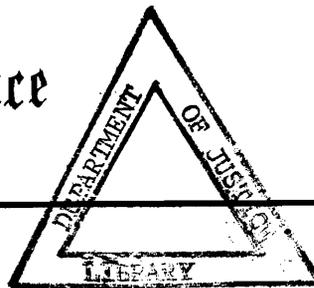




Department of Justice



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San Francisco--Attorney General John N. Mitchell today (Monday) urged private organizations and the business community to "enlist in the war against crime.

Warning that "crime is crushing us," the new Attorney General based his first major speech on President Nixon's theme:

"We are approaching the limits of what government alone can do. We must reach beyond government and enlist the legions of the concerned and the committed."

"Today," the Attorney General explained, "millions of Americans want to enlist. Throughout the recent political campaign, we heard: 'What can I do? I am willing to help.'"

Mr. Mitchell then outlined a suggested program for voluntary participation, at both the national and local levels, to maximize the effectiveness of the private sector.

A Private War Chest

"While the Federal government can contribute substantially (to defeat crime)," he said, "it will not be enough to underwrite the entire nationwide program."

"Only with the aid of the private sector," he said, "can we hope to fulfill our needs. At present there is no private war chest for combatting crime."

"The logical approach," he explained, "would be a voluntary program...This fund raising could take the form of a unified national drive bringing together voluntary organizations, professional groups, business and even individuals."

He added that "it would seem advisable that--on a national scale--they pool their fund raising efforts and coordinate their project planning."

Local Crime Coordinating Councils

Mr. Mitchell said that "I must emphasize to you my belief that crime is basically a local problem...Thus, if crime is to be reduced--assaulted effectively on the local level--there must be professional guidance and cooperation between government and the private sector."

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"It further would appear," he said, "that the most effective way to secure coordination of local government and the private sector is through the establishment of local crime coordinating councils--councils composed of official representatives from law enforcement, the courts, the corrections system and the social welfare agencies as well as representatives from private professional groups, volunteer organizations and private enterprise."

The Federal Role

The Attorney General explained that President Nixon is considering implementation of three proposals to further facilitate the anti-crime efforts of voluntary agencies.

"---A Cabinet Level Council on Law Enforcement." This Council, he explained, "would have the duty of suggesting over-all policies of the Federal government, of adjusting the Federal-state relationship on major crime control programs and their funding, and of delineating national priorities for this combined government-private sector cooperation."

"---'Town Hall' meetings on the crime problem." These meetings, he said, "would be held in a number of large cities and small communities...The average citizen could come to tell his side of the story..."

"---A National Information Center." This Center, he said, "would be a clearinghouse for the hundreds of projects...(It) could guide you to public and private sources of information...(and) available funding."

The Attorney General also said that he believed substantial Federal funds could reach private anti-crime programs through the \$300 million which the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration will spend next year.