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THE EXPERIENCE OF CONTROLLING STREET DRUG TRAFFICKING IN OAKLAND AND BIRMINGHAM

In Oakland, the treatments affected citizen perceptions of drug trafficking, property crime, satisfaction with police services, and neighborhood safety. In addition, crimes reported to the police declined substantially in one treatment area.

Residents perceived that drug trafficking declined. Visible police presence improved residents' perception of the ability of the police to handle drug problems in their neighborhoods. The door-to-door contact with police improved residents' satisfaction with the way police handled neighborhood problems. Despite the fluctuations in crime statistics in the different beats, residents in all three treatment areas believed that they felt safer than before the treatments were applied.

The perception that sexual assault incidents increased runs counter to our hypothesis; the researchers had expected that perceptions of violent crimes would diminish in the treatment beats.

The Birmingham Police received a tremendous amount of positive press coverage for their activities in Operation 'Caine Break. The two large-scale sweeps of suspects or "bust-outs" were successful because of the press reports and because the police were able to apprehend a high percentage (over 90 percent) of the suspects they sought. The narcotics detectives also believed that they had sent a message to drug traffickers: That police fully intended to apprehend, charge, and convict both the dealers and the buyers in the drug trade.

In both phases of the operation under NIJ study, the narcotics detectives were well-trained, organized, and thorough in their work. Their concerns for safety impressed the research staff, given the dangers inherent in drug enforcement activities. Equally impressive was the concern to follow proper legal procedures. Issues of entrapment, search and seizure, stop and frisk, proper field interrogations, and probable cause were discussed and emphasized throughout the project.

Because of the nature of narcotics work, the researchers did not anticipate significant changes in the attitudes of the residents in the area that received the 'Caine Break treatment. Narcotics officers relied on a low-key approach to their undercover operations of stings and the videotaped buys.

Residents would not see arrests regularly, so the impact on community attitudes was limited.

Instead, the research team relied on reported crime as an indicator of success or failure of the operation. Team members believe that a reduction in crime took place after a lag of 3 months in the area that received the buy-busts and sting operation.

The patterns that emerge in the crime data discussed earlier suggest that the door-to-door component had a beneficial effect on the control of violent criminal acts. The presence and visibility of officers in the neighborhood may have reduced some violent behavior. Although residents in two of the three experimental beats also perceived less property crime, reported property crimes actually increased slightly in the three beats as a group. This may be a useful consequence of the door-to-door interviews. Officers encouraged residents to call the police when they witnessed suspicious activities. In Goldwire, the findings show that the treatment was effective after a 3-month lag.

Although the researchers had hoped for a more intensive use of the police-citizen contacts, the results were nonetheless very positive. Though the police substation was an unanticipated event, the demands from the community and officials of the public housing authority could not be ignored.

The findings from this study show that these treatments had dramatic effects on citizen perceptions of quality of life, property crime, and satisfaction with police services. In addition, violent crimes re-reported to the police declined substantially in Gate City, where the police-citizen contacts occurred.

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INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN COMBATING ORGANIZED CRIME IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE

Financial crime over the last 30 years has increasingly become of concern to governments throughout the world. This concern arises from a variety of issues because the impact of financial crime varies in different contexts. It is today widely recognised that the prevalence of economically motivated crime in many societies is a substantial threat to the development of economies and their stability.