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THE ROLE
OF FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
IN CRIME PREVENTION AND JUSTICE

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by

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Originally written for the Wisconsin State Legislative Study Committee on Faith-Based Approaches to Crime Prevention and Justice, the purpose of this paper is to frame the discussion surrounding the role of faith-based organizations in crime prevention and justice. It is a collaborative effort of Hudson's Crime Control Policy Center and the Welfare Policy Center.

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The Role of Faith-Based Organizations in Crime Prevention and Justice

Religion and Crime: a Sociological Perspective

Research on the relationship between religion and crime has tended to fall into three categories. The largest of these are studies that focus on individual beliefs and practices and their relationship to involvement in deviance and crime. A second category is based on ecological studies that consider whether religious practice at the community level influences levels of crime. In effect, these studies ask whether relatively more religious communities, in contrast to secular communities, have less crime. The third group of studies involve research on the effect of faith-based programs to reduce crime and deviance.

Individual Effects

The theoretical link between religion and crime is most apparent from a control theory perspective (Hirschi, 1969; Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990). Control theorists, as with many religious traditions, take the motivation for crime for granted. As part of our basic nature we all seek self-gratification and are thus prone to violating the rights of others for our own pleasure or profit. Through the socialization process, however, we develop a bond to others and we learn to control these self-centered interests. The more we develop relationships with conventional others, the more we are committed to and involved in legitimate activities, and the more we believe in a moral basis of right and wrong, the less likely it is we will engage in crime and delinquency.

Religiosity can be theorized to influence this social bond. Clearly, we anticipate that individuals committed to religious beliefs such as the Golden Rule and the imperatives of the Ten Commandments will be more likely to believe in the moral legitimacy of the criminal law. Similarly, religiosity may relate to closer attachments with parents and family, involvement in conventional activities, and to association with conventional peers and avoidance of risky behaviors such as drug and alcohol use. [1] Additionally, involvement in a social network such as a faith-based community may provide a degree of informal social control (e.g., adults looking out for the behavior of youths; youths concerned with approval within the network) that may otherwise be missing.

Despite this theoretical foundation, most criminologists have ignored the possibility that religion might play a role in reducing crime. As with the case of the role of religion and health (Larson and Larson, 1994), however, recent years have witnessed increasing attention to the possibility that religion might influence criminal behavior. Fortunately, two comprehensive reviews of the research findings on the religion-crime connection have recently been published. The first focuses on religion and juvenile delinquency and the second on religion and adult crime.

With the support of John DiIulio's "Jeremiah Project," David Larson and Byron Johnson (1998) conducted what they refer to as a "systematic review" of the studies on religion and juvenile delinquency. The advantage of the systematic review approach is that it provides a quantitative assessment of the research literature that can be replicated by other researchers. Larson and Johnson provide explicit criteria for how they chose the studies to review, how they analyzed the studies, and for assessing the overall evidence from a large body of studies. The first step in the review consisted of identifying 402 articles appearing in peer reviewed articles between 1980 and 1997 that made some mention of religion or related terms and

delinquency. Of these, 40 studies were identified that analyzed the potential relationship between religiosity and delinquency. As would be anticipated, the 40 studies varied in terms of methodological rigor. This variation becomes a measured variable in the systematic review whereby the authors can contrast the findings produced by studies employing more or less rigorous scientific standards.

Three-quarters of the studies reviewed found that measures of religiosity had a negative effect on delinquency (1998: 10). That is, the higher the score on the religiosity measure, the less delinquency. Only one study reported a positive relationship with the remainder of the studies yielding inconclusive results. In an interesting finding, the authors reported that of the nine studies that used the most comprehensive measures of religiosity,[2] all found that religion decreased delinquency. This contrasted with studies using simpler measures of religion such as a single item like church attendance. Similarly, the thirteen most rigorous studies in terms of assessing the reliability of the measure of religiosity all found that religion related to lower levels of delinquency. Thus, the general pattern of Larson and Johnson's review was that religiosity reduces delinquency with the pattern becoming stronger as the methodological rigor of the study was enhanced.

Larson and Johnson (1998) followed their review of existing research by conducting several original analyses on the impact of religiosity on delinquency. The first of these focused on data from the National Bureau of Economic Research's survey on inner-city African-American youths. The analysis revealed that religiosity, in this instance measured by church attendance, had both direct and indirect effects on delinquency and substance abuse. The direct effect indicated that church attendance reduced delinquency even when controlling for age, family structure and size, urban residence, and related variables (1998: 20). The indirect effect revealed that church attendance related to other conventional ac-

tivities and relationships that are associated with reduced delinquency.

The authors also used data from the National Youth Survey (NYS) to examine these issues for a national sample of urban African-American youth (1998). Consistent with the prior analysis, religiosity reduced levels of minor and general delinquency. It did not have an impact on serious delinquency, though the authors believe that it might be due to a small sample size of serious delinquents. The authors point out that the findings are consistent with a social control perspective but also note that religiosity may be acting as a "resiliency" factor that protects youth living in high-crime neighborhoods from being caught up in delinquency, drug, and gang activities.

Larson and Johnson (1998) extended this analysis using the NYS data by distinguishing between direct and indirect effects. As in the previous studies, religiosity related to less delinquency. Religiosity also was found to have strong indirect effects by influencing delinquent beliefs and peer associations. Religiosity led to less adherence to delinquent beliefs and fewer associations with delinquent peers both of which related to reduced delinquency.

The second review of the literature is provided by Evans and colleagues (1995). This review presents some of the controversies that have emerged in the research on crime and delinquency but finds that generally research has found religion to relate to lower levels of delinquency and crime. The authors then proceed to conduct their own analysis looking at the effect on adult crime, an area that has received less attention than delinquency. The study included measures of religiosity based on religious activity, salience, and beliefs. The researchers also considered the effects of denomination and involvement in religious networks. The study also controlled for secular influences such as attachment to others, fear of legal sanctions, and community and demographic characteristics. The analyses found that

religious activities (church attendance, reading religious materials, and listening to religious broadcasts) related to lower criminal activity after controlling for a variety of other factors.

Evans and colleagues go on to note that whereas the individual connection between religious activity and crime is clear in the study, it is also "likely that religious behavior…is entangled with and reinforced by association with other believers, religious friends, family members, and fellow parishioners (1995:212)." We would argue that these networks are also likely to inhibit criminal behavior.

Community Effects
Rather than examine the effects of individual beliefs on involvement in crime and delinquency, another group of researchers have considered whether the level of religious involvement at the community level relates to crime rates. For example, Rodney Stark and colleagues (1980) examined the relationship between church membership and crime in 193 metropolitan areas. They found that the greater the church membership, the lower the community's crime rate.

Olson (1990) extended this analysis by examining all counties in the West, Midwest, and Northeast United States. Thus, the analysis included rural as well as urban communities. Although there were some regional and denominational differences, the general pattern was quite similar to that discovered by Stark. Church membership related to lower levels of crime. Further, the pattern held after controlling for the effects of a number of demographic characteristics of the county population.

Similar to the points made above regarding the effect of religion on crime at the individual level, church membership is thought to act as a social control mechanism reducing levels of crime. As Evans et al. (1995:199) note, "Crime rates are generally lower in regions of the country where the religious ecology is dense."

Reasons for the Faith-Based Approach

Motivation for Police and Criminal Justice Agencies

Political leaders and criminal justice officials have increasingly recognized that government alone is limited in its ability to effectively address serious social and cultural problems such as crime (Goldsmith, 1997). One manifestation of this recognition is the call to "reinvent government." David Osborne and Ted Gaebler (1992) are well known for their urging that government act as a "catalyst" in energizing local resources and as a partner in finding "community owned" solutions to local problems.

Many of these ideas resonate with calls in the law enforcement field to move toward a community policing philosophy. Although definitions of community policing vary, common elements include the development of a police-citizen partnership, a prevention focus, and an emphasis on proactive enforcement and problem solving. Similarly, prosecutors, courts, and correctional agencies are increasingly recognizing that to move from merely processing cases to resolving neighborhood problems, there is a need for building these types of community partnerships and for proactively preventing crime. This has led to an emerging community justice movement.

From a community policing or community justice perspective, faith-based organizations (FBOs) offer a key neighborhood institution with which to translate abstract ideas of partnership and community building into reality. Particularly in our most crime-ridden neighborhoods, the church is often the institution that is available to create police-neighborhood partnerships. Similarly, if faith-based organizations can more effectively work with juveniles, substance abusers, or with inmates returning to the community, then they become a key resource for crime reduction. It is in this sense that criminal justice agencies are increasingly likely to recognize faith-based organizations as a key mediating institution for addressing crime problems (Woodson, 1998). The Reverend Mel Jackson captures the promise of this type of collaboration when he states, "The police force is committed to providing safety but there is an appropriate role for the church to partner with the police to help create a safer community (Goldsmith, 1998:1)."

Motivation for Faith-Based Communities

While criminologists and sociologists think in terms of "religiosity," the faith-based groups themselves think in terms of "mission." Even the Puritans who first settled in America did so with the idea of creating a "city set upon a hill—a religious colony which would serve as an example to the rest of the world. Both the Old and New Testaments, accepted by those who embraced the Judeo-Christian ethic for our nation, admonish believers to live exemplary lives, committed to good works and helping others. The idea of a church or religious organization reaching out to have a positive influence in the community is as old as most of the organizations themselves.

Until the mid-1900s, it had been the faith-based organizations, in fact, that had carried the bulk of the responsibility for the provision of social services in our country. In 1935, with the passage of the Social Security Act, the federal government stepped in to address the needs of the society; this was the result of the government's realization that economic disaster, expansive urban growth, and problems inherent in modernization made the social burdens too great for the private sector to continue to carry. Gradually, as government expanded its efforts, the faith community handed over more and more of its responsibility, and also changed the nature of its delivery service to more closely resemble the profes-

sional and bureaucratic style demonstrated by the government.

Charitable Choice, Section 104 of the 1996 welfare reform law, offered the possibility of a new social services model that incorporates the caring, selfless, mission-orientation of the faith community *with* the money and resources of government. This legislation allows a *partnering* of Church and State in a way that was prohibited in the past. It lets religious organizations receive federal TANF funds to provide transitional services for recipients moving from welfare to self-sufficiency, while allowing the religious organizations to retain that nature and motivation that makes them successful in providing social services. At the same time, it provides safeguards for the faith-based groups, the government, and the welfare beneficiaries.

Senator John Ashcroft has proposed an even larger provision, the "Charitable Choice Expansion Act" (S. 2046), which would extend the funding opportunities for faith-based organizations to include *most* federally-funded social services, including housing, substance-abuse prevention and treatment, juvenile services, child welfare services and others. That bill has been read twice in the Senate and referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

Searching for successful models in dealing with the current problems of drug addiction, juvenile crime, domestic violence and similar activities, government has recognized the group with a centuries-old tradition of caring for the poor, the disadvantaged, and the troubled sectors of our society—and one that has done so with a great deal of proficiency. That group is the faith community. Bringing to America the charitable practices of Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim and other faiths, religious congregations have always been known for giving not only of their money, but also of their time and talents to those of their own groups and the larger community around them.

There are a number of specific benefits from using faith-based organizations that operate from a sense of mission. Some of them include:

- A willingness to "go the second mile," to do *more* than might be expected.

- A presence in the community. Unlike people who simply go into a neighborhood to perform a specific service, or, even worse, expect people from the neighborhood to go outside the community to their facility, churches and other religious groups are located right in the neighborhoods. They are known as part of the community and have a reputation for the work they do among community members.

- The ability to be a bridge from the neighborhood to the larger community. Congregations, by nature of all the individual lives of its members, are usually represented throughout many areas of city and in all walks of life. As people in the neighborhood become involved with a congregation, they are exposed to life and people outside their own little worlds.

- An awareness that others can change. People of faith have seen their own lives change as a result of their beliefs, and they believe that others can be transformed as well.

- A sense of security. People involved in criminal or delinquent activity have often come from dysfunctional families where the only thing they can count on is the fact that there is nothing and no one they can count on. Congregations offer stability. The church, synagogue or mosque

was there yesterday; it will probably be there tomorrow.

- A sense of belonging. People often find "family" within the congregations—people with whom they can relate, and people who truly care about them. Some gang members have admitted they turned to gangs to find that acceptance they didn't find in their own homes. During this same strategic period of life, others have found a place in the Church.

- A deeper level of commitment. Unlike a job which they are doing just to get paid, people involved in faith-based programs, whether paid or voluntary, are usually doing the work "for God." This motivation keeps them working against obstacles, and continuing even in spite of failure on the part of those with whom they are working.

Areas of Involvement

This section of the report presents descriptions of faith-based efforts to address crime problems. Where available, we consider research on the impact of these programs. Here, however, we consider several studies suggesting that faith-based approaches may be promising.

How extensive is the faith-based community's outreach? According to Abraham McLaughlin of the Christian Science Monitor, spending by churches towards services for the needy exceeds $12 billion a year. This does not even include the countless numbers of volunteer hours toward social service programs and projects. Additionally, many FBOs provide services supported by state and federal funding. For example, Catholic Charities in Boston receive about 65 percent of its budget from state and federal grants and Lutheran Social Services in New York receive about 80 percent (Loconte, 1998).

According to a study conducted by Ram Cnaan of the Brookings Institute:

> *Ninety one percent of older urban congregations serve the larger community through day care, food banks, clothing drives, tutoring classes, after-school programs, healthcare programs, substance abuse counseling and more. Eighty percent of these beneficiaries are not members of the congregation (church) and most are neighborhood youth. The median number of hours a congregation contributes to community volunteer works is approximately 5,300 hours a year (DiIulio, 1998).*

Additionally, a 1990 study of over 2,100 black churches across the U.S. found that 70 percent of the churches operated or participated in one or more outreach programs including drug abuse and prevention programs, after school "safe havens", and day care facilities (DiIulio, 1998). One such study of African American congregations in Atlanta, Georgia stated that 85 percent of African American congregations engaged in some form of outreach other than pastoral, liturgical or educational (DiIulio, 1998).

According to Robert Woodson, Sr. (1998), faith-based organizations distinguish themselves by the following characteristics. They:

- Are open to all comers.

- Have the same zip codes as the people they serve.

- Are flexible (no two individuals are the same and no one "treatment model" is best).

- Contain an element of reciprocity, if they are truly effective.

- Include clear behavioral guidelines, and discipline plays an important part.

- Fulfill the role of a parent.

- Are committed to the long haul.

- Are available.

- Involve an element of immersion in an environment of care and mutual support with a community of individuals who are trying to accomplish like changes.

- Are united in a "brotherhood" or duty of service.

White and de Marcellus (1998) note that FBOs can reach individuals through three mechanisms: church ministries, faith-based schools, and faith-based nonprofit organizations.

Faith-based organizations have been involved in many different types of crime prevention efforts. These include primary prevention, secondary prevention or intervention, and tertiary prevention or correction/reformation.

Primary prevention includes efforts to prevent crime from occurring in the first place. Examples include working to build a stronger neighborhood where informal social bonds work to reduce the level of offending. Socializing citizens to a moral code such as the Golden Rule can be thought of as primary prevention. Another example would be church-based counseling for young children who have witnessed violence in the home and who, in turn, are at increased risk for continuing the cycle of violence as adults.

Secondary prevention refers to efforts to prevent crime once there is some indication that continued involvement in crime is likely. A faith-based mentoring program that is geared toward youths who have been diverted from the juvenile court would be an example. Another example would be street-based ministry whereby members of the faith community march upon drug houses or walk the streets in high-crime neighborhoods and talk with youths at risk of involvement in gangs, drugs, and related crime. In this case the action is directed at individuals or situations thought likely to generate crime absent the intervention. We refer to secondary prevention as intervention throughout the report.

Faith-based organizations have a long tradition of formal involvement in prison and jail-based ministries. Members of the faith community have long heeded the call to serve to the imprisoned. Prior to the 20th century, many institutions for juvenile delinquents were actually administered by religious groups. To the extent that these efforts focused on reformation of individual offenders, they reflect a correction-type role of faith-based organizations. Criminologists refer to this as tertiary prevention, attempting to prevent continued offending among a population that has already shown its propensity to commit crime.

In the sections that follow, we describe faith-based efforts in each of these areas of primary prevention, intervention, and correction. Some of these efforts involve formal partnerships with government, others have arisen without formal or informal governmental support. Some have included formal evaluation components, others appear promising on the basis of anecdotal evidence. Taken together, however, they suggest the promise of faith-based organizations for addressing crime problems.

Prevention Programs
Prevention programs developed by FBOs may not necessarily include active criminal offenders. They may, however, focus on individuals who exhibit high-risk behaviors or on high-risk neighborhoods—for example, the youth that employs "bullying tactics" at school or in a neighborhood, youths experiencing academic or behavioral problems in school, or youths facing difficulties at home that may lead to criminality. The objective(s) of prevention programs may be multiple in scope but specific in outcome. Prevention of crime can be viewed as an inoculation to illness. Prevention may or may not "cure" the illness of crime, but it can develop immunities (competencies, opportunities, education, conscience, awareness) toward criminal behavior. The following section highlights some of the innovative faith-based efforts.

Many of the prevention programs seek to address illegal drug problems and to break the link between drugs and crime. One such program is the Communities in Action to Prevent Drug Abuse II, Reclaiming Our Neighborhoods. In 1996, three FBOs, (Action Through Churches Together, Virginia, MN; Congregations United

for Community Action, St. Petersburg, FL; and Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition, Bronx, NY), were selected to take part in a two-year Bureau of Justice Assistance and U.S. Department of Labor demonstration project. The purpose of this project is the development and implementation of short, intermediate and long-term strategies regarding community policing, prevention, education, and job-training opportunities placement, (Office of Justice Programs, 1996).

Another effort with public support is the Congress of National Black Churches' National Anti-drug/Violence Campaign's (NADVC's) Technical Assistance and Training Program. This program, supported by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, provides training and technical assistance designed to mobilize neighborhood residents and to increase public awareness towards drug abuse and related crimes in target communities across the United States. The NADVC also works to focus and coordinate church, public, and community leaders to initiate grassroots anti-drug campaigns. This campaign is being implemented in thirty-seven cities involving 1,760 clergy and affecting about 500,000 individuals. NADVC has helped sites leverage $13.4 million in direct funding to local anti-drug, anti-violence initiatives (Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1996).

The African Methodist Episcopal Church in New York with a congregation of 8,000 has raised millions of dollars and devoted numerous volunteer hours to the redevelopment of the church's surrounding community in Queens. This is evident in A.M.E. Shekinah Youth Chapel in Jamaica, Queens centered in one of the city's impoverished, crime- and drug-infested minority neighborhoods. The Youth Chapel's mission is to mentor and minister to surrounding neighborhood children, regardless religious affiliation. The Chapel also provides a safe haven for all youth (DiIulio, 1998). My Brothers Keeper (MBK) was founded by Miguel and Mercedes Torres and operates in Camden, New Jersey. MBK provides a "Christian-centered approach to the successful treatment of chemical dependency and homelessness" as well as serving impoverished children (DiIulio, 1998). MBK has no paid staff and does not receive government funding for services provided. The entire budget of $50,000 is provided by contributions and fundraisers. Specific programs offered by MBK include faith-based drug treatment shelters, neighborhood recreation programs, after-school programs, and vocational and job placement services. MBK has also partnered with local law enforcement to address crime issues such as Halloween (Devil Night) crimes; due to the efforts of law enforcement and programs and events sponsored by MBK, violence and mayhem are reported to be minimal. MBK also offers medical services through Holy Name Catholic Church JUST (Jesuit Urban Service Team). JUST operates a 24-hour, medical service that tends to the needs of over 7,000 patients per year. They also provide service programs that address crisis intervention for individuals who have witnessed or been victimized by crime. Additionally, Holy Name Catholic Church offers after-school and summer programs for over 150 youth as well as youth sports programs.

Concord Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York—one of the largest black churches in New York—has undertaken an enormous effort drawing on its 10,000 middle-class parishioners (Robinson, 1998). They have been able to collect as much as $1.7 million dollars on a Sunday. The Church owns an entire city block of social service institutions. Recently, Concord Baptist Church created its own foundation to support community and youth outreach programs as well as the development of a community health center in cooperation with a local hospital.

The City of Indianapolis awarded twelve churches with grant money to provide summer programs to some 1,500 youth. Many of these programs involved skill learning, crime prevention and evening recreation for youth.

This is reflective of the work of the city's Front Porch Alliance (FPA). The FPA was created by Mayor Stephen Goldsmith so that city government could provide training, technical assistance, and funding to support the efforts of FBOs at community renewal. One of the first groups to work with the FPA was the Westside Community Ministries, a coalition of twenty churches. Westside Community Ministries has developed a wide variety of initiatives including after-school programs, mentoring, and workforce training and placement. A more recent development from this alliance is the Indianapolis Ten-Point Coalition. The Ten-Point Coalition seeks to address juvenile crime and drug problems, literacy, and economic development. An example of the association's efforts is a group of ministers who spend Friday and Saturday evenings walking the streets of crime-plagued neighborhoods and working one-to-one with youths. The Reverend Mel Jackson states, "We are attempting to bring the presence of God to the street and let the people that we meet know that there is a more excellent way" (Goldsmith, 1998: 1).

The Indianapolis Coalition is modeled directly on the success of Boston's Ten-Point Coalition created by the Reverend Eugene Rivers. Rivers, a long-time critic of the police, decided to work with the police, probation officers, and state and federal prosecutors, as well as with youth and community leaders to reduce youth violence. As law enforcement spread a message of zero tolerance for gun violence, the coalition worked directly with youth to demonstrate opportunities outside of crime and gang life. The findings from Boston have been dramatic. Indeed, the city experienced a two-thirds decline in youth homicides and a period of approximately two and one-half years without a juvenile homicide (Kennedy, 1997).

Intervention Programs

Intervention programs are focused on individuals who have committed criminal acts. The intervention may be offered as a diversion from the courts or it may be court-ordered as a condition of probation. Examples of court-related services provided by FBOs include counseling, community service, housing, restorative justice and job placement.

Victory Fellowship is a faith-based intervention organization that specializes in working with substance abusers. The organization was founded by Freddie Garcia. The program has 65 satellite centers in California, Texas, New Mexico and several international sites. Victory Fellowship has served over 13,000 men and women whose goal is familial restoration and support. Victory Fellowship services include drop-in centers, safe havens for youth and drug abusers, court services for youth, gang-intervention programs and jail and prison ministries (Woodson, 1998).

The Institute for Conflict Management of Orange, California is sponsored by the St. Vincent de Paul Society, a church-related and community-based social service agency. This mediation program brings together both the victim and offender to discuss the incident, allows the victim to explain the impact of the offense, and devises a reparation plan whereby the offender makes amends. The program began in 1989 and today it represents one of the largest victim-offender mediation programs in North America. The Institute recently received a $300,000 county grant to divert more than 1,000 juvenile offenders. An evaluation of the program found that 96 percent of the reparation agreements between the victim and offender were completed successfully or are nearing completion (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1998).

Teen Turnaround is a court-supported project through Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas which intervenes on the behalf of juvenile offenders. The Fellowship focuses primarily on mentoring programs, job placement, and continued education. Today, Oak Cliff works with approximately 80 juveniles offenders (Loconte, 1998).

Consider Teen Challenge, a worldwide Christian organization that focuses on youth with drug addictions. For over thirty years, it has been going into schools to educate teens about the dangers of drugs; it offers programs in juvenile centers and prisons to educate people about "how to change their lives;" and it conducts support groups that help people make a transition from dependency problems to positive lifestyles. Residential programs challenge adults to learn to lead drug-free lives through spiritual transformation and achievement of their fullest potential socially, educationally, and occupationally. Since Teen Challenge began in 1958, it has helped thousands of drug addicts and alcoholics. Two significant research projects have confirmed Teen Challenge's effectiveness, showing a 70-86% cure rate for program graduates (www.teenchallenge.com).

FaithWorks International, founded by Bobby Polito, is an organization formed to meet the growing needs of the homeless drug addict population, based on the model he established in his work at the Bowery Mission Transitional Center (BMTC). The BMTC is a 77-bed Christian center, funded jointly by the City and State of New York. Situated in one of the poorest neighborhoods in New York, it helps homeless men to break the cycles of addiction and return to independent living. Since its inception in 1994, it has graduated over 500 people through its one-year, four-stage program, and was identified last year by President Clinton as one of the "top fifty programs in the United States."

Corrections

Correction programs instituted by FBOs work with offenders who have been convicted of an offense and are either currently carrying out their sentence via imprisonment or have been released from prison and are returning to the community. There are primarily three areas that FBO programs fall within. The first is servicing inmates and their families during incarceration. The programming offered by FBOs typically focuses on providing coping skills for the inmate and families. Second, FBOs also offer various counseling programs to inmates as well as religious services. Third, FBO's offer aftercare and follow-up after release from an institution. In many ways, FBOs assist the transitioning inmate by offering shelter, job placement, counseling, and related programs.

There is a long-standing tradition of religious programs in U.S. prisons. A survey of inmates in prisons found that one-third reported involvement in religious activities (U.S. Department of Justice, 1993). Johnson, Larson, and Pitts (1997) examined inmates participating in Prison Fellowship programs in four prisons in New York State. Using a matched comparison group, they found that inmates involved in Prison Fellowship had a similar rate of recidivism as inmates who did not participate in the program. They also discovered, however, that when they considered level of involvement in Prison Fellowship, the inmates most active in the program had significantly lower rates of rearrest in the year following release.

Prison Fellowship's Innerchange is a correctional program that addresses the needs of inmates within a Texas correctional facility. Innerchange, a volunteer Christian-based rehabilitation program, provides faith-based counseling, Bible study and prayer, and life-skills training during the time of incarceration and then assists inmates in the transition from incarceration to release. Particular attention is given to educational and vocational attainment and job placement. About 200 church volunteers work with over 130 inmates and parolees in this 18-month program. The early results indicate that the 26 ex-offenders who have completed the program all have employment. The Texas correctional facility has made concessions to assist in the implementation of the program. For example, one wing of the correctional facility has been designated as the Innerchange program and there is 24-hour on-

call access to those inmates (Loconte, 1998). Prison Fellowship is now active in prisons across the United States.

Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches (LAM) is a conglomeration of over thirty black congregations that works extensively with juvenile probationers in South-Central Los Angeles. LAM's primary focus is on assisting ex-offenders in unifying families as well as providing a range of aftercare services (DiIulio, 1998).

Challenges

Identity Crisis of the Church

There are a number of challenges that face faith-based organizations as they try to fulfill their mission in the community. One of the greatest is the difference today in the way faith-based groups are looked upon by the larger society. Once accepted as one of the normative institutions within society, the Church is now seen by some as a threat to individuality, and the social work it endeavored to do in the past, is often now thought to be the domain of "professionals," not volunteer "zealots."

Some churches themselves have even lost their own identity as they have tried to pattern themselves after the professional practices they have observed, and they have to work at maintaining the differences that have made them effective. Even individuals have that tendency. One organization in Pennsylvania that works effectively to address the needs of men and to promote responsible manhood has employed men who successfully completed their program to be program leaders. At one point one of the leaders, an African-American who is a former offender— streetwise, and able to relate well to other men going through the program—began trying to look and sound like the program director, a middle-class white man in suit and tie whose background is far different from most of the men in the program. He had to be encouraged to concentrate on being his own best "self," and not to lose his unique identity that makes his message so much more effective.

Some congregations, likewise, have traded the uniqueness that makes them effective for a sterile professionalism that keeps them from fulfilling their mission. Joe Loconte, Heritage Foundation 's William E. Simon Fellow for Religion in a Free Society, has said, "Since the courts have ruled that taxpayer money cannot support explicitly religious programs, charities often trade their spiritual birthright for the pottage of public money." (*All Things Considered,* 1999)

The concept of a caring community is explored in John McKnight's *The Careless Society: Community and Its Counterfeits.* McKnight and others have pointed to the need for a revitalization of the community that will reach out to provide in ways that go beyond what the professional establishment is willing or able to do. "As citizens have seen the professionalized service commodity invade their communities, they have grown doubtful of their common capacity to care, and so it is that we have become a careless society, populated by impotent citizens and ineffectual communities dependent on the counterfeit of care called human services. Service systems can never be reformed so they will ‘produce' care. Care is the consenting commitment of citizens to one another. Care cannot be produced, provided, managed, organized, administered, or commodified…. Care is, indeed, the manifestation of a community." (McKnight, 1995:x)

Identity Crisis of the State

The government in recent years has been questioning its own role vis-à- vis the private sector. At one time acting as though it were omnipotent, it has now acknowledged that there are some things it cannot do as well as the private sector, and has sought partnerships with private sector entities to provide such services. Privatization of a number of formerly government-operated services has changed both the scope of government and also its identity. Whereas in the past, the private sector may have had a passive attitude, expecting the government to take care of things, the government's new openness to partnership has prompted private sector organizations to ask themselves anew about their own role and responsibility.

"Elected officials also face another, more subtle, pressure," points out Steve Goldsmith. "Americans have always joked about the inefficiency of their government—witness the debate over national health care, which some pundits observed would combine ‘the efficiency of the post office with the compassion of the IRS.' There is an important issue underlying these jokes. Private enterprise and government share patrons. Customers to one are taxpayers to the other….Taxpayers will tolerate some level of inefficiency and unresponsiveness from government, but as taxes continue to rise, their patience wears thin. Citizens demand better value from those they elect." (1997: 14-15)

Privatization is not heralded by most as the appropriate route for every operation; there are some things that government *can* do best. At the same time, much success has been reported with private-sector involvement. A 1997 National League of Cities survey of 500 local elected officials found that of the 70 percent who had experience with privatization, 74 percent said it was a success. (*American Enterprise*, 1997) As economist and President of Mackinac Center for Public Policy Lawrence W. Reed has explained: "The theory is simple, but grounded in profound truths about the nature of humans and their response to incentives and disincentives. Tie up the performance of a task with red tape, bureaucracy, and politics within a system that is guaranteed to exist regardless of outcome, and the result is usually mediocrity at great expense. Infuse competition, accountability, and the fear of losing valued customers into the task, and mediocrity becomes the exception, excellence the rule." (1997:2)

Texas was one of the first states to try to deal with the role of the state in relationship to FBOs. The Governor's Advisory Task Force on Faith-Based Community Service Groups, after much study and deliberation, arrived at a ten-point definition of the state's role:

**First Principles:
Government's Role in Texas'
Religiously Diverse Society**

Principle 1: Each person is created in God's image with inherent worth and diverse talents, and each of us is bound together in various social relationships and responsibilities.

Principle 2 : We each bear a responsibility to do justice and love our neighbors, a responsibility that comes from God.

Principle 3: Government can do some things, but it cannot reach deep into the human character. Some of our worst social pathologies (e.g., illegitimacy, crime, poverty) can be solved if people experience spiritual transformation; if the hearts of parents are turned toward their children; if respect is restored for human life and property; if a commitment is renewed to care about our neighbor and our community.

Principle 4: Texas is blessed by a rich diversity of people and institutions—families, houses of worship, private and religious charities, schools, voluntary associations, local grassroots organizations—able to champion virtuous ideals and restore hope. Armed with love, individual responsibility and spiritual values, these character-building institutions of civil society perform miracles of renewal and restoration.

Principle 5: Every single one of Texas' social problems, no matter

*how severe, is today being ad-
dressed somewhere and somehow,
by some faith-based or community
group. This is a great and untold
story.*

*Principle 6: A responsibility of gov-
ernment is "fruitful cooperation"
with mediating institutions that
are meeting the needs of Texans in
crisis. Government policy must bol-
ster, not weaken or displace, people
and organizations that are carry-
ing out their vital responsibilities
and getting things done.*

*Principle 7: The urgent public mis-
sion of enhancing Texas' civil
society requires a fresh definition
of compassion, one that focuses on
the consoling hand and word of
someone who "suffers with" and
who invests himself or herself.*

*Principle 8: The members of this
Task Force see the First Amendment
as a vital protection against unrea-
sonable government interference.
Government should not exclude
religious expressions or concerns
from the public square nor grant
privilege to secular programs or
solutions. Government's treatment
of faith-based organizations should
be one of benevolent and positive
neutrality.*

*Principle 9: State and federal law,
rules, and regulations should not
discriminate against Texans eli-
gible to benefit from government
financial assistance for human ser-
vices (e.g., job training, health care,
shelter, child care, education, coun-
seling, drug and alcohol
rehabilitation) simply because they
choose to receive those services
from faith-based service groups.*

*Such groups, on an equal footing
with non-religious groups, should
be permitted to serve beneficiaries
of government-funded services—
and without having to "secularize"
their distinct religious character or
self-governance.*

*Principle 10: We see no conflict
with, or threat to "promot[ing] the
general welfare" when government
cooperates or contracts with faith-
based social service organizations
on the same basis as it does with
non-religious organizations in
seeking to fulfill this purpose.
(1996:2)*

Legal Ramifications

Robert Woodson, Founder and President of the
National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise,
uses a biblical story in his *Triumphs of Joseph:
How Today's Community Healers are Reviving Our
Streets and Neighborhoods* to explain the roles of
the government and faith-based groups.

During a period of great famine, the *Old
Testament's* Joseph gained favor with Pharaoh
and was entrusted with great resources which
he used to help his family, city, and entire coun-
try. Woodson draws an analogy with the work
of community groups in today's period of moral
and spiritual famine. "Pharaohs" are those with
resources, power and influence; "Josephs" are
those whose commitment, understanding and
hands-on service lead others to healthy, fulfill-
ing lives.

The book hypothesizes that the root causes of
the crises in American society are not poverty
and racism, but spiritual and moral bankruptcy
that pervades homes and communities regard-
less of race, status or education. In the inner
city, "little children can stand at the scene of a
homicide, eating ice cream cones." In a pasto-
ral Texas town, ten white boys could surround
a horse, torture it to death, and then laugh about
it. Two brothers in an affluent suburb could

murder their parents in cold blood. A Harvard graduate could become a "Unibomber."

To solve today's problems, Woodson suggests an alliance of Pharaohs and Josephs. Josephs, often part of faith-based organizations, live in the communities they serve, love unconditionally, and remain committed despite setbacks and rejection. Their goal is not rehabilitation, but transformation. Conventional interventions merely restore people to their state before they exhibited social deviance—still susceptible to the same temptations as before. Community "healers, " however, "do not seek simply to modify behavior but to engender a change in the values and hearts of the people they work with…the impact of a transformation lasts a lifetime (1998: 81-82)."

Woodson urges Pharaohs, (government officials, businessmen, philanthropic funders), to use their resources to support the Josephs already working within their own communities rather than new programs that do not address the deeper needs of those served, and are usually staffed by professionals who neither understand nor relate to the people they call "clients." Josephs, in contrast, are working and living alongside their "friends," and have dedicated themselves to promoting lasting changes.

He notes the change that must occur before government and faith-based groups can partner together:

> *The alliance between the Josephs of our nation's low-income communities and modern-day pharaohs requires nothing short of a fundamental paradigm shift—an essential change in the assumptions that have guided the relationships between individuals with resources and individuals in need of support. We can no longer look at this relationship as one between donors and recipients. We can no longer approach this relation-ship in terms of charity. Charity is not the model for the interchange between our nation's pharaohs and Josephs. In the Old Testament, the Pharaoh did not approach Joseph with charity. His goal was not to establish a welfare system for the people of Egypt or food stamps for Joseph's people, No, he said, ‘Let us come together to address this danger or it will consume us all.'*

> *Like their biblical counterpart, although today's Josephs deserve to be heeded by modern-day pharaohs—political leaders and leaders of the business community—their effectiveness is not dependent on such recognition. Long before support or acknowledgment came from the outside, the Josephs of our nation lived committed lives of service and accomplished miraculous changes in the lives of those they served. Yet an alliance between today's Josephs and pharaohs will allow their transforming efforts to expand and further develop, to the benefit of the entire society (1998: 117-118).*

A fear of violating the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment has kept some government agencies from partnering with faith-based groups, but others across the country are finding great success in doing so. In Massachusetts, men who are failing to pay child support are sent by judges to fatherhood classes held in local churches with teams of pastors and probation officers; Good Samaritan Ministries and other faith-based groups helped Ottawa County, Michigan become the first county in the nation to move every able-bodied welfare recipient off the rolls and into a job; in Indianapolis, Mayor Stephen Goldsmith's Front Porch Alliance has cut through bureaucratic red tape and, in some cases helped financially, to

renovate a dilapidated house into a drug-treatment center, an old fire station into an after-school center, vacant lots into playgrounds and numerous other projects.

Goldsmith has made the point that government needs to return to the intent of our country's founders. They intended the government to be *neutral* toward religion, but the tendency has become for government to be *hostile* toward religion. He would agree with Thomas Jefferson, who said, "Religion may be deemed in other countries incompatible with good government and yet proved by our experience, to be its best support." (*All Things*, 1999)

Most advocates of the inclusion of faith-based groups among those eligible for partnerships with government point to the *results* of such programs. Charitable Choice was never intended to be an affirmative action program for faith-based groups. If contracts are performance-based, then only those successful in attaining their goals will be funded. As Eugene Rivers, Executive Director of the National Ten-Point Coalition, says, "We should not be judging a group on the basis of the spiritual *input*, but on the secular *outcomes*."

Resources
While the love of money may be "the root of all evil," the absence of money prevents much good from being done. Funding is a continual challenge for most faith-based organizations. Fear of government encroachment, or even fear of crossing the line and violating church-state separation, holds back most such groups from applying for government funding even when they are eligible. Others are just unfamiliar with the world of government grants and have no idea they are available or how one would go about accessing them. This puts religious groups at a disadvantage relative to secular organizations who feel free to apply for every federal or local grant available.

Most congregations depend solely on contributions to enable them to provide specific

services to the community in addition to meeting needs of members of their own group. After the operating expenses of the church, staff salaries, and member needs are taken care of, there is often little left over for community services. A lot, however, can be done without money, simply through individuals volunteering their time. Mentoring programs, group self-help sessions, emergency child care or transportation for individuals, and countless other services are being offered in numerous congregations by people willing to give of their time and their talents.

Some groups have used fundraisers or even more formal money-making projects to enable them to have funds to accomplish service goals. Most people aren't aware that the internationally known Goodwill Industries was first started by a pastor in the South End of Boston who wanted his church to reach out to the people of that neighborhood—all of whom were poor, and most of whom were immigrants. Wanting to help the individual by putting "a tool in his hands, not a coin in his cup," Rev. Edgar J. Helms recognized the need for jobs. At his chapel, he collected discarded clothing and household items and then employed people who needed jobs to repair these donated goods, which were then sold to pay the employees' wages. From that small endeavor on the part of one concerned pastor in 1902, a world-wide organization has formed that still carries out the same principles. Throughout its history, Goodwill has earned more than 90 percent of its operating revenue from selling products and services. While learning to be savvy in business and self-funding, it has never lost sight of its real mission: to assist individuals in achieving fuller participation in society by helping them overcome barriers and expand their employment opportunities. (Polis)

One of the exciting things happening within communities across the country is the partnering of urban and suburban churches. Often, urban churches are attended by low-income inner-city residents, so they have little

money but great needs. Suburban churches often have more money and a desire to help those financially less fortunate. Where they would be ineffective going into an inner-city area to operate a program themselves, they can readily fund groups already established there to provide a particular service or offer a particular program. Patterned after giving to foreign missions, suburban churches often find a great sense of satisfaction in being able to help people even closer to home.

There are organizations, too, that help congregations in developing resources to help them carry out their work. Good Samaritan Ministries, mentioned earlier, helped coordinate the churches in Ottawa County, Michigan, in their efforts to assist people making the transition from welfare to work. The National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise works with grassroots organizations in thirty-eight states in a variety of ways to help them to help them receive necessary training and technical assistance and to help them link with business, philanthropic and public sector agencies to carry out their missions.

Policy Considerations

The Triumphs of Joseph closes with a speech presented by William Schambra of The Bradley Foundation, who agrees that society's needs are moral and spiritual, and the answer doesn't lie in the hands of disconnected professionals. "To put it a different way, if I'm ever in a serious accident, I don't want to be treated by a professor in medical science. Get me one of those doctors who spent a lot of time in emergency rooms. That's where grassroots have been trained—in the emergency rooms of civil society. They are civic 'trauma' specialists. They get the worst cases, the so-called hopeless cases. People come to them smashed, broken, bleeding, barely breathing…. Grassroots leaders send them back into the world healed and transformed and now capable of transforming others." (1998:153)

The involvement of grassroots organizations, including those motivated by faith, is not in question. They will continue to do what they have always done. How well they do their work, and the degree of impact they can have in individual communities, however, will depend on funding, resources and opportunities afforded them in carrying out their missions. In reviewing some of the literature relevant to the topic of the faith-based approaches to crime prevention and justice, and in getting to know the programs and understanding various perspectives on the issue, we would offer the following thoughts for consideration:

1. The Charitable Choice clause of the 1996 welfare reform law, and the proposed Charitable Choice Expansion Act, were never intended as affirmative action programs for faith-based organizations. They are only intended to *allow* such groups to compete for government funding in the same way as any other organization.

2. As with Charitable Choice, safeguards should be built into any future initiatives in order to prevent individuals from being forced to participate in faith-based programs if they choose not to, to protect the rights of the faith-based groups to retain their religious identity, and to justify the states' actions in assuring that government monies accessed through these provisions are being used to achieve the expressed goals, not to merely further the religious activities of a congregation.

3. A growing body of evidence suggests faith-based organizations are effective agents, especially regarding the more challenging personal problems. To deny their participation is to cut off one of the proven solutions to the myriad problems facing communities today.

4. The discussion of faith-based approaches can no way be interpreted as a denial of the success of many secular programs as well. Each program must be evaluated on its own merits, not approved or denied solely because of its orientation to the problem.

5. All contracts with service organizations should be performance based. In evaluating any program, the focus needs to be on *outcomes*. All programs should be required to prove their success rate in preventing crime, decreasing recidivism rates, improving the quality of life for at-risk youth, or whatever the expressed goals.

6. Participants should always be given the choice of either a religious or secular program. This ensures legal protection and is good policy. Voucher systems are sometimes a practical solution in assuring such individual choice.

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