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# **American Policing in the New Economy: “Leveraging What’s Left”**

**Summit on The Economics of Policing  
January 16-17, 2013  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada**

**Chief Jim Bueermann (Ret.)  
Police Foundation**

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“Faced with dramatic budget contraction, law enforcement leaders need to...articulate what the new public safety models will look like to their communities.”

- Director Barney Melekian  
US DOJ COPS Office

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## AMERICAN POLICING: A SNAPSHOT

- About 17,000 individual police/sheriff's departments (700,000+ cops)
  - 51% 10 officers, 75% serve pop. < 10,000
  - American communities are very dedicated to having local control of their police departments
  - In terms of sophistication, we are “all over the board”
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# AS GOES THE ECONOMY, SO GOES POLICING

- Funding sources for policing are local
  - Revenues have been down in all areas but showing improvements
  - Some places hit harder than others, but across America “it’s a new world officer!”
  - City leaders gaining a new perspective on funding of police (crime has been down)
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## Affects of the “new economy”

- Traditional mental models/paradigms are being challenged
  - Generational differences
    - Collective work ethic
    - Sense of entitlement
  - Institutional knowledge drain
  - Community policing at-risk?
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## Police officer compensation in the “new economy”

- Communities are less tolerant/sometimes extremely critical of police officer compensation - in conflict with union perspectives
  - Elected leaders have been paying attention - in conflict with union perspectives
  - Public discussions of cost reduction strategies that used to be heresy - in conflict with union perspectives
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## Policing in the “new economy”

- Multiple strategies
    - Few motivated by more effective policing
  - Connected to:
    - Budget problems
    - Local expectations
    - Local circumstances (e.g. union issues, problems within the department, etc.)
-



## Policing in the “new economy”

- Reduction in workforce
    - Furloughs
    - Attrition/Layoffs
    - Civilians go first
  - Reduction in service delivery
    - Use of technology to mitigate impact
    - “Sorry, we don’t do that anymore!”
-

## Policing in the “new economy”

- Outsourcing/contracting
    - “reduce your cost or we replace you!”
  - Regionalization of specialized units (e.g. SWAT, narcotics, etc.)
  - Elimination of specialized units (sometimes ego won't let us regionalize)
  - Civilianization - in conflict with union perspectives
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## Policing in the “new economy”

- Improvements in the “business of policing”
    - Accident/injury reduction
    - Cost avoidance strategies
      - Report writing, booking
      - Better purchasing
      - False alarm non-response
    - Revenue generators (usually unpopular)
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# SMART POLICING STRATEGIES

- Evidence-based Policing
  - Hot Spots Policing
  - Broken Windows Policing
  - Intelligence Led Policing
  - Predictive Policing
  - SMART Policing
  - Risk Focused Policing
-

## Leveraging police resources in the “new economy”

- Increasing emphasis on the police as “connectors”
  - Interweaving scarce community resources aimed at the “co-production” of community safety
  - Measuring What Matters
  - Outcomes, outcomes, outcomes
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Doing the possible...

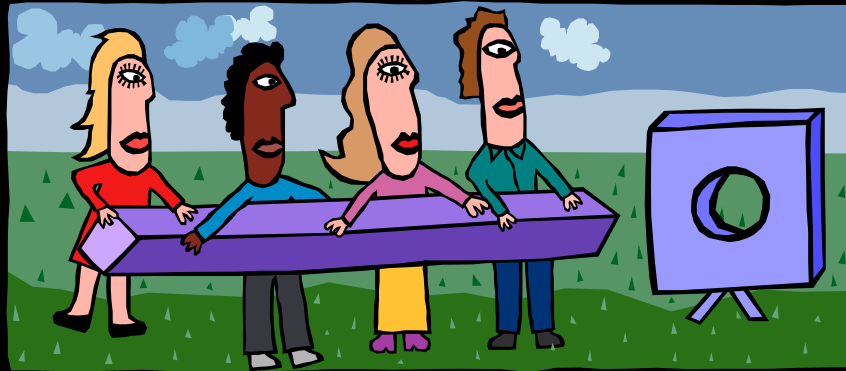
“This (gun violence) is a problem that requires immediate attention. I want to make clear that we’re not going to get caught up in the notion that, unless we can do everything, we’re going to do nothing.”

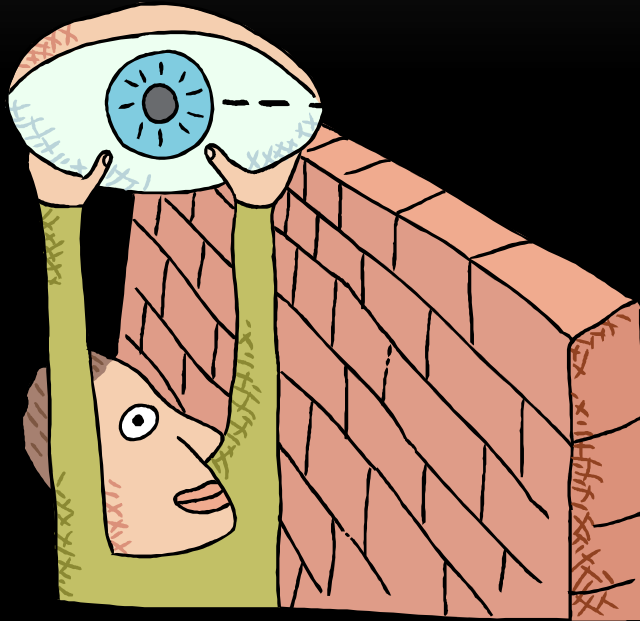
- Vice President Joe Biden

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“The world we created today has problems which cannot be solved by thinking the way we thought when we created them.”

– Albert  
Einstein





“The level of the  
solution is never found  
at the level of the  
problem”

– Deepak Chopra



# THINKING DIFFERENTLY ABOUT POLICING

- Why should we?
  - What is the true purpose of policing in a democracy? “The spirituality of policing”
  - Is the control of crime and disorder the sole province of the police? If not, who’s the “co-owner?”
  - What don’t we know that we should?
-

Doing the possible...

Policing in the new economy is a problem that requires thoughtful attention. We should not get caught up in the notion that, unless we can do everything, we're going to do almost nothing (in taxpayers' eyes).

# THINKING DIFFERENTLY ABOUT POLICING

- Research
    - Evidence-based strategies
  - Partnerships
    - With any and all!
  - Technology
    - Leveraging
    - Unintended consequences
  - Volunteers
    - Any and all – everywhere!
-

## Today's Foundational tools

- Systems thinking
  - Displacement of concept
  - Boundrylessness
  - Knowledge management
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# SYSTEMS THINKING



“When we try to pick anything out by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.”

– John Muir

## DISPLACEMENT OF CONCEPT

Understanding an important idea and dragging it across disciplines for new understanding and outcomes (e.g. public health strategies used to inform policing, traditional first aid and “mental health first aid,” etc.)

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# “Boundrylessness”

- Boundaries are internal, external and cultural
- Boundaries should be considered permeable, like the walls of biological cells, to allow the necessary transfer of data, knowledge and resources to facilitate the resolution of community problems
- **The ability and willingness to transcend administrative or bureaucratic boundaries is critical precondition to leveraging community resources**

# KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

How we **Capture, Use, Share** and **Increase** what we know is critical to meaningful outcomes like preventing mental health-related gun violence





# THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE CO-PRODUCTION OF COMMUNITY SAFETY

A irreplaceable capital a community possesses is the knowledge and abilities of its people. The productivity of that capital, and the safety of the community, depends on how effectively people share their knowledge and competence with those who can use it.

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## MOVING POLICING FROM RESPONSE TO PREVENTION

The police are usually relegated to responding to “low frequency, high impact” incidents of mental health-related gun violence. Can they move from a **responding** role to a constitutionally appropriate and compassionate **preventative** role?

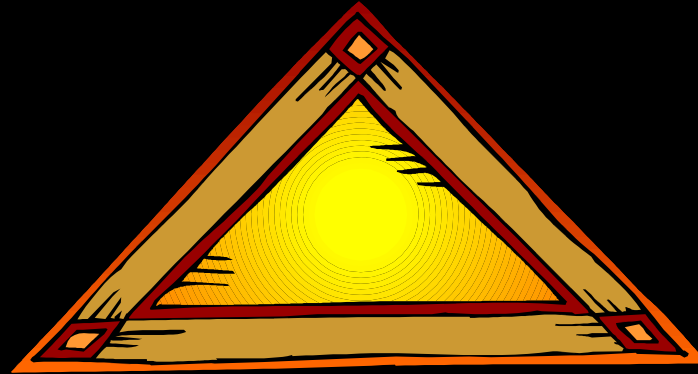
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The “three things” the police and communities need to know about mental health-related gun violence?

- ✓ Partnerships
  - ✓ Knowledge
  - ✓ Sustainability
-

# MHR GUN VIOLENCE TRIANGLE

Opportunity



Mental  
Health  
Crisis

Availability  
of Firearms

# COMMUNITY SAFETY TRIANGLE

Partnerships



Knowledge

Sustainability

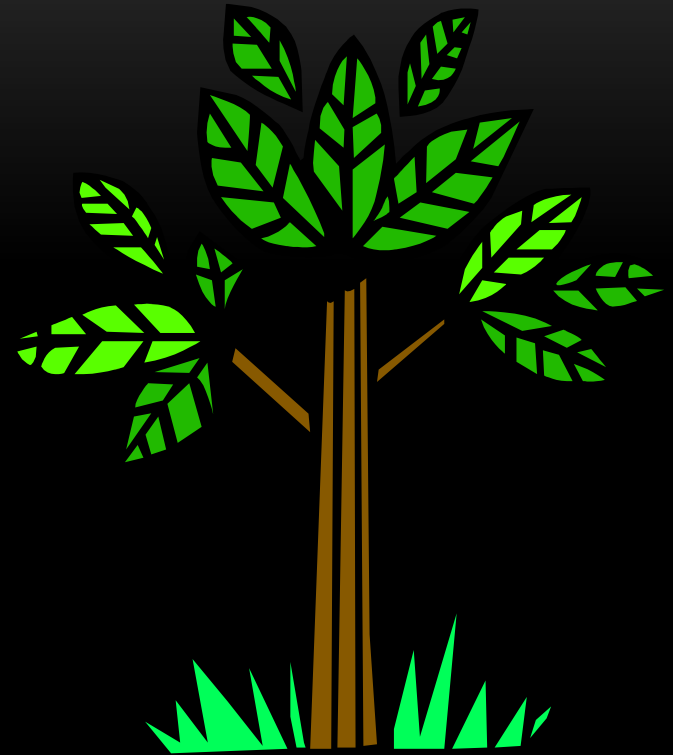
# CAN WE DISCONNECT, DISRUPT OR DISASSEMBLE THE MHRGV TRIANGLE?



- Community awareness campaign/MH First Aid
- Crisis Intervention Response
- Institutionalized police training
- Police-issued gun locks
- Gun safekeeping

“The true meaning of life  
is to plant trees under  
whose shade you do not  
expect to sit.”

– Nelson Henderson



END



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