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Memphis D.A. writes about what he knows

By Peggy Burch on January 19, 2010 2:21 PM



This review of Bill Gibbons' new book about crime is by The Commercial Appeal's editor, Chris Peck:

Three words summarize the Bill Gibbons plan for fighting crime in this country: prevention, intervention, and accountability.

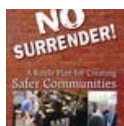
His just-released book "No Surrender! A Battle Plan for Creating Safer Communities" (Top Shelf Press, \$20) offers a road map to American cities that are intent on truly fighting crime.



True to Gibbons' get-tough approach to crime as the district attorney in Memphis, "No Surrender!" begins by making the case that criminals, particularly the most violent among them, must be held accountable for their deeds and not coddled, paroled or passed around. Gibbons cites convincing statistics from Virginia, New York and other states to make his case that long sentences for violent, hardened criminals result in less crime on the streets.

A more intriguing aspect of Gibbons' well-researched and fact-rich book is the case he makes that solving crime will require more than just long sentences and bigger jails. This means opening up what

he calls a "second front" in the war on crime, an approach that focuses on deterring young people from becoming repeat offenders, stopping bad apples from ruining otherwise good neighborhoods, and teaching kids and their parents the values of staying in school, off drugs, and not getting pregnant.



The generally conservative-minded Gibbons makes an excellent dollars-and-sense case for putting more money into drug treatment and drug diversion programs. He notes that in Brooklyn, N.Y., the diversion of about 1,000 drug offenders away from prison and into drug treatment programs saved that city \$42 million.

The remedies in "No Surrender!" will sound familiar to those in Memphis who have followed the Operation Save Community crime-fighting plan, which Gibbons has chaired. The book offers detailed and well-supported evidence that a comprehensive plan like Operation Safe Community can work. In Memphis, crime is down more than 15 percent since that effort began. Other cities cited in the book relate similar results.

This is a no-nonsense, comprehensive call to action for fighting crime. Law enforcement agencies, public policymakers and citizens concerned about fighting crime should make "No Surrender!" a must read.

-- Chris Peck, editor, *The Commercial Appeal*

Categories: Non-fiction, True Crime

Tags: bill gibbons, book, chris peck, law, memphis, review

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