

FINAL GRAND JURY REPORT JANUARY TERM 1995

WALTER HECKMAN, FOREMAN

MARCH 31, 1995

The following is a consensus of this group's feelings and observations:

1. Before beginning their term, the Grand Jury should go to the property room and jail to observe drugs, evidence, etc. The Grand Jury should receive a list of what constitutes different charges. Example: (a) Possession of Controlled Substance for Resale -- amounts of drugs involved; (b) assault versus aggravated assault; and, (c) the difference between a misdemeanor versus a felony.
2. The Grand Jury is quite concerned about the condition of the Metropolitan Nashville Courthouse. We are aware that certain work is being done on the Courthouse, however, we feel that a total restoration is needed.
3. The person who is responsible for the Grand Jury and for calling alternates should be furnished with an answering machine in order that the members can leave a message after business hours.
4. An alternate should be brought to the Grand Jury every day in case a Grand Jury member does not appear; this would avoid leaving the panel short a member.
5. All cases involving physical assault on a police officer should be indicted as aggravated assault.
6. Due to the overcrowding of the jails, police officers are unable to jail offenders that they come in contact with, and the officers are unable to do as many drug stings as they would like.
7. Additional facilities are needed for housing prisoners. The Grand Jury is aware that it costs more to arrest and charge re-offenders than it would cost to initially house offenders for a longer period of time. We as taxpayers are willing to pay for this.
8. The Grand Jury feels the police officers in Nashville should be adequately compensated for the job they perform.
9. We feel that those individuals subpoenaed to the Grand Jury should have adequate knowledge and should be directly involved in the case.

10. We feel that a profile of individuals who are going deeper into domestic violence should be developed in order that police can keep track of them in order to help prevent more severe future crimes.
11. Support should be increased for all drug suppression units especially at the airport.
12. More truth in sentencing, including life sentences and those that may involve the death penalty.
13. We feel there should be more serious charges placed against repeat offenders.
14. Criminals in the jail should have less privileges including no weight room and less phone access, especially for individuals charged in domestic violence cases.
15. Bonds should be consistent and once set should not be reduced. One severe stalking case had the bond reduced from \$104,000 to \$2,500.
16. We feel more protection for domestic violence victims should be given.
17. More serious penalties should be looked at for certain charges including (a) stalking; and (b) "assault" in which there was extensive physical damage accomplished without the use of a weapon.
18. The Grand Jury is very concerned about the large number of juveniles not brought before the Grand Jury. They need to be charged as adults for serious crimes and not simply adjudicated through the juvenile court system.
19. This Grand Jury recommends that a separate Grand Jury panel should be created to hear only drug cases, similar to the DUI Grand Jury.

In conclusion, this Grand Jury would like to express its appreciation to the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department for their dedicated efforts on behalf of the Nashville community. We would also like to express our thanks to the members of the District Attorney General's office for their assistance and cooperation during this term.

Unanimously adopted by the Grand Jury
March 31, 1995
Walter Heckman, Foreman