[MS-0234.002.011.003]

San Diego Chamber of Commerce

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May 19, 1980

MEMORANDUM TO: William Kolender, Chairman
Integration Task Force

FROM: Lee Grissom, Chairman
Subcommittee on School Violence

As requested, the following is a draft report covering our committee activities commensurate with Judge Welsh's order "to accumulate data and investigate causes for violence in the schools and recommend procedures for reducing violence and punishing offenders". Our committee has met frequently with Mr. Alex Rascon, the head of the School Security Patrol, Lt. Don Biddy of the San Diego Police Department and members of the Gang Detail, as well as other individuals concerned with reducing violence in local schools.

The following is a summary of the reported acts of violence in the San Diego Unified School District during 1977/78; 1978/79; and 1979-April 30, 1980. Following our interim report to Judge Welsh which noted that the Police Department observed an 8% drop in violence in the schools, and yet the School Security Task Force reported an increase, we met with all interested parties to reconcile the differences. Basically, both groups used the same definition of violence, but were reporting for different time periods (Security used July 1 as their starting date, while the Police Department used September 10), and different hours of the day, (Security reporting all acts of violence on school property regardless of the hour, Police Department reporting activities during actual school hours). The following figures were collected by the School Security Task Force:

1977/1978	Cases Reported	Cases Resolved	Arrests
71 P.C. Threat of Injury to School Employee	60	45	53
Assault W/Deadly Weapon			
Student	20	14	18
Teacher	3	2	2
Other	9	6	9
Assault with Intent to Commit Murder	1	1	1
Battery			
Student	92	67	81
Teacher	12	12	12
Peace Officer	1	1	1
Other	1	0	0
TOTALS	199	148	177

1978/1979	Cases Reported	Cases Resolved	Arrests
71 P.C. - Threat of Injury to School Employee	57	56	60
Assault W/Deadly Weapon			
Student	45	40	44
Teacher	23	16	16
Other	1	1	1
Attempt	1	1	1
Battery			
Student	120	108	101
Teacher	36	36	36
Peace Officer	4	3	3
Other	15	14	13
TOTALS	302	275	275

1979/April 1980	Cases Reported	Cases Resolved	Arrests
71 P.C. - Threat of Injury to School Employee	59	56	49
Assault W/Deadly Weapon			
Student	34	27	30
Teacher	4	4	1
Other	1	0	0
Battery			
Student	118	107	121
Teacher	20	19	17
Peace Officer	4	4	4
Other	8	6	6
TOTALS	248	223	228

OBSERVATION:

Generally, the number of violent incidents reported during the current school year are similar to the previous year. However, more vigilant supervision by Administrators has been noted along with a tendency to move quicker than might have been the case in the past. Also, we believe that the system of reporting violent incidents has been improved because of School Board interest. This should result in an increase in the number of "threats" reported, but concurrently a lessening in actual assaults.

At the present time, school violence problems are minor and very much under control. During the school day, almost all

acts of violence are spontaneous and consist of one-on-one mutual combat situations.

(1) PROGRESS ON SCHOOL DISTRICT'S DISCIPLINE

Program: On July 12, 1979, the Board of Education adopted a firm policy relating to the prevention and handling of school discipline problems. The policy has resulted in a strong effort to establish a high level of student conduct throughout the District and the creation of campus environments which aid the learning experience. We believe that the continued active implementation of this policy and its refinement where appropriate, should be encouraged. We congratulate the District in their efforts to date.

Site Administrators now feel that they have a mandate to be firm in handling both threats and actual incidents of violence and this has enhanced their willingness and effectiveness in resolving these situations.

(2) SECURITY WORKSHOPS

Between March 19 and April 30, a series of four Security Workshops were held at various schools throughout the District, with 152 employees (from principals to secretaries) in attendance. The response has been excellent and we encourage the District to continue this program and increase its frequency as necessary.

(3) SCHOOL SECURITY TASK FORCE

Mr. Alex Rascon heads 51 personnel charged with providing security throughout the District. He has 24 site agents working during the day, and 14 patrol agents at night. An additional 4 positions were recently added to this force. This group is also supplemented by more than 100 CETA personnel working throughout the District. While the School Security Task Force is recognized as performing an excellent job, concern has been expressed over what will occur when the CETA program expires next school year. This issue must be addressed by the District as soon as possible.

Of special mention is the "pro-active" philosophy used by the Security Task Force. They have a reputation of moving quickly when rumors of a possible violent incident are heard, and also utilize a "rumor control" program. The San Diego Police Department notes that the Security Task Force is "solid" and "very helpful", and consideration should be given to increasing its size as necessary.

(4) POLICE DEPARTMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL TASK FORCE

This program consists of 2 Sergeants and 18 Officers

working in close harmony with the School Security group. It is essential that the flow of information between the District and the Police Department be continued in the future and we recommend that a policy be adopted and a strategy implemented to assure this cooperation.

(5) STREET BAND DETAIL

This project of the San Diego Police Department consists of one Sergeant and 6 Officers who monitor, on a continuing basis, the activities of street "bands". It has been noted that these groups have increased from approximately 16 five years ago, to well over 50 today. It is imperative that this issue be addressed by both the San Diego Police Department and the City Schools in concert, to prevent the situation from getting out of hand in the future.

(6) PARKS

Several schools within the Southeast community are located in close proximity to neighborhood parks, including Baker, Memorial, Logan, Kennedy, Lincoln, Gompers and Wright Brothers. Increasingly, these areas have become the site of activities which impact the perception of safety on the campuses of the nearby schools, and potentially may impact the efforts to achieve integration at these schools. We encourage the increased supervision of these areas by the Police Department and an examination by City of San Diego and City School personnel, and neighbors in the affected areas, on ways to resolve these problems.

CONCLUSION

As previously noted, at the present time, school violence problems are generally minor and are being effectively addressed by appropriate parties. Almost all acts of violence are spontaneous, and consist of one-on-one mutual combat situations. We support the strong disciplinary code which has been adopted by the School District, the effective methods employed by the School Security Task Force, and the close working relationship which has developed between the School District and the San Diego Police Department. We encourage all involved parties to address the points of concern we have raised to assure that the current situation does not deteriorate.

LG/ma