NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

'THE LOST SON': BERNARD KERIK'S STORY

From **KERIK** *Page 23*

pital, watching Jack die. This is tearing Sonny up. He loves his old boss and friend.

After a while, Jack seems tired and catches my eye. "Guys," he says, "can I have a minute with the PC?" Sonny and Tom go out into the hallway and Jack and I are alone.

"Come here," Jack says.

I walk over. He reaches up and grabs me by the shirt, his IV line rattling on his arm. He pulls me close and we say our goodbyes.

Then he kisses me on the cheek and says into my ear, "You did it. Just like me. Nobody else thought it could be done, but you did it. Nobody can take that away from you."

"No Jack," I say. "Whatever I've accomplished was on top of what you did. You were the one, Jack."

He leans back in his hospital bed and smiles.

I lean over him, kiss him on the forehead and say, "I love you, Jackie."

And I leave the room.

My executive staff gathers in the eighth-floor command center, the same room where Jack and Bill Bratton first started holding Comp Stat meetings. There are about 75 of us in this room, gathered around a huge U-shaped table and a high-tech console that displays the latest maps and charts of crime.

Among the business today is the 100-day report about one of my highest priorities as police commissioner: the expansion of the intelligence division.

For law-enforcement agencies, intelligence is simply the gathering and sharing of information. This would seem like a natural activity for any police department, but it's something that the NYPD has struggled with. This is mostly because New York is divided into boroughs that are like separate cities in their own right. Information has typically stopped at the border of each borough. It is also because the culture of our department has bred territorialism among the precincts, the boroughs and the different divisions like narcotics and homicide. Officers take pride in their own work and want to keep their arrests and investigations for themselves. And it is partly a problem of size, of the glacial speed of changing a department as big as the NYPD.

For decades, the only sharing of information between these various units and boroughs was informal: between friends over a coffee or at a funeral or at a racket — a fund-raiser for cops. When old cops retired, the knowledge they'd collected went with them. Even with the advent of computers, information didn't seem to flow between units and the databases for the separate boroughs and divisions weren't even connected.

Unfortunately, the criminals didn't obey the rigid boundaries and categories that the New York Police Department had set up and so a drug gang in Brooklyn that robbed people in The Bronx to buy crack in Harlem might spawn three separate investigations with detectives who may not know anything about each other and who have no way to pool their information to respond more quickly and effectively.

There had always been an intelligence division in the NYPD, but it had been greatly decreased following a scandal involving the infiltration of radical groups in the 1970s. And so when I took over, the intelligence division was only a dozen or so officers whose main duties were to provide security for diplomats and dignitaries. The division was good at security but it didn't answer the larger question of who would be responsible for coordinating the vast amounts of information that should be used to fight crime.

When I worked in the Drug Enforcement Task Force, we realized pretty quickly that intelligence was our best weapon. We used our guns only a handful of times but we used our computer databases every day. If we got the last four digits of a license plate, within minutes we could have lists of any cars with those four digits and thirty categories of information, from the owners of those cars and their addresses to their associates and friends, their criminal records and intelligence about all those people. The collection of information in DETF was valued as much as arrests — more in some cases.

I knew I'd need someone bright and analytical, someone who could think abstractly and act quickly. I had just the person. A person I had recently whacked.



CREDIT IS DUE: Commissioner Kerik says Jack Maple was the creator of the modern-day NYPD. Jerry Nemfield

In my first week, I had demoted the Bronx Borough Commander — a veteran cop named Joanne Jaffe. Under her watch, murders in The Bronx had gone up 51 percent in the first eight months of 2000 — 46 more murders than the year before. While I couldn't approve of the results she'd gotten in The Bronx, I knew Assistant Chief Jaffe to be a brilliant police officer with a keen understanding of the way the NYPD operated.

I pulled her aside. "Look, I've got a job for you." I told her all about my vision for the Criminal Intelligence Section and she was eager for the challenge.

In May 2001, when Joanne Jaffe was ready, we assigned 250 of the most promising officers in the department to this new intelligence division and put a talented Deputy Inspector named John Cutter in charge. Right away, we started seeing results.

In June, an arrest was made in the One-Nine precinct on an aggravated harassment case — a guy harassing his girlfriend over the phone — and the perp told the arresting officer that he might trade some information on another criminal for a lighter sentence.

Since the other criminal was in another borough, in the past, this information might have died on the vine because it didn't do the arresting officer any good.

But in this case, it was passed on to the Intel. Section.

Detectives interviewed the guy and checked out his story. He claimed to know a fugitive who was selling tickets for a tour bus in Midtown Manhattan.

The detectives found the bus and one of them walked over and said the man's name. "Francisco." He seemed stunned to hear his name.

Francisco Sepulveda, 31, had been a fugitive since September 1994, when he was allegedly part of a home-invasion team that tied the hands and legs of a couple and their seven-year-old daughter while they burglarized the house.

They also taped the mouths of the family and that's how the little girl died, suffocating from the tape over her mouth. For seven years, Francisco Sepulveda had evaded capture, working odd jobs, living under assumed names and moving whenever he sensed trouble.

He was on the FBI's Most Wanted List and among the 10 most-wanted fugitives in Massachusetts.

"You finally got me," Francisco said when he was collared.

Under the old system, the information about Sepulveda would probably never have made it to another borough.

And more than likely, Sepulveda would have simply moved on.

These are the kinds of stories we share at the meeting in the Command and Control Center. The numbers are phenomenal. In its first 100 days, the Intel Section has come up with information that led to the seizure of 113 guns and the execution of 199 search warrants that wouldn't have happened without their work. In addition, the section's information was used to find witnesses and suspects in 45 homicides and 47 shootings.

"I talked about criminal intelligence for the past six months," I tell the brass at the meeting. "I put together a great team of people to look at it, to implement it and make it work."

I reach in my pocket and pull out an inspector's shield. "John," I say as Cutter stares at me, "on Friday, you're gonna be promoted to inspector."

If he wasn't leaning against a wall, I think he would have fallen over. He just stares at me, stunned.

One of the commanding officers says, "What'd he just say?"

Battlefield promotions are extremely rare in the NYPD.

There is a whole process for that sort of thing.

But Joanne Jaffe and John Cutter have done something extraordinary, building the new Intelligence Section from nothing but an idea, creating a program that builds on the Giuliani style of government — using performance indicators and management accountability to run government like a business.

More important, they have broken down traditional walls that separated bureaus and boroughs, state, local and federal authorities. They have helped me change the very culture of this department.

It is the kind of thing that would make Jack Maple proud.



IN TOMORROW'S POST

Bernard Kerik describes how he first learned of the World Trade Center tragedy — and of the courage amid the chaos in the first few hours of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. The commissioner details how he joined Mayor Giuliani and other top city officials at ground zero — and saw doomed Fire Department officials just before the towers collapsed. He reveals how they gained control of the situation during the city's worst crisis ever.

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