The 1996 National Crime Prevention Strategy

by

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Origin and development of the NCPS

The initiative to develop a National Crime Prevention Strategy began in early February 1995 as a response to President Mandela's address at opening of Parliament, which raised concerns about crime.

> The situation cannot be tolerated in which our country continues to be engulfed by the crime wave which includes murder, crimes against women and children, drug trafficking, armed robbery, fraud and theft. We must take the war to the criminals and no longer allow the situation in which we are mere sitting ducks of those in our society who, for whatever reason, are bent to engage in criminal and anti-social activities. Instructions have therefore already gone out to the Minister of Safety and Security, the National Commissioner of the Police Service and the security organs as a whole to take all necessary measures to bring down the levels of crime. (President N R Mandela, 17 Feb 1995, Cape Town)

Part of the response to the President's speech was the development of the SAPS' 1995 'Community Safety Plan', a package of short-term policing measures aimed at tackling the priority crimes in the country. In May 1995, an inter-departmental strategy team, composed largely of civilian officials, began the process of drafting a long-term crime prevention strategy, which would become known as the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS). The intention was that the long-term strategy would tackle the root causes of crime, in parallel to the Police's Community Safety Plan, which would deliver more effective responses to crimes which had already been committed or planned. This bifurcation is essential to an understanding of the shift in government crime prevention policy in the five years since the NCPS was adopted. At that time, the tough, crime combating approach was contained in the Community Safety Plan (and later the various 'Police Plans'), and the planning and implementation processes for those were entirely separate to those for the NCPS.

The Ministers responsible for initiating the NCPS did not give detailed guidance to the drafters, instead encouraged an extremely broad approach:

> Cabinet has asked us to design the process which will eventually culminate in a comprehensive and holistic National Crime Prevention Strategy. The NCPS which eventually emerges should be owned by the broadest possible cross-section of South Africa's population, and should go beyond a mere police response to crime. … In considering the process which should be followed, this

> Committee should bear in mind the complexity of the causes of crime and therefore pay proper attention to political, social and economic causes and manifestations of crime. … If this Committee succeeds with its task, the NCPS could result in answers to the question: What is crime prevention all about? It could result in a recognized and co-ordinated government response to crime, and in a greater role for civil society and communities in the prevention of crime. (Mufamadi May 1995)

At the same time that the NCPS was being developed, the National Growth and Development Strategy (GDS) of Government was launched. In an effort to integrate the crime prevention approach with the overall socio-economic development approach, the NCPS became one of the 'pillars' of the National Growth and Development Strategy.

> We can already define the six pillars of our Growth and Development Strategy. They are not new. In fact they have emerged by clustering the key areas identified in departmental and provincial policies and plans. Their power is their simplicity. Although not every issue of importance to every department is covered explicitly, these pillars aim to encompass and crystallise all our work. They are as follows:
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> - Investing in people as the productive and creative core of the economy, especially the poor majority;
> - Creating employment on a massive scale, while building a powerfully competitive South African and Southern African economy;
> - Investment in household and economic infrastructure, both to facilitate growth and to improve the quality of life for the poor;
> - A national crime prevention strategy to protect the livelihood of our people, secure the wealth of the country and promote investment;
> - Building efficient and effective government as a responsive instrument of delivery and empowerment, able to serve all South Africans while directing government resources primarily to meet the needs of the poor majority
> - Welfare safety nets which aim to draw the poorest and most vulnerable groups progressively into the mainstream of the economy and society. (Deputy President TM Mbeki, 27 November 1995)
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> Although the National Growth and Development Strategy was abandoned by government not long after the NCPS was adopted, the inclusion of crime prevention in an economic development strategy was symbolically important. For the first time, crime prevention was recognized as one of the key national priorities. The contextualisation of crime prevention within the six pillars of the NGDS made links between crime and the economic development of the country and its people, which had not been seen before in government policy.

By early 1996, the drafting of the NCPS was in its final phases, and Business Against Crime (BAC) had been established and began to assist the process. An early draft of the NCPS was presented to key ANC Ministers and officials from their departments before its first presentation to the Cabinet Committee on Security and Intelligence. At that meeting, the ANC Ministers expressed their unease with a strategy that was purely long-term in

nature. They instructed the drafters to add an additional component to the strategy document, reflecting the current actions and short-term plans of the range of government departments involved in crime reduction. Already the Ministers were aware that there constituency was hungry, not for 'more plans' – the popular interpretation of the plethora of government policymaking that characterized the early post-democracy period – but for a tough approach to criminals. In response to the Ministers' concerns, a chapter was added to the draft Strategy, describing the measures already being implemented by the different Departments in respect of the seven identified priority crimes. This section reflected the need to demonstrate short-term crime combating strategies as well as longer-term prevention approaches. It demonstrated that many Government Departments were already taking steps to deal with the priority crimes, but also clearly exposed the lack of co-ordination among government agencies.

The NCPS was approved by Cabinet in May 1996, and launched in the final days of the Government of National Unity. It was welcomed by all the parties in government, the ANC, the IFP and the NNP. However, in a massive public-relations gaffe, the NCPS was launched shortly after SAPS National Commissioner George Fivaz announced the launch of the "1996 Police Plan". The resultant confusion between the SAPS' strategy and the government's long-term crime prevention agenda reinforced the gulf between immediate short-term responses to rising crime, and the need for a developmental crime prevention agenda which could ensure an eventual decline in the crime figures.

Despite the problems associated with its public launch, the NCPS began to introduce a new paradigm for dealing with crime in South Africa. Some of the key concepts that it introduced were:

- Crime cannot be reduced using only law enforcement and criminal justice responses. States must also introduce methods to prevent crime. This is clear from the international experience of rising crime rates over the past fifty years, despite parallel increases in expenditure on criminal justice.
- The criminal justice system cannot operate effectively unless there is better co-operation between the departments which constitute the system, and integration of the things they do as part of the system.
- The government cannot deal with crime on its own. The institutions of government, in all three tiers, must work with each other and with civil society to overcome crime. This is one of the key elements of the 'social crime prevention' approach.
- Crimes are different, and must be 'dis-aggregated' if effective prevention strategies are to be designed and implemented.
- Prevention efforts need to be focused on victims and potential victims of crime, and not merely on perpetrators, as traditional systems of criminal justice tend to be.
- Prevention efforts need to take cognizance of fear of crime, as well as of real crime patterns. The success of the NCPS would be in reducing fear, as well as in reducing crime.

Four types of prevention (pillars) were described in the original NCPS and seven national priority crimes identified. What was never well conceptualized or communicated was the intersection between the types of prevention, and the priority crimes. This led to a belief that the main implementation approach should be a focus on the 'pillars' – an approach which saw structures and processes in isolation from the content of the crimes they deal

with.

Implementing the NCPS

The NCPS document proposed a number of 'national programmes', but provided scant detail on how these programmes should be developed and implemented. After the adoption of the NCPS, Business Against Crime took the initiative to assist government with an investigation of problems and possible solutions in the criminal justice process, as a means of kickstarting the activities envisaged in 'Pillar 1' of the NCPS, the programme dealing with criminal justice reform. BAC arranged for Andersen Consulting to perform a 'pre-scoping exercise' in the criminal justice system, to identify key blockages and possible points of intervention. Thus the first significant activity in the life of the NCPS was focused on the criminal justice system ('Pillar 1') rather than on the situational or social approaches to prevention envisaged in some of the other pillars. The BAC consultants recommended a priority list of areas for intervention. The priorities were:

- To develop systems for enterprise-level (system-wide) management of people, processes and information, including information technology. This sent a strong message to government about the problems created by each department working in isolation from, and often at odds with, the others involved in the criminal justice process.
- To improve systems of crime reporting, recording and investigation at police stations and in detective units.
- To improve processes and administration in the courts
- To provide 'social support' which would prevent people from becoming victims or perpetrators of crime, and support people who were victims of crime
- To improve the administration of juvenile justice and the systems for dealing with incarceration of juvenile suspects and offenders
- To improve sentence enforcement, reduce escapes and parole violations.

The NCPS document did not promise that Government would make available more resources for crime prevention, but encouraged Departments to rationalise existing resources and allocate them to activities aimed at reducing the identified priority crimes and at the NCPS national programmes. This re-prioritisation process was one of the most painful aspects of the transformation process in government overall, and was not likely to deliver significant funds to enable the implementation of new policies such as the NCPS. Fortuitously, in September of 1996, the Reconstruction and Development Fund made available a cross-departmental fund of R174 Million, to fund implementation of the NCPS. The unusual and sudden appearance of a large pot of funds quickly exposed inter-departmental rivalries and differences of emphasis in departments' understanding of crime *prevention*. (These differences would re-emerge in the later debates between social crime prevention and law enforcement approaches). The decisions on allocation of the RDP Funds were based on the findings of the Andersen investigation. They planted the seeds of what is now known as the integrated justice system initiative (the IJS), encouraging inter-departmental collaboration and an approach which emphasized information technology as a key tactic to achieve streamlining in the criminal justice system. Today the IJS initiative is the flagship of the government's crime prevention programme.

In October 1996, Bernie Fanaroff (formerly the head of the Reconstruction and

Development Programme in the President's Office) was appointed in the Department of Safety and Security as co-ordinator of the NCPS. His appointment gave the NCPS some political stature within the senior echelons of government, and he was able to interact with a wide range of government departments, many of whom had previously never considered themselves players in crime reduction. Fanaroff and Azhar Cachalia (the Secretary for Safety and Security) established a range of structures for decision-making and support for the NCPS, and maintained a strong relationship with Business Against Crime.

In mid-1996, the process of provincial mobilization behind the NCPS was initiated, as envisaged in the final chapter of the original document. The national department of Safety and Security began holding 'provincial crime prevention summits'. The aims of the summits were:

- To identify provincial crime prevention priorities
- To identify provincial roleplayers for possible crime prevention programmes
- To identify location and responsibility for provincial programs
- To establish provincial co-ordination teams for crime prevention programmes
- To involve all government departments and civil society organizations in crime prevention activity in the provinces.

This approach to the summits was more focused on implementation of the NCPS than on a participative, rolling-out process of policy consultation and refinement, as envisaged in the original strategy document. Already this demonstrated a shift from participative policy-making towards implementation (or 'delivery', as it later came to be known). Little was done in these early months to reach local authorities and mobilize them in the prevention effort, and this became a focus of the subsequent White Paper on Safety and Security in 1998.

The NCPS co-ordinating office set u a number of committees and was increasingly given responsibility for new government initiatives related to crime. Most of the projects envisaged in the Andersen scooping report were implemented. Some of the programmes identified in the original NCPS – like gun control, vehicle crime, corruption, juvenile justice and victim empowerment – had been conceptualized or implemented. New projects had been added, mainly by the Ministers (who were facing increased public pressure and a series of crises in the criminal justice system). These included security systems at prisons to reduce escapes, investigations into bail administration, management of the awaiting trial prisoner population, border control and illegal immigration, drug abuse, gangs, domestic violence, and school safety.

By the end of 1997, it was clear that the NCPS was trying to manage too many issues, and it was suggested that projects should be evaluated for their contribution to the larger goal of crime reduction. There were two key reasons for the concentration of government's crime prevention efforts around the NCPS office. Firstly, the NCPS office was staffed largely by people who were (politically) trusted by the ANC Ministers – it was made up mainly of civilians, rather than police officers, and most of them had joined the public service after the ANC's first election victory. Secondly, the Ministers had their hands full, trying to direct the process of transformation in each government department. In the security sector, this entailed not only rebuilding public confidence in the institutions of government, but also – simultaneously – managing complex organizational change processes in large

bureaucracies, and supporting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process. The Ministers were largely concerned with restructuring, re-planning and re-directing their departments, and had little or no capacity to develop innovative responses to the burgeoning crime problem. They were also skeptical of some of the crime-fighting tactics proposed by senior officials in the criminal justice system, most of whom had served the apartheid regime. It was therefore unsurprising that they tended to assign an increasing number of increasingly complex crime and criminal justice issues to a small group of trusted civil servants in the NCPS office and their respective Ministries.

Financing the NCPS

Criminal justice consumes a large, and - until recently - rapidly growing, share of South Africa's national budget. In the late 1980's, the about 5.5% of the budget of the South African government was devoted to the main criminal justice departments. Rapid growth in the police budget in particular (especially in 1990/1) meant that by 1994/5, 9.1% of the budget was devoted to the these departments, and the proportion spent on criminal justice currently stands at over 10%.

The original RDP funds allocated to the NCPS largely served to build, renovate or replace infrastructure in key areas of the criminal justice system. This meant that the bulk of the money actually spent did not represent the implementation of crime prevention policy, as much as it represented a process for replacing infrastructure – a process that could, alternatively, have been the responsibility of the departments concerned. Examples of this include:

- the improvement of security infrastructure at prisons to reduce the number of escapes from custody;
- the purchase of furniture and equipment for offices of the Department of Justice in former TBVC areas; and
- the building or renovation of structures to house juvenile offenders.

Apart from the concern about whether these projects could/should have been the responsibility of the relevant departments, the fact that the NCPS funded these infrastructural projects may have created the impression in state departments that the NCPS was a source of funds with which departments can supplement their budgets, rather than a source of funds for genuinely new *prevention* activities.

Government budgeting happens in a medium-term expenditure framework, which runs on a three-year cycle. This meant that the implementers of the NCPS faced a situation, for two years, in which their budgets had made no provision for new NCPS activities. This led to frustration (both on the part of officials and concerned civil society groups) with the lack of implementation of NCPS activities. However, in recent years, many NCPS programmes have been accommodated in the budgets of the criminal justice departments, and the Treasury has taken a more active role in managing the negotiations between these departments to decide on which projects are funded and which departments receive funds for implementation of NCPS priority programmes.

Managing the NCPS: the structures

The NCPS document proposed a range of structures to enable improved inter-departmental co-operation around crime prevention. It proposed a National Committee of Director-Generals, of Ministers, and of senior departmental officials. It proposed similar structures at provincial and local government levels. The NCPS was based on the assumption that integrated programmes requiring the participation of more than one Department, and integrated inter-departmental planning structures, would enhance the co-ordination which was previously lacking between the different Departments dealing with crime in South Africa. This approach assumed that co-operation between the departments would arise naturally and spontaneously when they were required to work together on the identified cross-sectoral programmes set out in the document. It was soon obvious that co-operation did not arise naturally or spontaneously, because almost all of the financial and performance incentives in government act against co-operation and integration of effort and very few, if any, reward co-operation directly. To develop and maintain co-operation therefore required a great deal of effort, leadership, the maintenance of project management disciplines and a management information system.

The NCPS provided a framework for problem solving, in which national government departments, different tiers of government, and organisations from civil society would be brought together in order to identify and implement multi-agency solutions. The success of the NCPS is therefore completely dependent on the quality of co-operation, agreed and improved focus on joint priorities, and the sharing of information. The institutionalisation of co-operation is essential for it to be effective and sustained. Implementers of the NCPS are still struggling to find incentives that encourage system-wide co- operation and integration without compromising the requirements of public financial accountability and performance management. However, since 1998, levels of commitment and co-ordination have improved, for a variety of reasons:

- the implementation of a project management system to govern all NCPS projects
- the appointment of very senior departmental officials to lead each NCPS project
- the new 'cluster' system adopted by the Cabinet in 1999, which sees the NCPS Ministries working more closely together
- the new approach to cluster budgeting adopted by the Treasury
- the cumulative experience of co-operation and co-ordination among officials involved in implementing NCPS programmes.

It is important to note, however, that in almost all of the multi-agency projects of the NCPS, there was a stage in which the project has had to be driven from the centre (such as the NCPS office or one of the Ministries), until the project had gained some momentum. This experience provided a strong argument for the retention of some central capacity to oversee and co-ordinate all NCPS activity. This argument was made in the 1998 White Paper on Safety and Security, which proposed a 'National Crime Prevention Centre' to be housed in the Secretariat for Safety and Security.

The beginning of the re-think?

In 1997, an internal review of NCPS activities recommended that

- A summary of the NCPS should be redrafted to capture the original intentions in a clearer way, and to incorporate the programme-driven approach by means of which the NCPS was then being implemented.
- A National Victim Survey should be conducted. (This was subsequently completed.)
- The priority focus for the NCPS for the medium term should be the reduction in the incidents of serious violent crime, (especially gun crime) and the reduction of corruption in order to create public confidence in the criminal justice system.
- NCPS programmes should be prioritized in departmental budgets, and that the NCPS should be reflected in the strategic objectives of the various participating departments.
- Reform of the criminal justice system and the long-term preventive and corrective approach should not be sacrificed in the face of short-term pressures to respond to changing crime trends.
- More attention should be devoted to the problem of organised crime and, in particular transnational organised crime.
- Attention should be given to fast-tracking the diversion of offenders before the enter the criminal justice system, by means of measures such as spot fines, admission of guilt fines, or a point system for traffic offenders, in order to reduce the burden on the system.
- An appropriate strategy for implementing "zero-tolerance" law enforcement should be agreed with the NCPS framework, taking into account the priority problem of violent crime and the issues of capacity and of diversion.
- Alternative (non-custodial) sentencing options should be considered.
- Renewed focus should be placed on the management of courts, including human resource development, infrastructure and training in the justice and prosecution sectors. There was a critical need for "unblocking" of the justice system.
- Medium to long-term programmes should not be developed in isolation from what is happening at the short-term, operational level. One way of achieving this would be to implement pilot projects in order to test new tactics.
- A link between longer-term programmes and shorter-term operational initiatives *within* each department should be created and maintained, as well as similar links between departments. It was proposed that a National Operations Co-ordinating Committee (NOCOC) should be established to deal with purely operational matters between the NCPS departments.
- The high rate of recidivism is a key issue which should be taken up more actively within the NCPS.

Many of these issues should have been addressed in the original NCPS. They did inform subsequent developments in government crime reduction approaches, and continue to shape the policy agenda today. Two critical conceptual links were made in this period: the need to link enforcement and prevention, and the need to link immediate (short term) actions against crime with the longer-term processes envisaged in the original NCPS. These two themes were, to some extent, a reflection of tensions within the public service more widely – tensions between the old guard, whose strength lay in tough tactics and immediate action, and the new appointees, who tended to emphasise planning.

The 1998 White Paper on Safety and Security

The 1998 White Paper on Safety and Security deepened government's policy approach to

crime prevention in South Africa, and suggested areas for revision of the original NCPS, based, in part, on the experiences captured in the 1997 NCPS Review.

In addition to making changes in respect of the institutional arrangements within the Department of Safety and Security, and shifting the emphasis of policing to crime investigation, visible policing and improved service to victims; the White Paper made a number of policy proposals in respect of crime prevention.

The key conceptual guidance provided in the White Paper was that policing (law enforcement) and crime prevention should be integrated and "inter-locking". This aimed to address the rift between the endeavours of the NCPS and those of the SAPS in the Department of Safety and Security. The White Paper provided a new definition of crime prevention, which included "all activities which reduce, deter or prevent the occurrence of specific crimes firstly, by altering the environment in which they occur, secondly by changing the conditions which are thought to cause them, and thirdly by providing a strong deterrent in the form of an effective criminal justice system". This was an attempt to encapsulate both criminal justice and social crime prevention within government's crime reduction agenda.

In the area of social crime prevention, the White Paper introduced new approaches such as "developmental" crime prevention aimed at young people and families; "situational crime prevention", and "community crime prevention", which are targeted at specific local areas, at the same time as reinforcing the already-entrenched emphasis on criminal justice reform.

The White Paper went further than the original NCPS to define the roles of national, provincial and local government in respect of crime prevention; and placed significant emphasis on a new role for local authorities in crime reduction. The White Paper proposed that local authorities could contribute in two key ways: by ensuring effective enforcement of traffic laws and local bylaws, and by playing a role in the local co-ordination and initiation of social crime prevention programmes. Although shifting the crime prevention function to local level was a logical and internationally-proven approach, it failed to take effect in South Africa, primarily because the new policy was not accompanied by new funds or capacity-building for local authorities. Other chapters in this book refer in more detail to the problems faced by local authorities in attempting to implement the vision contained in the White Paper.

The 1998 NCPS Review

Shortly before the end of the first Cabinet's term of office, a Review of the NCPS was commissioned. The Review drew on a range of official reports that had made comments on the NCPS since its launch in 1996, including the 1997 Auditor-General's Report on the NCPS and the 1998 Presidential Review Commission. The findings of the Review were hard-hitting:

- Drastic improvements are necessary if there is to be a significant impact on crime and violence. The NCPS cannot continue with incremental steps.
- Much more focus is required between the cluster of criminal justice departments, much tighter prioritisation of efforts and resources, and much more integration of

the work of the different departments and agencies.
- Efforts should be integrated around a small number of high-impact priority programmes aimed at dealing with priority crimes.
- Government's approach to crime reduction must be based on knowledge and information. It must be possible to learn from successes and failures and to monitor progress on a regular basis. Increased interface with international prevention efforts, and exchanges of information and intelligence between government agencies must be facilitated.
- There must be integration of short-term (operational) and long-term (preventive) measures which, together, will impact on priority crimes.

The recommendations of the NCPS review were made to the new Ministers responsible for the NCPS, after the June 1999 election, and correlated easily with the new approach of the Mbeki Cabinet.

After the second election: a new political era for crime fighting in SA

The new Ministers in the Justice, Safety and Security and Prisons portfolios commenced their terms of office with remarks and policy statements intended to clearly differentiate them from their predecessors. This was made clear by Minister Maduna (Minister of Justice) soon after his appointment:

> As our country embarks on the second democratic term, we have to reflect on the shortcomings of the previous term and resolve to improve significantly on performance. While over the last five years the Department was able to lay a solid legislative and indeed infra-structural foundation for a strong and responsive justice system, many problems continue to plague our justice system and at times evoking public sentiments that the new democratic order is more sympathetic to human rights concerns of criminals and less sensitive to the plight of victims of crime and the general sense of insecurity that continues to besiege our country. (Maduna, June 1999)

His colleague, Minister of Safety and Security, adopted a tough tone from the outset:

> The criminals have obviously declared war against the South African public. … We are ready, more than ever before, not just to send a message to the criminals out there about our intentions, but more importantly to make them feel that 'die tyd vir speletjies is nou verby'. We are now poised to rise with power and vigour proportional to the enormity and vastness of the aim to be achieved. (Tshwete June 1999)

The new Ministers infused the NCPS with the rhetoric of 'war on crime', distancing themselves from its origins as the 'soft', developmental side of government's strategy to deal with crime. Although perhaps a perversion of its original intents, this approach permitted the survival of the NCPS, understood now mainly as a mechanism for government co-ordination.

The new government followed the recommendations of the 1998 NCPS Review in

prioritizing the following issues:

- Crime Involving Firearms:The easy availability of firearms is a major contributor to the prevalence of inter-personal violence and lethal crime in South Africa. Statistics on offenders and victims in gun killings from the National Victim Survey and the Department of Health Mortality Survey showed that almost all offenders and victims are young men from ages 18 to 30 (offenders) and 16 to 35 (victims);
- Organised crime: A recognition, largely absent from the original NCPS, that much of South Africa's crime problem is organised. By tackling organised crime, government believes it will be able to impact on vehicle crime, drug trafficking, trade in illegal weapons and endangered species as well as money laundering and certain forms of commercial crime.
- White collar crimes: Commercial crimes, although often perceived as "victimless" rob the South African economy of billions of Rand every year, thereby reducing opportunities for economic growth and development. A continued focus on white collar crime would ensure that the strategy is balanced to include a focus on "the crimes of the powerful".
- Inter-group conflict:This type of crime needed to remain a national priority in the light of continuing conflicts in KwaZulu Natal, the taxi industry, and the Western Cape. This focus would government to deal with problems of vigilante groups, organised gangs, and political conflict.
- Vehicle Theft and Hijackings: The figures for vehicle crime in South Africa remain unacceptably high and the violence which has come to be associated with these crimes generates high levels of fear in our community.
- Corruption Within a Criminal Justice System: A recognition that, if this problem is not effectively addressed, it will undermine all government efforts in respect of crime prevention.
- Inter-personal violence: Making more explicit some of the content of the NCPS, this new focus will enable government to prioritise violence against women; violence against children, murder; assault and aggravated assault, which make up the bulk of South Africa's violent crime problem. A new focus would require social crime prevention to prevent young people from becoming perpetrators of violent crimes, and a range of strategies to prevent certain groups of people from becoming victims, and repeat victims, of these crimes (e.g. women, children and the elderly).

The selection of these priorities showed that some lessons had been learnt from the early years of the NCPS: violent crime needed to be prioritized, as did organized crime. The new approach to the NCPS was strengthened by the emergence of the National Director of Public Prosecutions (and the Scorpions) as major roleplayers in the new 'war on crime'. With strong direction from the President, inter-departmental co-ordination improved significantly in the post 1999 period. These developments were driven by a political leadership which was far more sensitive to the concerns of the citizenry – no longer focused largely on the transformation of the bureaucracy, and more concerned with delivery of services, government began responding to crime with the sense of urgency and toughness that their constituents demanded. By March of 2000, opinion polls found that public confidence in government's ability to control crime had increased markedly (Business Day 9/3/2000).

Perhaps the most critical shift in the government's crime prevention approach in this period

was the merging of what had previously been described as 'short-term', operational, or immediate actions, with the longer term strategies for criminal justice reform and social prevention. For the new Ministers, there was no separation between police and army roadblocks in Hillbrow, and the information technology complexities of the IJS: they considered both to be part of the NCPS. This was evident in the Minister of Safety and Security's first speech after his appointment to the position.

The criminals have obviously declared war against the South African public. In response our Government formulated the National Crime Prevention Strategy which would serve as a basis for the eradication of the criminal activity which has pervaded practically all spheres of life in our country. It is not that Government did not have a plan aimed at ridding our society of this particular scourge. What is required now is a ruthless implementation of that plan. (Tshwete June 1999)

Future plans for dealing with crime: the 2001 Budget Review

The 2001 Budget Review is a sound indicator of future government policy, because it defines government's expenditure priorities for the 2001/02 to 2003/04 period. The new priorities all contribute to the crime prevention effort:

- Economic growth and job creation,
- Reducing inequality and promoting social development, and
- Strengthening the provision of safety and justice.

That safety and justice are regarded as priorities on a par with job creation and development indicates that delivery in relation to crime and violence, safety and justice is seen as key to the success of government as a whole. For that reason, the 2001 Budget reflected significant additional resources having been allocated to the criminal justice departments. These allocations, coming on the back of the rapid rise in spending on criminal justice over the past decade, need to be considered in relation to the high levels of crime and low levels of prosecutorial success, as well as the pressures confronting the prisons.

The additional resources allocated to the criminal justice cluster, together with the manner in which the baseline budgets have been allocated to the various functions and activities which make up the work of the system, reflect the following priorities:

- Improving personnel remuneration while growing personnel numbers modestly,
- Investing in supportive equipment, supplies and infrastructure, and
- Investing in prison accommodation.

Government intends the budgets of the criminal justice departments to grow at rates well in excess of anticipated inflation in this financial year and for the next two years. Overall, the budget will grow by 2.9 per cent more than the rate of inflation between 2000/01 and 2003/04. The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development will see the fastest budget growth of 7.6 per cent a year over the period, with much of that growth concentrated in 2001/02. (This is true even if the once-off allocations for TRC-related reparations are stripped out for the 2001/02 and 2002/03 financial years). Correctional Services (3.2 per cent a year), SAPS (1.8 per cent a year) and the ICD (0.1 per cent a year) follow the pace

set by the Justice budget.

The growing allocations to the individual departments are intended to fund the following spending programmes over the next three years:

SAPS

- The recruitment of additional staff to stabilise the size of the establishment
- The implementation of a special salary dispensation for police officers which will see police officers receiving an additional 3 to 4 per cent annual increase in 2001/02 relative to all other civil servants
- The purchase of new vehicles to improve police responsiveness
- The financing of the costs of the implementation of the Automated Fingerprint Identification System
- The maintenance and upgrading of police stations

Justice

- The recruitment of additional staff in the Directorate of Special Operations and the Prosecution Service
- Improving the salaries of judges and some magistrates
- The financing of TRC reparations
- The improvement of the solvency of the Legal Aid Board while also managing the transition of legal aid to a public defender model
- The implementation of IT systems in, and the provision of IT equipment to members of, in the Department

Corrections

- The financing of the operational costs associated with the rapid rise in prisoner numbers
- The provision of more prison space over the medium-term

In the Budget Review, the government has defined a policy agenda that strongly supports a criminal justice and law enforcement approach, with little attention to the social crime prevention approach proposed in the 1998 White Paper. Although this shift is hardly new, it demonstrated their response to the policy-makers' dilemma that Simpson describes:

> For policy innovation to be effective in a society in transition there has to be at some level an active process of acquiring public support. There is no question that the [long-term crime] prevention agenda is the best vehicle for dealing with violence and crime, but, because we did not have short-term enforcement measures that built popular confidence upfront, the wider prevention agenda was discredited. The people on the ground were not feeling the effect of any short-term safety and security measures. The lesson learnt is not so much about how we strategically defend creative policy intervention, but about how we build the mechanisms which anticipate shifting popular concerns, and build public confidence, at the outset. (Simpson 2000)

The future of social crime prevention hangs in the balance. Some social programmes are under way, led from within the SAPS National Division on Crime Prevention. They include projects dealing with rape, local government capacity-building in crime prevention, and schools safety. If those projects are sustained and evaluated, and benefits can be shown, perhaps they will lead to renewed interest in the long-term, developmental approach to crime prevention.

Those committed to the promotion of social crime prevention in South Africa would do well to bear in mind that the promotion of a preventive agenda is a battle that still needs to be regularly fought, even in countries with a far longer history of 'war on crime' than ours.

> For the past twenty years, criminal justice practices have been so profoundly ill-conceived that they have been bound to fail. As the failures have accumulated, the justice system has responded by adding more of the same policies. Prison and jail populations in this nation have tripled since 1980, and law enforcement expenditures have quadrupled, but polls show that most Americans do not feel safe. Legislatures lengthen sentences and add more mandatory minimum penalties. More police are hired, more prisons built. Still, we do not feel safe. In response, policy-makers continue to expand the same criminal justice apparatus: more enforcement, longer sentences, more prisons. If this 'get tough' strategy worked, the results would be apparent by now. They are not. (Donziger et al:1996:198)

Perhaps the Ministers responsible for crime prevention in South Africa are already learning this lesson. In his Budget Vote in Parliament this year, the Minister for Safety and Security conceded that current SAPS crime fighting methods "have not yielded the desired result". "Let us find an alternative", Tshwete told parliament, "we all underestimated how difficult it would be to transform the SAPS and the whole criminal justice system." (Business Day 8 June 2001)

Note:

The shift in the focus of the provincial processes, from consultation to implementation, was criticized by Scharf and Artz (1996)

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