

In some instances, steering a local criminal into the federal system was as simple as a Richmond police officer paging the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to double-check for federal gun violations, such as the obliteration of serial numbers on weapons, use of a gun while possessing a controlled substance or possession of guns buy fugitives.

Several federal judges here have complained that their caseloads now seem to resemble reruns of the "Night Court" television show, but city officials and community leaders delight in the lower homicide rate.

In the year that ended last week, 363 guns were seized, 191 of 251 of those arrested on gun violations were convicted, and 137 of those were sentenced to an average of 56 months in jail.

James B. Comey, the executive assistance U.S. attorney who helped craft the Exile program, said the numbers in part reflect the unusually large number of people who were carrying guns in Richmond.

"Richmond is a weird place," he said. "The world is flooded with guns here."

Comey, a tall, boyish prosecutor who spins hair-raising tales about his Mafia wire-tapping days in New York, said the gun "carry" rate—the number of times police confiscate a gun when arresting suspects—has dropped from 135 a month to 67.

"It's an amazingly high carry rate," he said. "I've never seen a place like 'Richmond. Dealers in cities like Chicago, New York or Cleveland have access to guns, but they're not standing on a street corner with a gun!"

Of Project Exile, he added: "It's a cultural war. It's totally apolitical. It's about locking up criminals with guns."

Gun violence has long plagued Richmond, sending its homicide rate higher than the District's several years this decade. In the fall of 1994, for instance, Richmond passed its previous homicide record, outpacing every city in the country except New Orleans.

S. David Schiller, the senior litigation counsel in the U.S. attorney's office, said police have passed out 17,000 hand bills detailing the program. There are Exile billboards, television spots and even a giant black city bus that runs through the city with a message in stark white paint: "An illegal gun gets you five years in federal prison."

A coalition of civic and merchant groups has raised \$40,000 and pledged an additional \$60,000 to fund the marketing efforts.

Though the Exile prosecutions have not been glamorous—"These cases are not sexy: These are mutts with guns," said Schiller—they are getting notice in other urban centers. Seventeen cities nationwide, including the District and Baltimore, are now participating in a federal pilot program to trace illegal guns, and there has been talk of extending Exile elsewhere.

"Richmond has one of the most involved programs in the country," said Joe Sudbay, a spokesman for Handgun Control in Washington. "It's a great combining of resources to combat violence."

NRA Executive Director Wayne R. LaPierre said that Exile "ought to be in every major city in the country where there's a major crime problem."

"The dirty little secret is that there is no enforcement of federal gun laws," LaPierre said. "What Exile's doing—which I think is great—is for the first time in a major American city, if a criminal picks up a gun, he'll do major time. It's a message the NRA cheers, a message police cheer."

"That's the magic of what they're doing in Richmond. The word is out on the streets of Richmond that the U.S. attorney is dead serious about stopping gun violence."

AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER, MAJORITY LEADER AND MINORITY LEADER TO ACCEPT RESIGNATIONS AND MAKE APPOINTMENTS NOTWITHSTANDING ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding any adjournment of the House until Tuesday, July 14, 1998, the Speaker, majority leader and minority leader be authorized to accept resignations and to make appointments authorized by law or by the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 1998

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday, July 15, 1998.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

CHILD CUSTODY PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, the House will soon have the opportunity to vote on legislation that will help secure the rights of parents to counsel our children during a situation of great confusion that could lead to grave consequences, that of obtaining an abortion.

Almost half the States in the American union have passed laws that require the consent or notification of one or both parents before a minor girl can obtain an abortion. These laws are designed to assure that a mother, father or legal guardian can provide counsel and comfort to an innocent and naive young girl before making a decision that brings with it mental and physical ramifications.

Unfortunately, unscrupulous abortionists, while practicing in a State without parental notification laws, loudly advertise in another State which does have consent laws, that their abortion mill lacks such notification requirements. Minor girls are then taken by a stranger, oftentimes, to obtain this dangerous procedure.

This, Mr. Speaker, is an outrage that must be stopped, and can be stopped, if

Congress adopts the legislation that I have introduced along with the gentleman from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK), who joins me here tonight, H.R. 3682, the Child Custody Protection Act. This bill would make it a Federal misdemeanor for an adult to knowingly transport a minor across State lines in order to evade a State's parental notification or consent laws on abortion. This legislation already has 135 cosponsors, and this number is rising, because it is a common sense idea, protecting parental rights from being stripped away by a complete stranger.

Many of our Nation's schools, for example, prohibit giving an aspirin to children without parental notification. Yet we have a situation where a complete stranger can take a young girl away from her parents to obtain an abortion and suffer no consequences, despite this young lady having been subjected to a life-threatening procedure.

President Clinton this week said parents should know when their children are being encouraged to smoke by tobacco companies. Well, this same principle, the parents right to know, should apply also to a young girl obtaining an abortion.

In July, just in a few weeks, we will have the opportunity here in the full House of Representatives to secure the parents right to know, to know when our daughters are being taken advantage of by a stranger without our consent and without our notification. H.R. 3682 is that opportunity, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that all of our colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, will join in protecting parental rights from being stripped away by a stranger.

We urge our colleagues to support H.R. 3682, the Child Custody Protection Act.

SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS SANCTITY OF ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, in the continuing saga of the legal education of Kenneth W. Starr, the Supreme Court upholds the sanctity of the attorney-client relationship. In a vote of six to three today, they upheld this relationship by ruling that communications between a client and his or her lawyer remain privileged, even after the client's death.

□ 1815

Today's decision rejected efforts by the Independent Counsel, Kenneth Starr, to obtain three pages of handwritten notes taken by the attorney for former deputy White House counsel Vincent Foster. The notes were taken during a meeting between Mr. Foster and his lawyer just 9 days before Mr. Foster tragically took his own life.