

REPORT OF THE GRAND JURY
FOR APRIL TERM, 1995

To

The Honorable J. Randall Wyatt, Jr.
Judge, Division II, Criminal Court
Davidson County, Tennessee

The Term of Office for this Grand Jury began on April 10, 1995, and concluded on June 30, 1995. Scheduled meeting days were Monday, Tuesday, and Friday each week.

Far and away the greatest concern of this Grand Jury, can our Metropolitan Government cope with and begin to make strides against drug related crimes in our community?

Over sixty percent (60%) of the 800 plus Indictments brought before this Grand Jury were either directly or indirectly drug related. But most alarming was the fact that the majority of these involved young adults and even juveniles.

The relationship between drugs and crime is a complex one. Many drug users commit crimes to finance their habit and some criminals take drugs to help them commit their crimes. The high profits in the illicit drugs market attract organized crime as well as petty offenders hoping to make a quick profit. What is clear is that much of the crime experienced in our community is drug related.

The attraction of fast cash lifestyles and violence, together with the lack of acceptable role models, jobs, life opportunities and status in society, require urgent examination.

Enforcement, prevention, education, treatment, and rehabilitation are all crucial to a strategy of action which addresses drug use and community safety.

Members of this Grand Jury extend congratulations to the Metropolitan Police Department which was recently accredited by the International Association of Accreditation. World wide only 300 police departments have been accredited and just a few the size of Nashville.

A visit to the police Training Academy offered us the opportunity to interact with various instructors, and it dramatically emphasized the rigid standards a cadet candidate must meet in order to successfully complete this 26 week course. The selection process and entry level requirements placed on incoming candidates vividly explains the officer quality being graduated today.

Collectively the Patrol Division, Intelligence-Vice Division, Crime Suppression Units, Drug Task Force, and Aviation Section have worked diligently to apprehend drug offenders at all levels. This concerted effort has at least kept Nashville's drug problem "in check", and to date, rid it of serious gang elements.

Overcrowding in our correctional system, local and state, continues to be "the tail that wags the dog." Until funding is appropriated to provide sufficient space, criminals will continue to serve only 20 to 30 percent of their sentences. Recent legislation requiring violent crime offenders to serve a minimum of 80% of the prescribed sentence is to be applauded. However, our turnstile prison system for non-violent offenders will become totally unmanageable regarding percent of sentence time served.

