

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

It is meaningless to talk only of the responsibility of the police. The police are also citizens and always a part of the community they serve. The citizen, likewise, is part of this same partnership and should try to achieve just and equal law enforcement. Police cannot be held solely responsible for social inequities they did not create. Citizens must recognize the inter-dependent character of police work and mobilize to help back up their police department in the maintenance of community harmony and peace.

Effective police and community relations involves citizens of different backgrounds and recognizes each others point of view. Good communication between the police and all community elements is important. Effective communication, therefore, should also exist between the police and groups known to be antagonistic because of real or imagined wrongs.

The police bear a major responsibility for making needed changes in relationships with the community. They bear this responsibility because they have the duty to protect and secure life and property and in so doing are given the discretion to use force. The police officer requires the full support of the community if there is to be effective law enforcement. The community will support the police as they observe daily practices that are meaningful to the community.

Instances of "police brutality" are less frequent today than in the past, and police officers are increasingly sensitive to demands from all citizens for improved police services. At the same time, there is an increased impatience and anger at police for real and imagined mistreatment of citizens. Also in evidence is a major emphasis from police administration and police organizations

to improve police professionalism. This internal movement among officer organizations has helped in the development of improved standards of conduct which should minimize street occurrences. It is difficult to develop a substantial police-community relations program if there is not a change in attitude on the part of some officers and some citizens.

Despite the conviction of police officers that their major responsibility is one of apprehending law breakers, police provide more immediate and essential services to poor people, black people and people in trouble than most other governmental organizations. A range of services performed by the police, intervention in family quarrels, running an emergency ambulance service, dealing with young people in trouble, intervening in neighborhood situations having the potential for disruption, consumes more time than the apprehension of criminals. The provision of these services forms the basis for an effective police-community relations program.

Attitude Change

If we are to improve police-community relations, police and citizen must see the relationship between cooperation and effective police work. If a police officer views a segment of the community as hostile, this may cause the officer to use unnecessary force when he interprets a situation as threatening. If some citizens assume that all officers are biased and harbor prejudiced attitudes, the resulting police-community tensions could have explosive consequences. Both officer and citizen must be made aware that changes in perception and attitude are necessary if we are to move as a total community in the search for problem solutions.

Community Service

Increased community support begins with improved communications and a minimizing of confrontations viewed as abrasive by black and other minority group representatives. It seems that one way to start is to redefine the police role. The strongest way to do this is to support professional norms of conduct on the part of police officers. Since the majority of an officer's time is spent in providing service to the public, some recognition should be given to the important job that police perform in assisting citizens who lack resources or sufficient influence to obtain needed help. Officers also have to see the connection between good community relations and greater effectiveness in crime control.

Police-Citizen Relationships

All of us have grown up in a society that discriminates against minority groups. Since police agencies have little control over the early experiences and social contacts of the men who become officers, it is the department, then, that must take primary responsibility for the re-education and direction of their officers. The strong emphasis on improved and higher levels of education is an absolute must, coupled with community-based programs that reinforce relationships with the citizen. In this regard, it is important to reward superiors who exemplify a commitment to positive police-community relations.

The Department must be willing to evaluate a number of approaches designed to improve relationships with the community. Police must know community attitudes and determine what practices offend community groups and heighten tensions. They must be willing to establish communication with hostile elements within the community. They must be willing to expand and professionalize their Youth Bureau. They must develop a citizen participation program that is in

touch with the pulse of the community. They must be willing to try new ideas in the area of police-community relations and reward those participants who perform well and achieve results.

Police as Advocates

Police must begin to evidence a major advocacy role for the disadvantaged and the oppressed. At the precinct level, citizen groups must see policemen as their friends and assistants in getting proper services into the community. It then becomes the officer's role to enforce laws that are on the books relating to the amenities in a neighborhood. For example, the police, during regular performance of duty, could become a visible force in correcting health and sanitary code violations, violations of the building code, and combating unscrupulous practices by storekeepers and others who take advantage of poor people. In those cases where the Police Department currently lacks enforcement jurisdiction, the violations could be recorded by the officer and forwarded to the appropriate City department for priority correction or investigation.

(Exhibit H)

Most important is the willingness of senior command to establish norms of conduct that reward fair and impartial treatment and enforce sanctions against attitudes, feelings and behavior that are most repugnant to members of the minority community.

Police-Citizen Programs

The fact that officers perform a variety of community services unrelated to the apprehension of criminals will serve as the basis for improved police-community relations. Increased professionalization of officers, increased education and reward by superiors to officers who display good relations with the community and innovative new techniques are the starting points for a

comprehensive program. The recent announcement by Police Commissioner Murphy of a specialized community relations program in the Tenth Precinct is an example of an innovative technique that has promising potential for reducing crime in that neighborhood and improving relationships between citizen and police. Patrolmen will be assigned specific areas to walk a beat. This will permit their becoming acquainted with the neighborhood residents who, in turn, will get to know the policemen on a more personal basis.

In 1968, the Police Committee of the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce spearheaded a comprehensive police recruiting effort that materially improved the number and quality of applicants. The Chamber enlisted broad community support and advertising contributions that substantially increased the number of black applicants and resulted in the highest percentage of black appointees in the history of the Detroit Police Department. The Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce and its Police Committee is actively pursuing programs of a similar nature that will improve relations between police and community. (Exhibit G)

For a number of years the Round Table of Christians and Jews has been in the vanguard of establishing precinct-police-citizen groups to open communication at the precinct level and improve law enforcement in the local community.

On Detroit's east side, in the Seventh Precinct, a BOUY-7 program (Business United with Officers and Youth) that enlists the support of community leadership and police has gone a long way in reducing tensions and minimizing certain types of crimes. The active participation of grass roots leadership, police officers, businessmen and other community residents has instilled a new spirit in police-citizen cooperation. Two-way communication has reduced the occurrence of abrasive police-citizen confrontations. Mutual respect between citizen and officer has begun to replace suspicion and apprehension. Neighborhood

residents have commented that the effective operation of this precinct program has created a new sense of community.

The Urban League, during the past year, has attempted to organize concerned citizens in an effort to establish closer ties and improved relationships with police representatives.

The Commission on Community Relations, an agency of Detroit government, has been working for many years to improve police attitudes and establish effective links between police representatives and the community in which they work.

The Michigan Civil Rights Commission has suggested a number of recommendations, based upon their complaint investigations, that would establish bridges of communication between the minority community and the Police Department. Central to their findings is the recommendation that community relations directives must be articulated by senior command and enforced at the precinct level of operation. Great emphasis is placed on the commitment of senior command to changes in policies that promote professional police conduct and services to the community. Rewarding positive officer performance and accomplishments have important impact on attitude formation and conduct of the individual patrolman.

The Detroit Police Department has established a PAYS (Police and Youth in Sports) program that promotes good relationships between policemen and the youth in our city. Based upon involvement in athletics and sports events, this program has evidenced successful results with minority group youth.

Existing programs to promote communication and understanding between police officers and citizens should be evaluated, and their successful components expanded and implemented in all precincts. These would include programs and other efforts by public and private groups desirous of improving relationships between the Police Department and the community. In addition, a number of innovative and creative programs have been adopted in other American cities. These cities should be contacted and the results achieved evaluated for possible application in the Detroit area.

The increasing demand for "citizen involvement" by civic and government leaders has brought into existence two noteworthy programs: The Civilian Patrols and the KUY Emergency Radio. Both programs utilize the citizens band (CB) two-way radio for the sending and receiving of emergency broadcasts.

In the 5th, 7th, 12th and 15th Police Precincts, groups of civilians approved by the local Precinct Inspector patrol the streets nightly, watching for suspicious vehicles, possible burglaries, accidents, etc., which are reported to a base monitor who then notifies police.

Under this program civilian patrol units take no action other than to watch and report. Four major groups on Detroit's east side (Riverside Patrol, Kercheval Patrol, Concerned 100 and C.R.F.W.- Civilian Radio Emergency Watch) may have as many as 200 patrol units on the street on any given evening; all united by CB radio. Similar civilian units function on Detroit's west side.

The KUY Program, on the other hand, is funded by General Motors and works under the jurisdiction of the Department of Streets and Traffic, City of Detroit. With their main transmission facility in the Water Board Building, and booster stations around the city, they are in direct radio contact with any licensed CB radio in the metropolitan Detroit and suburban area. To date,

their concern is mainly with the reporting of auto accidents and traffic hazards, but they will take requests for police aid from radio operators throughout their coverage area.

We recommend that the Police Department and the Department of Streets and Traffic jointly study these programs with a view toward coordinating the two efforts and establishing guidelines for operation and possible licensing under jurisdiction of Streets and Traffic.

Improving Police-Community Relations: Police Responsibility

Improving police-community relations must become the goal for every member of the police force. It demands a willingness to change attitudes and behavior. It means increased education and heightened awareness so that misunderstandings and confrontations can be avoided. It requires a deep and continued involvement in the problems and experiences that affect citizens most. Improved police-community relations depend upon the willingness of an officer to become involved in community affairs. It requires program attention to develop citizen participation and positive relationships between neighborhood resident and police representative.

Citizen-Officer Awards

The Detroit Police Department currently awards the Medal of Valor when an officer risks his life performing exceptionally hazardous duty. Departmental Citations recognize officer performance requiring courage and bravery that saves a life, prevents a serious crime or results in the apprehension of individuals who have committed serious crimes. The Department now recognizes citizen contributions to law enforcement.

Both police officer and citizen should be appropriately rewarded for actions that support and encourage cooperation and understanding between the Department and the community. Efforts that improve police-community relations should be highlighted and publicly acknowledged.

An awards program that spotlights sound community relations can encourage participation in such activities by police and citizen. Community relations awards should become a permanent part of an officer's personnel file.

Citations and plaques should be given to officers and citizens selected for their outstanding contribution to police-community relations. Officer attitude and performance that is helpful to persons in the neighborhood, and recognized as outstanding by them, should be formally acknowledged by the Police Commissioner and community. It is important that the award presentation be public and afforded prestige and formality. Mass media should be invited, except in situations where the awardee requests privacy.

Establish an awards program for police and citizen efforts that improve police-community relations. Citations and plaques should be used by the Commissioner in recognizing officer and citizen actions that improve relationships between police and community.
(Implemented.)

Improving Police-Community Relations: Mass Media

Dramatizing and advertising sound community relations programs is a responsibility of mass media. Too much space in our newspaper, radio and television programming is devoted to the negative and sensational side of the news. Those instances that exhibit a more humane and improved relationship between conflicting groups should be dramatized.

Mass media initiative in publicizing positive accomplishments in police-community relations should be acknowledged when it occurs, and more of it encouraged.

The police-community relations award to citizens and policemen given by one of the major newspapers should be widely publicized and supported by the total community.

Greater recognition and appreciation should be given to officers who handle difficult situations by "keeping their cool." Commendations and letters of recognition should be sent by the Police Commissioner or Superintendent to officers who do outstanding jobs in the community relations area.
(Implemented.)

Public recognition should be given to media representatives for programming that clarifies community issues and improves understanding between conflicting groups.

Lighting

A "Light Up The Night" campaign in Detroit might have results similar to those tried in other cities. Immediately following an extensive street lighting campaign in a high crime area, one major city reported a 71 percent drop in crimes. Over a period of the next two years, the neighborhood experienced a 49 percent decline in crimes of violence and a 30 percent drop in juvenile offenses.

Apartment buildings, sidewalks, parking areas, can be illuminated at a very reasonable cost to cut down on the possibility of using the dark for criminal activity. One major city reports block club organizations installing special night lights at a very reasonable cost to the home owner. Front and