

**Testimony of  
HONORABLE COLLENE (THOMPSON) CAMPBELL  
FORCE 100 & Memory Of Victims Everywhere (MOVE)  
Before the U. S. Sentencing Commission  
Washington, D.C.**

**February 15, 2005**

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Commissioners:

On behalf of the thousands of crime victims that I represent, thank you for giving me the privilege to be heard.

No one wants an education on the Justice System like my family has been forced to endure. Our first, life-changing tragedy, was caused by the lack of mandatory sentencing. As you are well aware, leniency afforded to evil criminals, frequently causes enormous loss and suffering to good law abiding citizens.

Statistics are not kept on the “oops” factor of releasing dangerous and violent criminals. However, those mistakes are forever engraved in the hearts and lives of their subsequent victims.

I have the greatest respect and place tremendous importance on your recommendations. Because, I know first hand the great need for improvement, I felt I must be here. Yesterday, I was in a California Superior Court listening to a disturbing bail motion in the 17-year old murder case of my Brother, auto racing legend, Mickey Thompson and his wife, Trudy. Last night, I climbed on a plane and flew all night to be here to testify.

My knowledge and experience in the justice system is not one to be envied. Our only son, Scott, was murdered in 1982—he was robbed, strangled, and thrown from an airplane into the Pacific Ocean. His body was never recovered. Like thousands of other victims, our Son was murdered by a dangerous felon, out on early release. At that time, there were no mandatory sentencing guidelines. Had there been, our son would be alive today. Prior to killing our Son, his murderer had received four indeterminate life sentences, but instead of spending his life behind bars, he was released within four years, giving him another opportunity to do violence and destroy families.

We are among the many who have suffered devastating results of crime, due to a system that placed greater emphasis on returning dangerous criminals back to the streets, instead of protecting innocent men, women and children. In doing this, our government failed to carry out its most important mandate, that of public safety.

Please don't allow these horrible mistakes and poor judgment to be repeated, by continuing the misplaced focus on leniency. Renew the commitment to protect America's law-abiding families.

Make certain strong mandatory sentencing guidelines are in place and not ignored. In

every new case, I would wish the decision makers would internalize their evaluation process by asking themselves: “Would I feel comfortable allowing this inmate to spend an evening with my mother, daughter, or son?” If the answer is “no,” then please don’t allow that criminal to return to society to be with some innocent family.

We all enormously despair over our military deaths in Iraq, but we want the world to be peaceful and free. Along with their families, our courageous servicemen and woman are making huge sacrifices to eliminate evil, to keep us safe. Since 9-11, there have been 1110 Americans killed in action in Iraq and 65 more killed in Afghanistan. That’s a total of 1185 of our highly valued American military, killed in our fight to stop terrorism and bring peace to the world.

But, lets not forget the Americans at home and what’s going on here in “our” Country.

During that same period of time, (since 9-11), there have been more than 55,000 Americans, murdered, right here in our own homeland. That, Commissioners, is 50 times more than in the war zone. Every day, every week, every month and every year, 50 times more Americans have been murdered in our own Nation, than have been killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan. I’m not just talking about crime, I’m talking about “murder”...loved ones dead, never to come back to their Mom and Dad, their sister or brother . . . they have been killed, they’re lifeless, they are gone forever.

We need to once and for all set the balance true. We need to send a strong and clear message that the lives and well being of honest law-abiding Americans are more important than those who have shown they cannot be trusted in a free society, those who have forfeited their right to freedom, those who have caused great pain and misery, they are the dangerous and violent among us.

We must make certain that fair and reasonable, but realistic and tough, sentencing guidelines are in place and followed. We must be positive that our standards are not weak, or give into those with a propensity for violence.

We need to protect “honest citizens” and must recognize that we have a huge battle in the fight against crime, right here, in our own Country.

Please do not allow evil to prevail—the cost is too great. Too many lives have been forever shattered, due to failures and false hopes in a broken system that sympathies with criminals.

Federal Judges have once again gained vast sentencing power. And, it would be helpful to this Commission’s work to recall the reasons for mandatory sentencing guidelines in the past. It was a judiciary that was unaccountable and out of step with the American people. They had embraced the false promises that everyone is good and can, in fact, be rehabilitated. However, virtually every institution and the American people lost confidence in the court’s ability to protect us, the honest citizens. And make no mistake, protecting the people is the court’s

highest responsibility, and it is “just”. When your child is lying dead, murdered by a repeat, evil killer, lip service does not help or heal the problem. We know that protection of the citizens has not been the “top priority” it simply hasn’t been happening. It took an Act of Congress to help correct this free fall of chaos and to begin to see that the top priority should and must be, first and foremost to protect the good people, before the bad.

This Commission must build into its sentencing policies and procedures a requirement that Judges are obligated to give the victim a right to be heard and must take into consideration and understand the impact of the crime, along with the views of the victim, prior to making any sentencing decisions. And, certainly you are aware this is now mandated by Congress, in 18 U.S.C. Section 3771, which is the new “Crime Victims’ Rights Act”, incidentally, named after our murdered son, Scott, and others victims.

It is vitally important for the survival of our Republic that our laws truly work to protect the innocent and punish the guilty. And remember, there is no better indication of future behavior, than a person’s past actions.

Romans, Chapter 13, Verse 1 & 4 in essence says: Those who are in authority are ordained by God, for they are his ministers to reward those who do good and execute judgment on those who do evil.

I will close with the well-respected phrase: "Evil triumphs when good people do nothing". Please do the right thing so that mothers and sisters, like me, will no longer have to come before bodies such as this and request true American justice. Please do not hesitate to ask me questions.

Thank You.