

REGIONAL ATTENTION IN ORANGE CRIME SUMMIT

BY WALTER ELLIOTT

ORANGE : About 130 people, from as near as Oakwood Avenue and as far as Montclair, sought solutions in the Summit on Violence here at St. Matthew AME Church May 14. The 130 - largely but not exclusively Orange residents - heard from two panels of civic officials, ministers and law enforcers about the state of street crime. At least 14 of the public asked questions of the panelists and traded crime prevention suggestions.

"The summit was good," said Councilman Rayfield Morton 2 p.m. May 18. "The question is now of following-up. We need to try the suggestions to see if they'll make a difference." Orange's Summit on Violence coincided with the City of Newark's "Push4Peace" town hall meeting and other similar and parallel area events on violence prevention that weekend. St. Matthew Senior Pastor Reginald T. Jackson had allowed Saturday's meeting in the same ground level room where a late January town



State Senator Ronald Rice, Acting Essex County Prosecutor Carolyn Murray, Councilman Elroy Corbitt, Congressman Donald Payne, Assemblyman Thomas Giblin, Essex County Head of Detectives Anthony Ambrose,

Those suggestions, while "Local Talk" was present in the St. Matthew meeting room, included: more parental involvement, creating neighborhood block and tenant watch associations, more recreation and education resources and more incident or situation reporting to police.

meeting organized by Councilwoman Donna K. Williams was held.

This summit's organizers - Councilman Elroy Corbitt, Orange Police Director John Rappaport and Mayor Eldridge Hawkins, Jr. - were able to get a wider range of speakers and guests. (cont. on page 5)

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Rappaport also placed packets of news clippings - including from "Local Talk" - on the city's arrests of suspects linked to recent shootings on audience tables.

The Saturday morning panel included Hawkins, East Orange Mayor Robert Bowser, Irvington Mayor Wayne Smith, Newark's Paradise Baptist Church Senior Pastor and moderator Jethro J. James and Andrew Roberts of the Guardian Angels patrol group.

Saturday afternoon's panel included State Assemblymen Ronald L. Rice and Thomas Giblin, Cong. Donald M. Payne, Sr., Acting Essex County Prosecutor Carolyn A. Murray and Essex County Sheriff Director of Detectives Anthony Ambrose. James opened with an invocation and a reading of The Old Testament's Hosea 4:6, "My people are destroyed from a lack of knowledge."

"We had a generation of builders from 1914 to 1946, who laid the foundation for the Civil Right Movement of 46-64," said James. "Somewhere after the 60s, the Civil Rights generation forgot to impart the importance of education. That leads us to the generation growing up today." "I'm going to say some things controversial," said Smith. "The first is that the police can't do their job by themselves - we need help from our residents and neighbors. The second is that few of the businesses people who look like me spend at are owned by people who look like us."

Smith soon excused himself for an Irvington street

dedication. Bowser, fresh from a morning memorial fund-raising walk, took Smith's seat.



Orange Mayor Eldridge Hawkins, Jr. addressing the audience

"Crime is not an Orange, or an East Orange or an Irvington problem," said Bowser. "Crime is a regional or Essex County problem. Suspects who are from one town commits a crime in a second and flees into a third."

One public speaker who grew up in Orange since the 1960s recalled when the city had a number of recreational outlets for children. Another speaker said that residents "know who the drug dealer on the corner is but are afraid to call the police."

The mother and grandmother of Tyrell Coleman rose to thank Rappaport and the Orange Police Department for the May 5 arrests of a murder suspect. Coleman, 18, was shot Jan. 25. James noted in passing that he was the victim of a carjacking in Newark April 16. He later asked for those who have been affected by gun violence to stand. 10 people responded.