

U.S. Department of Justice  
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**National Institute of Justice** / *Issues and Practices*

**Community Policing:**  
**Issues and Practices**  
**Around The World**

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**James K. Stewart**

*Director*

U.S. Department of Justice  
National Institute of Justice  
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# Community Policing: Issues and Practices Around The World

by

Jerome H. Skolnick

and

David H. Bayley

NCJRS

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## Foreword

The role of the police vis-a-vis the community is a central issue in modern policing. Increasingly, both the police and the community recognize how much each needs the other. As this valuable report points out, when police and citizens begin to see themselves as "co-producers" of public safety, substantial benefits accrue. For the public, it can mean more effective crime prevention and less fear, as well as greater accountability on the part of the police. For police, the increased support and respect from the community heightens morale and intensifies motivation.

Forward-looking police executives in the world's industrial democracies are making community police initiatives the centerpiece of innovative policing. This report focuses on the many common aspects of community policing at home and abroad. It offers a theoretically coherent discussion of the concept of community policing as it reviews international experience with the approach in Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Singapore and Japan.

As the report notes, contemporary ideas about community policing grew out of reconsideration of police strategies and practices in the 1960's and 1970's. There is a realization that some of the well-intentioned efforts to enhance professionalism may instead have created a gulf between police and the public they are sworn to protect.

Community policing is viewed as a strategy for bridging that gap while strengthening police effectiveness in preventing and controlling crime. But what constitutes "community policing?" This report translates the rhetoric

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into realistic program elements that seem central to the concept around the world. Emphasizing that community policing requires a change not only in practice but in philosophy, the authors discuss likely obstacles police executives face in introducing community policing to their departments.

Equally important, they candidly explore possible shortcomings of community policing. Can it reduce crime? Can the peril of police corruption be avoided?

Law enforcement officials and community leaders who must weigh these issues will find this report a valuable guide. The National Institute of Justice is pleased to present this international perspective on a subject that is among the most important in contemporary policing. We hope it will stimulate continued discussion of the future course of American policing.

James K. Stewart  
Director  
National Institute of Justice

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# Table of Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Foreword.....	iii
Preface.....	ix
<b>Chapter 1 Elements of Community Policing.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Community-Based Crime Prevention.....	4
Reorientation of Patrol Activities.....	7
Increased Police Accountability.....	12
Decentralization of Command.....	14
Overview.....	16
Problem-Oriented Policing.....	17
Endnotes.....	20
<b>Chapter 2 A Guide to International Experience....</b>	<b>23</b>
Australia.....	23
Canada.....	24
Norway.....	24
Sweden.....	26
Denmark.....	27
Finland.....	29
Great Britain.....	30
Japan.....	31
Singapore.....	32
The United States.....	32
Motivations for Community Policing.....	33
Endnotes.....	34
<b>Chapter 3 The Origins of Community Policing....</b>	<b>37</b>
The Tranquil Period.....	39
The 1960's.....	39
Inadequacies of Public Relations Units.....	41

	<i>Page</i>
Team Policing .....	42
The Era of Research .....	43
Endnotes .....	46
<b>Chapter 4 Potential Obstacles to Community Policing .....</b>	<b>49</b>
The Traditional Culture of Policing .....	49
The Youth of Police .....	51
Street v. Management Cops .....	51
The Responsibility to Respond .....	53
Limitations of Resources .....	54
Detroit's Solution to Emergency Response Obligations .....	54
The Inertia of Police Unions .....	57
Para-Police .....	58
The Two-Officer Car .....	59
Command Accountability .....	60
The Reward Structure .....	61
Public Expectations of Police .....	62
Failure to Integrate with Crime Detection .....	62
The Ambiguity of Community .....	64
Endnotes .....	65
<b>Chapter 5 The Value of Community Policing .....</b>	<b>67</b>
Benefits to the Community .....	67
Benefits to the Police .....	70
Endnotes .....	73
<b>Chapter 6 Possible Shortcomings of Community Policing .....</b>	<b>75</b>
Does Community Policing Reduce Public Safety? .....	75
Does Community Policing Undermine Police Will and Capacity to Maintain Public Order? .....	76
Will Community Policing Weaken the Capacity of Police to Enforce the Law? .....	76
Will Community Policing Result in Police Corruption? .....	77



	<i>Page</i>
Does the Community Policing Undermine the Patrol Force? .....	78
Endnotes .....	79
<b>Chapter 7    Community Policing in Democratic Society .....</b>	<b>81</b>
Is it Appropriate for Police to Develop a Political Base? .....	81
Will Community Policing Discriminate Against the Unpopular? .....	82
Will Community Policing Increase the Relative Power of the Police Among Government Agencies? .....	84
Does Community Policing Unduly Invade Novel Public and Private Realms? .....	84
Will Access to Community Policing be Fairly Distributed? .....	86
Endnotes .....	87
<b>Chapter 8    Conclusion .....</b>	<b>89</b>

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## Preface

This monograph is based partly on research materials that we collected in connection with our previously published book *The New Blue Line: Police Innovation in Six American Cities*. In addition, following the publication of that book, we studied police departments in England, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Australia, Singapore, and Japan. We spent at least a week and in some places — in Australia, England, Singapore, and Japan — a month or more. (Bayley has published a book on the Japanese police, *Forces of Order*, University of California Press, 1976.)

More important, however, than the amount of time we spent in each research location, was the way we employed our time. These were, for us, intensive field observation experiences. We generally started at the top, interviewing heads of justice ministries and chiefs of police and their staffs about the shape and direction of departmental thinking and policy. Then we would typically ride with and interview working cops, usually patrol officers and sergeants, partly to assess the reality of departmental policy and rhetoric; partly to gain a feeling for how the local crime scene impacts upon the police; and partly to comprehend the nuances of local police culture, in particular police feelings about the community being policed.

Finally, we would routinely interview heads of police unions, local criminologists, and other functionaries in the criminal justice system, who often provided useful supplementary and sometimes, to be sure, conflicting interpretations of the role and policies of the department under study.

We conducted hundreds of interviews and observations of varying length. A typical interview with an official would last an hour or two.

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Sometimes we would reinterview. We would typically ride in patrol cars for a shift or a substantial part of a shift. Some of those whom we interviewed proved to be enormously insightful and informative. Others were less so. On the whole, however, as we have learned over the many years we have been conducting this sort of research, police tend to be articulate and voluble interviewees. Even in the rare instances when they are not, an observer learns a whole lot about a city and its crime problems from the vantage of a patrol car.

We are obliged to more people than we could possibly thank in this preface. All of those who gave of their time and wisdom are, in a sense, co-authors of this report.

Two colleagues were especially helpful and deserve mention and gratitude. Professor Hans Klette organized the Scandinavian research itinerary, and interpreted with keen insight the Nordic countries police experience to an outsider. Professor Robert Reiner was exceptionally knowledgeable and astute in interpreting developments in the British police, and in facilitating relevant contacts in the police, political, and academic worlds.

Jerome H. Skolnick  
David H. Bayley  
October, 1987

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## Chapter One

# Elements of Community Policing

*The closer a police officer's relationship is with people on his beat, the more people he knows and the more those people trust him, the greater his chances of reducing crime.*

Charles Silberman  
*Criminal Violence, Criminal  
Justice, 1978.*

Among the world's industrial democracies, community-oriented policing represents what is progressive and forward-looking in policing. In Western Europe, North America, Australia-New Zealand, and the Far East, community policing is being talked about as the solution to the problems of policing. Papers exploring it have become a cottage industry. The governments of Australia and Canada have commissioned reports about community policing.<sup>1</sup> National conferences have explored it.<sup>2</sup> And the U. S. Department of Justice featured community policing in its third annual "Policing State of the Art" conference in June, 1987.

Considering the amount of talk about community policing in professional circles worldwide, one would expect that it has become well established in police operations and that examples of it abound. The reality is, however, that while everyone talks about it, there is still little agreement on its meaning. As a result, practical innovation under the rubric of community policing is very uneven. In some places, genuine changes in police practices have occurred. In others, community policing is used to dress up traditional programs, a classic case of putting old wine in new bottles.

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The variety of programs that are described as "community policing" is truly bewildering. It has been attached to Neighborhood Watch, mini- and shopfront-police stations, liaison with gay communities, specialized attention to the problems of women and children, unsolicited visits by patrol officers to homes, media campaigns to improve the image of the police, foot patrols, village constables, designation of "safety houses" for school children, strategies for reducing the public's fear of crime, directed patrol, police-sponsored discos and athletic leagues, horse patrols, and the creation of citizen auxiliary police. One police chief created "community policing" by fiat, declaring that every police officer was to be known as a "community police officer." At a recent conference in the United States on community policing, scholars, consultants, and police managers attached the phrase to ten distinctively different programs without ever clarifying its meaning. Surveying United States police departments in 1984, Robert C. Trojanowicz and Hazel A. Harden found that 143 had community policing. Although this would seem to be cause for congratulation, the programs qualifying as "community policing" were so extensive that almost any force would have one of them — foot patrol, park and walk, motorcycle-scooter-walk, team policing, special purpose vehicle, horse patrol, auxiliary, reserve, and volunteer citizens, and neighborhood response units.<sup>3</sup>

Many readers of this report will think they already know what community policing is. They will have an implicit idea of the programs that they think will be discussed here. But they are bound to be disappointed, because community policing is not yet an accepted program or even a core of programs.

British police officers love to tell a story about the meaning of community policing. A community knows it has community policing, they say, when patrol officers are put on bicycles — and when they encounter people out for a walk, immediately leap off their bikes, throw the people on the ground, and tell them what time it is.

If one goes to police departments and says, "Show me community policing," one will be shown different activities in different places. This lack of programmatic clarity with respect to community policing is cause for concern. Because "community policing" is so popular but so vague in modern policing, many will conclude that it is a rhetorical movement only — another clever phrase coined to make policing more palatable. The inevitable result of this overselling will be disillusionment and deepening cynicism about the prospects of meaningful police reform. Our opinion is that there *is* more to community policing than words, as we shall show, but we think that more care must be taken in the use of the phrase "community policing." This is an essential first step in encouraging meaningful innovation.

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Not only has there been a failure to identify what is distinctive programmatically, discussions about community policing frequently confuse operational practices with intentions, philosophy, motivation, management style, administrative requirements, and organizational structure. For example, participants in an executive seminar in the Houston Police Department recently identified thirty defining elements in "neighborhood-oriented policing."<sup>4</sup> These included a sense of trust between police and citizens, altering the role of the police, defining and communicating responsibilities to officers, encouraging the acceptance of responsibility, developing appropriate intentions, coordinating the delivery of police services, and recognizing fiscal limitations. In order to achieve community- or neighborhood-oriented policing, all of these elements may be involved, but they aren't in themselves community policing. Good intentions may not lead to new programs; police departments may be reorganized without recasting basic strategies; and management styles may change but organizational goals remains the same.

Policing becomes meaningful to society in actions taken in relation to the world around it. What policing is internally in terms of philosophy, management style, and organization are a means to that end. If progress is to be made toward community policing, or any other form of policing, it must be given programmatic content. It must reflect philosophy at the level of operating strategies and tactics. If we fail to insist on this, community policing will be closet drama, interesting to police themselves, perhaps, but of little importance to the communities they purport to serve.

Accordingly, our presentation of community policing in this report begins with a description of its operational features and then moves to a consideration of the requirements for its successful implementation. In this way discussion of the meaning of "community policing" as a set of activities is separated from analysis of what is needed in order to make it succeed.

The central premise of community policing is that the public should play a more active and coordinated part in enhancing safety. The police cannot bear the responsibility alone, nor can the criminal justice system. In an apt phrase, the public should be seen as "coproducers" with the police of safety and order.<sup>5</sup> Community policing thus imposes a new responsibility on the police, namely, to devise appropriate ways of associating the public with law enforcement and the maintenance of order.

This is not a new formulation of the responsibilities of the police, and it does not narrow the concept of community policing very much. Hard-bitten older officers recognize full well that their job is made easier if the public "cooperates" and "supports" the police. They have spent their professional lives asking for assistance from the public. What's new, they growl, about that? It follows, therefore, that if "community policing" is to mean something

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distinctive, it must refer to programs that change the customary interaction between police and public. New phrases are misleading if they do not describe a new reality.

We propose, therefore, that "community policing" should be said to exist only when new programs are undertaken that raise the level of public participation in the maintenance of public order. Past practices should not be referred to as "community policing" simply because their intent was to lead to greater public involvement. In short, "community policing" deserves to be celebrated only if it is attached to *departures* from past operating practices, only if it reflects a *new* strategic and tactical reality.

Community policing in this substantial sense is very much alive around the world and appears to be growing rapidly. Examining experience on four continents, we have found four areas of programmatic change in policing that have occurred consistently under the banner of community policing. In other words, when police departments act rather than just talk about community policing, they tend to do four things: (1) organize community-based crime prevention; (2) reorient patrol activities to emphasize nonemergency servicing; (3) increase accountability to local communities; and (4) decentralize command.

We will now describe these four programmatic elements, providing examples of each from countries around the world.

### **Community-Based Crime Prevention**

Community-based crime prevention is the ultimate goal and centerpiece of community-oriented policing. Since communities are made up of neighborhoods, Neighborhood Watch has become the centerpiece of community-based crime prevention.

Although Neighborhood Watch is an American invention of the early 1970's, it varies considerably throughout the world and sometimes even within the same country.<sup>6</sup> The London Metropolitan Police defines Neighborhood Watch as involving three elements:

1. **Public Surveillance.** People residing in a defined area are encouraged to get together and act as the eyes and ears of the police. This requires a certain amount of vigilance by residents looking out for suspicious characters and vehicles, and then informing the police.
2. **Property Marking.** The police loan out property-marking kits so that residents can mark their property with the post code, house or flat number, and their initials. This is intended as a deterrent to burglars, and in addition as a method of providing swift identification and return of stolen property.

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3. **Home Security.** When a Neighborhood Watch scheme is set up, the police are supposed to offer to visit any household, free of charge, in that area and make recommendations for improving security.

Above all, Neighborhood Watch tries to inculcate a feeling of neighborhood identity and therefore of community. This means that an individual who resides in the neighborhood should bear and share some collective responsibility for the safety of other persons and the security of their property, as well as for their own safety and security.

Neighborhood Watch programs vary in whether the initiative comes from the police or the public; the size of areas organized; the manner in which leaders are selected; whether costs are borne by participants, government, or charitable organizations; the amount of effort devoted to maintaining high levels of activity and involvement; provision for organizing neighborhood units into larger associations; and the level of ongoing support provided by the police.

The most ambitious and extensive neighborhood crime prevention program is the Japanese, though it is not called Neighborhood Watch and does not owe its inspiration to the United States.<sup>7</sup> From time immemorial Japanese neighborhoods have had the rudiments of informal government, the creation of custom rather than statute. Membership has been automatic and participation compelled by social pressure. Its leaders mediated disputes, lobbied for municipal services, organized neighborhood improvement campaigns, communicated information about local concerns, and sponsored festivals. As an outgrowth of this tradition, most Japanese neighborhoods now have crime-prevention associations that distribute information, sell security hardware, publish newsletters, maintain close liaison with local police, and occasionally patrol the streets. All neighborhood organizations belong to provincial and national crime prevention associations.

Although closely watched by the police and often discouraged, civilian street patrols are also found in other countries. In the United States, "CB" (citizen-band radio) patrols are common. Designed to increase the surveillance capacity of the police, CB personnel are strictly cautioned against taking any action except notifying the police about emergencies or suspicious circumstances.<sup>8</sup>

In Great Britain the Neighborhood Watch program has been advanced by the police and by government politicians as its most important crime prevention strategy. Neighborhood Watch has mushroomed throughout Britain in the 1980's. Figures given by the Minister for State of the Home Office indicate that as of 1986 some 8,000 schemes were in operation.<sup>9</sup> They are established either through a police initiative or as a result of local interest



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expressed to the police. For example, after identifying a target area the police will normally contact people who might be active members of a residents' or tenants' association. These people often form the core of the scheme, and the police will informally identify the area coordinator from among these residents.

In London, Neighborhood Watch is part of a larger concept of multi-agency policing. This concept is based on the belief that since all Londoners and the police have a common interest in stopping crime, public goodwill should be harnessed whenever possible to achieve this end. Multi-agency policing thus involves not only Neighborhood Watch and citizen participation, but also the coordination by the police of various government departments, such as local education, social services, and housing agencies. Thus, in London, Neighborhood Watch is only part of a broader and more expansive vision of the role of police in society: officers should be seen to be front runners in social change, whether it is urging architectural change to help in the "designing out" of crime, advocating alternative housing policies, or actively persuading commercial enterprises to build greater safety or crime prevention factors into house or vehicle design.<sup>10</sup>

A number of criticisms have been leveled in Britain at both Neighborhood Watch and the more expansive vision. First, there is some question as to whether Neighborhood Watch actually works to prevent crime or to make citizens less fearful of crime. A careful, but admittedly tentative, evaluation of two Neighborhood Watch areas conducted by the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cambridge suggests that there is not much reason to believe that Neighborhood Watch is very effective.<sup>11</sup> There are also criticisms that while Neighborhood Watch may be helpful to middle-class families that own homes, the type of advice the police are prepared to offer is of little practical value to individuals whose income and standard of living are too low for them to be able to afford improvements. Finally, multi-agency policing has been criticized as an overreaching by police into aspects of citizens' lives in which the police have no business. We return to these points in Section VI.

In Australia, too, Neighborhood Watch is relatively new, beginning in Victoria State in the early 1980's. Although police officials studied the American experience systematically before formulating their own program, the "Victoria Model" made some important modifications.<sup>12</sup> For example, the basic unit is not a block but an area containing approximately 400 to 600 residences, or about two thousand people. As in Britain, the police work closely with residents to identify people who would make responsible leaders and then sound them out for election. In order to remain a certified Neighborhood Watch group, meetings must be held at least once a month. Newsletters containing crime information and crime-prevention tips are

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standard. Neighborhood Watch is not free in Australia. Although the police help with publicity and local governments sometimes furnish Neighborhood Watch signs, members are expected to make a small yearly contribution for ongoing expenses such as the purchase of engraving tools and decals and the publication of newsletters. Australian Neighborhood Watch groups are not left on their own, but belong to larger associations which support and coordinate their work. There are successively zonal, city, and state Neighborhood Watch organizations, containing representatives from the levels below.

The Singapore police estimate that between 1980 and 1987 approximately half the population has been covered by Neighborhood Watch Groups (NWGs).<sup>13</sup> The basic unit is very small, on average four households, either detached houses or apartments. Confronted with doubts both inside and outside the police about the effectiveness of the NWGs, the Crime Prevention Department of the police force undertook a carefully evaluated "intensification" program in 1986. This involved stepped-up formation of new groups, visits by local police officers to the homes of existing NW members, and general encouraging of self-defense activity. Because the evaluation involves before-and-after as well as side-by-side comparisons, Singapore by late 1987 may have some of the best data in the world for evaluating the practice and impact of Neighborhood Watch.

Police around the world have also developed extensive education programs designed to help targeted groups protect themselves more successfully. Police departments now produce a vast literature in many languages with crime prevention advice to the elderly, school children, working women, secretaries, vending machine operators, taxicab drivers, and vacationers. In addition to writing and publishing brochures and leaflets, specialists in police agencies, usually based in headquarters' crime prevention units, give lectures, organize meetings, conduct classes, and coordinate media campaigns. There are now national and even international networks of crime prevention personnel, trading material, exchanging experts, and generally encouraging one another to bear up against the scepticism of their colleagues in the police.

## **Reorientation of Patrol Activities**

In the past fifteen years serious questions have been raised about whether traditional police strategies provide effective protection. These strategies have been based on the assumption that criminal, as well as disorderly, activity would be deterred if police were a visible presence on the streets and promptly arrested people who broke the law. Accordingly, approximately 60 per cent of personnel in police forces have been assigned to patrolling and the bulk of the remainder to criminal investigation.<sup>14</sup> Over

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the course of several decades, patrol work has been handled increasingly from motor vehicles and prompted by telephone solicitation and radio dispatch.

Although often described misleadingly as the "crime fighting" model of policing, the purpose of this system in fact was crime prevention. It is a source of confusion and ill-feeling that proponents of community policing sometimes speak as if they had a monopoly on concern with prevention. What community policing questions is not the goal of policing, but the means.

Buttressed by research that has shown that random motorized patrolling and rapid response may not effectively deter crime or lead to the more certain apprehension of criminals,<sup>15</sup> community-police reformers contend that patrol operations should encourage a deeper involvement with the community, an involvement not instigated predominantly by emergency calls for service. Rather than being deployed as an ambulance service, patrol officers should "get to know the community," talk to people in all walks of life, encourage requests for non-emergency services, and become a visible but unremarkable part of the community scene. By so doing, patrol officers will be able to assist individual as well as collective self-protection, to intervene at earlier stages to prevent problems from arising, develop a heightened appreciation of community concerns, explain police services more accurately, and solicit information that leads to arrests and prosecution. Police would still handle genuine emergencies, but with a much reduced force. The point, in effect, is to unhook a large portion of patrol personnel from the emergency response system, so they can engage in proactive crime prevention.

This kind of reorientation of patrol, practiced in the name of community policing, is being accomplished in a variety of ways. The most dramatic change is the redeployment of patrol officers from motor vehicles into small, decentralized police posts. They are called mini-stations in Detroit, shopfronts in Australia, Neighborhood Police Posts in Singapore, and *koban* in Japan. The Japanese, Norwegian, and Singaporean posts are miniature police stations, responsible for all aspects of policing except criminal investigation — receiving complaints, responding to calls for service, providing information and advice, patrolling on foot or bicycle, organizing community crime prevention, and developing personal contacts. Detroit's mini-stations, however, like Stockholm's and Melbourne, Australia's Broadmeadows shopfront, do not do general police work, but are responsible solely for community crime prevention. Their personnel organize Neighborhood Watch, give lectures on self-protection, and serve as liaison between the police force and institutions with special security needs. In Copenhagen, they teach schoolchildren the rudiments of public safety. Like "community policing" itself, fixed posts are not cut to a single pattern; there are operational differences in purpose and performance.

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Physically, the multi-functional Japan *koban* and Singaporean Neighborhood Police Posts (NPPs) consist of a reception room with a low counter or desk, telephone, radio, and wall maps; a resting room for personnel, often with a television set; a small kitchen or at least a hot plate and refrigerator; an interview room; a storeroom; and a toilet. Singapore NPPs also have a fairly large "multi-purpose" room with folding chairs and a desk that doubles as meeting room and office for the officer-in-charge. To discourage the public from using the *koban* as public lavatories, the toilets are often marked "out of order." In Singapore this is less of a problem because the NPPs are located primarily in residential housing estates which have their own facilities. Japanese *koban* have been built wherever space was available — in bus and railway stations, among rows of shops, at intersections of busy roads, on residential lots, and even on the grounds of temples. Because land prices have skyrocketed in Tokyo recently, the cost of building new *koban* has become a significant drain on police resources. Some land owners, moreover, would like the *koban* to move so that they can resell the land. Singapore's NPPs, by contrast, are much newer and well-equipped, having been built to order since 1983. Most are located on the ground floor of the large multi-storied public-housing estates where approximately 84 per cent of the population now lives.

*Koban* and NPPs have been inventive in finding ways to be useful to their community, in addition to patrolling, making security surveys, and promoting crime prevention. In both countries they serve as the "lost and found." Officers listen to endless complaints about municipal services, disputes with neighbors, and legal entanglements. One Japanese *koban* is a general delivery office for letters addressed to transients working in the area; another rings a chime early in the morning to announce the time; and a third broadcasts information of local interest over a loudspeaker, including advice to children that they should think of going home from the nearby park when the sun goes down. Singapore's NPPs invite neighborhood organizations to meet in their multi-purpose room; some lend board games, like Chinese chess, for children to use; and all of them register changes of address as well as births and deaths.

An intensive form of community involvement is "house visits," where officers go door-to-door asking about security problems, offering services, soliciting suggestions about police activity, and sometimes collecting information about residents. *Koban* officers in Japan and NPP officers in Singapore are expected to call at every residence and business in their beats at least once a year. House visits are also made by Community Service Officers in Santa Ana and Oslo, although not as routinely as in Japan and Singapore. Detroit and Houston police have made house visits too and, contrary to some expectations, were welcomed with enthusiasm rather than being told to get lost.<sup>16</sup>

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House visits in Singapore demand daunting linguistic skill. Singapore has four official languages — English, Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil. Although everyone is required to learn English, older Singaporeans may not be fluent in it. So NPP officers, working their way along the corridors on the outside of the high-rise housing blocks, may be confronted successively with Indian, Malay, and Chinese families, all preferring to speak their mother tongues. Among the Chinese this involves using dialects like Cantonese, Hakka, and Hokkien. NPP officers knock at the barred gates of apartments that provide security while letting in fresh air in the tropical climate. Conversations are almost always conducted through the bars, allowing the officers an intimate view of living arrangements. Officers invariably mention if the gates are unlocked, especially if children answer, pointing out that this provides access to burglars and other unwanted persons. Sometimes residents wave the officer away, preferring not to be disturbed as they eat or watch TV. On one occasion four middle-aged Chinese ladies smilingly refused to interrupt their afternoon Mah Jong game. Just as often, officers will be invited in for a cold drink or cup of tea. They usually refuse, pleading the pressure of work.

Foot patrols as well as horse patrols, traditional strategies of policing, are coming back everywhere. In Singapore and Japan, foot patrols are the mainstay of deployment in every neighborhood. Singapore stresses “vertical patrols,” where officers walk through the open-air corridors of high-rise housing blocks, beginning at the top floor and working their way down. Singapore patrol officers are still a visible presence, therefore, from building to building as well as within them. They can also see out over the surrounding area. Singapore’s foot patrolling, which seems so intensive, is a practical adaptation to the need to make the police accessible in three dimensions rather than in two.

Foot patrol officers in Stockholm, Copenhagen, and Santa Ana work in conjunction with neighborhood mini-stations. Scandinavian mini-stations are especially attractive, warmly furnished, inviting places, where neighborhood residents talk to police about a variety of “problems” — a husband’s excessive drinking, a child’s failure to meet school obligations — that may not bear directly on crime.

In most countries, however, foot patrols are used selectively, mostly in areas of high pedestrian traffic, like malls, shopping centers, entertainment “strips,” and public transportation facilities. Some police forces have ordered mobile personnel to park their vehicles regularly and walk targeted foot beats. Others have put foot patrol officers in cars with instructions to cover several dispersed areas during a single tour of duty.

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Foot beats are another device for unhooking police from the emergency system, allowing them to mingle with the public outside a context of demands. Foot beats may not, of course, lessen the volume of requests for service, but they extend, deepen, and personalize interaction.

A particular kind of reoriented patrolling is frequently identified with community policing, namely, "order maintenance." Although "order maintenance" sometimes refers to the control of unruly or riotous crowds, here it refers to the suppression of disorderly or uncivil behavior by individuals in public places. Giving priority to order maintenance has been urged by James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling in a well-known article entitled "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety," published in 1982.<sup>17</sup> They argued that patrol had an important contribution to make to community safety even though, as research had shown, neither random mobile patrols nor foot patrols prevented crime. What a foot patrol could do, however, was reduce the fear of crime, especially the free-floating fear generated by environments that seemed to be normless and out of control. Foot patrols, they maintained, should reduce the "signs of crime" and disorder, such as vandalism, graffiti, rude and boisterous behavior, panhandling street people, dangerously operated bicycles or skateboards on pedestrian walk ways, public drunkenness, loud music, and sleeping vagrants. Not only would this reduce anxiety, thereby encouraging people to use public places more freely, but it might prevent the decay of urban neighborhoods. Wilson and Kelling suggested that police give special order-maintenance attention to neighborhoods that were tipping in the direction of anomic social disorganization, trying to redress the balance before the "respectable" people gave up and moved away. Order maintenance, then, was seen as a tactic in neighborhood stabilization through reinforcing the public-behavior code of people who had a stake in the community. The trick of order maintenance, from the police point of view, was to read correctly the behavior code considered appropriate for each area by its respectable inhabitants. If police could do this, order maintenance would demonstrate that morality still mattered, that criminal elements were not in charge, and that a community existed that cared what happened within it.

Whether order maintenance in the Wilson-Kelling sense fits within the philosophy and practice of community policing depends entirely on how it is done. If it is carried out highhandedly and without accountability to the local community, it may be just another recycling of "ass kicking" policing. On the other hand, if it is a knowledgeable response to disorder problems that trouble a neighborhood, reflecting the wishes of the majority, then order maintenance can be viewed as providing a relevant service by the police, albeit a service conducted under the explicit threat of law. It also represents a broadening of the purpose of policing from the narrow suppression of

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criminal offenses to the development of liveable communities. In short, Wilson and Kelling's order maintenance represents one program in the reorientation of patrol that may occur under the banner of community policing.

### **Increased Police Accountability**

Community policing in practice involves not only listening sympathetically but creating new opportunities to do so. This is a big step for most police forces, who are afraid to open the floodgates to unfair criticism. It also clashes with their cherished belief that they are professionals who know better than anyone else what must be done in order to protect the community and enforce the law. Yet police have discovered that if they want to enlist public support and cooperation, they must be prepared to listen to what the populace has to say, even if it may be unpleasant. Neighborhood Watch and "getting to know people" will not work if police insist on one-way communication. Unless police are willing, at the very least, to tolerate public feedback about operations, community policing will be perceived as "public relations," and the chasm between police and public will grow wider once again.

In England, the Scarman report, an inquiry into police-minority conflict in Brixton in 1981, has been notably influential in developing the idea of liaison.<sup>18</sup> Scarman's report concluded that the riots represented an "outburst of anger and resentment by young black people against the police."<sup>19</sup> The report attributed the riots, at least in part, to the failure of police to maintain formal liaison with the black community of this inner London borough, concluding that "a police force which does not consult locally will fail to be efficient."<sup>20</sup>

Police forces are establishing an array of liaison officers and councils with groups whose relations with the police have been troubled, such as blacks in the U. S., Aborigines in Australia, Koreans in Japan, Indians and Afro-Caribbeans in Britain, and gays in many places. Melbourne, Australia, even has a liaison committee with lawyers. Naturally enough, liaison officers spend much of their time fending off potential crises — the uprush of anger, confusion, and violence sometimes generated by police encounters with these groups. They also try to cultivate contacts in those communities and develop programs to meet special needs. And they are frequently asked to create educational programs that will increase the knowledge and sensitivity of their colleagues in dealing with non-mainstream groups.

Police are also trying to cooperate more closely with established groups and institutions that have a working interest in crime and order. It is common, for example, for commanders of all ranks in Britain, Sweden, Japan, and

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Singapore to meet with crime-prevention organizations. So, too, do the police in Houston, Santa Ana, and Detroit. In London, some heads of local police stations are more receptive than others to meeting with local groups. Those in charge of stations in areas where riots have occurred are particularly sensitive to this need. Mini-station and shopfront police station officers in the U. S. and Australia act as informal security advisors to halfway houses for the mentally disturbed, homes for battered women, schools, and hospitals. Neighborhood Police Posts in Singapore are enmeshed in a consultative infrastructure that dates back to independence in 1965. The boundaries of NPPs are coincidental with parliamentary constituencies, although one or two larger constituencies have two NPPs. The Inspector in charge of an NPP meets regularly with the Constituency Consultative Committee, which is a grassroots political group advisory to the constituency's Member of Parliament. All public housing estates have Residents' Committees formed of representatives from separate housing blocks. Liaison with each is the responsibility of designated sergeants at each NPP. And there is regular contact with other organizations as needed, such as Community Centre Management Committees, Senior Citizens' Recreation Centre Committees, and Sports Clubs.

Even more far-reaching, police are creating new formal committees and councils to advise them about security needs and operations. Such consultative committees exist throughout Great Britain and Scandinavia. They take a variety of forms, but generally are a mix of elected officials and community representatives. In Britain, for example, despite the fact that each police force is responsible to a Police Authority, whose membership is one-third judicial magistrates and two-thirds elected local council politicians, the police in various cities have recently set up special Consultative Committees at police-station level. Their purpose is to mobilize public participation, assess consumer opinion about police services, and communicate information that will help the police carry out their duties more effectively. Detroit created similar groups in its precincts. Australia has no tradition of local control over police and its police, apart from the federal force, are responsible to the seven state governments. As a result, the Commissioner of Police of New South Wales, John Avery, and the Victoria Police Commission have strongly advocated the creation of consultative committees for every police station.

More problematic is the role consultative committees are actually to play. Morgan, in his study of police community consultation arrangements in England and Wales, distinguishes three models (not mutually exclusive) that consultative groups can follow.<sup>21</sup> One is the *steward* or *auditing* model, requiring the Chief Constable to publish an annual report — rather like a publicly traded corporation's — that gives an account of policing in his area for his police authority. But in this model, policy and practice are the sole responsibility of the police.



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The *partner* model is much akin to what we are defining as community policing. It stresses the importance of police being in touch with citizen views and emphasizes "the desirability of the police jointly engaging with citizens and other agencies in crime prevention and detection initiatives."<sup>22</sup> In sum, policing is supposed to be congruent with community priorities and inviting of public cooperation "to know about and solve most crime."<sup>23</sup>

Finally, the *directive* model puts police policy in control of democratically elected authorities, either Parliament or elected local committees. Morgan lists as "core problems of this approach" that local political groups may disagree with the law, ignore minority interests or rights, and be susceptible to corruption.<sup>24</sup>

Striking at a sometimes even more sensitive nerve, efforts are expanding to allow civilians to observe police operations in order to ensure that they are conducted fairly and legally. Britain, for example, now allows "lay visitors" to inspect police stations, with particular attention to the holding cells. So too does Sweden. Many American forces, despite a tradition of reflexive hostility to civilian review, allow civilians to go on patrol, provided a serious educational purpose is served. Police complaints tribunals have recently been established in all Australian states, contrary to the most sanguine predictions even eight years ago. Several American cities, like Miami, Detroit, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C., have quietly created various models of civilian oversight in the last decade.

In short, community policing embraces the expansion of civilian input into policing. Reciprocity of communication is not only accepted but encouraged. Under community policing, the public is allowed to speak and to be informed about strategic priorities, tactical approaches, and even the behavior of individual officers.

## **Decentralization of Command**

Although police operations are often decentralized geographically to some relatively small precinct or station-house jurisdiction, local commanders have usually had limited ability to shape the character of police operations. They have followed force-wide blueprints drawn up by headquarters staff — administering them "by the numbers." A key assumption of community policing, however, is that communities have different policing priorities and problems. Policing must be adaptable. To accomplish this, subordinate commanders must be given freedom to act according to their own reading of local conditions. Decentralization of command is necessary in order to take advantage of the particular knowledge that can come through greater police involvement in the community and feedback from it. It follows from this that not all decentralization qualifies as a step in the direction of

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community policing. Sweden recently “decentralized” police command to its 117 subnational jurisdictions. But these are still large areas, in fact larger than they were in 1965 when there were 558 forces.<sup>25</sup> It remains to be seen whether adaptation of policing to local conditions can and will be allowed to occur in Sweden.

Community policing uses decentralization to gain operational flexibility needed to shape police strategies to particular areas. Redrawing the boundaries of command, which goes on constantly in world policing, may or may not involve the devolution of authority upon local commanders. This critical element depends on the scale of command as well as the commitment of senior police managers.<sup>26</sup> Command decentralization is more than a mapmaking exercise.

On the whole, then, community policing implies that smaller and more local is better. Some of the cities we studied in *The New Blue Line* had disaggregated command. Santa Ana was divided into four areas, where entire teams of police and associated community service officers would be assigned for substantial time periods — usually two or more years. The first step in community police reform in Adelaide, Australia, was a redrawing of subdivisional boundaries to make them coincide with smaller, more organic communities. Officers-in-charge were urged to develop their own plans for area policing, changing them as circumstances warranted. In Denver, Colorado, computer terminals were installed and data collators assigned to assist district commanders in shaping patrol operations to counter emerging crime patterns.

Lee P. Brown, Chief of Police in Houston, Texas, started a program on a pilot basis in 1984 that he hoped would transform patrol operations and command responsibilities throughout the city. Patrol beats were reduced in size and covered by teams of patrol officers and detectives. The commanders of the Directed Area Response Teams, as they were called, were given authority to determine how resources were to be used to meet area problems. Operational planning was to be collective, using the insights, knowledge, and suggestions of field personnel. Commanders could change deployment, shuffle personnel between uniformed and undercover assignments, and concentrate on emergent problems as needed. The D.A.R.T. experience has been thoroughly reviewed since then. Its core concepts, especially supervised adaptation to local needs, has become the model for all field operations.<sup>27</sup>

The enhancement of decision-making responsibility under community policing extends beyond subordinate commanders. It involves the rank-and-file as well. In addition to their traditional duties, community police constables and patrol officers must be able to organize community groups, suggest

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solutions to neighborhood problems, listen unflappably to critical comment, enlist the cooperation of people who are fearful and resentful, participate intelligently in command conferences, and speak with poise before public audiences. Such duties require new aptitudes. Officers must have the capacity to think on their feet and be able to translate general mandates into appropriate words and actions. A new breed of police officer is needed, as well as a new command ethos. Community policing transforms the responsibilities of all ranks — subordinate ranks to become more self-directing; senior ranks to encourage disciplined initiative while developing coherent plans responsive to local conditions.

## Overview

Community crime-prevention, reorientation of patrol, increased accountability, and command decentralization are, then, the four programmatic components that recur again and again when more than lip service is paid to the idea of community policing. Several other programs may be involved depending on how they are done. Civilian employment in policing, either voluntary or for pay, may be used to enhance these elements. And order maintenance as presented by Wilson and Kelling may become a community-responsive activity within a framework of reoriented patrolling.

Accepting that the purpose of community policing is to involve the public in its own defense, sharing the burden of protection with the thin-blue-line, these four programmatic elements follow logically. Community-based crime prevention is the objective that the police set out to achieve. In order to do this, however, they must find the resources, especially of personnel, to mobilize communities and point them in the right direction. This requires using patrol personnel, the largest reservoir of police talent, more effectively. Hands-on interaction is essential if the public is to be coaxed, prodded and encouraged to assist in preventing crime and apprehending criminals. Furthermore, this can't be done extensively enough by specialized headquarters units; every frontline police officer must be involved.

Expanded accountability follows logically from outreach. One reason the public is mobilized for crime prevention is to provide a richer amount of information to the police. The public is unlikely to be willing to be passive in this relationship, especially when they meet in groups with the police. Accountability, in the sense of enhanced knowledge of police activities, collective and individual, and opportunities to comment, is the price that the police pay for more wholehearted community cooperation.

Finally, command decentralization is the organizational adaptation that must occur to take advantage of the particularities of communities that become apparent. Increased interaction cannot be managed or increased

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information be assimilated unless command centers are multiplied. The older system of management from the top down would simply be overwhelmed.

Thus, the four elements fit together. Police forces will find that if they embark seriously on community-based crime prevention, incorporating the notion of coproduction, they will be led by the process of interaction with the public to the other three. Community policing is a *package* whose parts are integrally related.

### **Problem-Oriented Policing**

This explains why “problem-oriented policing,” as formulated by Herman Goldstein, is frequently identified with community policing. The same programmatic parts are joined, although the rationale behind “problem-oriented policing” is interestingly different. Goldstein argues that police have focused too narrowly on specific incidents.<sup>28</sup> The strategy of most police forces is to deploy most of their personnel so as to be visibly available to respond to emergency calls for service. The dominating objective of police patrol is to get places fast, stabilize situations, and get back on the job — which means being available again. The response of patrol officers to most calls for service is inevitably hasty and superficial. Like para-medical personnel, what they do may be critically important to minimizing damage, but they do not pretend to treat situations therapeutically. As patrol officers themselves recognize, they don’t solve problems; they cope with the consequences of problems. At best, they refer situations to other people who have the time and expertise to find long-term solutions.

The effect of adhering to this incident-centered strategy is that police resources are largely wasted. Police are neither solving problems nor preventing crime. Their visible presence, whether on foot or motorized, has a questionable effect on crime, as so much research has shown. By concentrating on incidents the police have lost control of their work and of their effectiveness. Most of their human resources are tied down to a format that makes them unavailable for finding more effective approaches to the disorder problems of modern communities.

The solution, Goldstein states, is for the police to become problem-oriented rather than incident-oriented. They should develop the capacity to diagnose longer-term solutions to recurrent crime and disorder problems and to assist in mobilizing public and private resources to those ends. This means that police must develop an ability to analyze social problems, work with others to design solutions, appraise the most feasible and least cost approaches, forcefully advocate the adoption of required programs, and monitor the results of cooperative efforts.<sup>29</sup> In problem-oriented policing the objective doesn’t change; it is still the enhancement of public safety and

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order. What changes is that police resources are now committed where they can make a difference. This implies, in turn, that police must develop organizations that can accommodate flexibility, adapt on the ground to emergent needs, and supervise responsibly different uses of resources.

Goldstein's problem-oriented approach has been tried in several American communities. In Madison, Wisconsin, for example, police were constantly summoned to the downtown shopping mall to deal with people who were behaving bizarrely and disruptively. Press reports put the number involved at one thousand, portraying the mall as a haven for vagrants and street people. Not surprisingly, the public began to avoid the mall, and business suffered. When the police studied the problem over a period of time, they found that only thirteen individuals were responsible for the whole problem; that all had been under psychological supervision; and that they behaved strangely only when they failed to take prescribed medication. The police began to work with mental health authorities and constructed a tighter system of supervision for these people. Within a short time, the problem in the mall vanished, business increased, and the police were free to turn to other matters.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to Madison, Wisconsin, the best documented adoption of the problem-oriented approach has occurred in Baltimore County, Maryland.<sup>31</sup> Beginning in 1982, the Baltimore County Police Department, which covers a population of 670,000 in an area of 600 square miles outside Baltimore city, established three teams of fifteen officers to find solutions to recurrent incident-generating problems. The program was called COPE, for Citizen Oriented Police Enforcement. Working closely with local patrol officers, the COPE teams sought to pinpoint ongoing conditions that were not responding to the usual patrol mobilization but might yield to low cost coordination of resources among government agencies. In this process they analyzed incident data, talked extensively to residents, made house visits, and explored the willingness of other agencies to help. After plans were drawn up and approved by operational supervisors, COPE teams worked actively to implement the plans, including developing publicity campaigns, enlisting neighborhood support, and prodding other agencies to join the effort.<sup>32</sup>

One problem they addressed was the surge in burglaries that occurred during the spring of every year. A COPE team noted that baseball gloves were an item consistently stolen. When they organized a program to help purchase baseball equipment for families with low incomes, the breaking-and-entering rate fell noticeably. In another instance, when paint sniffing by adolescents made use of a public park unpleasant, COPE officers persuaded local retailers to remove preferred colors with higher hallucinogenic content from display and not to sell to known abusers. They also worked

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up case histories of chronic abusers so that when arrests were made prosecution and conviction were more likely. In the process of canvassing the neighborhood about the paint sniffing problem, COPE officers discovered that elderly residents of an apartment house had difficulty crossing a busy intersection to get to a nearby shopping center. This problem, in fact, was much more important to them than the paint sniffing in the park, since they rarely used the park at night anyhow. COPE lobbied for the physical reconstruction of the intersection, including the installation of a traffic light, and got heavier enforcement from their own traffic police.

Elements similar to COPE have been incorporated into New York City's Community Police Officer Program (CPOP). Started in 1984, CPOP officers are assigned permanently to beats that cover about eighteen city blocks. They are responsible for getting to know the community; uncovering problems that the police could appropriately and feasibly help to solve; facilitating community and governmental efforts at solution; and increasing the flow of information reciprocally between police and public. CPOP is now in twenty one precincts and its effectiveness is being evaluated by the Vera Institute.<sup>33</sup>

Quite obviously problem-oriented policing can and often does incorporate elements of community policing, especially when it involves close interaction with local residents or flexible use of resources by area commanders. But problem-oriented policing is not necessarily community-oriented, as, for example, if electronic bank teller fraud were to be identified as a problem deserving special police attention. Correspondingly, community-policing does not necessarily involve a "problem" focus.

In terms of encouraging reform of policing, "problem-oriented policing" may be a better rallying cry than "community policing." "Problem-oriented policing" connotes more than an orientation and the taking up of a particular stance. It implies a program, suggesting what the police need to do.

In either case, police administrators who want to introduce a new orientation toward policing face an uphill battle in defining their program and gaining its acceptance among the public and their own personnel. This report helps reform-minded administrators by describing the variety of forms community-oriented policing takes around the world and (in Chapter VI) the obstacles to its implementation.

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30. Speech by Herman Goldstein at the "State-of-the-Art in Policing Conference," Phoenix, Arizona, June 1987, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice.
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## Chapter Two

### A Guide to International Experience

How real is community policing internationally? Having established what community policing looks like when it is seriously pursued, we can begin to answer this question. Our ability to characterize countries' progress toward community policing is limited, of course, by our knowledge of policing comparatively. We cannot survey all the countries of the world or even the free world. But for a selected but varied group of countries that have been explicitly interested in community policing, we can present brief reports on the progress being made to incorporate into policing the package of programs we have identified as community policing. These reports are not intended to be complete summaries of all relevant activity in each country. They are general assessments. We treat more briefly countries whose experience we have cited often in the previous section of this report and dwell more extensively on countries whose experience is less well known to professional audiences.

#### **Australia**

Australian police forces have developed community policing most in the areas of community-based crime prevention and servicing outreach toward special clientele. Neighborhood Watch is expanding rapidly, although it is still new and experimental in several states. Community policing has barely touched traditional operations, however. Minimal redeployment of patrol personnel or reorientation of their activity has occurred. By and large, community policing remains a small but growing specialist activity, represented by the growing crime prevention units in state headquarters.

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Grassroots feedback is selective and episodic in Australia. The only explicit mechanisms for it are the various liaison officers and liaison committees attached to groups whose relations with the police are apt to be strained, such as Aboriginals, homosexuals, and immigrants. Feedback appears to have little impact on local police practices, except in response to crises. Because Australia's Neighborhood Watch program has created federated organizations from the grassroots to state levels, it may become an important mechanism for making the police more accountable and ensuring that there is lively input into police planning.

This is a creative and fertile period in Australian policing, featuring a willingness to consider new programs and question older practices. Indications are that innovation will expand. Australian police forces are alive to the rhetoric of community policing and are beginning to explore its implications. Resistance is substantial, however, within the police, and community policing has been made acceptable by focusing initially on the mobilization of the public in support of the police and separating community policing from other ongoing operations.

## Canada

Although the rhetoric of community policing is powerful, programmatic development has been halting. Among the more substantial developments, the Toronto and Halifax police departments have established zone-based team policing. They have also reestablished foot patrols, as have Edmonton, Montreal, Winnipeg, and Victoria, and instituted storefront police operations in many of the same cities. Several patrol programs now emphasize local-area crime analysis as the basis for directed patrolling. Halton Regional Police Force has adopted a split-force deployment, where urgent calls are separated from service calls and are handled by different patrol groups. Crime-prevention campaigns are common, but they are rarely linked to the development of systematic community feedback.

Chris Murphy, Office of the Solicitor General, makes a point about the community policing movement in Canada that applies elsewhere in the world as well. Community policing has been undertaken largely as a strategy of organizational change by progressive senior and middle-rank officers. In Murphy's words, "community policing is as much a source of potential organization and management reform as it is a reform of the police role in policing communities."<sup>1</sup> Community policing provides a justification for undertaking internal changes advocated by reform elements within the police.

## Norway

Norway has produced the most influential report in Scandinavian policing today,<sup>2</sup> a document whose principles were affirmed by every major

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Scandinavian (Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Finnish) police official we interviewed. Nevertheless, the depth of the struggle for police reform in Scandinavia can be measured by the size of the distance between the theory of the role of the police in society that the document proposes and the lesser reality of implementation that we came to see through interviews and observations. What is the theory? It is asserted in the following ten principles:

1. The police shall reflect the ideals of the society.
2. The police shall have a civilian profile.
3. The police must be "integrated."
4. The police must be decentralized.
5. The policeman should be an "all-rounder" — a "generalist."
6. The police shall function in interplay with the public.
7. The police shall be an integrated part of the local community.
8. There must be broad recruitment to the police.
9. The police must decide the priority of their different tasks and place the emphasis on preventive activity.
10. The police shall be subject to effective control by the society.

There is some implementation of these principles, but also some serious problems, especially regarding the attitudes and professional culture of police officers. During the summer of 1986, a book on police brutality, written in Norwegian by University of Oslo law professor Anders Bratholm, charged police — particularly in Bergen, but also in Oslo — with routine beatings of custodial prisoners.

Oslo police officials and officers make two replies to Bratholm's charges. They are true, but exaggerated; and the situation is worse in Bergen than in Oslo. Bratholm sticks by his charges, which do implicate police in Bergen more than in Oslo. Oslo police acknowledge that a small group of older police have brutalized prisoners, and that the progressive, reform Chief is making every effort to root these officers out. In any case, this sort of charge can make the introduction of community policing initiatives both more difficult and perhaps more needed.

Actually, Oslo does have an experimental and apparently successful community police initiative, the Holmia "town district" police post that is located in the suburban outskirts of Oslo. (Oslo is a beautiful city of around 500,000. Its downtown is close by the fjord, or deep water bay, which is visible to residents in surrounding hills.)

The Holmia police post is actually a set of offices located in a mall building. It is surrounded by the amenities of the affluent — health clubs,

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medical and dental offices, and attractive shops. Six officers are assigned to this police post and visit schools, youth clubs, family groups, and so forth. The main school problem is a phenomenon called "mobbing" in which older kids tease, bully, and sometimes extort money from younger ones. All the officers also do considerable foot patrol in uniform "to show that we are human beings." At the same time each of the officers maintains a primary responsibility. One deals with traffic and its enforcement, including inspection of vehicles to see that they are up to code; another does administration, and the licensing and court summons work typical of European police; a third is responsible for internal office administration — equipment maintenance, evaluation reports, central filing. A fourth maintains liaison with a neighboring suburban police district. Thieves move back and forth between the district boundaries of these suburbs, and the police sustain an intelligence network. The fifth officer concentrates on such family related issues as domestic violence and alcohol and drug problems. The unit's head is the principal investigator and interrogator, and strongly affirms the community relations functions of the post as its main purpose and achievement.

There is little, if any, question that the Holmia "town district" post is a successful model and example for community policing. One cannot help observing, however, that the famous Norwegian report, which was published in 1981, notes approvingly the existence of the "town district" police service in Oslo, but regards it still, after fifteen years, as "experimental." Given the success of this unit one has to wonder why its status remains "experimental."

## Sweden

The rhetoric of official Sweden is comparable to that of official Norway. The Governmental Commission on the Police considers positive relations between police and the public "a vital element in successful police work." The Commission reports 600 local and area police officers in Sweden amounting to about 7 per cent of the total and opines that these numbers should be "considerably increased in the future." Actually (for reasons discussed at length in Chapter IV) it is quite difficult to increase the number of these "home beat constables," as they are called, in contrast to motorized patrols.

Nevertheless, there are such constables in Stockholm who work out of neighborhood police offices. In major Stockholm districts there are as many as twenty-twenty five. Two whom we interviewed are Bo Nilsson and Rolf Andersson. Nilsson is a burly, blond, bearded man with a warm smile who has been a home beat constable for five years. Nilsson says he likes the job — which he describes as a combination of patrol policeman and social worker — because he thinks "it is better for policemen to be near the people."

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In a car, you're on a level above the people." Andersson has worked out of a neighborhood station, walking a foot patrol beat, for thirteen years. Both of them say they really enjoy their work, and to a participant-observer it seems far preferable to being cooped in a car for long time periods, with boredom as a third companion. "Why then," we asked Andersson, "do so many Stockholm police prefer to work in patrol cars?"

To understand his answer we must appreciate that the Swedish police are not really decentralized, although Swedish literature on the police suggests that they are. Swedish cities have their identifiable police forces — e.g., the Stockholm and Maalmo police — but salaries are allocated by a National Police Board. There are local boards, with lay members, but they don't control finances. This means, of course, that their power is inherently limited.

That police training and assignment is also nationalized is also important for the future of community policing. Nationalization of training and assignment means that rookies out of the training academy are assigned to cities as they are needed or requested. As a result many, if not most, of the Stockholm patrol officers are young, and grew up in the countryside. As they mature and achieve seniority, they typically request transfers to country posts. Even when they work in Stockholm, they do not live in or identify with the city or its residents. Their spouses and children reside in the country. To accommodate these country dwellers, the National Union has negotiated a three and one-half day work week, with long hours that can be filled in a patrol car. So what we see in Stockholm is the dominance of young police who would prefer to be posted elsewhere, and who also prefer the security they feel working in a patrol car with another officer. The prevalence of this kind of officer thus impedes the implementation of community policing, since there is little rank and file support for neighborhood police posts, even though community patrol officers are enthusiastic about their work. In sum, motorized patrol is compatible with police who want to complete their job and leave town as quickly as possible. Community policing, by contrast, implies a commitment to the neighborhood and its residents.

## Denmark

Danish police engage in three kinds of preventive policing, with a certain degree of overlap. Fifteen police in the Copenhagen force are "education" police. These officers are assigned to teach courses in safety, crime prevention, and drug prevention to school children. Their main task is to develop a positive relationship between the police and the youngsters. They attempt to become the youngsters' friends as they instruct about traffic, how to cross streets, and so forth. Education police by and large address the needs of ordinary schoolchildren who have not experienced difficulties with the law.

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The city of Copenhagen also employs fifteen "SSP" units — units coordinated and located within police stations to bring together schools, social workers, and police. Each unit has six to eight members. The SSP idea was formally initiated in 1982 but the idea had been around for approximately a decade. Teachers, social workers, and police all understood the need for cooperation in the interests of reforming youngsters who were in trouble with the law, but there was considerable distrust among the groups, particularly between social workers, who leaned politically toward the socialist left, and police, who are typically more conservative in political disposition. The formal SSP organization, however, required these different groups to work together. No miraculous transformation occurred. Rather, police who were assigned to SSP work were inclined to be more sympathetic to social work, and the more open-minded social workers were able to work with the police.

Basically, SSP works as follows: A sizeable number of children, we were told, spend a good deal of time on the streets, often come from broken homes, and are arrested for minor crimes such as shoplifting. The idea behind SSP is to offer such children role models and to improve the quality of their lives so that they will be disinclined to engage in further crime. A staple of the program is a "big brother" commitment by both police assigned to SSP and other police who involve the youngsters in a variety of recreational activities — swimming, body building, fishing, and other sports. Police we interviewed seem to enjoy working with children. It is worth noting that Denmark is a relatively culturally homogeneous society where the police identify with wayward children. Whether SSP actually works as well as it is presented is hard to say, since no formal evaluation of the program has been carried out. It is clear, however, that police officials we interviewed regard it positively and claim success for it.

Neighborhood police houses are the third aspect of community policing in Denmark. The two we inspected were more than clean and well-lighted single family dwellings. They were homelike, attractive, and charming, quite unlike those we have seen in Santa Ana, California, and Newark, New Jersey. An American observer is in general impressed by the quality of Scandinavian police facilities. The "Hill Street" sort of station house would simply be unthinkable in Scandinavia where an ideology of the rights of workers and the dignity of police combine to offer far more attractive and appropriate physical facilities for law enforcement officials than exist in many of America's larger cities.

In any case, these inviting neighborhood police houses serve a variety of functions: police in them undertake foot patrol, hold meetings with neighborhood residents regarding crime control, teach children in the education program, work with SSP, and so forth. They are trouble shooters





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signified that the police had to admit that some criminogenic factors were beyond their control.

Economic and social development and its challenges, as well as changes in thinking about crime, led to the rebirth of community policing in Finland. Although foreign theories and models had a role in influencing the development of community policing, the roots of the community policing idea lay in the old village police system, still in force at the end of the 1960's, and remembered with nostalgic affection by many citizens and police. According to this model, the local policeman lived in his own district and knew the residents. He may have even been born in this same district. He could be considered the village's own policeman. In this respect, community policing is not a totally new idea. What is new, however, is that it is regarded as a strategic resource in the preventive activity of the police.

Community policing was not initiated until 1978, and in 1981 the national police leadership issued official instructions on the matter. At the moment, there are some 160 community policemen in about 40 different police districts; the number of community policemen equals some 2 per cent of the entire police force in Finland.

## Great Britain

Community policing in Britain is a patchwork of programs unguided by any coherent strategic vision. Moreover, considerable scepticism has developed about it among police and the informed public. Community policing is not "celebrated" in Britain as it appears to be in the United States.<sup>4</sup> This is attributable in part to the failure of whatever has passed as community policing to eliminate tension and violent incidents between police and the nonwhite ethnic groups; and in part to studies casting doubt on the effectiveness of community-based crime prevention.<sup>5</sup>

Neighborhood Watch is growing in Britain, but the number of designated crime-prevention officers is small, less than 0.5 per cent of police personnel. Detectives, in comparison, account for between 12 per cent and 15 per cent. At the instigation of the Home Office, roughly 300 crime prevention advisory panels have been established within Britain's 43 police force jurisdictions in the last three years.

In terms of patrol deployment, referred to as "general duties," foot beats are returning after being virtually eliminated in favor of motorized units in the early 1970's. The London Metropolitan Police have assigned 5 per cent of their officers to "home beats" as "community constables." They are supposed to develop an intimate working knowledge of their beats, encourage crime-prevention, patrol on foot, and build closer rapport between the community and the police.

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The key issue in community policing in Britain is undoubtedly accountability. Opinion is especially intense in London where there is no local control over the police, and the police are a huge bureaucracy of nearly 27,000 sworn officers and over 13,000 civilians. The police report instead directly to the Home Secretary, a national cabinet official, and through him to Parliament. The Labour Party and many nonwhite politicians would like to make the metropolitan police accountable to borough authorities, which represent populations of around one-quarter of a million. Since Lord Scarman's report following the Brixton riots in London in 1981, Community Consultative Committees have been set up in most of Britain's police forces. The Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1984 requires (s. 106) that "arrangements shall be made in each police area for obtaining the views of people in that area about matters concerning the policing of the area and for obtaining their cooperation with the police in preventing crime in the area." The consultative committees are composed of representatives from local councils; important statutory services like health, probation, education, and housing; residents' and tenants' associations; and neighborhood action groups. They supplement the very much older Police Authorities which, since the Police Act of 1964, have been composed two-thirds of elected politicians from local councils and one-third of judicial magistrates. The Police Authorities have supervisory power over the police forces. A recent study by Rod Morgan found that the Community Consultative Committees, like the Police Authorities before them, tend to be dominated by the police and rarely display initiative.<sup>6</sup> In a self-fulfilling prophecy, groups hostile to the police have often boycotted them fearing that the Committees would be taken over by pro-police elements.

The programs and rhetoric of community policing are part of the highly charged debate about policing in contemporary Britain. It is not clear at the moment whether enthusiasm or disillusion about them will prevail.

## Japan

The oldest and best established community policing system in the world is the Japanese. This statement may surprise the Japanese, who forged their system immediately after World War II out of a combination of traditional culture and American democratic ideals, long before community policing became popular.<sup>7</sup> Japanese policing has all the elements of community policing stipulated here. Since many examples of Japanese practice have already been given, we won't try to summarize their experience. Japanese practice has recently been made more available to the English-speaking world through Singapore's careful adoption of the Japanese model.

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## Singapore

Singapore is the best showcase in the world for the transformation of traditional reactive police strategies to a thoroughgoing community policing program.<sup>8</sup> Beginning in 1982, the Singapore Police Force studied, field tested, and evaluated the Japanese *koban* system of policing. Impressed with the results in terms of crime prevention, the public's fear of crime, and the public's attitudes toward the police, the Singapore police decided to substitute a community police system based on Neighborhood Police Posts for the old mobile-reactive model inherited from the British. The new system features intense efforts at developing community crime-prevention, largely through the creation of Neighborhood Watch Groups and close liaison with grassroots councils that were already in place; deployment of police officers into ninety one Neighborhood Police Posts and deemphasis on passive patrolling and "fast response"; encouragement of the city's well established network of grassroots organizations, such as Constituency Consultative Committees and Residents' Councils, to become involved in setting local police agendas; and, finally, upgrading and intensifying supervision over local patrol operations at the Neighborhood Police Posts with a view to making them vital centers of command decision with respect to the character of police operations.

In short, Singapore represents the most ambitious and carefully implemented program of planned change in the direction of community policing that exists in the world today.

## The United States

In the United States community policing is more often aspiration than implementation. Although notable initiatives are succeeding against great odds in Detroit, Houston, Santa Ana, Newport News, and Baltimore County, most municipal police forces are using "community policing" to embellish rather than transform standard operating procedures. At the same time, small-scale experimentation is common and there are many test cases from which interested police executives can learn.

Although we believe that community policing has not yet crystallized as a coherent program in most large municipal departments, the intellectual ferment in professional circles is heartening and should not be underestimated. Furthermore, community policing may be more vigorous in the myriad small police departments of the country which remain generally unstudied and underreported. It is possible, then, that while most of the American population has only been glancingly touched by community policing, a preponderance of its police departments have already incorporated many of its essential lessons.

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## Motivations for Community Policing

Reviewing international experience, we observe a close connection between the substantiality of community policing from place to place and the reasons police leaders find it attractive. Some senior managers jump on the community police bandwagon simply because to do so is progressive. "Community policing" is like motherhood, it can't be denied. Such leaders talk a good game, but they rarely follow through. They are more concerned with appearances than reality. Others recognize that community policing has tremendous emotional appeal to the public. It provides a rationale for urging the public to support the police. Without necessarily being consciously cynical, such leaders tend to develop one-directional outreach programs. They form specialized media-relations units, undertake much publicized programs in community education, and organize Neighborhood Watch. But these programs are tacked onto existing operations; community policing rarely touches operational practices, nor does it open the force to outside scrutiny and direction. The old concept of professionalism is maintained, with traditional police firmly in charge and the public kept at arm's length until needed.

Community policing is most substantial, when it becomes part of a broader vision, implying a change of values as well as programs. Innovation is most likely to follow analysis of failure. Diagnosis of shortcomings is the prerequisite to meaningful change. It is not an accident that three of the most ambitious experiments in community policing have taken place where there was a sense of strategic need. Great Britain's recent controversial but wide-ranging innovations under the rubric of community policing derive from the racial turmoil of the late 70's and early 80's. Although some voices called for the stern application of force, more advocated a wholehearted, conciliatory attempt to bridge the gap between the police and minorities. While it is too early to say that community police practices will persist in Britain in the long run, its police should be credited with being creative under fire and replying to violence with imagination rather than exclusively with a fist.

Detroit, Michigan, too, constructed community policing out of the evidence of failure. Seared by devastating rioting and well-founded charges of racism, the city's predominantly white police force entered the 1970's facing an angry, largely black population. In 1974 Coleman Young, the city's first black mayor, appointed the city's first black chief of police, William Hart. Together they established mini-police-stations, while at the same time strenuously recruiting blacks and women to the force. But Detroit's failure was also in crime control. Its crime rates were among the highest in the nation and it had earned the ugly title "murder capital of the United States."

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Furthermore, because of a revenue crisis stemming from recession in the automobile industry, the police were forced in 1978-1979 to lay off nearly one-third of the sworn officers on the force. With tremendous courage and resolve, Detroit's leadership responded by increasing the number of mini-stations, upgrading their operation, clarifying their purpose, and starting neighborhood crime-prevention programs across the city. Stark necessity, therefore, produced strategic reform in the direction of community policing.

Finally, Singapore is using community policing to accomplish bold goals of nation building. Enjoying one of the highest standards of living in Asia, its leaders have been worried that prosperity would erode traditional moral values and, more fearful yet, exacerbate tensions within the city's multi-ethnic population. Since neither Europe nor America appeared to have an answer to rising crime, incivility, and drug abuse, Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's Prime Minister, announced that Singapore would henceforth "learn from the East." For the police, this meant Japan. At the end of a trial year, 1984, the Singapore police decided to expand the system to the entire island, a process to be completed by 1989. Singapore's leaders believed that a neighborhood police presence would help to draw together diverse ethnic groups into genuine communities. This was especially difficult since most of the population had been resettled in the previous ten years into large multi-storied public housing estates. Since crime was already falling, the primary purpose of redeployment was not crime-prevention, but inculcation of lessons of citizenship. Police were to be an instrument in the creation of the "new Singapore man." As in Britain and Detroit, customary policing, derived in this case from British experience, was found wanting.

## Endnotes

1. For a more detailed discussion see Chris Murphy, "Community Policing in Canada: Development, Impact and Future" (Paper for the "International Symposium on Community Policing," Temple University, Philadelphia, May 1987); and with G. Muir, *Community-Based Policing: A Review of the Critical Issues* (Ottawa, Canada: Technical Report TRS No. 6, Programs Branch, Solicitor General, 1986); Programs with J. DeVerteuil, "Metropolitan Toronto, Community Policing Survey: Working Paper No. 1, 1987-6-87" (Research and Statistics Group, Solicitor General, Ottawa, Canada, 1987).
2. Norwegian Official Reports, *The Role of the Police in the Society*, NOU 35 (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1981).

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3. Our description is based in part upon observation in Helsinki and in part on a 1987 research report on community policing by Anu Mantila, National Research Institute of Legal Policy, Helsinki.
  4. Mollie Weatheritt, Police Foundation, London, in a private conversation. See also her excellent paper "Community Policing: Rhetoric or Reality" (Paper prepared for the "International Symposium on Community Policing," May 1987).
  5. For example, R. V. Clarke and P. Mayhew, *Designing Out Crime* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1980).
  6. Rod Morgan (assisted by Christopher Maggs), "Setting the P.A.C.E. Police Community Consultation Arrangements in England and Wales" (Bath, England: University of Bath, Centre for Analysis of Social Policy, 1985).
  7. David H. Bayley, *Forces of Order: Police Behavior in the United States* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1976); and Walter L. Ames, *The Police and Community in Japan* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1981).
  8. David H. Bayley is preparing a separate monograph on Singapore that will be published by the National Institute of Justice.

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## Chapter Three

### The Origins of Community Policing

Community policing is a coherent concept that grows out of a perspective about how police should sensibly and appropriately respond to citizens and communities. The perspective is scarcely new. Arthur Woods, who was New York City's Police Commissioner from 1914 to 1919, was perhaps the earliest American proponent of the community policing vision. His overriding idea, as expressed in a notable lecture series at Yale University,<sup>1</sup> was to invest in the ordinary rank and file police officer a sense of the social importance, dignity, and public value of the policeman's job. He was convinced that an informed public would benefit police in two ways: the public would gain an increased respect for police work if citizens came to understand the complexities, difficulties, and significance of the policeman's duties; and through this understanding, the public would be willing to develop rewards for conscientious and effective police performance.

Woods was not an ivory tower theorist. He was deeply cognizant of the considerable obstacles to reform, including police corruption in New York City. He mistrusted both the Civil Service and politicians, who, he believed, would unscrupulously use police and the department to further their own political ends.

Whatever the obstacles, Woods practiced what today we might describe as a version of community-oriented policing. Under his direction Captains organized their precincts into junior police leagues. Youngsters were presented with junior police badges, drilled, and asked to assist police by reporting violations of ordinances in their neighborhood. The NYPD's snappiest-looking sergeants were assigned to visit schools and tell the school children

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that true police work meant more than just arresting people — that it meant improving the neighborhood, making it a safer, better, happier place to live.

These efforts were backed up by effective and consequential ideas and programs. For example, Woods understood that children who lived on Manhattan's lower east side were reared in large and impoverished families. There was no way their mothers could find time to accompany them to city parks or open spaces. So Woods invented the "play street." In these, police placed barriers for several hours during the day at either end of a tenement street, barring traffic. Youngsters could play outdoors without danger from traffic — which had become increasingly threatening in a bustling city of five and one-half million people, one million of whom were children.

In this era of massive immigration, Woods contacted Greek, Italian, and Yiddish language newspaper publishers and persuaded them to print circulars in their own language about ordinances governing pushcart vendors. These were distributed among the police for further redistribution to residents of foreign language areas.

Woods saw the responsibility of the policeman for the community as extending in other ways that would be regarded as innovative even among contemporary police chiefs. Every police officer was responsible for the social conditions of a street or neighborhood. Unemployment was perceived as a key cause of crime, and police precincts were used as sites for distributing industrial and social information. Unemployed residents could ask police for assistance in locating employment. Boys who were slipping into delinquency were put into contact with such social agencies as the YMCA and Big Brother Associations.

Woods' policing philosophy was widely appreciated in New York City. He was generously praised by New York newspapers and magazines in this period of mass immigration, social dislocation, and crime among the children of immigrants. Campbell MacCulloch, a noted journalist of the time, described Woods' New York City Police Department as follows:<sup>2</sup>

To many persons, and particularly the foreign-born population . . . the law stands for a vast machine of menace. The new police idea is wholly different. It aims to do something that in America seems never to have been tried as an angle of police duty — to strive for the inculcation of the thought that the law is an engine of mutuality, of good will, of positive influence; that it is constructive. The new police idea is to present it as a protector.

In the end, Woods' abundant virtues may have proved his worst shortcoming. He strongly believed in the force of personal leadership in administration. Yet such leadership can create its own problems — of



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succession, of consolidating the organizational advances made during the initiative period. When the reform administration which appointed Commissioner Woods lost power to Tammany Hall, his initiatives were to wither away as did many reforms of the progressive era. Unfortunately, the NYPD was to relapse time and again into machine politics and associated corruption.

## The Tranquil Period

The period between 1920 and 1960 could scarcely be described as uneventful, what with the emergence of the Great Depression, the Second World War and the postwar period of the 1950's. Nevertheless, so far as crime was concerned the United States and the cities within it seemed during the period following World War II to be in a time of unparalleled social tranquility. Police and social order did not engender highly visible or significant public policy issues. Within the police world itself, professionalism tended to be defined by higher educational standards for police, technological improvement, administrative regularity, rule enforcement to combat corruption, and strong central authority. Police reformers, like O.W. Wilson and Chief Parker of Los Angeles, developed these concepts of professionalism in response to the problems generated by old line police departments which were riddled by political appointments and associated corruption.<sup>3</sup>

Many departments, however, — probably most — adopted the highly discretionary and erratic “watchman” style in which the quality of law enforcement depended not simply on how the police made judgments, “but also on the socioeconomic composition of the community, the law enforcement standard set, implicitly or explicitly, by the political systems, and the special interests or concerns of the police chief.”<sup>4</sup> Watchman-style police typically treated blacks on the one hand, indifferently, and on the other, discriminatorily.

## The 1960's

Then, during the 1960's, the situation of the nation, the cities, and the police changed dramatically. “It all began about 1963,” writes Wilson. “That was the year, to overdramatize a bit, that a decade began to fall apart.”<sup>5</sup> Why that happened is subject to various explanations, but there can be no doubt that it did. The impact of the 1960's on American police and American police thinking can scarcely be overrated. The years following the urban riots of the 1960's wrought the most important changes — in thinking, tactics, and resources — ever seen in the history of the American police. These changes centered mainly on police relations with communities, and particularly minority communities.

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Two government reports are essential to an understanding of these changes and to the origins of the community relations approach to policing: one is the *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (March, 1968) known more familiarly as The Kerner Commission report; the other is the report by *The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice* or the Crime Commission report (February, 1967). The Kerner Commission examined the causes of the riots that were tearing apart American cities — Detroit, Newark, Los Angeles, New York — in what came to be known as the long hot summers of the 1960's. The Commission found a deep hostility between police and ghetto communities and cited these hostile relations as “a primary cause”<sup>6</sup> of the racial disruptions. “Abrasive relationships between police and Negroes and other minority groups,” the Commission concluded, “have been a major source of grievance, tension, and, ultimately, disorder.”<sup>7</sup> The Kerner Report did not, however, attribute the causes of the riots solely to hostility to police. The Commission recognized that animus toward police symbolized deeper problems — with the society as a whole and the role of blacks within it, and especially with the entire system of law enforcement and criminal justice. Thus, the Commission cites as sources of hostility and resentment: assembly-line justice in teeming lower courts, wide disparities in sentences, antiquated correctional facilities, and basic inequities imposed on the poor.

Certain police practices were singled out for negative comment. Chief among these was “aggressive preventive patrol.” This practice took a number of forms but always involved large numbers of police-initiated citizen contacts that were not responsive to calls for help or assistance. The worst example cited was that of “a roving task force which moves into high crime districts without prior notice, and conducts intensive, often indiscriminate, street stops and searches.”<sup>8</sup> At the same time, the Commission found that ghetto areas did not receive adequate police protection. Activities that would not elsewhere be tolerated — street violence, drug addiction, and prostitution — were ignored by many police departments which reserved quality police response for white areas of the cities.

Another source of hostility, the Commission found, was the “almost total lack of effective channels for redress of complaints against police conduct.” The sorts of complaints the Commission heard in this area indicated that many police departments were insensitive to minority communities, even to the point of ignoring complaints that prejudiced and brutal officers were being assigned to ghetto areas. At the same time, internal affairs investigation mechanisms were often designed to protect police accused of misconduct rather than to conduct impartial and searching inquiries.<sup>9</sup>

Both the Kerner Commission and the Crime Commission commented also on the lack of minority representation on police forces. “For police in

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a Negro community to be predominantly white can serve as a dangerous irritant; a feeling may develop that the community is not being policed to maintain civil peace but to maintain the status quo."<sup>10</sup>

The Crime Commission, concerned with growing social tensions and especially with rising crime rates, asserted that the police and other public agencies will not be able to preserve the peace and control crime unless they encourage and succeed in generating more public participation in law enforcement. Accordingly, the Commission concluded that bad community feelings do more than simply create tensions — they engender actions against the police that may embitter police and trigger irrational responses from them. Citizens, in turn, become more hostile toward police. Because of the absence of public support, police become less effective and crime is stimulated.<sup>11</sup> In other words, police fail not only to prevent crime but may inadvertently encourage its rise.

### **Inadequacies of Public Relations Units**

A study of the San Francisco Police Community Relations Unit, prepared for the Kerner Commission,<sup>12</sup> revealed some of the characteristic problems of such units. The basic problem was to maintain integrity and acceptance as police within the department, while still winning the confidence of minority populations who were hostile and fearful of police. Three difficulties were especially pronounced. The San Francisco PCR unit engaged in what other police regarded as “social work” and not “real” police work — e.g., they organized sports teams in poverty areas; engaged in this work in plainclothes, which many police thought should be reserved to detectives; and, worst of all, they legitimized and facilitated complaints, not only against the police, but also against other City services. This, of course, was a function that badly needed serving, but many rank and file police resented the idea that police should be serving it.

With time, the Unit became increasingly isolated from the rest of the Department and in order to exist generated its own political constituency. This development ultimately proved to be disastrous. It meant that the Unit was in battle with its fellows in the Department. The police Chief, who had initiated the unit, was caught in a political cross-fire between the majority of officers who sought to disband what they perceived as a “minority-coddling” community relations unit, and an increasingly disaffected minority community backed by influential organizations — such as the National Conference of Christians and Jews — elected officials, and the City’s leading newspapers. Given sufficient social unrest, polarization, and hostility toward authorities in general and the police in particular, it is unlikely that a PCR unit can have much of an effect.

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The lesson of the 1960's police communities relations programs — most of which failed<sup>13</sup> — is this: to the extent that a community relations perspective is segregated within the department it is likely to disappoint. Indeed, segregation might also lead to intra-departmental hostility, which could even worsen relations between most of the rank and file police and the rest of the community.

## Team Policing

Given the polarization between rank-and-file police and minorities, and the tendency within police departments to polarize between community relations units and the rest of the department, are there other possible strategies that might be employed both to reduce crime and improve community relations? The Crime Commission had hinted at another — team policing. A 1973 study of team policing described it in contrast to traditional reactive patrol as follows:

In theory, the patrol force is reorganized to include one or more quasi-autonomous teams, with a joint purpose of improving police services to the community and increasing job satisfaction of the patrol officers. Usually the team is based in a particular neighborhood. Each team has responsibility for police services in its neighborhood and is intended to work as a unit in close contact with the community to prevent crime and maintain order.<sup>14</sup>

The study warned, however, that in practice team policing may not be able to accomplish its theoretical goals. Team policing was, however, never fully developed in the seven cities studied.

The most ambitious team policing experiment of the 1970's was begun in 1973 in Cincinnati. Under a Community Sector Team Policing Program, or COMSEC, the downtown inner-city area only slightly increased its manpower while major changes were introduced in the organization and direction of manpower. Except for homicides, which were still investigated by headquarters detectives, virtually all calls (91 per cent) were handled by a team assigned to the sector. Moreover, beat officers appeared at meetings offering crime control information with colleagues. The experiment did not prove out to be successful. Citizens' feelings of safety did not change in the area, and the crime rate, except for burglaries, was not very different from the rate for the rest of the city.

Although the results were disappointing, it is possible that relevant conditions were not actually controlled. Cincinnati patrol officers were told that they were supposed to spend more time getting to know individuals and groups on their beats. But the department's system of incentives rewarded

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“activity” — which was defined in such traditional police terms as “parker” and “mover,” arrests, and suspicion stops. Time spent talking with citizens was, by contrast, not recorded.<sup>15</sup>

Team policing contemplated that lieutenants in charge of sectors would function as mini-chiefs, with the authority to assign men to work in plainclothes or uniform, and with flexible time arrangements. But members of middle and top management in the Cincinnati department felt they were in danger of losing status if such authority was delegated to lieutenants, sergeants, and patrol officers. As their anxiety increased — they felt their own jobs were becoming obsolete — they, bit by bit, began to undermine team leaders’ authority and to reassert their own, thereby undermining the integrity of the team policing experiment.<sup>16</sup>

## The Era of Research

The history of attempts by the police during the 1970’s to orient themselves more directly within the community seems to have been less than encouraging. So why is it that the movement toward community-oriented policing is achieving such a resurgence in the 1980’s, not only within the United States but around the world? At first thought, this is quite astonishing. Why should police leaders in places as separated as London, Detroit, Oslo, California, Singapore, and Texas be attracted to a concept that was not probably successful in the past and that challenges established conceptions of the role of police in society?

Part of the answer has to be that the problems experienced in the United States during the 1960’s have not disappeared and in certain respects and in some places have gotten worse. In Great Britain for example, the vision of the English police as being publicly supported in a relatively calm and crime-free society no longer prevails — as it did in the 1960’s. That perception has, in fact, been shattered ever since the sharply rising crime rates of the 1970’s, the Brixton race riots of 1981, the Miners’ and Printers’ strikes, and a 1981 riot in a central London high-rise housing project.

Another part of the answer has to be rising crime rates themselves and the effects of these rates on the perceptions of a broad public. Weiner and Wolfgang, reviewing violent crime trends in America from 1969-1982, show substantial percentage increases in murder, nonnegligent manslaughter, robbery, and aggravated assault. The combined violent crime rate, dominated by robbery and aggravated assault, soared by 69 per cent during the period studied. There has been some reduction during the 1980’s in UCR rates, but robbery and aggravated assault have fallen by less than 5 per cent.<sup>17</sup>

Rising crime is not a uniquely American phenomenon. During roughly the same period, there has been a 68 per cent increase in the crime rate in

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England and Wales, a doubling of crimes known to the police in Scotland, and an 80 per cent rise in London.<sup>18</sup> There has even been a crime rise in relatively peaceful Scandinavia (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden) where the number of reported offenses against the Penal Code has more than trebled in the past thirty years. There are differences of course among the countries. Levels of reported crime are highest in Sweden and Denmark, low in Finland, and especially low in Norway. But, as Danish criminologist Flemming Balvig reports, "There is hardly any doubt that the increase is real."<sup>19</sup>

With respect to crime — and, perhaps more importantly, to perceptions and fear of crime — there is almost an international language, a virtually predictable set of responses to rises in crime and fear of crime. One part of the response is to seek to punish criminals more heavily, to fill prisons to capacity and to overcapacity. Another part is to look to the police to prevent crime from occurring in the first place. The public, rather than turning away from the police, are turning to them.

At the same time, police leaders have learned, as we discovered in research for our book, *The New Blue Line: Police Innovation in Six American Cities*, that solutions to the crime problem are scarcely met by conducting business as usual. They understood the realities of what research findings were demonstrating:

First, increasing the numbers of police does not necessarily reduce crime rates, nor raise the proportion of crimes solved. Neither does "throwing money" at police departments by boosting police budgets and manpower. Certainly, if there were no police there would be more crime. But once a certain threshold has been reached, neither more police nor more money seem to help very much. Such crime control measures do have an effect, but they constitute a minor part of the equation. Such social conditions as income, unemployment, population, and social heterogeneity are far more important predictors of variation in crime and clearance rates.

Second, randomized motorized patrolling neither reduces crime nor improves the chances of catching criminals. Neither do such randomized patrols reassure citizens enough to affect their fear of crime; nor do they generate greater trust in the police. Regular foot patrols, by contrast, were shown to reduce citizens' fear of crime, although they do not appear to affect crime rates.

Third, two-person cars neither reduce crime nor catch criminals more effectively than one-person cars. And police are no more likely to be injured in one-person cars.

Fourth, although saturation patrolling does reduce crime, it does so at the cost of displacing it to other areas.

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Fifth, the legendary "good collar" is a rare event. Even more rarely do patrol police confront a crime in progress. Only "Dirty Harry" encounters an armed robbery with his morning coffee. Most of the time, cops passively patrol and provide emergency services.

Sixth, response time doesn't much matter. If even one minute elapses from the time the crime is committed, there is less than a 10 per cent chance that police will apprehend the criminal. Even instantaneous reaction would not be effective. Since citizens delay an average of four to five and one-half minutes before calling the police, speed of response makes little difference. Citizens seem to want a predictable response. Crime victims recognize that the perpetrator will usually have left the scene by the time the police arrive. Citizens want a police response they can count on. They prefer, research has shown, an assured not-so-fast response to an unpredictable sometimes rapid response.

Seventh, criminal investigations are not very effective in solving crimes. Generally, crimes are solved because offenders are immediately apprehended or someone identifies them with a name, an address, a license plate number. Holmes and Watson worked effectively from subtle clues to apprehension of criminals. Real-life detectives work from known suspects to corroborating evidence. This means that, in order to solve crime, the police must obtain information from residents of the communities where crimes occur. But if residents are hostile and suspicious of police, citizens are less likely to provide information. An extensive survey conducted by London's Policy Studies Institute (akin to the Rand Corporation in the U.S.) of the London Metropolitan Police showed the enormous importance of public cooperation. The survey found that one-third of arrests arose directly by a call or approach by a member of the public. In addition, public initiatives made it possible in many other cases for the police to make an arrest later. "On the other hand," the authors of the report conclude, "comparatively little crime is detected by the police being there when it happens: 14 per cent of arrests arise in this way, and a substantial number of these are for non-crime matters."<sup>20</sup>

To the thoughtful police administrator such findings suggest that traditional strategies are neither reducing crime nor reassuring its potential victims. In effect, thinking police professionals have had to develop some new ideas. The key reformulation has been that the police and the communities they are policing must try to become coproducers of crime prevention. As James K. Stewart wrote not long after becoming Director of the National Institute of Justice:

The police cannot be expected to control crime on their own.  
Citizens are an essential part of the equation ... the role of the

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average individual in helping to keep the peace is crucial. Unless victims and witnesses report crimes, come forward with information, see the case through, and participate actively in organized efforts to prevent crime, our system of justice cannot function as it should.

Forging an alliance with the citizenry is not easy. It calls for special skills, facilitating a "sense of community" in a neighborhood and serving the community's needs. In some respects, "crime fighting" is easier for police than listening to citizen complaints or dealing with incivilities. But activities like these are central to building community involvement that can help prevent crime.<sup>21</sup>

This concept of increased cooperation between police and the community is what has taken hold around the globe as "community policing."

### Endnotes

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## Chapter Four

### Potential Obstacles to Community Policing

One way of comprehending a police department is through a table of organization. Such tables do offer useful, indeed indispensable, information. At best, they function something like a road map of a city, pointing out where things are and how they stand in relation to the other. But however indispensable they might be, tables of organization are limited in the information they offer — they don't tell us anything about the human side of the landscape they describe. The most significant features of police departments — their attitudes, internal divisions, belief systems, traditions, values — cannot be captured by the labelled boxes of a table of organization. If police executives consider a move toward community-oriented policing, there is much more involved than reconstructing an organizational chart. Community policing must anticipate and facilitate a shift in values. That is not easy to accomplish. Those who do undertake such a move will almost certainly encounter identifiable and persistent constraints resisting the change. We could identify twelve of these obstacles.

#### The Traditional Culture of Policing

How police officers learn to see the world around them and their role in it has come to be acknowledged by all scholars of police as an indispensable key to understanding the behavior and attitudes of police. "It is a commonplace of the now voluminous sociological literature on police operations and discretion," writes Robert Reiner, "that the rank-and-file officer is the primary determinant of policing where it really counts — on the street."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, after reviewing an increasingly broad and cross-national literature on police culture he finds what those of us who have studied police across cities and nations have also discovered — that there are identifiable commonalities in police culture. Some of these commonalities,

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we believe, are especially salient to our understanding of the resistance of police to the introduction of community policing.

First is the perception of *danger*, which, although real, is typically magnified. Police officers are sometimes shot at and killed, of course. But the first line of defense against anticipated danger is *suspicion*, the development of a cognitive map of the social world to protect against signs of trouble, offense, and potential threat.

The combination of danger and suspicion leads to a third feature of police culture, namely solidarity or *brotherhood*. Most police tend to socialize with other police, a feature of police culture noted by observers of police from the 1960's to the 1980's. There are any number of reasons for police solidarity. One is that police do not work normal hours. As emergency service workers, they often find themselves in the position of having to work nights, weekends, and other odd hours. Police work time is one of the major stresses of police work. When one's days off are Wednesday and Thursday, one becomes a deviant in the social world and is drawn to socialize with others who are similarly situated.

Another reason is that cops don't feel they fit into many worlds they might occupy. Every cop has a story about how they were stared at or otherwise adversely noted at a party or social occasion. This has been a special problem for young police in the 1970's or 1980's, when many of their peers might light up a joint and pass it around at a festive occasion. When faced with this dilemma, young police will find new friends — among police.

A third reason is the policeman's felt need for support from other police. Police are in fact in dangerous or potentially dangerous situations. When cops, looking for drug dealers, walk through a pool hall occupied by unfriendly young men, they depend on their partners for cover and assistance. But, as Mark Baker comments:

The real reason most police officers socialize exclusively with other police officers is that they just don't trust the people they police — which is everybody who is not a cop. They know the public generally resent their authority and is fickle in its support of police policy and individual police officers. Older officers teach younger ones that it is best to avoid civilians. Civilians will try to "hurt" the cop in the end, they say.<sup>2</sup>

Since community policing demands a degree of trust and acceptance of civilians, the tendency toward suspicion and its concomitant development into marked internal solidarity — the division into the world of we and they — may inhibit the sort of acceptance of ordinary citizens implicit in community policing.

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## The Youth of Police

Students of police have frequently noted the *machismo* qualities in the world of policing.<sup>3</sup> Those who are attracted to the occupation are often very young, in chronological age and in maturity of temperament and judgment. England sets nineteen as the age of entry. Recruits typically have athletic backgrounds, are sports minded, and are trained in self-defense. It is not uncommon for trainees to bulk the upper body — like football players, through weight lifting — so as to offer a more formidable appearance as a potential adversary in street encounters. They are also trained to handle a variety of offensive weapons, including deadly weapons. They are taught how to disable and kill people with their bare hands. No matter how many warnings may be offered by superiors about limitations on use of force, its possible use is a central feature of the police role, and of policemen's perceptions of themselves.

The training and permission in the use of force combined with the youth of police can well inhibit the capacity of a police officer to empathize with the situation of those being policed in ethnically diverse and low-income neighborhoods. Community policing requires effective interaction between cops and ordinary citizens. This implies a capacity to envision the world through the eyes of another, to develop a broader perspective, to hone judgmental and communicative skills. In a word, community policing demands a degree of emotional *maturity* more likely to be present in somewhat older officers. Senior officers are not only less likely to be macho, but also are more likely to feel comfortable in the problem solving, almost parental role associated with community policing. Thus, the youth of police recruits — who can be veterans at 24 or 26 years of age — may disincline them to embrace the broader role encompassed by community policing.

## Street v. Management Cops

When scholars write about the culture of policing, they usually have in mind the street-wise cop who follows a blue code of solidarity with fellow officers. Street-wise officers are likely to be cynical, tough, skeptical of innovation within management. By contrast, management cops tend to project a vision of policing that is more acceptable to the general public. This concept of two contrasting cultures of policing grew out of research conducted in New York City by Ianni and Ianni (1983), who developed a distinction between “street cops” and “management cops.”

The “street-wise” cop is apt to approve of cutting corners, of throwing weight around on the street, of expressing the qualities of in-group solidarity referred to above. Management cops tend to be more legalistic, rule oriented, rational. Management cops, on the whole, are thus more likely to be at least

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initially interested in the idea of community policing — as they are more generally interested in new ideas. By contrast, some street cops are hard-boiled cynics who deride innovations in policing as needless and unworkable incursions into the true and eternal role of the cop — the one they were socialized into as recruits by a sometimes venerated field training officer. These “street-wise” police, instead of gradually developing a broader perspective, taking advanced degrees in management, law, or criminal justice and so forth, reinforce their post-recruit identity. Unfortunately, this reinforcement sometimes develops into a lifelong occupational vision rooted in an abiding, even growing, bitterness that seems impervious to any sort of hope for change or new ideas.

The cynicism typifying these officers may of course also be present at higher levels of management — after all, most police, and all American police, begin their career as street cops, and the learning that takes place on the street is never outgrown by many. If community policing is to take hold, it requires a mature vision of a police executive to introduce it and to make it compelling to the working cops on the street. In our studies of police innovation in the United States, Europe, and Asia, we have found that street cop cynicism is a force undermining the potential introduction of community policing. The street cop tends to be resistant to all forms of innovation that are non-technological. The management cop is not necessarily more accepting of the idea of policing as a broader social issue, but is likelier to be receptive to a more expansive vision of the police role. The innovative management cop employs prior street experience to overcome the resistance of the street cop. By contrast, the self-conception of the traditional street cop remains firmly rooted in his earliest training experiences.

Elizabeth Ruess-Ianni summarizes the difference between the two cultures as follows, based on her study of the New York City Police Department:

In a sense, the management cop culture represents those police who have decided that the old way of running a police department is finished (for a variety of external reasons, such as social pressures, economic realities of the city, increased visibility, minority recruitment, and growth in size that cannot be managed easily in the informal fashion of the old days) and they are “going to get in on the ground floor of something new.” They do not, like the street cops, regard community relations, for example, as “Mickey Mouse bullshit,” but as something that must be done for politically expedient reasons if not for social ones.<sup>4</sup>

In any case, a broader vision of the police role is a necessary but not sufficient condition for introducing community policing. Its absence is surely an obstacle.

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## The Responsibility to Respond

Crime, and its associated response, fear of crime, is an international phenomenon. All nations and many political subdivisions — states, cities, regions — maintain crime statistics. However unreliable these might be, there is always some crime. Even among the most peaceful cities in the world, such as Copenhagen, Oslo, and Stockholm, this is perceptibly true. And every modern police agency is built around being an around-the-clock emergency service responsive to telephone numbers available to any citizen.

Many police executives now regard the emergency response system they have created as a monster that is consuming the operational guts of the department. Calling the emergency number is so easy that police could spend all their time speeding in patrol cars to anonymously placed calls, often handling trivial matters that may not even involve law violations.

This pressure to react insures the high priority of responsive ability and acts as an additional constraint upon innovation involving relations with citizens. Under a response model, the patrol car — usually with two persons occupying it — is paramount. Insuring that the responsibilities of the emergency service system are met becomes the highest priority of the command staff, not community policing.

In fact, the interpretation of amounts of crime depends much upon subjective assessment. Let us consider the following example. In 1986, Oakland, California counted 146 homicides. Copenhagen, Denmark counted 16, in 1985. Objectively, Oakland has around 9 times the volume of homicides as Copenhagen. Oakland officials and citizens perceive homicide and violent crime as a desperate problem. The Chief Judge of Oakland's Superior Court, Henry Ramsey, told us recently in an interview that some dramatic and innovative measures must be taken to keep Oakland residents from killing each other. He half-seriously suggested paying \$1000 annually to every Oakland family whose members stay clear of the criminal courts for a year.

That officials and citizens in Oakland should be concerned about crime is understandable. But crime is also seen as an increasingly serious problem in relatively peaceful Copenhagen. As one Scandinavian criminologist, Annika Snare, said in an interview, "Feelings about crime are not quantifiable. We feel that there should be no homicides, so sixteen seems like an enormous number." (In Oakland, officials and citizens would rejoice if the annual number of homicides was to fall to sixteen, or even sixty.)

What is the point of this tale of two cities? It is this: the perception of crime and danger, whatever its comparative reality, puts increased pressure on police to respond. The more police feel this pressure, either through calls for service, or complaints by citizen groups about rises in crime, the more

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is the immediacy of this pressure likely to undermine the possibilities of redirecting police resources to innovative programs.

## **Limitations of Resources**

The perception of resource limitation is a constraining factor closely related to the responsibility to respond. In several locations, particularly in Scandinavia, we encountered a rhetorical acceptance of the idea of community policing that was scarcely met in practice. "Community policing is a good idea," we were told, provided that we are given the additional manpower it demands." With such a stance on the part of police executives, community policing cannot develop without expanding the dimensions of an already sizeable bureaucracy.

Is this a fair assessment? Are resources so limited that community policing cannot be undertaken without additional manpower? There is no clear cut answer to this question. What is self-evident, however, is how subjective is the concept of "necessary resources." For example, we visited the radio dispatch room of the City of Stockholm on a Wednesday evening at 8:30 p.m. in June, 1986. At this time, seventy two-officer cars, including traffic enforcement cars, and two ten-officer vans were assigned to street patrol.

### **DETROIT'S SOLUTION TO EMERGENCY RESPONSE OBLIGATIONS**

During the summer of 1983 when the Detroit Police Department's efforts in community crime-prevention and the development of police mini-stations were attracting national as well as international attention, the department came under intense pressure to reappraise its operational priorities. Specifically, the Mayor's office and the press, responding to complaints from the public, charged that many 911 calls for service were not being answered. The charge was true. A large number of "runs" were in fact being "dumped," meaning that when no patrol vehicle was available, the calls were simply being disregarded. The problem was particularly acute during the summer, when several thousand 911 calls would be "dumped" each month.

Several solutions to the problem were explored, some of them representing significant changes in the way the department had operated. Senior police officers admitted publicly that patrol cars could not be sent to each telephone solicitation, as had proudly been done in the past. Instead, the public would have to learn that the 911 system was to be used only in genuine emergencies. As a short-run summer expedient, the department disbanded the undercover crime prevention "task forces" that had targeted high crime areas and serious repeat offenses. These personnel were reassigned to uniformed patrol. More far reaching, the department

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replaced uniformed officers in radio dispatch and technical services with nonsworn personnel. The department also introduced a program for prioritizing 911 calls on the basis of urgency. Precinct commanders were then asked to reorganize their commands in order to find personnel to handle the low priority work, rather than simply ignoring it under the pressure of emergency calls. Most precincts asked patrol car officers to call in for low priority calls when they were "in service" but only patrolling. This was of limited usefulness because most patrol officers thought they were already overworked, a position vociferously supported by the union. More successfully, one precinct designed a patrol car to handle all low priority runs during the evening shift. Another precinct reassigned its traffic enforcement car for the same purpose during the day. And a third sent a daytime female clerk to handle calls that had been dropped during the previous several days. Since notification by dispatch of such calls took three to four days, the female officer either failed to find the complainant, let alone the problem, or found instead a very irate citizen.

Finally, Detroit established a telephone crime-reporting unit, staffed by nonsworn personnel. It handled primarily burglaries and auto thefts, crimes where personal investigation was usually not productive but citizens needed a police report for insurance purposes or in case stolen property was recovered. The auto-theft unit was consolidated with the telephone crime-reporting unit.

Altogether the results of these measures were impressive. Dropped runs declined by more than 50 per cent during peak demand months. More importantly, the community-policing initiatives for which Detroit was famous were preserved. Indeed, the number of mini-stations was doubled in 1986 from approximately 50 to 100.

Stockholm's main control room is outfitted with strikingly modern equipment. A large illuminated map of the city dominates the room. Ten sworn officers occupy each of ten surveillance subscreens allocated to various parts of the city, with additional screens monitoring the central railroad station.

At 8:39 p.m. we counted *not a single call for service*. We noted that only one dispatcher was actually working. Some were watching ordinary TV programs, others were having dinner, others were reading newspapers. Our impression, based upon riding in patrol cars over four Stockholm nights, was of manpower redundancy. This impression was of course based on limited observation and a particular time of year. Several Stockholm officials insisted that our impressions were wrong, that police are often busier, and that there is in fact a manpower shortage. Moreover, we were told that it was essential to have two persons in each of the seventy patrol cars because it would otherwise be too dangerous to be a policeman in this capital city. Whatever the actual reality, there is no question that a perception of lively demand,



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danger, and busyness pervades Stockholm's and other Scandinavian police departments; and this perception is a significant factor in constraining the development of community policing.

At the same time, where community policing or even foot patrol is working, we may find a reduced demand for police patrol car responses. There is some evidence to this effect from the Flint, Michigan experience with foot patrol,<sup>5</sup> and our interviews with foot patrol police in the U.S. and around the world suggest this to be the case. This is not surprising. If a citizen has a complaint or crime problem, the citizen is likely to bring it to the attention of the foot patrolman, if one is available. Consider the following kinds of fairly typical problems that patrol police are frequently asked to deal with, and which could be dealt with more expeditiously by foot patrol officers:

1. Noisy neighbors. Every patrol officer has had the experience of dealing with this problem, particularly in densely populated inner city areas.

2. Child abuse. A centralized patrol response may arrive entirely too late to prevent serious injury to children. By contrast, a neighborhood foot patrol officer may be able to learn of the problem through neighbors and to intervene at an earlier stage.

3. Spouse abuse. A similar situation applies here. The foot patrolman, who is closer to the actual situation, may be able to encourage an abused spouse to file a formal complaint before she is seriously injured. The issue here is not the effectiveness of various modes of police intervention — e.g., arrest vs. counseling — about which so many interesting and valuable experiments have and are being conducted, but rather the capacity of police to be informed about a problem at an earlier stage.

4. Public order. All sorts of seemingly minor problems can occur on public streets which are appropriate for a foot patrol officer to address,<sup>6</sup> although the legal limits of foot patrol to deal with certain problems will vary with the laws of any individual country. Even in the United States, however, where citizens enjoy the highest legal protection in using the public streets, foot patrol officers enjoy considerable discretion in addressing and deterring unlawful street behavior such as drug dealing and prostitution. To the extent that neighborhood foot patrol prevents criminal activity from developing, it should be able to reduce the drain on other police resources. As we shall discuss at greater length later, however, one of the problems of neighborhood or community policing is precisely the difficulties of evaluating its impact on the overall crime picture. Nevertheless, difficulties of developing measures to prove an impact should not lead to the inference that no impact has occurred.

Furthermore — and finally — community policing or foot patrol appears from our observations to be universally popular with socially stable

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residents of neighborhoods from Santa Ana to Stockholm. As a result, police resources may actually be increased in the long run because of citizen satisfaction, to the extent that police depend upon citizen support for resources.

## **The Inertia of Police Unions**

Police unions have become more powerful in the United States, Scandinavia, and Great Britain since the 1960's, and for fairly evident reasons. Mostly, the power of police unions has correlated with the rise in crime and the fear of crime over the past two decades. All over the United States, Great Britain, and parts of Scandinavia (with the exception of Norway), police are among the highest paid public service workers, whereas they were among the lowest paid twenty years ago. The size of police salaries is not necessarily, as might be thought, correlated with dominant politics. Thus, police salaries have risen substantially under the Thatcher administration's promise of a more "Law and Order" oriented commitment. At the same time, however, police salaries have risen substantially in Sweden and Denmark under socialist and welfare state governments.

By Scandinavian standards, Swedish police are especially well paid. The average policeman earns around \$23,000 per year, which is roughly 20 per cent higher than the salaries earned by Finnish or Norwegian rank-and-file, and about the same as Danish. Another indicator of the power of Swedish police unions is this: the head of the National Police Union earns the same salary (around \$44,000) as the National Chief of Police, with whom he collectively bargains. Unions are generally strong in Scandinavia, and police unions are no exception.

Norwegian police salaries are not so high as those in Sweden, partly because of a troubled economy, but mostly because an unwritten norm, we were told, of a communitarian society where it is considered unseemly for one part of the public sector work force to earn substantially more than other parts (which has happened in Great Britain). This means that a rise in police salaries would have to be accompanied by raises in the salaries of nurses, doctors, and bus drivers. This is not to suggest that Norwegian police unions are weak. It is rather that they function under a different set of constraints.

Given the increasing power of police unions, what they think about community policing is important. And generally, they are less than enthusiastic, for reasons they state, and for others which might be inferred.

For some union leaders, community policing is seen as a threat to the proper role of the police in a good society. In this vision, the police are supposed to provide the citizen with protection against crime. Neighborhood Watch is perceived as a "substitute" for the police, one which relieves the state of a moral responsibility to protect the citizen.

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Similarly, community policing is seen as a threat to police professionalism. Police are the designated and appropriately trained personnel to handle crime, whether through prevention or apprehension. Citizens are neither needed nor wanted. Moreover, community policing implies a degree of police accountability to citizens, yet another hazard to police unions.

Finally, community policing appears threatening to police unions if it transpires that fewer police will be necessary in the society. The unionization of police unquestionably encourages police to claim hegemony over crime prevention activities, even when interaction with the citizenry might well reduce crime. For police unions, jobs, and job benefits are primary concerns. The prevention of crime seems to merit a lower priority. This stance, of course, constrains the development of community policing.

### PARA-POLICE

Civilianization may or may not be a fundamental element of community policing, depending upon the philosophy animating the introduction of nonsworn personnel into functions that might otherwise be performed by sworn officers. There is a clear history of employment of civilians by police departments. A survey of forty-one metropolitan police departments taken in 1973 by the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals found an average of 16 per cent civilians to 84 per cent sworn. Thus, the issue is not merely the percentage of nonsworn to sworn, but the reasons behind a rise in the ratio of nonsworn to sworn. A community policing philosophy contemplates the transformation of the status of "nonsworn" into the status "para-police," a concept modeled on the idea of the para-professional, e.g., the para-medical or para-legal. Thus, the para-professional is by no means a minimally skilled individual. On the contrary, the para-professional concept suggests someone who performs important but more routine, preliminary, or peripheral tasks that might otherwise be required of the fully-qualified professional.

Santa Ana, California had the most highly developed conception of para-policing we observed in our international research over the past five years. Nonsworn officers in Santa Ana wore uniforms but no guns or batons. The Santa Ana Police Department called these nonsworn officers Police Service Officers — PSOs. The SAPD originally considered outfitting their para-police in blazers to distinguish them from sworn officers. But a brief experiment with that mode convinced the Department that citizens were reluctant to accept them as authoritative representatives. The traditional blue uniform seems to signal the only sort of authority citizens are willing to accept.

Observers of police have time and again noted that patrol time overwhelmingly involves service to citizens rather than direct investigation of criminal activity. The SAPD figured that nine service officers could be hired at the cost of five sworn officers, and could offer equally

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qualified performance for many police activities. Indeed, for many of these activities they were more qualified because they spoke Spanish as well as English, and Santa Ana has a considerable Spanish speaking population because of its proximity to the Mexican border. Thus, to the extent that police work requires *communicative skills* the para-police officer may prove as or more qualified than the sworn.

Santa Ana's para-police even patrolled in police cars — alone, equipped only with a radio, which permitted them to call for a sworn patrol officer if an observed situation suggested that force or arrest seemed likely. But they also performed related functions that did not require use of force. Thus, they marked abandoned vehicles and had them towed when appropriate, responded to a variety of crime reports of crimes not in progress such as burglaries or rapes that happened the night before, and recontacted crime victims not only in the interests of solving the crime — which was often out of the question — but for purposes of victim support which the SAPD considered a high priority police function. They also, as it happened, turned out to be highly effective traffic investigators. Unlike many patrol officers, who consider traffic accident investigation, and related paperwork, to be a nuisance, the para-police saw this work as evidence of *their* professional expertise, took it seriously, and tended to be more empathic and helpful with those involved. The Department rewarded them for this because it realized that a several hundred dollar “fender bender” accident might be the most important and traumatic event of the month for the average working person.

Para-police, as might be expected, also participated in all of the traditional community policing functions, such as helping to form and monitor neighborhood watch groups, organizing and presenting crime prevention seminars, alongside sworn officers who conveyed the Department's serious commitment to community policing.

To summarize: para-police can perform certain functions very well indeed. That fact presents a dilemma. The more qualified the performance of para-police, the more they may be seen to threaten the job security and pay scales of sworn police. Accordingly, police unions are apt to be wary of their introduction on a significant scale. On the other hand, top management are likely to be more interested because they represent cost savings and in addition heighten the status and professionalism of sworn police.

## The Two-Officer Car

The so-called “manpower shortage” is undoubtedly related to the apparently unyielding practice of assigning two officers to a patrol car. If one-officer cars were to become the norm (as in California police departments) there would no longer be a shortage of manpower for such community policing strategies as foot patrol and mini-stations.

Those who advocate — indeed, insist upon — two-officer cars say they are necessary, first of all, to protect against danger. But with modern

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communications technology, officers can actually obtain assistance quickly in virtually any dangerous situation. One study has shown two-officer cars to be no less dangerous or more effective than one-officer cars.<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, two-officer patrol cars foster a sense of camaraderie — the enjoyment of working with one's fellow officers — the idea of a special relationship with a partner that is considered a prerogative of the job. Indeed, in Sweden, we were told, there is a law that nobody should work alone, and that it is the right of working people to enjoy their work.

Whatever the validity of these reasons, they are contrary to the value of efficiency and, perhaps more importantly, the value of community. Although the two-officer patrol car may engender a sense of security and job enjoyment among those who are policing, it may also generate a sense of remoteness from the population being policed. Two officers riding together in a patrol car tend to become their own movable community, distant from the people they are policing. In any event, the two-officer car, by claiming so much manpower, may prove to be the single most important resource constraint upon the development of community policing.

## Command Accountability

Police organizations are characteristically arranged in hierarchical form — they are, after all, para-military institutions. Policy is made by the Chief or Commissioner and the command staff. Community policing, by contrast, implies a degree of decentralization of authority. In many police departments where precinct systems prevail, authority is, in fact, decentralized. Thus, in Newark, New Jersey, which we reported on in *The New Blue Line*, the precinct commander was jokingly referred to as a "Baron." So the tension between hierarchical command accountability and the decentralization of authority is not exactly new or surprising. Nevertheless, the decentralization of command implied by adopting a neighborhood policing or mini-station strategy, which are integral features of community policing, may not easily be adapted to departments with a strong centralized orientation. Thus, as a general proposition, we would conclude that the more centralized and hierarchical is the accountability system of a police department, the more difficult it will be to introduce community policing.

At the same time, it is important to stress that community policing does not necessarily imply either a loss of centralized policy-making authority, or of centralized accountability. Chief Raymond Davis of Santa Ana delegated considerable authority to area commanders to implement a community policing philosophy or overall strategy. Area commanders enjoyed extraordinary discretion within that context. But the overall strategy placed important constraints on discretion. Area commanders (and sergeants) could

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assign more or fewer foot patrol officers to one block of streets or another — but they could not entirely avoid their responsibilities for neighborhood foot patrol, neighborhood watch, crime prevention education, and so forth.

Furthermore, community policing is an intelligence gathering tactic. It implies that community police will provide central station police with information — e.g., about youth gangs and local drug dealers. In this sense, community policing can become an adjunct to criminal investigation. Still, when we observe the big organizational picture, community policing does entail decentralization and consequent greater autonomy for lower ranks.

## The Reward Structure

Community policing cannot only create a problem of restructuring the norms of hierarchical command; it can also reconstitute the norms of effective policing by which the higher command can judge the effectiveness of police. This is not to suggest that traditional police departments have worked out exemplary or widely accepted criteria for judging exactly who is the more proficient cop. On the contrary, the difficulty of developing a set of such criteria has bedeviled police administrators for generations. Arrests, felony arrests, clearances, convictions, street stops, traffic tickets — none of these is an entirely satisfactory indicator of police performance. Still, if police are playing the traditional role of criminal apprehension, some of the above criteria seem sensible to employ.

But how do we evaluate the performance of the community-oriented police officer whose task is crime prevention as well as apprehension? Not only is it impossible to measure the amount of crime a particular police officer contributed to preventing; a community police officer's success involves initiating subtle changes in community behavior and attitudes. For example, is a neighborhood more enthusiastic about self defense? Are people more willing to provide critical information to police? Are referral services more effectively engaged? Are victims able to reconstitute their shattered lives more quickly? Is the sense of citizen efficacy against crime enhanced? Is trust developed among neighbors? Does the fear of crime diminish? And is there a greater sense of partnership with the police? Because police forces have not learned how to systematically reward such performance, they find it difficult to encourage rank-and-file officers to dedicate themselves to it.

In sum, community policing exaggerates the ambiguity of police performance, and, by implication, of measures of evaluation and reward. Police executives recognize the problem, even when they do not articulate it; and we have come to believe that it — the ambiguity of evaluating and rewarding the quality of community police performance — constitutes a factor, albeit not a dispositive one, in inhibiting the development of community policing.

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## **Public Expectations of Police**

Community policing is supposed to be more satisfying to the public than traditional policing, and it may be if citizens experience a diminished fear of crime, a heightened sense of efficacy, and increased trust in the police. At the same time, some citizens may prefer and demand more traditional modes of policing. In part, this is simply what they are used to — they don't want to deal with police service officers or community service officers. They want their police to be "real" with appropriate badge and gun. Such citizens, and there are such, may be especially discontented when they encounter female police.

There is, in addition, a more insidious reason for citizen mistrust of community policing. Citizens may come to believe that community policing is actually interfering with standard crime-fighting capabilities. This can occur if community policing is permitted to bear the responsibility — within the police department — for reductions in the patrol force, response time, and so forth. Such a message, if permitted to take hold within the department, will eventually make its way to the general public. Thus, community policing is easily maligned by traditional police who resent change and want to return to the old ways of preventive patrol in two-officer cars. If community policing is to succeed, administrative leadership must insure that this unfairly negative definition of "the crime problem" — attributing it to resource constraints caused by community policing — is not allowed to prevail.

## **Failure to Integrate with Crime Detection**

Departmental segregation has by now become an almost predictable problem of community policing. Community policing activities are assigned to newly created, specialized units — crime prevention branches, mini-station commands, and community relations squads. Community police personnel may be attached to decentralized commands, but they "do their own thing" and are not integrated into traditional patrol or criminal investigation activities. Police departments are composed of jealous fiefdoms that don't want to accommodate a new role like community policing or share their responsibilities with community-policing units. This poses a serious organizational problem. If community policing is made a separate command, turf battles develop with established commands, especially with patrol units. As a result, for example, Detroit's mini-stations are devoted almost exclusively to crime prevention, not to patrolling, emergency response, or criminal investigation. They are not really mini-police stations, since that would infringe too much on patrol functions. Many of America's storefront police stations, begun with such fanfare in the early 70's, failed for the same reason. Their officers had nothing to do, so they ended up handing out jelly beans

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and crime prevention pamphlets to schoolchildren. Community policing became another specialized function, distinct from other ongoing department activities.

On the other hand, if community policing is given to operational units to carry out, which generally means to patrol, they may neglect it in favor of traditional activities. In Detroit, for example, when mini-stations were first established they were subordinated to precinct commanders. The mini-stations quickly earned the reputation for being staffed by walking wounded, as commanders assigned their least effectual officers to them, such as pregnant women and officers under disciplinary suspension. In Singapore, too, when divisional commanders were asked to send personnel to the pilot program in Neighborhood Police Posts (NPPs), they assigned officers who were close to retirement or didn't measure up to the demands of emergency response. Detroit's solution to the problem was to transfer mini-stations out of patrol, creating a separate command accountable directly to the chief. Singapore's solution was for the Commissioner to insist that commanders must send the very best and to reject during training, officers who were not up to the mark judged necessary for the NPPs.

The problem of overcoming organizational compartmentalization in order to accommodate community policing has been achieved best in Japan and Singapore. In both countries *kobans* and Neighborhood Police Posts, respectively, come under what Americans would call precinct direction, specifically through the supervisor of patrol. *Koban* and NPPs are viewed in both countries as fixed *patrol* bases — receiving complaints and requests for service, patrolling on foot, bicycles, and motor scooters, and responding to emergency calls for services when feasible, while giving special attention to community liaison and crime prevention. In effect, patrol operations are composed of fixed bases with overlays of mobile, emergency-response vehicles. During their careers Japanese and Singaporean police officers serve in both fast-response vehicles and fixed small-scale stations.

Coordination with criminal investigation has been more distant, although the relationship is well defined. In both Japan and Singapore the investigative role of *koban* and NPP personnel is minimal. Like patrol officers in most countries, they preserve the scenes of crime until detectives arrive and only investigate minor offenses on their own. Houston, Texas, by contrast, has tried a much more ambitious integration formula. Against all tradition, criminal investigation of street crime — robbery, burglary, larceny, and vehicle theft — has been shared with patrol personnel and radically decentralized. Investigative sergeants have been reassigned to Field Operations Command in support of teams of patrol officers based on well-defined beats.

Thus, for community policing to be successful, thinking executives have to figure out how to integrate the crime prevention initiatives of community



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policing with the investigative, crime control activities of traditional policing.

## The Ambiguity of Community

Community is an inherently ambiguous, almost elusive, idea. It implies a commonality of interest, values, identities, demands, and expectations. When one considers how fragile a two-person relationship can be, it requires little imagination to comprehend the difficulties of expanding the notion of mutuality of interest to a larger group of human beings. Nevertheless, the quest for community seems an almost universal aspiration. Community is the apple pie and motherhood of social organization. As Raymond Williams has observed,<sup>8</sup> unlike such similar terms as state, nation, and society, *community* "seems never to be used unfavorably, and never to be given any negative or opposing meaning." Moreover, as Morgan and Maggs have observed in their study of provincial police departments in England,<sup>9</sup> every Chief Constable and local Police Authority affirms the import of community "consultation" and "liaison," but the terms are slippery and vague and mean significantly different things to different people.

In addition, there can be quite a bleak side to the idea of community when some of its members become overprotective, and threaten or engage in violence to perceived outsiders. The most notorious example of this occurred recently in the Howard Beach section of New York City, where a black youth was beaten and driven to run to a highway, where he was struck by an oncoming automobile and killed.

Police-community reciprocity can be achieved only where there is a genuine bonding of interests between the police and the served citizenry, on the one hand, and among definable sections of the public, on the other. That may turn out to be progressively difficult to accomplish in demographically complex urban areas, with their increasingly ethnic diversity. Moreover, contiguous ethnic variation prevails in parts of many major cities throughout the world. London offers perhaps one of the most striking examples of the phenomenon. The city experienced one of the most destructive riots in its history on October 5, 1985, a riot which Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Kenneth Newman described as "violence on an unprecedented scale." One police officer was hacked to death with machetes, 248 were injured by rocks, other missiles and petrol bombs, and 7 by gunshot wounds. The Broadwater Farm Estate — which is in actuality a high-rise urban low income housing project — is located in Haringay, a mostly working class borough. A tour of the area surrounding the estate, however, reveals blocks of solidly middle class housing. This neighborhood's residents had comfortably formed a Neighborhood Watch group — evidently to protect against potential burglaries that might be committed by unemployed Estate youth. During the

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riot itself police lines were drawn on the theory that the rioters were intent upon looting what might be considered another community of interests — adjacent small businesses.

Nevertheless, the London Metropolitan Police have drawn some positive lessons from the riot. During the summer of 1986, efforts were being made to develop strong liaisons with groups — particularly young black men — within the Broadwater Farm Estate, to stress commonalities of interest between Estate residents, other residents of Haringay and the local police. This is a tense and difficult business because police are in the paradoxical — some might argue paternalistic — position of reaching out to residents, particularly young men, while retaining the authority to discipline. And it is more difficult to play a role after the bitter residues of race riot than before.

The Broadwater Farm Estate riot can offer an important lesson for the theory of community policing, which is to distinguish between the *process* of coproduction of crime prevention and the concept of the appropriate *territory* to be considered. Within various administrative boundaries — cities, boroughs — we do find neighborhoods. Suttles defines “the defended neighborhood,” as “the smallest area which possesses a corporate identity known to both its members and outsiders . . . an area within which people retreat to avoid a quantum jump in the risks of insult or injury they must take in moving about outside that area.”<sup>10</sup> Police can perhaps resolve the ambiguity of community by themselves conveying broader communal norms of decorum and safety to individual neighborhoods. Like the Japanese police, they can seek to move beyond being merely the law’s enforcers; they can aspire to teach the community’s moral values within self-defined and cohesive neighborhoods.

## Endnotes

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9. Rod Morgan and Christopher Maggs, *Setting the P.A.C.E.: Police Consultation Arrangements in England and Wales* (Bath, England: Center for Analysis of Social Policy, University of Bath, 1985), p. 3.
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## Chapter Five

# The Value of Community Policing

Given the ambiguities of the concept of community, and the realities of police resistance, should we conclude that the idea of community policing is without substance, and that the constraints we discussed above make it virtually impossible to achieve? We think not. The aspiration is central to policing in a democracy, but it isn't enough to employ it as a slogan. It needs to be carefully considered, studied further in actual practice, and its constraints and limitations candidly discussed. We think that community policing does have enduring value. If police forces encourage community-based crime prevention, emphasize non-emergency interaction with the public, increase public input into policy making, and decentralize command, substantial benefits can accrue both to the community and to the police.

### Benefits to the Community

Among the possible public benefits of community policing are a possibility of improved crime prevention, greater public scrutiny of police authority, greater police accountability to the community, and encouragement of efforts to recruit women and minorities into police work.

**Crime Prevention.** The most critical question that needs to be answered is whether community policing will produce safer communities. Protection, after all, is the traditional *raison d'être* of police, and no one advocating community policing wants the police to abandon that responsibility. Unfortunately, we can't answer this crucial question. Although there are strong *a priori* reasons for thinking that community policing will be at least as effective as past approaches, there is little hard evidence to support the point. Again and again, we found that the police could not supply convincing

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data on the effect of changes in operations. Often preoccupied with problems of implementation and strapped for funds, they plow ahead without careful analysis of effects.

Singapore is the outstanding exception. A one-year pilot project in five areas of central Singapore was carefully evaluated by the police department and a team of scholars from Singapore National University. A before-and-after survey of public opinion was included. Briefly, it was found that compared with the rest of Singapore, especially adjacent neighborhoods, serious crime declined while reports of minor crimes rose, support for police increased, and the public's sense of security, already high, also rose.<sup>1</sup> Only after the results of the evaluation were studied, did the Government of Singapore decide to expand the new system to the entire island.

Community policing is advancing because it seems to make sense, not because it has yet been shown to be demonstrably superior. This is dangerous because policy making unsupported by facts is fickle. Good practices both old and new may be cast aside on the basis of seat-of-the-pants' impressions.

Although free world policing is in an unprecedented period of soul searching and experimentation, police forces are unable to learn from one another because careful evaluations of program outcomes are not being made; or when they are, are difficult to pin down or to generalize about. For example, Rosenbaum, Lewis, and Grant undertook a major evaluation of multi-neighborhood crime prevention programs in Chicago, Illinois.<sup>2</sup> They evaluated community crime prevention programs established by volunteer community organizations, and found that on seven measures — participation, feelings of efficacy, behavioral change, social integration, reduced crime and incivility, reduced fear, and attachment to neighborhood — there was no significant differences between "treated" and "untreated" areas.

Why? When they looked more closely they found little evidence of successful treatment implementation. By contrast, "the one neighborhood that initiated a number of block watches showed fewer of these unfavorable results and, in fact, showed some encouraging effects along the lines of reductions in victimization, as well as increases in surveillance and home protection behavior."<sup>3</sup>

Whatever the validity of *community-organized* crime prevention programs, these results cannot be generalized to what would happen if a committed police agency was to undertake similar programs. Thus, we still do not have adequate measures of what happens when such programs are implemented and closely monitored by police in cooperation with neighborhood groups.

It is unrealistic to expect the police simultaneously to devise and implement new strategies and to evaluate their impact. Their priorities are

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operational and their expertise in evaluation limited. It is enough that they be creative and open. The responsibility for evaluating program results should be shouldered by agencies outside the police. Governments especially should study the effects of the many natural experiments in policing that are occurring throughout the world. Without this, the future of strategic innovation, not just community policing, is problematic.

**Public Scrutiny.** Even when community policing is only rhetoric, an opportunity is created for legitimate public examination of police practices. If community policing minimally means greater involvement of the public in public safety, how can the police convincingly deflect public discussion of police strategies? Community policing is like a Trojan horse that attacks the pretensions of professional insulation from within. Even if community policing cannot do much in the way of preventing crime, it does offer the public a larger window into police activity.

**Public Accountability.** Community policing increases effective public accountability over the police. There are three primary ways in which the public can constrain what the police do: (1) by providing, or not providing, a framework of laws and money for police action; (2) by participating in policy-making with respect to the means of achieving desired objectives; and (3) by examining and possibly punishing errors in performance. Historically, the police in most places have fared reasonably well with respect to legal and financial support. They are powerful politically. Police have, however, adamantly resisted public participation in policy-making. Claims about professionalism, as we have remarked before, have been used to gain autonomy and exclude lay persons, including politicians, from policy deliberations. With respect to civilian supervision of errors in implementation, police have been most fiercely opposed. Ad hoc civilian review has been unthinkable; civil and criminal liability has to be mediated through strict due process; and the press is often considered unfair and inflammatory. Such is the standard police view.

Now something almost unimaginable is happening wherever community policing is being meaningfully developed. The police themselves are inviting the public into policy making because they realize that this is the surest way to obtain the kind of public cooperation that is essential to successful crime prevention and crime fighting. In order for outreach to be successful, the police must sit still for feedback. The myriad consultative committees, crime-prevention councils, and liaison groups are making suggestions about policy which the police cannot cavalierly dismiss because the police instigated the dialogue. For the police, mobilizing the public for crime prevention, especially when enduring institutions are created, is like climbing on the tiger's back — it's hard to get off. Community policing makes public collaboration in

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policy making acceptable because it occurs at police initiative. To be sure, as we found in Scandinavia, most of the liaison groups are dominated by the police, who after all, are the professionals in crime prevention. Nevertheless, the police have to make sense to the public representatives in these groups, many of whom are themselves articulate and judgmental professionals.

Community policing also makes civilian oversight of implementation more acceptable. The same dynamic is apparent. How can the police solicit public input into community safety and cut off inconvenient questions about their own failing to follow through? Though it is too early to say, collaboration between police and public in crime-fighting and crime-prevention may eventually build the kind of mutual trust that lessens police objections to civilian oversight. The police may discover that they share with the vast majority of the populace an interest in assuring proper as well as effective performance.

Community policing is a back door into comprehensive accountability. What could not be achieved by public demand through political channels, may occur because the police believe wider community participation is essential to the achievement of organizational objectives. Accountability may occur under police auspices, where it could not under political ones.

**Recruitment.** Community policing provides a double-barreled rationale for representative recruitment. On the one hand, it challenges the macho, martial model of policing. Traditional officers are being very acute when they distinguish "hard" from "soft" policing. The tactics of community policing are indeed soft, even though the goal of deterring criminality is not. While both community and traditional policing use hard and soft tactics, the emphasis in community policing is toward soliciting, enlisting, inviting, and encouraging, while in traditional policing it is toward warning, threatening, forcing, and hurting. Community policing is less direct than traditional policing. It is a kind of policing that can be done as well by women as men, by the short as the tall, by the verbal as the physical, and by the sympathetic as the authoritarian.

Community policing also requires an ability to interact constructively with a differentiated public. Police know from experience that people are not all the same. Community policing justifies making particularistic appeals and adaptations. In order to do this successfully, people with diverse backgrounds are needed in the police. Community policing helps to demonstrate the value of heterogeneity; it makes heterogeneity professional.

## **Benefits to the Police**

Community policing also offers potential benefits to the police. Seven of these are described below.

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**Political Benefits.** Politically, community policing is a game the police can't lose. If coproduction through community participation leads to lower crime rates and higher arrest rates, the police can take credit as foresighted agents of change. If community policing fails to increase public security, the police can argue for an intensification of traditional strategies. Given the current fear of crime, the public is hardly likely to reduce support for policing because a new gambit doesn't work out. Moreover, even if the police cannot actually deliver on the larger goal of crime reduction, a heightened police presence is reassuring. Thus, community policing reduces fear of crime — and from the perspective of political benefits to the police, delivers the message that police care.

**Grassroots Support.** Perhaps of all the political benefits is this — community policing offers a magnificent opportunity to build grassroots political support for the police. It embeds the police in the community, giving them an opportunity to explain themselves, associate themselves with community initiatives, and become highly visible as concerned defenders of public safety. Community policing makes the population at large a “special interest group” supporting police-led programs. A Philadelphia TV producer learned of the reputation of the Santa Ana Police Department, and organized a two-day trip to interview citizens and police and shoot his documentary film. He became so fascinated he extended his trip for a couple of weeks. The resulting videotape opens with the narrator commenting, “A lot of communities have baseball teams and then root for those baseball teams. It seems to be that in Santa Ana everybody is rooting for crime prevention.”

**Consensus Building.** Community policing is a means for developing consensus between police and public about the appropriate use of law and force. The police have an obligation not only to catch criminals but to maintain order in public places. There are sound crime-prevention reasons for this, quite apart from enforcement of standards of decency and propriety. Research has shown that people are made fearful and insecure by disorder and incivility, not just by criminal activity. In fact, criminal victimization is rare; most people's knowledge of crime comes secondhand through the media. Inability to curb public disorder — loud music, vandalism, drunkenness, uncouth behavior — generates further disorder, more serious crime, and diffuse feelings of insecurity.<sup>4</sup>

In order to maintain public decorum, the police use the authority of law and sometimes the reality of constraint or the threat of force. This is a delicate balancing: if police under-enforce, the “signs of crime” multiply, encouraging further depredations; if they over-enforce, the public becomes mistrustful, worse yet hostile, perhaps even violent. Community policing is a vehicle for undergirding police action with moral support. Through



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community liaison the police can assimilate local standards of conduct and acceptable levels of enforcement. This is not meant to imply that the police are always properly bound by community sentiment. Communities, too, can be too punitive, permissive, or have double standards. But the police are less likely to be regarded as an army of occupation, especially in ethnic neighborhoods, if they are able to act in accordance with the wishes of the respectable, law-abiding people who work and reside there.

**Police Morale.** Community policing probably raises the morale of police involved because it multiplies the positive contacts they have with a community's supportive people, those who welcome police presence and activity. Traditional deployment concentrates police contacts on "difficult" people — criminals and incorrigibles as well as deserving but demanding claimants for police service, such as victims, incompetents, and mental cases. For different reasons, all of these people are difficult to satisfy. One set sees the police as the enemy; the other as being ineffective or unsympathetic. As officers throughout the world ruefully note, police work doesn't bring them in contact with an improving group of people. More to the point, it does not bring them in contact with people who readily say "glad to have you here."

Community policing leads to unemotional, non-emergency interaction with citizens, increasing contact with people who want nothing more from the police than their reassuring presence. Community policing increases the likelihood that the public's quiet regard will be displayed to individual officers. This improves police officers' sense of self-worth, and makes being a police officer more satisfying. Stockholm's climate does not commend it as one of the world's most sought after vacation spots. Yet foot patrol officers we interviewed there were enthusiastic about their assignments, far more than patrol car police. Their reason — they enjoyed being on personal terms with people in the neighborhood, with being appreciated, with being in positive contact with residents whom they saw and spoke with time and again. When we speak of community policing, the word "community," recited time and again, tends to vaporize into an abstraction. In actual context, however, the reality of community is territory and communication — knowing who belongs and who doesn't, where they fit in, and talking with them in an appropriate way.

**Satisfaction.** Because effective community policing requires that subordinate ranks take more initiative and responsibility, it makes the police job more challenging. Community policing cannot be managed in a quasi-military way, fulfilling easily measured norms and avoiding stipulated errors. Community policing may, in fact, be the operational strategy that is peculiarly fitted to the new breed of police recruit. Police managers report that today's more highly educated officers are less accepting of routine, more likely to question command, and more impatient with non-solutions to recurrent

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problems. Community policing may be the best program the police have devised for maintaining zest for the job.

**Professional Stature.** Community policing raises the professional standing of the police by broadening the range of skills required. To be successful at community policing, police must be more than large, physical, and tough; they must be analytic, empathetic, flexible, and communicative. Breaking the old template is threatening to some of the older, less educated officers. It helps to explain why community policing is resented by many. In the long run, however, community policing will make police less marginal as professionals.

**Career Development.** By enriching the strategic paradigm of policing, community policing creates more lines for career development. Because community policing encompasses and expands upon the traditional model, it provides more ways for personnel to be valuable. For community policing to work, police forces must reward a wider range of performance skills. This provides career opportunities to a more diversified group of officers.

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## Chapter Six

### Possible Shortcomings of Community Policing<sup>1</sup>

#### Does Community Policing Reduce Public Safety?

One could make the following argument: community policing is based on the notion that the police cannot protect the public by their own unaided efforts; successful crime prevention demands public surveillance; and successful apprehension and prosecution of criminals requires public cooperation in identifying suspects and testifying against them in court. Nevertheless, it could be argued, the efficacy of the public as coproducers of crime prevention has not been tested. Indeed, the evaluative evidence is scarcely encouraging. After reviewing all the American studies, Dennis Rosenbaum argues that the benefits are uncertain and that both the theory and the implementation of Neighborhood Watch may be flawed.<sup>2</sup> Trevor Bennett's study of Neighborhood Watch in England is hardly more reassuring with regard to its efficacy.<sup>3</sup> The only positive bits of evidence come from Singapore, where a pilot program establishing five "Neighborhood Police Posts" in 1983-84 reduced street crime and raised public perceptions of safety.<sup>4</sup>

How are we to interpret this evidence? On the whole, it is equivocal. On the one hand, we could argue that community policing is being adopted as a crime-reducing strategy on the strength of *a priori* arguments rather than demonstrated fact. To a certain extent, that is true. On the other hand, the evaluations are also not dispositive. Neighborhood watch is, after all, only one of the components of community policing. It may prove more effective in some communities, depending upon such factors as demographic composition, community solidarity, and the methods employed both to organize and follow up its introduction. What may indeed prove critical is its embeddedness in a broader value structure of police-community

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reciprocity. Thus, as with police innovation, what may be most important of all is an "abiding, energetic commitment to the values and implications of a crime-prevention-oriented police department."<sup>5</sup> Moreover, reporting of crimes does increase where community policing has been established. Certainly, we should think about careful research and evaluation. In doing so, however, we should be wary of measuring the wrong things — because they are more easily quantifiable — and drawing unwarranted conclusions.

### **Does Community Policing Undermine Police Will and Capacity to Maintain Public Order?**

Community policing stresses the development of close relations with the public. To achieve this goal, it might be argued, the determination of the police to take strong public enforcement action when needed might be impaired. During our research in England we heard such charges leveled by both rank-and-file police and ordinary citizens. Police managers, they asserted, have a policy of being "soft" on hoodlum elements because they feared that forceful action would anger the community and result in renewed rioting. There are, we were told, "no go" areas in central London, heavily populated by minorities, where the police are supposed to underenforce the law.

It is difficult to substantiate the truth of such charges, just as it is often hard to substantiate charges that police are "harassing" minorities, charges that have been made in England more frequently and heatedly than allegations of underenforcement. In actuality, there probably are instances of both underenforcement and harassment, but it would be formidable, if not futile, to try to obtain an actual measure or ratio of such instances. More importantly, the idea of community policing by no means implies underenforcement. On the contrary, programs aimed at crime prevention and victim assistance suggest concern for public order, not neglect.

### **Will Community Policing Weaken the Capacity of Police to Enforce the Law?**

Those who recall how woefully unprepared American police officers were in the 1960's for crowd control operations may fear that a community-policing orientation will further undermine their ability to control crowds. If community policing changes the operational style and training of a substantial portion of police personnel, will officers be found who are competent to handle riots and demonstrations? Can the police put on a velvet glove and keep their iron hand in shape? There are several reasonable replies to those questions. First, the questions assume that the crowd control problems experienced by American police in the 1960's arose from an inadequately strong fist. On the contrary, studies of these riots<sup>6</sup> suggested

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that problems arose from inadequate police training and discipline, coupled with a pre-existing animus toward minorities. A community-policing orientation in a police department will implicitly be directed toward riot prevention. Since police will be in communication with minority communities, police should be able to discuss problems directly, rather than permit them to fester. Thus, the potential for riot should be significantly reduced.

Furthermore, effective and proper riot control is predicated on firm and disciplined use of force, not an "iron hand" attitude. Our observations suggest no reason to believe there is an inherent inconsistency between community policing training and firm and disciplined use of force during public disorder. At the same time, community policing is predicated on the idea that the positive relations between the police and the community will diminish, if not eliminate, the probability of the occurrence of public disorder. Thus, Lt. Joseph Brann of the Santa Ana Police Department reported that when he first joined the force "We had mini-riots all the time," which he attributed to the then-prevailing "kick ass and take names" outlook of the Department.<sup>7</sup>

### **Will Community Policing Result in Police Corruption?**

There is no evidence of that where community policing has been tried. It could be argued, however, that since community policing brings the police closer to the people, and that since decentralized policing may signify less departmental control over the daily activities of community police officers, the opportunities for corruption are enhanced. Moreover, since corruption is an essentially covert activity, its actual prevalence must surely be underreported.

Further, it could be asserted, under a regime of community policing, police organizations will be less accountable because police officers will enjoy greater freedom of action. Subordinate commanders can claim they know what particular communities need and will enjoy the political clout to implement their priorities. Officers in charge of neighborhood police stations speak proudly of their ability to mobilize resources, such as funds for crime-prevention programs, appearances of political VIP's at community functions, coverage by radio and television, and supportive services by area businesses. They also quietly mention that their support networks free them from accountability to the command hierarchy. Some might interpret this as a desirable loosening from command hierarchy, while others might interpret it as a dangerous independence from command policy and supervision.

When the conduct of community police officers is exemplary, their independent power base should not be a cause for concern. But if they should mismanage funds, take bribes, abuse authority, or wink at violations of the

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law, they may be better positioned to defy disciplinary action. Indeed, command centralization in American cities occurred early in the 20th century in direct reaction to the corruption and lack of discipline engendered by all too cozy relations between precinct commanders and local power structures.<sup>8</sup>

So how should we think about the connection between community policing and corruption? Everything we know about police corruption suggests that where it has occurred, it was already institutionalized irrespective of community policing. Corruption seems to be attributable to a different vision of the role of police in the community from that proposed by advocates of community policing. Traditional precincts were tied to politics — police would have connections with “hooks” or “rabbis” in the local political machines, who could influence assignment or promotion within the police department. Police corruption was part of a larger pattern of corrupt practices that pervaded municipal government. Under those conditions, it was customary for police to accept small gifts or gratuities or payoffs from bookmakers or traffic offenders; or to tolerate criminal activities by local politicians in the belief that this would lead to a promotion.<sup>9</sup> Thus, when we discuss police corruption, we often speak of a “climate” of corruption.

Community policing, by contrast, has been initiated by police executives who are reputedly among the most intelligent, progressive, and professional in the police management business. They are known to be people who will not tolerate corruption and will, if possible, root it out of their departments. They are characteristically opposed to the sort of climate in which corruption thrives. From this perspective, there is little or no relationship between community policing and corruption. Indeed, we would expect that police who are motivated by and genuinely subscribe to a philosophy of community policing must condemn corruption since it undermines a constructive notion of community.

At the same time, there is a danger that community policing will be introduced by a reform chief into a department that already has a climate and expectation of corruption. If that should happen, the decentralization associated with community policing could facilitate already existing corrupt practices. That result, however, would not properly be considered community policing, nor should it be attributed to the introduction of community policing. It would simply be another instance of the abuse of police authority conferred by the gun and the badge. Crooked cops, like other crooks, are capable of using any instrumentality — including the philosophy of community policing — to achieve unlawful and self-interested goals.

### **Does Community Policing Undermine the Patrol Force?**

One of the obstacles to community policing, discussed above, is the organizational segregation and lower status of those involved in the

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community policing enterprise. Assume, however, a department in which community policing takes hold, including decentralization of command. Assume, furthermore, that instead of community policing occupying a lower status, the best and the brightest of the patrol force are attracted to it. There is a danger, under those circumstances, that those responsible for responding to emergency calls will be the least able patrol officers in the department. This will, of course, not necessarily happen. But it is at least a remote possibility and should be kept in mind by police administrators considering the implementation of community oriented policing.

There is another similar and remote possibility. Traditional conceptions of professionalism have been legally oriented as to both substantive law and procedure. Legal competence was perceived as a distinguishing mark of the police professional. As community policing develops and takes hold in a department there may be a tendency to underplay legal competence in favor of interpersonal skills with citizens. If both things happen — reduction in the quality of the reactive patrol force coupled with a decline in legal competence — we may well have written a recipe for disaster. For example, because of a lack of adequate legal training, officers might conduct unlawful warrantless searches resulting in the exclusion of evidence and subsequent loss of convictions. Even more harrowing would be a situation where, relying upon the word of a questionable informant, police forcibly enter and search an innocent residence and generate unintended but serious damage — as, for example, a heart attack in one of the occupants, with attendant civil liability. In sum, if community policing is introduced it should not be at the expense of a well-trained reactive patrol force and associated legal competence.

### Endnotes

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  6. See National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, *Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968), (The Kerner Report); Daniel Walker, *Rights in Conflict* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968); Jerome H. Skolnick, *The Politics of Protest: A Task Force Report Submitted to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969).
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  8. James F. Richardson, *Urban Police in the United States* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1974); Robert M. Fogelson, *Big-City Police* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977); Samuel Walker, *A Critical History of Police Reform* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1977); Gene E. Carte and Elain H. Carte, *Police Reform in the United States: The Era of August Vollmer, 1905-1932* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1975).
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## Chapter Seven

### Community Policing in Democratic Society

Since community policing anticipates profound changes in customary roles of police, it seems appropriate to raise broader philosophical issues about the role of police in a democratic and free society which, after all, embodies fundamental Constitutional constraints on the police to protect citizens against unwarranted invasions of property, liberty, and privacy. From this perspective, a more skeptical argument against community policing might be that as police blend into the community, they will no longer be visible in their fundamental role as law enforcement officials. It might be argued that, just as the term "correctional institution" conceals the essentially punitive nature of jails and prisons, so will the development of "community police" obscure the centrality of the police role as enforcers of law. These broader concerns — about police becoming too well integrated into the community and their law enforcement side obscured — are somewhat speculative, but they are fundamental and are rarely addressed. They are reflected in the following questions:

#### **Is it Appropriate for Police to Develop a Political Base?**

Community policing makes the public an interest-group for the police. A key feature of community policing is the redeployment of police personnel so as to encourage regular, routine, non-emergency interaction with the public. This is done through foot patrols, park-and-walk patrols, and fixed police posts. In these ways the police become a more noticeable, less anonymous presence. They become better acquainted with community so that they can anticipate, and possibly prevent, crime and order problems from arising. They assist in organizing crime-prevention programs like

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Neighborhood Watch, develop dependable sources of local information, and encourage cooperation in crime solving. The police also meet a more diverse cross-section of the populace, especially respectable, noncriminal people who welcome and support the police uncritically. Finally, the new modes of deployment encourage people to solicit assistance from the police for problems that are important but not necessarily criminal or urgent. This dramatizes that the police are at the disposal of the public rather than an occasionally forceful presence intruding according to an invisible agenda. Community policing seeks to transform the police from what has been described as "an army of occupation" into an accepted, unremarkable, and institutionalized part of the community.

Studies have repeatedly shown that police are already very popular, even in their traditional reactive deployment.<sup>1</sup> Citizens often demand a greater police patrol presence and complain loudly when police stations are closed. Community policing will intensify this connection by personalizing police service, making it available to ordinary people who are not necessarily victims of crime. By freeing some police from the tyranny of the reactive radio-dispatch system, community policing makes a virtue of the "servicing" that police do so much of anyhow. Detroit's mini-stations, for example, have become popular even in depressed, disadvantaged neighborhoods. And despite the carping of traditional operational personnel, they are increasing from fifty-two to almost one hundred. Every neighborhood in Stockholm and Singapore wants a Neighborhood Police Post and every neighborhood in Japan a *koban*. Police in Australia have more requests for Neighborhood Watch than they can handle. Commercial associations clamor for more shopfronts like those in Santa Ana or Melbourne's Broadmeadows.

Community policing thus provides a rationale for the systematic organization of communities at the grass roots in favor of the police. Some may be concerned that, if police budgets tended to be untouchable in the past, due to the public's fear of crime, they may become more so in the future as community policing transforms communities into police interest-groups. Whether such concerns have much basis in reality remains to be seen. These concerns assume that police services will be so well appreciated the police will become overly politically powerful because they are providing services that most people want and prefer. To the extent, however, that the police are responsive to public concerns it could be argued that there is scarcely an inconsistency between community policing and democratic theory.

### **Will Community Policing Discriminate Against the Unpopular?**

Community policing may arguably lessen the protection afforded by law to unpopular persons; it might even encourage vigilantism. Community

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policing mobilizes the populace for crime prevention, including systematic surveillance and informing. Mobile citizen-band radio patrols have been formed in many American cities. In Japan, neighborhood foot patrols, often targeted on teenagers and runaways, are common. Members of Neighborhood Watch are encouraged to report suspicious persons and activity. Under community policing, local commanders are judged by their ability to develop such activities. In these circumstances, the line between community protection and harassment could become blurred. Neighborhood Watch meetings in Detroit, for instance, have been held outdoors across the street from suspected "drug houses," with uniformed police prominently in attendance. The message was loud and clear, and in several instances drug operations have shifted. In Santa Ana, the police have encouraged judges to give stiffer sentences to those arrested for drunkenness. Is this an appropriate police activity? What happens if crime-prevention attention shifts from suspected drug dealers and drunks to porn shop operators, prostitutes, members of the Nazi party, homosexuals, nonresident minorities, atheists, and civil libertarians? Would local police sympathetically investigate complaints of citizen spying, intimidation, and denial of services? Under community policing would they be more or less bound by local community sentiment?

In "outback" police stations in Australia, where one or two officers often work a hundred miles from "backup," police officers dwell on how dependent they are on the support of locals for order maintenance, especially when out-of-towners are involved. Among an evening's drinking crowd at a local pub, officers take pride in pointing out the "blokes" they can count on in a fight. The feeling is strongly reciprocated, only the "blokes" may speak quietly about the need to keep unruly, drunken Aborigines from overrunning the town. While drunkenness and fighting are indeed chronic problems of the Australian Aborigines, it is not hard to imagine that outback towns must seem cold and indifferent, if not actively hostile, to Aborigines faced with a tacit alliance between white townie and the white police officer.<sup>2</sup> If push comes to shove, it would be an imprudent officer who chose an Aborigine over a white resident unless the situation was crystal clear.

Is it possible to construct a model of community policing that protects the rights of minorities who are perceived to threaten the interests of the majority in the community? In a sense, this is the local community police version of the dilemma of democracy our founding fathers, particularly James Madison, wrestled with — how to construct a system of equality in decision making while protecting the rights of minorities.<sup>3</sup> Given the possibility of discrimination against the unpopular, care should be taken to insure the quality of protection produced by community policing. It should not be permitted to grow without reasonable and effective accountability and evaluation mechanisms.

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## **Will Community Policing Increase the Relative Power of the Police Among Government Agencies?**

This could occur in two ways. First, crime prevention, unlike crimeresponse, is open-ended. For example, if the police develop their capacity to diagnose circumstances that lead to crime, as fire departments have done with respect to fires, the police will enjoy a broad consultative role — in planning educational programs, public health, building design, street layout, public housing, municipal services, and welfare and employment policies. Crime prevention gives the police an almost unbounded watching-brief over community affairs and government services. Second, community policing places officers in a position to act as advocates for the public vis-a-vis other government agencies. Already Detroit's mini-station officers have helped communities obtain the quality of municipal services they are entitled to, such as improved street lighting, garbage removal, and repair of streets. Police in other cities have joined communities in getting abandoned buildings razed, truancy programs tightened up, and school facilities opened for teen recreation. Such interventions are bound to grow in community policing, not just because they serve the interests of public safety, but because the police need to be seen as sympathetic government friends.

Despite the documented importance of noncriminal servicing in police work, the role of the police has become more specialized in the western world during the last century.<sup>4</sup> Slowly the police have given up a host of regulatory functions, such as inspecting buildings, checking weights and measures, insuring food supplies, feeding and hosing the indigent, quarantining cattle, and issuing many permits and licenses. They now concentrate more exclusively on investigating and deterring crime. The diversity in today's police work comes from the nature of the calls that individuals make to the police, not from governmental design. Community policing may reverse this trend, as police consciously develop their capacity to assist neighborhoods as mini-centers of government service, all in the name of convenience, crime prevention, and community development.

## **Does Community Policing Unduly Invade Novel Public and Private Realms?**

Community policing legitimates the penetration of communities by forceful enforcement agents of government. The whole purpose of community policing is to bridge the gap between the populace and the law's enforcers. In order to accomplish this, police in Detroit and Houston have called at individual residences offering to make security inspections and asking about neighborhood crime problems. In Singapore and Japan such visits are routinely made to every residence twice a year. Officers fill out a short information form on the inhabitants, their relationships, ownership of a

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motor vehicle, and anything else they think pertinent. So far such records are not collated or centrally stored. They are available to investigators, however, if the need arises. Computer storage would be a comparatively easy step to take, turning innocuous visits into a tool of systematic government surveillance.

Police in Melbourne and Detroit volunteer to serve on executive committees of local institutions that have security problems — hospitals, mental health homes, shelters for battered women, schools, and industries that employ large numbers of commuting women. Police appoint liaison officers to work with troublesome groups, such as gays and ethnics, to avoid confrontations and smooth relations. Police officers in Australia and Denmark have been assigned to high schools where they work in uniform to help with discipline, counsel hard core delinquents, build rapport with students, lecture on crime prevention, and generally show that the police can be friends. Police are lecturing on drug use and abuse in public schools and private settings all over the U.S. Although all these purposes are laudable, the bottom line is that police officers are now being assigned and welcomed to watch, probe, and penetrate social processes and institutions that have previously been out of bounds.

Traditionally the police deterred, arrested, constrained, and warned, and did so almost exclusively in public places. Now they advise, mediate, lecture, organize, participate, cooperate, communicate, reach out, solicit, and encourage, as much in private places as public. In many countries, the police are being viewed explicitly as agents of community development, responsible for molding and shaping social processes that enhance harmony and order. This is a far cry from the minimalist philosophy of creating an environment in which social processes may safely occur. Just as the public's need for social welfare impelled the state into becoming more than a referee in the economic marketplace, so the public's fear of crime may impel the police to play an interventionist role in novel and expanding realms of social life.

So we need to ask ourselves whether police are the most appropriate and competent purveyors of the information they are communicating; whether others could possibly do these jobs better; and, if not, whether current police training is adequate and comprehensive enough for the more expansive tasks police will and are being asked to perform.

Finally, we need to ask about the misuse of community policing as an intelligence gathering device. When the New York police were worried about more racial violence after the Howard Beach incident, Police Commissioner Benjamin Ward asked for more intelligence gathering in the black community. He apparently got more than he asked for, and black leaders accused the

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department of unwarranted surveillance and intimidation. *The New York Times* editorialized about the danger of using community policing to gather political intelligence:

Community affairs and community patrol officers involve themselves in neighborhood activities to foster a constructive relationship and to gain insight — intelligence — about potential trouble. Departmental officials acknowledge that some such officers now show up at neighborhood meetings in plainclothes, unannounced and unidentified. That properly raises questions about the necessity of anonymity and the tainting effect on police-community relations. Where the subject of intelligence gathering is the community's mood rather than the activities of suspected terrorists, police resources are far better devoted to outreach than to spying. Information flows best in an atmosphere of trust.<sup>5</sup>

### **Will Access to Community Policing be Fairly Distributed?**

Community policing is indeed popular with the public, but it may exacerbate a growing dualism in the benefits of policing in modern industrial societies. Police officers report greater difficulty in organizing crime-prevention efforts, eliciting responsible community feedback, and obtaining reliable information among people who are poor and uneducated than people who are affluent and professional. Evaluations of Neighborhood Watch show greater success in ethnically homogeneous, relatively affluent, middle-class communities.<sup>6</sup> This suggests that the vitality of community policing may depend on social structure. Community policing, over a period of years, may become unevenly distributed socially and hence geographically. It could become the mode for the affluent, educated middle-class, while traditional reactive policing remains the norm for the poor and uneducated underclass.

Such a split in policing modalities already exists to some extent due to the rise of private security operations. Private security is characterized, as Stenning and Shearing have shown, by the very qualities community policing hopes to develop — prevention, mobilization, intrusiveness, and substantive due process.<sup>7</sup> Accountability is obtained through contract, as private police do what the client wishes. Operationally, private security is community policing obtained through the marketplace. It is free enterprise's anticipation of community policing. Conversely, community policing can be seen as the public sector's attempt at emulating what private security does for the well-to-do.

As Patrick Murphy has observed, "At its core, community policing is the service model applied to minorities and the poor."<sup>8</sup> However, unless strenuous efforts are made to implant community policing among the poor

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(as in Detroit and Santa Ana), community policing may not equalize the quality of security protection but may reinforce the market's dualism in mode and effectiveness of policing. If social structure affects the implementation of community policing, policing for the rich, under both public and private auspices, may increasingly conform to a preventive, penetrating, "service" model, while policing for the poor will increasingly reflect a reactive, "legalistic," crime control model.

### Endnotes

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3. Robert Dahl, *A Preface to Democratic Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1956).
4. David H. Bayley, *Patterns of Policing* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1985).
5. Editorial, *The New York Times*, 4 July 1987, p. 14.
6. Dennis Rosenbaum, "The Theory and Research Behind Community Watch: Is It a Sound Fear and Crime Reduction Strategy?" (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications 1987).
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## Chapter Eight

### Conclusion

Community policing is the new philosophy of professional law enforcement in the world's industrial democracies. From London to Perth, Detroit to Singapore, police managers are talking about it. It represents progress and innovation. Wherever change is occurring, community policing is the watchword. According to proponents, community policing enhances public security and lowers crime rates, reduces the fear of crime and makes the public feel less helpless, reconnects the police with alienated publics, raises police morale, and makes the police more accountable. Community policing has emerged as the major strategic alternative to traditional practices that are now widely regarded as having failed.

Despite the benefits claimed for community policing, programmatic implementation of it has been very uneven. Although widely, almost universally, said to be important, it means different things to different people — public relations campaigns, shopfront and mini-police stations, rescaled patrol beats, liaison with ethnic groups, Neighborhood Watch, foot patrols, patrol-detective teams, and door-to-door visits by police officers. Community policing on the ground often seems less a program than a set of aspirations wrapped in a slogan. This explains why older officers often remark that community policing is nothing new, that its core ideas of prevention, concern, and cooperation have been practiced all along.

It is probably fair to say that community policing currently is more rhetoric than reality. It is a trendy phrase spread thinly over customary reality. Unless this state of affairs changes, the most likely future for community policing is that it will be remembered as another attempt to put old wine into new bottles. While some small changes may be made, enthusiasm will



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gradually wane. Its failure to live up to its pretensions may deepen cynicism among police and the attentive public about the possibilities for major reform in contemporary policing. Perhaps, unhappily, rhetorical oversell is necessary even for incremental change.

Fortunately this is not the whole story of community policing at the present time. The reality of it is both more promising and more troublesome. In several places in the world, community policing has taken on solid programmatic form. Courageous police executives, bucking tradition, have used it to change the way police responsibilities are carried out. The practice of community policing is developing, and as a result an operational definition of it is emerging. Specifically, when community policing rhetoric has been translated into novel programs, four elements tend to be associated: (1) community-based crime prevention; (2) proactive patrol servicing as opposed to emergency response; (3) public participation in the planning and supervision of police operations; and (4) shifting of command responsibilities to lower rank levels. Such changes can be seen some places in Australia, Canada, Great Britain, and the United States. Policing in Japan has been based entirely on these principles since World War II. And Singapore is in the process of shifting from a traditional reactive police model, derived from the British, to a Japanese-inspired community police model.

It is critically important to emphasize that community policing represents a change in the practices but not in the objectives of policing. Too often the debate about community policing is couched in terms of "hard" versus "soft" policing and crime fighting versus crime prevention. People sympathetic to community policing are as guilty of this as are people who are hostile to it. This overdramatizing of the difference between community policing and what has gone before has several unfortunate effects. It misrepresents the purposes of traditional policing. Creating a visible police presence on the street was designed to prevent crime every bit as much as the newer practices associated with community policing. So too was rapid response to crimes and follow-up by trained detectives. Apprehension and conviction were viewed as contributing to the deterrence of crime. Officers who have devoted lives of committed service to traditional practices justifiably resent the implication that they are not interested in preventing crime, that they are lost in a macho myth of warlike heroism.

Not only does the distortion of the objectives of traditional policing alienate many officers, especially older ones, it fails to enlist them in the diagnosis of the imperfections of past practice. The fact is that experienced officers have known in their bones that customary practices aren't as effective as many have liked to think. Although they have not been encouraged to admit it, experienced officers do not need academic research to convince them that all is not well. Many know that the strength of patrol can vary sharply,

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due, for example, to reassignments to special events or accumulations of vacation and sick leave, without crime going through the roof. They know that driving hell-for-leather to many 911 calls, even crime-in-progress calls, is a waste of time because the perpetrator will long be gone. They know too that investigating car thefts and burglaries is largely a public relations exercise. They check doors and windows for signs of entry even when they know that the chances of catching the culprit are nil. The advocates of community policing must be careful, therefore, not to write off "traditional" officers. Such officers may not be convinced yet that community policing is the solution, but that is not because they are unaware of the shortcomings of past practice. They are as interested in being effective as anyone else.

Community policing also needs to underscore its commitment to public security because that is the unique function policing is supposed to serve and it is the standard by which traditional policing has been judged. Suggesting that community policing changes the objectives of policing makes responsibility for maintaining public security an orphan. Until the public says that police need not be concerned with crime and order, the police cannot in conscience say they are going to be concerned with other things. To do so is also like changing the rules in the middle of the game. If customary policing is judged defective because it is unable to demonstrate it can reduce crime and the fear of crime, doesn't fairness require that community policing too be judged in terms of its impact on the same objectives? The answer is surely yes.

Stressing, therefore, that community policing represents a change in means rather than ends is not only a correct appraisal of what is occurring, but it can reduce the tension between proponents of the new and adherents to the old and encourages both to join together in the task of making communities safer, which is what the public wants the police to do.

Although we have argued that community policing is often formless and lacking in program, we are not saying that it is another program among many. Community policing makes a difference when it is something everyone does, when it represents a philosophy of police service, not when it is carried out by a group of specialists in a designated command. The key program elements of community policing we have identified in practice must not be segregated within police organizations. The Singapore high command insisted during the pilot project in Neighborhood Police Posts that all officers throughout the force be sent to the police academy for a six-week course in community policing. They wanted the entire force to understand what was going on, the rationale for the changes, and the implications for police operations if the scheme succeeded. The development of the Neighborhood Police Posts was seen as being part of a larger reorientation of the attitudes

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of all police toward the public. New deployment, it was recognized, was a waste of effort if a new kind of police officer was not developed for it and supported in it.

Similarly in Houston, Texas, Chief Lee P. Brown and his staff began the implementation of what has become "neighborhood oriented policing" with the publication of a brochure setting forth the values of the department. This was not window-dressing designed to disarm the public. The Houston police high command wanted sworn personnel and the public alike to know what the department was trying to achieve regardless of the specific practices that would be tried, evaluated, and ultimately adopted. Programs, the department was saying, are means to these broad-gauged ends, and all personnel must be committed to them. And in Santa Ana, under Chief Raymond Davis, community policing has provided a philosophical umbrella for the entire police department.

Community policing, then, is a program of values that achieves changes in the behavior of individual officers toward the public as well as adjustments in organizational practice. The problem is that many police departments stop with the approach and never get to the practices. Public talk about values takes the place of effective changes in the operational behavior of personnel. Community policing can work to achieve community crime-prevention, proactive servicing, accountability, and command decentralization only if the departments who practice it are committed to whole-hearted cooperation with the noncriminal population, whoever that public is in terms of race, education, and income.

Finally, whether the specific initiatives identified here as community policing grow or not, the movement has been valuable if it contributes to the growth of constructive self-consciousness in the conduct of policing. Community policing is implemented with the greatest commitment, we have found, when it proceeds from an awareness that previous practices were deficient. If the community policing movement confirms this habit of self-conscious examination, and is willing to apply it to itself, it will have made a lasting contribution to policing. Community policing experience also shows that new attention must be paid to the process of appraising the performance of individual officers, along with the achievement of organizational goals. No formula for policing can succeed if the criteria for the judgment of the performance of individuals who carry it out fails to further institutional objectives. One of the greatest challenges facing community policing is construction of sensitive criteria and procedures for judging the performance of its rank-and-file practitioners.

Thus, both strategically and tactically, community policing is helping to confirm the development of professional self-appraisal in policing. The

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corner has not been turned; self-study remains very threatening. But the benefits are evident. Our hope is that whatever operational practices are ultimately adopted, police of all persuasions — the old and the new, the hard and the soft — will accept the importance of learning from experience. And that they will welcome assistance in making appraisals by outsiders as well. If this occurs, police policies of the future will become truly responsible and the chances of their success will be substantially increased.