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GOVERNOR RUDY PERPICH

Special Message

Corrections, Crime and Criminal Justice

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STATE OF MINNESOTA

To The 70th Session Of The Minnesota State Legislature

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GOVERNOR RUDY PERPICH

SPECIAL MESSAGE

CRIME, CORRECTIONS AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

FEBRUARY 15, 1977

ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA

It is a pleasure to be in Rochester, the medical center of the world, where many of the medical professionals and citizens have joined together with criminal justice officials to create a climate of creative, effective criminal control agencies.

Your police and sheriffs departments are now housed together to create efficiency and reduce duplication of efforts and facilities. The judiciary has taken an active role in program planning, and corrections officials administer programs which are some of the most creative in the country. The county attorney operates an active diversion program in cooperation with defense attorneys.

Your county commissioners have provided backing and leadership to cause effective programs that improve criminal justice and ultimately the quality of life in this area.

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*Corrections
Crime & Criminals*

Yet that is what we must do. We cannot make crime go away by hollering at it.

It is good to keep in mind as we talk about crime that our state is a law abiding state.

Minnesota has a comparatively low crime rate and prison population. Only one other state--North Dakota--has a lower percentage of its population in prison than we do. Only ten other states have proportionately fewer crimes of violence than we do, and only one of them--Wisconsin--contains a major metropolitan area.

In 1975, 35 out of every 100,000 Minnesotans were in prison. North Carolina--which has the highest prison population in the country--had 238 out of every 100,000 of its people in prison, yet had a higher crime rate than ours. Whether the chicken or the egg came first--whether they have a prison population seven times ours because of a high crime rate, or whether prison doesn't really deter crime--is something for experts to argue.

But statistics are no comfort to the crime victim. Wounds do not heal faster because Minnesota has fewer wounds per capita than most other states. One does not recover sooner from a mugging or a rape by being told we don't have very many.

The people feel--rightly--that any crime is too much. They feel--rightly or wrongly--that our criminal justice system isn't working as well as it could or should.

Criminal justice professionals tell me the system could work better.

And I think it could work better.

I asked to speak to you today so that I could discuss some ideas for improving the system and get your reactions.

There is no function of government in which the three branches of government are in such constant daily contact--and conflict--than the criminal justice system. It will be difficult to improve the system unless the legislative, executive, and judicial branches can work more together more often.

We cannot expect judges, prosecutors, defenders, police and corrections people to agree all the time. As a matter of fact, it would be a threat to liberty if they did. But I would hope our inevitable disagreements could be handled by civilized discussion, rather than by taking pot shots at one another.

We must always assume all segments of the criminal justice system are composed of people doing the best they can, in good faith, to carry out their duties. We want to stimulate improvement, not point the finger.

It is in that spirit that I appear before you today.

I think the criminal justice system ought to be improved in four major areas--

--The systems goals ought to be clarified.

Elected representatives must tell the system what they expect of it.

--The system ought to be better planned and simpler.

--The system ought to be made more accountable both to the elected representatives of the people and to the people themselves.

--The system ought to be better managed with the separate components of law enforcement, courts, and corrections coordinating their efforts.

Let's first take our goals. What should the governor, the legislature and the people expect the system to do?

Generally, I expect the criminal justice system to be effective, fair and humane. More specifically:

- The system should pay more attention to the victims of crime;
- The system should impose penalties which are fairer, more consistent, and more certain, and which do not vary because of the offenders' race, sex, ethnic background, relative wealth, or geographic location;
- The system should concentrate its resources on serious crimes;
- The system should work faster.

Let's take the first thought--paying more attention to the victims of crime.

The public's response to a criminal act shouldn't just be to catch the offender. Many offenders are not caught, and catching the offender doesn't do much for the victim's immediate problems anyway.

The victim is the "orphan" of the criminal justice system. There has been no one in the system to act as the victim's advocate or to give the victim a hand in coping with the effects of crime. As a matter of fact, we know that general opinion labels the criminal justice system as being so insensitive that many citizens do not even bother to report crime because they don't want to go through the inconvenience.

I would hope we can change this. I hope the entire system will become more sensitive to the needs and feelings of crime victims. A shift in emphasis is long overdue. The programs I am proposing will help turn this around.

CRIME REPARATIONS

Our existing state crime reparations program is a major step forward in recognizing the needs of the crime victim. To bolster our efforts in this area, I am recommending an additional \$150,000 in my budget request to increase benefits for crime victims. In addition, I am supporting legislation that will raise the maximum benefit available for each claim from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

Last year Congress considered a bill that would match our state appropriation for crime victims with federal dollars. The bill narrowly failed. This session Senator Hubert Humphrey and Senator Wendell Anderson will co-author this legislation in the Senate and Congressman Rick Nolan will be a co-sponsor in the House of Representatives. I have written our Congressional delegation to urge their support for this measure.

SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS

In 1975, as a result of state legislation, the Minnesota Program for Victims of Sexual Assault was established through the Department of Corrections with funding from the Governor's Commission on Crime Prevention and Control. I have earmarked \$120,000 to continue these significant services in providing assistance to rape and sexual assault victims.

BATTERED WOMEN

The battered woman is the victim of a violent yet hidden crime. She can be threatened, attacked and beaten in the privacy of her own home, often within view of her children, and usually within close proximity to her neighbors and friends.

In recognition of the absence of adequate programs available to these victims, I have designated \$500,000 in my budget request to aid battered women. Counseling, advocacy assistance and, if necessary, secure shelter must be provided to protect the growing numbers of physically abused women.

VICTIM RESOURCE CENTERS

The victim of a crime is entitled to some direct and immediate indication that society cares about his or her welfare. I am, therefore, supporting legislation to provide a state grant of \$300,000 to the Department of Corrections to be matched by private funds. This will permit the development of pilot "Victim Resource" centers in the Twin Cities. If proven successful, these centers can be extended to other portions of the state.

The victim of a crime ought to be able to expect a response to the crime which will guarantee at least the following:

- Access to help, even for such a simple thing as a ride to a doctor's office;
- Verification of injury or damage for reparations purposes;
- Help with insurance and welfare problems;
- Information on pending police investigations;
- Referral to social agencies which can provide further help;

This may not sound like a lot; but if you're old, or poor, or alone--which so many crime victims are--it could mean a great deal.

VICTIM WITNESS

When a crime is committed, if the offender is caught, the victim becomes a witness. For many people this is a frightening experience and our system doesn't always do enough to help alleviate that fright.

A victim who becomes a witness ought to be guaranteed the following:

- Someone to explain the legal proceedings, and when and why his or her presence in court might be needed;
- The chance to discuss the case with the prosecutor before the morning of trial;
- The chance to be heard before the judge, or by a presentence investigator, before sentence is imposed. Too often, victims never do find out what happened to their assailant. I think they have a right to know and a right to be heard.

I have asked the Crime Commission to give favorable consideration to continuing successful victim witness programs, which now exist in some parts of the state, and extending them to additional areas which request them.

RESTITUTION

I consider restitution an excellent alternative for dealing with the property offender. Requiring a check forger or burglar to make restitution will often benefit victims and society more than the punishment of imprisonment. Those who damage or steal property should be required to work off their debt to the people through useful service in the community.

I am supporting a newly created restitution program within the Department of Corrections to focus in on making restitution a more common disposition in our courts. This program will be responsible for designing innovative ideas for encouraging greater use of restitution in both state and community corrections systems.

SENTENCING

Let's take the question of sentencing, and the related question of violent offenders.

We cannot expect any sentencing system to be a panacea for our crime problems.

We can, however, legislatively remove the ambiguity of how long a convict will spend in prison and more certainly fit the punishment to the crime. Prison may not rehabilitate the murderer, armed robber or the rapist but it will assuredly protect society during the prison term. By fixing the length of that prison term with more certainty we will ensure a fairer, more equitable system of justice in dealing with all convicted felons.

The determinate sentencing bill now pending before the legislature addresses some of these concerns. I support the general approach of determinate sentencing, particularly as it relates to dangerous and violent crime.

In addition to providing for determinate sentences, we should have appellate review of sentencing itself. Only through appellate review can we begin to develop statewide sentencing policies which will eliminate unfairness based upon race, sex, color, social position, wealth, or location within the state.

At the other end of the spectrum, our criminal code imposes considerably greater penalties upon some crimes against property than upon some crimes against people.

I think it's time we reorder our priorities. When we treat a minor property offense as a felony we divert important resources from the handling of violent offenders who are a threat to society.

To secure the safety of life and limb of our citizens is the primary responsibility of government. I abhor violence. There is no reason for us to tolerate violent crime. My first priority is to eliminate criminal attacks on individuals.

I recognize that the root causes for crime are poverty, unemployment and deprivation. But these are not justifications for assaulting and maiming people. I give notice now that those who intentionally violate or attack individuals have no right to our sympathy.

We should take into account that an offense which is labeled a felony takes substantially more court, prosecution, defense and police resources to process than does an offense which is labeled a misdemeanor.

The legislature should carefully examine some of the less serious felony offenses that are often routinely disposed of as misdemeanors.

TRIALS

Third, the system should work faster. Criminal cases should not drag on and on.

All criminal cases should be concluded within 60 days. If we modify our classifications of property crimes and adopt the other judicial reforms I am proposing, we can have these criminal cases disposed of within 60 days without adding any more judges.

Speeding up dispositions is particularly necessary in the area of serious misdemeanors. Many misdemeanor charges involve family assaults and chemical dependency or both. They often are hung on a trial calendar for months. Both society and the accused have a right to have criminal cases disposed of promptly. The battered wife or the family of an alcoholic should not have to wait months for court intervention.

To sum up, as far as the goals of the system are concerned, I think the system should

- Pay more attention to the victims of crime;
- Impose penalties which are fairer and more consistent, as well as more certain, and which do not vary according to sex, race, ethnic background, wealth, or location within the state;
- Concentrate its efforts on serious crime, and not have matters classified as felonies which are routinely treated as misdemeanors;
- work faster.

The second group of changes I would suggest in the system have to do with making it more planned and less complicated.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

In 1973 Minnesota passed the Community Corrections Act. This places emphasis on local planning and control of correctional programs aided by state subsidies. This Act, a major impetus for developing these alternatives, has gained national recognition as a means to bring some order to the correctional process. In designating this as model legislation, the National Association of Counties has said that the Act "provides one of the best examples of how such a (state and local) partnership can work in delinquency prevention programs".

The beginnings of that Act were right here in Rochester with formation of your well known PORT program. That program demonstrated the value of bringing together members of the criminal justice system with local leaders to plan for sensible correctional programs.

I am recommending that the legislature commit \$1,616,800 towards bringing an additional ten counties under the Act and to increase the existing subsidies to keep pace with inflation.

We must, at the same time, review the administration of the program at the local level to ensure that it accomplishes the goals set by the legislature. We must avoid the tremendous problem of prison over-population as most other states are suffering, and at the same time take measures which put us in the best position to control crime and protect the public.

CORRECTIONS PLANNING

A year ago the legislature authorized the Department of Corrections to prepare a comprehensive Master Plan relating to corrections in the State of Minnesota. That plan will include information as to what the state is doing in Corrections, what needs to be done and how state services should relate to local resources. The details of the plan are nearly completed and will be released in the very near future.

This planning process is a valuable aid in evaluating the progress of our corrections policies and something we will want to continue on a periodic basis. As our system becomes more elaborate, there is more need to step back and carefully examine what's going on in total so that we are not wasting energy and money in fruitless endeavors.

STATE CORRECTIONS INSTITUTIONS

Based on the most up to date projections on future prison populations and the associated needs for incarcerating the type of offenders who will be entering our corrections system in the coming years, I am recommending the following blueprint for structuring our state correctional institutions:

1. Construct a new 400 bed high security prison on land adjacent to the existing prison at Stillwater. With funds appropriated last session by the legislature, an intensive planning project by the Department of Corrections has produced a detailed report and architectural design for a \$20.8 million facility that can be completed by 1981.

2. Close existing cell blocks at present Stillwater prison; build 200 bed medium security replacement.

The most undesirable aspects of the prison at Stillwater are the tiers of cell blocks which make prison administration and control of the inmates so difficult. By demolishing these living units and replacing them with a 200 bed medium security living unit on the same site, we can retain the rest of the prison complex which is in relatively good shape and would be very expensive to rebuild. This includes the kitchen, gymnasium, auditorium and the extensive farm industry program. This unit can be completed in time to coincide with the opening of the new high security prison immediately adjacent to it.

3. Close the Willow River Camp in 1977. This will eliminate 50 beds in this adult minimum security facility which has out lived its usefulness because of the deteriorating buildings and extremely high per diem costs. The closing can be done this year with inmates and staff phased into other institutions.

4. Retain the Correctional Institution for Women at Shakopee. With a capacity of 65 this facility should be adequate to provide for the anticipated inmate population.

5. Convert the Minnesota Home School at Sauk Center from a juvenile facility into a 200 bed minimum security institution for adults.

6. Retain the 70 bed minimum security unit adjacent to the present Stillwater prison for its present use to prepare inmates to return to the community.

7. Retain the State Training School at Red Wing as the only state juvenile institution. Population estimates for juvenile offenders sent to the state corrections system show declining commitments from the juvenile court. The 200 bed capacity at Red Wing should be adequate to take care of expected juvenile commitments.

8. Retain the Thistledeew Forestry Camp as a self-supporting facility for youth with a 40 bed limit.

9. Renovate the Minnesota Metroplitan Training Center at Lino Lakes to a medium security institution of 200 beds which will be completed this summer. If necessary, this can be expanded to 400 beds in a relatively short period of time to cover any required bed space in future years that cannot be handled by other institutions.

10. Retain the St. Cloud Reformatory as a 630 bed maximum security institution.

This recommendation does several important things.

--It guarantees sufficient space for the largest possible number of inmates we can expect to see in our corrections system for at least the next two decades. On the other hand, we are being careful not to over-build to insure that we don't have too many prison cells, which would be wasteful and inefficient to administer properly.

--It provides a good mix of varied levels of security so we can have the proper degree of control for each inmate. The most dangerous criminals will have the tightest security while check forgers and other property offenders can be detained in less confining surroundings.

-As a whole, the institutions under this arrangement will be more cost efficient and less expensive to operate. There will be an emphasis on smaller units which will be easier to control, resulting in less personnel per inmate in several of the facilities.

In 1972 the State of Minnesota accepted a gift of \$156,724 from the Reverend Francis J. Miller Memorial Foundation for the purpose of building an interdenominational chapel at the State Prison. Father Miller served as Prison Chaplin for many years. Following his death, the Foundation was organized to acquire contributions to construct a chapel in his memory. Now that we have committed ourselves to a new prison, I am requesting that this fund plus the interest earned be dedicated to incorporating this chapel into the new high security prison at Stillwater.

MENTAL HEALTH UNIT

To help ease the burden of overcrowding at the Security Hospital at St. Peter, where mentally ill prison inmates have been transferred for treatment, I am suggesting the establishment of a mental health unit at either St. Cloud or Stillwater. The funds for this will be transferred from the Department of Welfare budget formerly applied for the treatment of convicts. Thus, this unit will require no new money.

DRUG TREATMENT

We know that most of our prison inmates have a chemical dependency problem. I have designated \$392,000 in state funds to continue the excellent chemical dependency treatment program at St. Cloud Reformatory that was formerly paid for by federal dollars. I also support the establishment of a similar drug treatment unit at Stillwater with federal grant money.

VIOLENT JUVENILES

Of increasing concern is the problem of the violent, hard-core juvenile offender. Although these youth represent less than 3% of all juveniles arrested, controlling and helping these young people is a desirable goal worthy of priority status.

We must be able to furnish sufficient options for dealing with these juveniles for varying lengths of time with varying levels of security. At the same time, if we are to treat these juveniles more firmly we must have suitable protection for their rights under the law. Higher levels of security and confinement may be required for many of these hard-core juvenile offenders but we must not overlook the necessity of an effective treatment program.

To date, a model program to control and treat these juveniles does not exist. At my request, the Commissioner of Corrections has appointed a committee of legislators, police and interested citizens to develop a concrete proposal to identify and control these delinquents. Their recommendations will be the basis for more specific legislative proposals in the near future.

POLICE TRAINING

Every peace officer in Minnesota deserves the opportunity for continuing training to do his job better, and every citizen of this state deserves to have the police who serve him properly trained. There must be mandatory minimum basic training for every peace officer, no matter what the size of the community served. To provide such training we must use the training and educational services of community colleges and area vocational technical schools in conjunction with the peace officer training board and the state crime bureau. In addition we must provide continuing in-service training in locations throughout the state to create easy availability and accessibility to all officers. The state should assist local units of government in the costs of training officers.

We cannot expect a person to become a professional peace officer merely by giving him a badge and a gun. We must make sure peace officers are professionals in every sense of the word.

Other professions--doctors, lawyers, dentists, architects, engineers, land surveyors, and the like--are regulated by state professional standards boards.

Police, who deal with human lives and property on a daily basis, should have nothing less. We should work with police leaders to develop this kind of program, so that both the public and the police know what to expect from the profession of law enforcement.

STOLEN PROPERTY

Burglary and theft are encouraged by easy markets for stolen goods through receivers of stolen property, or fences. I am supporting legislation to create a fund that will be available to local law enforcement agencies to assist in buying contraband goods for use as evidence. This will be useful to help convict fences and put them out of business.

DRUG ENFORCEMENT

The sale of illegal hard drugs continues to be a problem throughout the state. Seizures of hard drugs have continually increased in recent years.

While the problem is usually associated with metropolitan areas, rural areas are not exempt from this concern. Although street dealing of heroin in small towns was virtually non-existent three years ago, 20% of the heroin seized during 1976 originated with suppliers operating in out-state areas.

To combat this, I am proposing a fund similar to the above contraband fund, for the purchase of narcotics to facilitate the arrest and conviction of drug pushers.

DRUNK DRIVING

Our society has a very serious alcohol problem. Death and destruction caused by the abuse of alcohol by drivers have become intolerable. We are not going to solve the problem only by reliance upon criminal prosecution. Many of the people we are concerned about are sick -- they are alcoholics in need of treatment. More efficient treatment programs must be established in conjunction with greater reliance by the courts upon treatment of alcoholics who are arrested for drunk driving.

We also can reform the present drunk driving laws which have become so complicated that a sober person cannot understand them. They must be simplified. We ought to have one hearing, prosecuted by local officials, to cover all the issues that arise when an individual is arrested for drunk driving.

We require individuals to take a written test in order to secure a driver's license. The problem of alcohol and driving is serious enough to require formal written testing on the effects of alcohol and driving as part of the regular driving license application and renewal process. People have to realize the effect alcohol will have on them as individuals. That realization will come through public dialogue, through education in our schools and communities, but most importantly through political leadership.

HANDGUN REGULATION

Too many of our citizens are being injured or killed by the careless or illegal use of handguns. In recognition of the fact, I support the attempts by Attorney General Spannaus to tighten up our handgun control law.

We already have provisions for mandatory prison terms for major crimes committed with a handgun. People who hurt or threaten others with a handgun deserve certain punishment.

While I want our law-abiding citizens to retain the right to own and use firearms for sport, hunting and, when necessary, for personal protection, I believe we must have further safeguards to prevent violence-prone or irresponsible persons from possessing handguns.

The Spannaus bill will accomplish this without any gun registration and with no unreasonable delays in the sale or transfer of handguns.

COURT REORGANIZATION

Now let's talk about simplification.

Minnesota has been a leader in court reform.

In 1956 we adopted a new judiciary article to our Constitution. This article permits the legislature to reorganize the courts for better service to the people.

In 1971, acting under the new Article, the legislature adopted the county court act. This act provides full-time, legally-trained judges for every part of the state, and is looked on as a national model.

However, the job of court reorganization is only partly done.

We don't have a true court system. We have 79 independent trial benches. The jurisdictional differences among the district, county, municipal, and probate courts are based on history, not logic. The courts are not legally capable of sharing business back and forth to balance workload or reduce travel and delays.

Our existing court structure promotes differences in workload among judges. In the county court system, the population per judge ranges from 5,700 to 54,000, with equivalent differences in workload.

Each judge in your Dodge-Olmsted county court serves 34,000 people. In 1974 each of your judges handled almost 5,000 civil and criminal matters. The judge in another nearby county serves fewer than 16,000 people and disposed of 1,800 civil and criminal matters in 1975.

Since the salaries of county court judges are paid by the county, disparities in district size translate directly into cost. Between our smallest and largest county court districts judicial costs range from \$4 per capita to 53¢ per capita.

Some time back the judiciary rightly told our legislatures, "One man, one vote." Maybe it's time the legislatures applied something like the same criteria to judicial apportionment.

The best way to make it possible to provide judicial service to the people of the state in proportion to the population and workload of the various areas, is to unify our trial bench so that instead of district, county, municipal, probate, family, and juvenile courts, we have just one district court. With a unified trial bench we can achieve many efficiencies and provide a better access to justice for our people.

The American Bar Association and the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals-- organizations which disagree on many major points--both agree that there should be a unified trial bench in each state.

If all the judges in each of our judicial districts were merged into one district court we would then have only 10 benches, rather than 79. We could eliminate one-judge courts, which all experts tell us should be done. Each of the 10 districts of a unified trial court would have at least 15 judges.

Within each of the 10 districts we ought to have professional court administration. We learned long ago in our hospitals that we ought to have professionally trained lay administrators and free up our doctors to practice medicine. We ought to apply this lesson in our court system. Administrators should administer and judges should judge.

Our objectives ought to be, it seems to me,

- (1) Unification of the trial courts;
- (2) State assumption of all judicial salaries;
- (3) Professional management and administration to the court system.

If we don't unify the courts and provide for professional administration, we will go on adding judges to this bench or that bench in response to local pressures and workload situations, rather than in accord with a plan. We'll spend a lot more money than we have to, and we will not have as effective a judicial system.

PARKING TICKETS: ADMINISTRATION

By way of additional simplification, we should eliminate from the criminal justice system the responsibility for enforcing sanctions against people who fail to appear on parking tickets and petty misdemeanor traffic tickets.

At present, if these people don't appear in court, we issue a warrant for their arrest.

These warrants are piling up. Thousands are cancelled each year because local law enforcement agencies cannot keep up.

It has been estimated that state and local governments lose a minimum of \$2,500,000 each year. You can fail to appear on a traffic or parking ticket and never get caught except by accident.

A statewide warrant policy advisory committee consisting of police officers, judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys has recommended that arrest warrants no longer be issued against people who fail to appear on parking and petty misdemeanor traffic tags. Instead, the committee suggests people who don't appear on parking or minor traffic tags simply won't be able to get their license plates or drivers' licenses renewed until they dispose of the pending matters.

This recommendation makes sense. It will reduce the number of scofflaws. It will reduce the burden on our police departments. It will provide for more effective law enforcement.

Most importantly, legislation along these lines will free up resources of our criminal justice system to concentrate on real crime, the kind of crime that bothers the people--violent crime.

GOVERNOR'S CRIME COMMISSION

The Governor's Commission on Crime Prevention and Control has been the source of a number of programs that have benefited the criminal justice system. This is particularly true in the initiation of programs to encourage the prevention of crime.

The Crime Watch program has achieved statewide acceptance and nationwide recognition. I urge continued support for this program.

FRANK J. SULLIVAN
GOVERNOR

The program for crime prevention through environment design is producing some unique suggestions in increasing citizen participation in finding design-related means to cut crime in our urban neighborhoods. I look forward to further ideas developing out of this program over the next year.

In the months to come I will evaluate the role of the Crime Commission and its relationship to state agencies, local units of government and regional planning units. I want to receive input from the professionals, government officials and citizens with an interest in this area.

ACCOUNTABILITY

In addition to clarifying the goals of our criminal justice system and providing more rational planning and simpler organization, there is a third step we must take: Make the system accountable to the public.

It's hard to find out what's happening inside the criminal justice system. When legislators and governors start to look into it, we find a lot of emotion and myths and few hard facts.

We should remove the veil of mystery that surrounds police, courts, and corrections. We who hold public office are not practitioners of a secret art. We are public servants. Our employers--the people--have a right to know what's going on.

The public should have ready access to information. Some of the questions which ought to be answered are:

- How many crimes go unreported?
- Of the crimes which are reported, how many are solved?
- How much time do police spend preventing and investigating crime?
- How many criminal charges are brought each year?
- How many are reduced from the original charge or dismissed?
- What sentences are actually imposed on various classes of felons and misdemeanants?
- How do these sentences vary from judge to judge, from court to court, and from region to region?

--Are some correctional institutions and programs more effective than others?

You can go on and on listing these questions. I am sure many of you would like to know the answers as much as I do.

There ought to be a way to find out.

That's what I call accountability.

We also have to find out what works so we can reward what works and eliminate what doesn't.

That's what I call accountability.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

We have tools that we are working on that will help us answer some of these questions.

I have recommended for funding \$221,200 for the Department of Corrections to further develop an Offender Tracking System or Computerized Corrections Management Information System. This will be an invaluable instrument in assisting us to make educated policy decisions in the corrections system.

The new Minnesota Justice Information System Advisory Council has my backing in putting together an overall plan to provide maximum usage of technology in tele-communications for law enforcement. I have inserted \$1,008,000 into the budget that will guarantee the participation of all our law enforcement agencies into this communications system. If this appropriation is made, no police department, regardless of size or lack of funds, will be excluded from access to the system.

Accountability will be good for the public and for the system. It will give the people a basis to judge the performance of agencies supported by their taxes. Accountability may be the most complicated job of all--but it may be the most important. I look forward to the day when we have an annual report on the state of the criminal justice system.

Minnesota has a sound, fair, and effective criminal justice system. It does not need earth-shaking revolution, but well thought out improvements. It is good, it must be better, it can be better.

The way to make it better is to
--clarify its goals,
--improve planning, and simplify the system,
--make the system more accountable to the public.

I hope to work toward all these goals during my term of office. But I don't expect to do it alone. I expect to listen to and work with the legislature, professionals within the system, experts from outside the system, and with the people at large.

I am proud of Minnesota.

I think we can make it better.

No one can do it alone. We all can do it together.

As I have said before, and will say again, none of us is as smart as all of us.