are. We will not do it as an occupying army, but in partnership, to work with those communities, to understand that to rid those neighborhoods, we must be there in very large numbers, and we must be there assertively. But we need to do it with their support and their cooperation and their understanding. So we will be spending a lot of time working with those designated neighborhoods to work with us and not feel that we are working against them.

30. Information provided by the New York Police Department, Bureau of Public Relations.

31. *Id.*

32. *Id.*

So it has been a good-news couple of years. It has not been without problems, though. The issue of corruption was, unfortunately, in this department, a major problem as evidenced by the Mollen Commission Report.³³ I spent a great deal of my first year on that issue, as did my predecessors. The good news is that what was not known when the Mollen Commission was first put together—the extent of corruption—is known now. The Mollen Commission's principal service was that it identified the extent of corruption in the Department and caused significant changes in the way we police ourselves. As Police Commissioner, now, I feel I have a very good idea of the extent of it, but more importantly, the ability to control it. Like crime, police crime is never going to go away totally. I have 38,000 cops. They are risk-takers by nature. Some of them are not good people. They are in a profession where there are phenomenal temptations, and many of them go over the line. Yet, now I can comfortably say to you that we do not have rogue precincts like the 30th and the 48th. I do have rogue officers, but increasingly their numbers are being minimized and increasingly we are getting more efficient at finding them out ourselves, arresting them, and putting them in jail. But the reality is, you are still going to hear from time to time of those types of corruption arrests. In the same way, no matter how good we are, you will still hear about horrendous crimes, whether it is the massacre up in Harlem³⁴ or the shooting massacre up in the Bronx.³⁵ That is part of the American scene, unfortunately. The best we can do is try to prevent as much of that as possible. I think that, fortunately, in this City, we have been able to prevent an awful lot of it working together with you.

So with that, I would like to bring my comments to a close and open the discussion up for whatever questions, comments or critiques you might have. I believe we have brought some materials that reinforce some of my comments. Materials such as *Managing for Results* which explains more in detail the intimacies of what we have done over the last couple of years. I have really only given you an overview. It is a very large topic area to cover in a 20-30 minute time frame. But certainly one that is of critical importance

33. For excerpts from the report, see *Corruption in Uniform; Excerpts of What the Commission Found: Loyalty Over Integrity*, N. Y. TIMES, July 7, 1994, at B2.

34. See John Kifner, *Death on 125th Street; The Overview: Gunman and 7 Others Die in Blaze at Harlem Store*, N.Y. TIMES, Dec. 9, 1995, at 1.

35. See Wendall Jamieson et. al, *Shoe Store Slaughter Shooter Kills 5, Wounds 3*, DAILY NEWS, Dec. 20, 1995, at 3.

to each and every one of you in this room. It is my pleasure to have had the opportunity to come in and talk about something that I thoroughly enjoy working on—improving our safety.

