



Community & Law Enforcement Against Narcotics

The Dallas Police Department's 1989 Drug Initiative

Mack M. Vines
Chief of Police



Concept Development



& Implementation



Twelve years ago, in 1988, the toll on the City of Dallas and especially the Dallas Police Department. Five Dallas Police Officers were killed in the line of duty. Crime increased to such a degree that in many categories Dallas ranked among the highest in the nation. Tension throughout the city continued to increase as drug-related murders climbed to 130—a third of the city's total.

Chief Mack M. Vines took office in August of 1988; his first priority was to appoint his command staff and then to embark on an innovative action plan to curb the rising crime rate. Chief Vines was convinced the number one factor in the escalating crime rate was the infestation of drugs. 1989 was to be a year when the number one priority in fighting crime was drug abatement initiatives.

Traditionally, many citizens—and even police officers—fail to recognize the inextricable link that exists between illegal narcotics and other types of crime including property crime. In Dallas—as well as most major cities—that link manifests itself in alarming proportions of crime.

The Dallas Police Department's Narcotics Division developed the following mathematical scenario—one that is repeated hundreds, maybe thousands—of times annually: A crack cocaine addict in Dallas might need three hits a day at \$20 each, to support his habit. So 365 days a year, he needs to raise \$60. In Dallas, officers estimate property thieves get about a 10 percent return through their fences on the value of stolen property.

That means a single addict needs to steal \$600 a day to support his habit, or more than \$200,000 a year. Just five crack addicts may be responsible for more than \$1 million annually in stolen property.

This illustrates the magnitude crack cocaine addiction has on the Dallas—and most cities—escalating crime rate. All citizens—including those in exclusive neighborhoods—are victims . . . whether they've ever even seen a rock of crack. When an expensive set of hubcaps is popped, there is probably a link to drug trafficking. When a set of silver is taken in a residential burglary, the physical need for a few rocks of crack is likely the root cause.

Not too long ago, Dallas officers arrested a young addict who had been stealing one car a day to support his habit. He'd ride a bus from his residence to a site where he'd steal a specific make of car for a stolen car parts fence. The young addict would drive the car to an area close to his residence, remove the part and swap it for cash. He'd then buy the crack needed to get him through another day, wake up the next morning, hop a bus and repeat the routine.

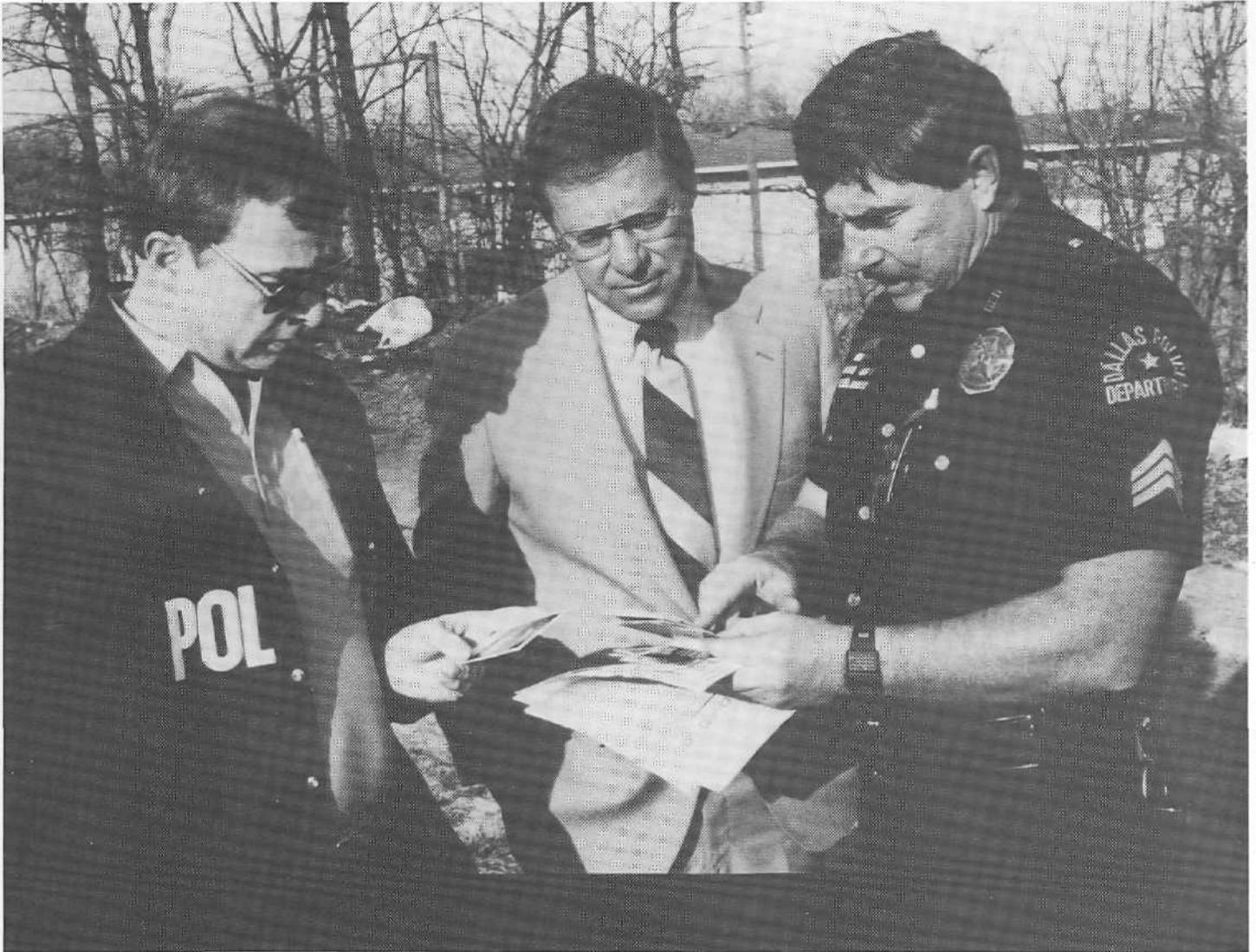
On a somewhat more scientific level of analysis, our local Sheriff's office in 1988 embarked on a drug testing study of incoming inmates into the county jail.

The results were astounding and probably representative of inmate populations across the country. At the time of their arrests, 53 percent of the males and 51 percent of the females tested positive for cocaine. This percentage made cocaine the most frequently detected drug among arrestees.

Marijuana was the second most frequently detected drug. In male prisoners, 44 percent tested positive while 33 percent of the females tested positive. When marijuana is included with the other drugs, 72 percent of the males tested positive. Thirty percent tested positive for two or more drugs.

Thus, it is abundantly clear that an aggressive attack on illicit drug trade is an attack on the crime rate. Chief Vines recognized this—and he recognized something else that is very important in any strategy to fight drugs: Illicit drug trafficking is not merely a police problem.





In January of this year, in response to continued citizens' complaints, a small drug task force, utilizing uniformed officer deployment, was conducted in the 4900 block of Live Oak Street, east of our downtown area. This area was saturated with heavy drug traffic, below standard apartment complexes and reports of gunfire throughout the night. The task force's strategy was high police visibility. Officers stopped

and talked with everyone in the area. The Narcotics Division sent undercover personnel in to make some buys. Here's where Chief Vines departed from tradition and substituted innovation. Contact was made with the Fire Department and Housing and Neighborhood Services to check the area for code violations. The task force made 12 felony arrests, 38 misdemeanor arrests, and recovered numerous weapons and narcotics. The task force operated 16 hours

a day for 17 days (January 14-30, 1989). The one square block target area was patrolled by a sergeant and six to eight officers. Narcotics officers were able to seize an apartment complex after the owners increased the rent to allow a "dealer" (an undercover officer) to sell drugs. Although there was not a large number of arrests, criminal activity in the area was greatly decreased. Calls for service decreased from 238 to 158 or a 34 percent reduction.

Using the task force's results and operational experiences, Chief Vines and his staff began to form the basic concepts of Operation CLEAN (Community and Law Enforcement Against Narcotics). They knew the plan must utilize a continued police presence over an extended period of time, along with support from other city departments.

Staffing the operation was a major concern since 1988 was also a record attrition year. The department lost 201 officers in 1988 and had already lost 26 in January, 1989. These losses, coupled with increasing calls for service (partly due to the implementation of the 9-1-1 system), were already driving our response time beyond acceptable levels.

On Monday, February 6, 1989, Chief Vines, Executive Assistant Chief W.R. Rollins, Assistant Chief Sam Gonzales and Lieutenant David Goelden met with Assistant City Manager A.C. Gonzalez and First Assistant City Manager Jan Hart to discuss the broad concept of Operation CLEAN. City leaders tentatively approved overtime pay for officers and asked that a written plan and a cost analysis be prepared.

Chief Vines instructed Chief Gonzales along with Assistant Chief Greg Holliday and Deputy Chief Rick Hatler, to formalize the Operation CLEAN concept. The final product was presented to the Dallas City Council Workshop on Monday, February 13, 1989-

As the plan was presented, it was apparent that several vital ingredients must be included if the Operation was to be successful. The plan needed commitment and cooperation within the City organization as well as community involvement.



The Dallas Morning News/Erich Schlegel

especially drugs, are a city problem, not just a police problem. A unified level of cooperation must exist that allows City resources to be used in cleaning target areas. Police divisions and units need to understand the importance of the operation and willingly accept some temporary assignments.

First, there must be a commitment from the Police Chief and his staff that the war on drugs and the CLEAN initiative are a top priority. The City Manager and the City Council must not only approve and support financially such a plan, but they also must be committed to a successful conclusion.

Second, there must be a great deal of cooperation between the City departments. Crime, and

Third, the community must get involved in the operation. The Police and other City Departments can go in and effectively clean an area but the community must then literally reclaim it. The amount of City resources and the time City employees can stay will at some point come to an end. Neighborhoods, through community leaders, crime watch groups and church organizations must be willing to accept the responsibility.



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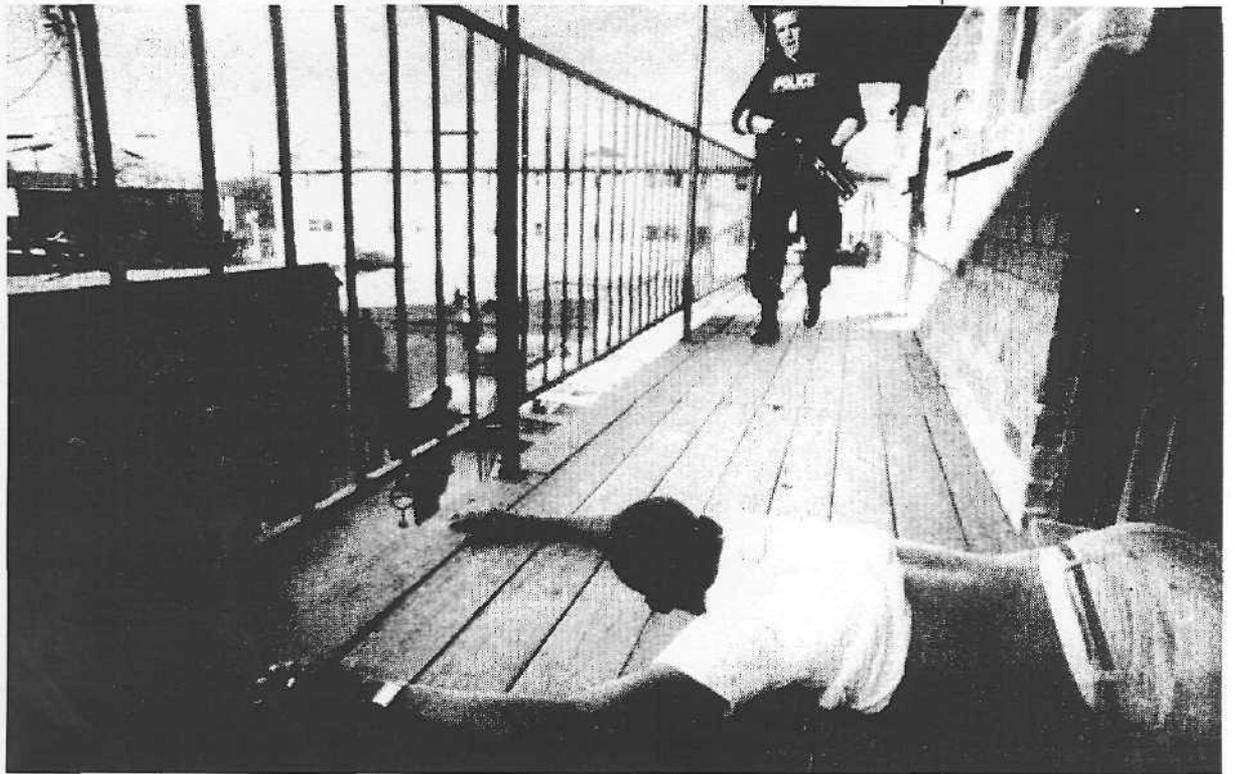
It was with these vital ingredients in mind -M-that Operation CLEAN was created. The first order of business was to decide how the CLEAN target areas would be selected. If the program was a success, it would be in demand all over the city. The overriding factor in target selection would be the degree of drug

infestation. Besides drugs, the number of violent crimes reported, calls for police service, and the overall physical condition of the area would also be considered. The size of the areas would vary from one apartment complex to a maximum of four square blocks.

The basic concept consisted of three phases: First, providing immediate relief to the target area. Second, implementing some short-term remedies, and finally developing some long-term solutions.

Since the target areas would be selected because of the high infestation of drugs, high number of offenses, and calls for service, the residents needed some immediate relief. For a period of eight to 10 days, narcotics officers would work the area to identify drug locations and drug dealers. At the end of this period, warrants would be obtained and a high-profile sweep of the area would be made to make the area as drug free as possible. The displacement of drug dealers and users from the area would provide the immediate relief residents needed.

Many short-term remedies had to be achieved. First, now that drug dealers had been displaced they had to be kept out of the area. During the first six weeks, uniformed officers would be assigned to the area. They would patrol 24 hours a day during the first two weeks, 16 hours a day for the second two-week period, and during the third two-week period, they would be there 10 hours a day. The number of officers assigned to each shift would depend on the size of the area and the level of activity.



Jesse Hornbuckle/Dallas Times Herald

During this six-week period, the other City resources would move in to give the target area a face lift. The following Departments would be involved:

Streets & Sanitation Department

- Use street sweepers and water trucks to clean the streets.
- I Graders would once more make the alleyways passable.
- I Trees and brush adjacent to city property would be trimmed to rid vacant property of hiding places.

Sanitation Division

- Clean the trash and litter from the alleys and vacant properties.
- Remove old couches and chairs that were in vacant lots and being used by drug dealers.

Fire Department

- I Check the properties for code violations.
- Order unoccupied buildings that presented safety violations to be boarded up.

Housing & Neighborhood Services Department

- Conduct code enforcement on occupied properties.
- Work through outside groups to obtain vacant lots and then bring in in-fill housing.
- Refer unsalvageable properties to the Urban Rehabilitation Standards Board for demolition.





Urban Rehabilitation Standards Board

- Expedite the demolition of properties within target areas.

Water Utilities

I Check all meters in the area.

I Check for water leaks and sewer problems.

These efforts by City departments would accomplish the short-term goals. However, this would not be enough if there was not a commitment to the long-term solutions. The long-term solutions fit neatly into four categories: Police Responses, Social Services Support, Environmental Assistance, and Ministerial Counseling.

Police Responses

The Patrol Division responsible for the target area would establish a Foot Patrol using a version of the New York City Community Patrol Officer Program (CPOP). CPOP is a proven police method for becoming a part of the community. As officers identify specific Police needs, the Department would divert the resources on a special assignment basis to meet these needs.

Social Services Support

As part of the CPOP Program, the officers would visit each family in the area and identify any special needs. These needs would then be relayed to Health and Human Services Division personnel who would use their own counselors and outside support groups.

Environmental Assistance

Although the area would undergo a face lift during the beginning of the operation, some long-range attention would also be needed. The neighborhood did not deteriorate overnight, nor would revitalization occur overnight. Housing and Neighborhood Services would continue to achieve owner compliance on existing properties. Using outside agencies, attempts would be made to solicit construction of new housing in the area. In addition, groups such as Adopt-A-Block would be incorporated into the CLEAN operation.

Adopt-A-Block is a program that has corporate sponsors who adopt a portion of the City and provide support one block at a time. The program offers assistance in overall cleanup in addition to becoming involved one-on-one with the citizens. Through such groups as Adopt-A-Block and the Police Athletic League, youths would be encouraged to participate in community projects.

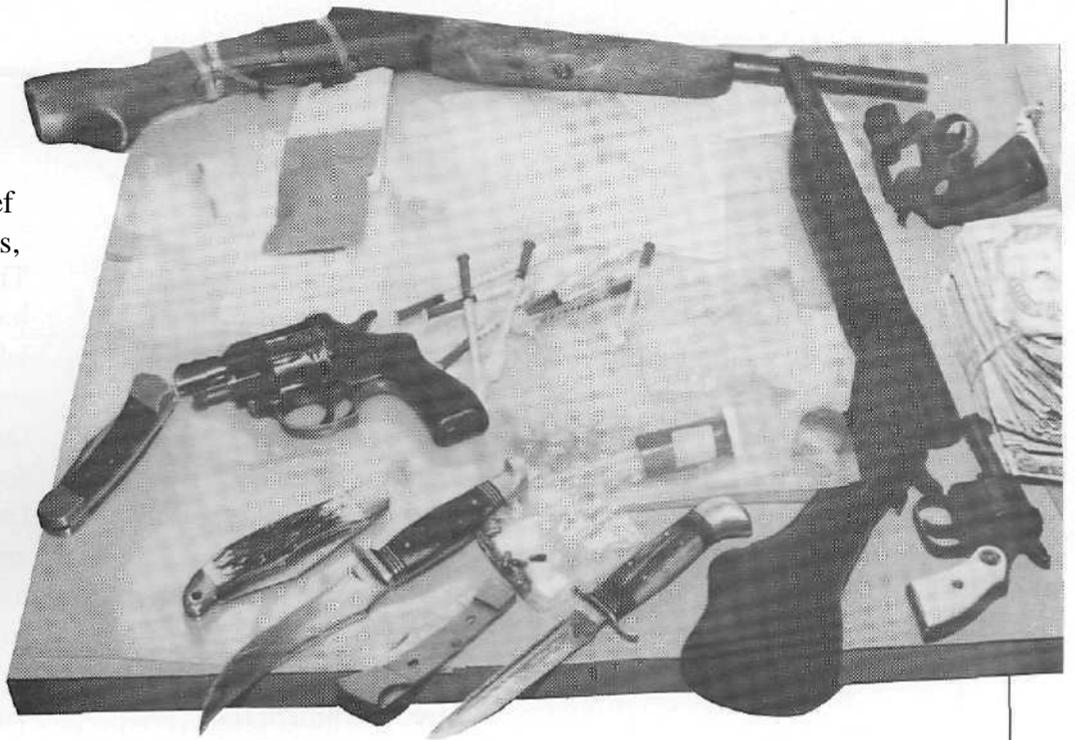
Ministerial Counseling

Any area that has been sociologically and economically depressed for any length of time affects the hope and outlook of the residents. Any long-term solutions must include concentrated efforts on the part of the local ministerial alliances to offer counseling. Church leaders are community leaders and¹ have good insight into the needs of their community. We would listen to the churches' concerns for they usually reflect the concerns of people on the street.

After this plan was presented to the City Council on February 13, 1989, Chief Vines, in prepared remarks, said:

"In 1989, the Police Department plans to concentrate all available resources on the battle against drugs. We are absolutely convinced that illegal drug usage is the chief cause of the soaring crime rates we have experienced in the City of Dallas. The overwhelming evidence of research studies and our considerable practical experience have confirmed that illegal drugs are the public's number one enemy.

"...A plan of action which harnesses the resources of the entire city will be presented. We envision beginning an effort which will not only dislocate drug offenders from significant geographical areas, but will actually reclaim these areas for our law-abiding citizens.



"Drug distribution within any community cannot be perceived as a simple problem to be resolved through simple solutions. In order to create a meaningful reduction in drug abuse, distribution, and related crimes, major drug control initiatives must be implemented. Operation CLEAN is such an initiative.

"Operation CLEAN will focus all the resources of the City of Dallas on the drug problem in this city. This project will emphasize drug eradication, drug education and the enforcement of applicable City codes to improve the quality of life in some of the more drug-infested areas of our city.

"As with any major effort, the costs and benefits must be thoroughly examined. While we intend to redirect every available resource into the fight against drugs, we are committed to not allowing the level of service to our citizens to decrease. Our people are convinced that the costs associated with this initiative will directly benefit the citizens of our City who are suffering the ill effects of a major drug problem."

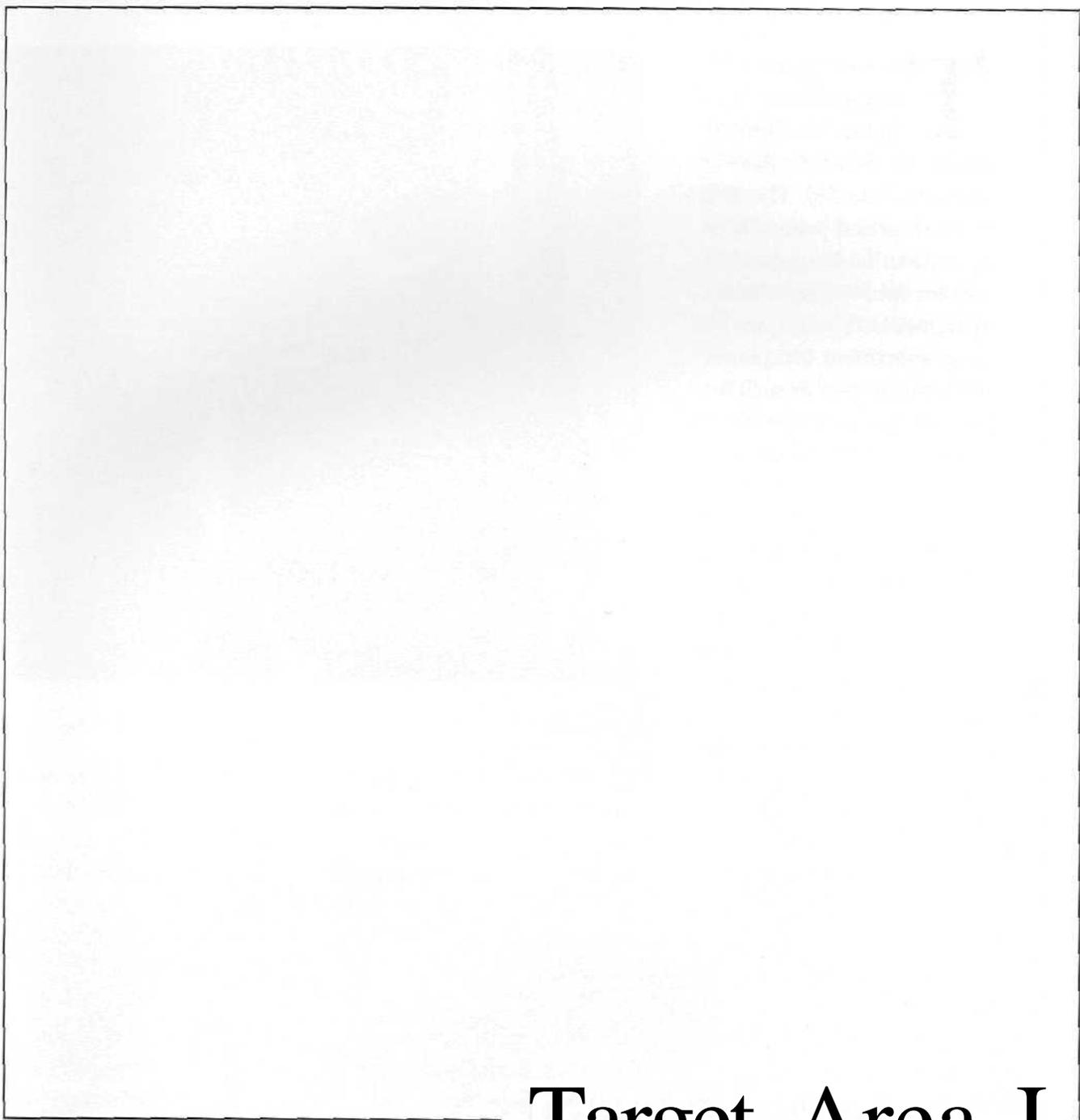
The City Council at a February 13 workshop indicated approval for the estimated \$450,000 needed to conduct nine operational CLEAN projects. On Wednesday, February 23, 1989, the City Council officially approved funds for Operation CLEAN.

Assistant Chief Sam Gonzales was selected Operation CLEAN Coordinator. Meetings began immediately to determine the target areas and level of involvement of other City departments.

In retrospect, there were two factors that were instrumental in the Operation CLEAN success. First was the tremendous support from the City Manager's office especially on the part of First Assistant City Manager Jan Hart. Her hands-on involvement and leadership were instrumental in maintaining the inter-departmental cooperation.

The second factor was having a single coordinator who could facilitate getting the job done without the Operation becoming bogged down in its own red tape. Department managers and employees held weekly meetings to address concerns before they became problems. CLEAN was truly viewed as a City of Dallas project, not just a Police initiative.



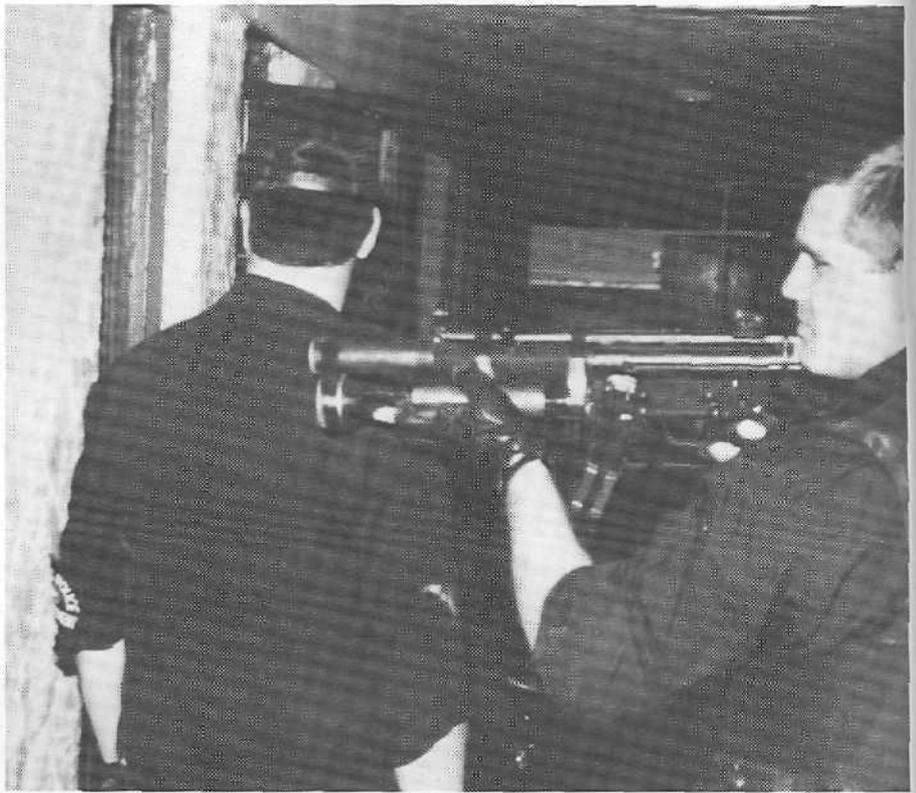


-Target Area I-

The first area targeted for Operation CLEAN was in the South Dallas section of the city. The area was comprised primarily of apartment buildings and smaller four- to eight-unit apartments. The majority of large apartment complexes were vacant and in such a state of disrepair they would have to be demolished.

In the six weeks prior to Operation CLEAN, the six-block target area averaged eight calls for police service per day, recorded 26 violent crimes and nine property crimes. These crimes included one murder, a rape, 12 robberies of individuals, and 12 aggravated assaults. Continuous gunfire throughout the day and night was reported.

The area was highly congested with both vehicular and foot traffic. The burned-out, vacant buildings were stash locations for drug dealers. As buyers would come into the area, a dealer would approach the vehicle, obtain the order, then go into the vacant property to



get the crack. Sales would be made without buyers leaving their cars. Several vacant apartments had different sets of dealers working out of opposite ends of the buildings,

The Narcotics Division began its initial undercover operations on March 1, 1989. The sweep target date was set for March 5. A snow storm that hit on March 3 and 4 brought the city to a standstill. The sweep was postponed until Saturday, March 11.

Armed with 14 warrants, the Narcotics Division, accompanied by more than 100 uniformed tactical, patrol and deployment officers, swept into this area of South Dallas.

The results were as we expected: good drug seizures but very few arrests due to the concealing of the drugs in vacant buildings. Word spread rapidly and after a couple of hours the drug dealers were gone. This area was unique in that almost none of the drug dealers had residences in the target

area. All worked out of vacant buildings.

The sight of 100 highly trained officers executing hazardous search warrants is something to see. But, the picture the following Monday morning was one officers thought they would never see. Street sweepers, bulldozers, sewer-vac trucks, water trucks, and a back loader were working in this six-block area.

The city's Street and Sanitation Department cleared 6.4 miles of

alleyways and removed more than 1,000 cubic yards of debris. They not only cleaned the city property and right-of-ways, they also cleaned 15 privately-owned lots.

Code violations were enforced by the Fire Department, Street Department, and Housing and Neighborhood Services. City employees were everywhere.

During the entire time police had a visible presence. During Phase I and Phase II,

the concentration was on activity. Officers made plenty of arrests, wrote tickets, and made sure drug dealers and buyers did not come into the area. During Phase I when officers were assigned around the clock, 289 arrests were made. This was in just a two-week period, and in a very small confined area. During Phase II, coverage was reduced to 16 hours a day but 106 arrests were effected. Phase III brought relative peace and quiet to the area. Thirty arrests occurred; only nine of those were drug related.



visible uniformed police presence was decreased. In Phase I, there were 33 calls, 31 in Phase II and only 19 in Phase III.

Skepticism on the part of the tenants slowly began to turn to expectation. Edgar Jordan, director of Housing and Neighborhood Services, quickly set into motion the process of purchasing several vacant lots. St. Luke's United Methodist Church donated some houses to bring into the area. In addition to the in-fill housing, Mr. Jordan started a series of meetings with property owners to inform them of the many City programs to help in property renovation and rehabilitation.

The Park Department reallocated resources to a park in the area. Due to budget cutbacks, this park had not been kept up nor were there organized activities at the facility. Park personnel established after-school and Saturday programs and plan to hire two summer recreational leaders to serve the area.

Dallas Water Utilities (DWU) made sure all the meters in the area had been updated. DWU personnel also spearheaded an initiative that would waive "hook-up" fees for new residents in the area. This brought about a meeting with representatives from other utility companies (Lone Star Gas and Texas Utilities) who agreed to participate as much as possible.

The City Attorney's office along with the judicial system, the prosecutor's office, and the court system were all a part of the CLEAN team. Special attention was given to all code citations and Operation CLEAN (OC) notations were placed on them so they could be tracked through the court system and expedited.

The Part I offenses in the area followed an interesting trend. During Phase I when the most officers were present, seven Part I offenses—five of which were violent crimes—were reported. During the final phase, only one Part I offense occurred. Compared to the prior six weeks, violent crime was reduced by 71 percent.

Calls for police service followed a similar pattern. The area had 108 calls for service during the prior 30 days. During the entire six weeks, there were only 83 calls. As with offenses, the calls reduced during each phase even though the

Each Monday, Chief Gonzales held meetings with representatives from the involved city departments. Each week's past activities were discussed as were any special problems. Problems were solved during those meetings without the usual week or two delay for memos to travel between departments. This weekly interaction among workers is a vital key to a successful operation.

Each Tuesday, First Assistant City Manager Jan Hart presided over Operation CLEAN meetings so department directors could present updates. Her involvement in the project made inter-departmental cooperation an integral part of the operation. One of the greatest benefits to the City of Dallas as an organization has been this open dialogue and spirit of cooperation generated by Operation CLEAN.

The final police phase in the first target area was to establish a foot patrol. These officers, using a modified version of New York City's CPOP program, will remain in the area. As part of this program, officers are visiting each resident and filling out profile sheets. Information from these reports are sent to Health and Human Services Department for follow up.

Although it is too early to declare the final verdict, we are convinced Operation CLEAN is destined to be a tremendous success. The City of Dallas is committed to the operation and to the fight against drugs. The price of failure is more than we care for our citizens to pay.





Mack M. Vines has commanded the Dallas Police Department—the nation's ninth largest department—since August, 1988. His law enforcement career spans almost 30 years and includes service as chief of police in St. Petersburg, Fla., Charlotte, N.C., and Cape Coral, Fla.

Chief Vines also served as the Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice under the Reagan Administration. In that capacity, he was responsible for distributing more than \$300 million in federal grants to local law enforcement agencies.

An FBI National Academy graduate, Chief Vines was recently elected president of the Police Executive Research Forum.



Jan Hart is the First Assistant City Manager for the City of Dallas. She supervises four assistant city managers and has operational management responsibilities for all city departments.

Hart first joined the City of Dallas in 1970 as a research analyst. In 1972, she was employed by the North Texas Council of Governments. She also served as a legislative intern for the United States Senate and later as consultant to the Texas State House of Representatives.

In 1977, she returned to the City of Dallas as a research and analysis supervisor. Hart has served Dallas as an acting director of the Office of Human Development, an assistant city auditor, the city controller, the director of budget and research and an assistant city manager.



Sam Gonzales is an assistant chief of police with the Dallas Police Department. As commander of the Patrol East Bureau, he commands one-half of the department's field officers.

A 25-year veteran, Gonzales has held assignments in the Dallas Police Department's Patrol Bureau, Vice Division, Intelligence Division, Internal Affairs Division, Detention Services Division, Identification Division and Community Services Division.

An FBI National Academy graduate, he is the recipient of a departmental Certificate of Merit Award and a Marksmanship Award.