

## TEAM CIVIC JUSTICE POLICY 1976

Policy Paper approved at 16th June 1976 Policy Meeting.

### Preamble

This is the first TEAM policy statement dealing specifically with the maintenance of civic order. It appears at a time of considerable public concern about criminal activity and the administration of justice. Whilst public concern is still mounting, the rate of increase of criminal activity has levelled off in recent months with actual reductions in some areas. This pattern is by no means peculiar to Vancouver but it is tempting to relate it to the changes and improvements introduced by a TEAM council in concert with other levels of government.

Significant changes in policing began with the appointment of a new Chief Constable early in 1974. An increased emphasis on police/community cooperation followed, leading to better public acceptance of the police. 120 police officers, many of them women, are being added to the force, all trained at the new B.C. Police College. A major reconstruction of police headquarters on Main Street is under way and the communication centre (911) is operational. Through the B.C. Police Act, new and much improved procedures have been established for dealing with citizens' complaints. With the active participation of the Vancouver police, the provincial government has set up the Coordinated Law Enforcement Unit (C.L.E.U.) in order to fight organised crime.

Perhaps the most interesting and significant innovation is the team policing concept now being tested in southeast Vancouver. Six teams of about 30 officers are each responsible for a defined area on a 24 hour basis. The teams work closely with other social services in their areas; they are able to concentrate on preventive work and early identification of problems; they provide a more visible presence: their faces as well as their uniforms become familiar to the people they serve.

The policy proposals which follow arise out of six basic themes:

- 1) Responsibility of each individual for his own behaviour and for the well-being of his community.
- 2) The neighbourhood as a focus for prevention and early detection of crime through an enhanced sense of community.
- 3) Cooperation between all levels of government (the proposals recognise that a civic government with clear policy guidelines can influence areas well beyond its own strict mandate).
- 4) Preservation of balance and objectivity in an area plagued with extremes of feeling and opinion.
- 5) Maintenance of a humane attitude towards all those involved (both the criminal and his victim).
- 6) Openness to innovation, recognizing that existing methods are inadequate.

Purpose: To ensure that every Vancouver citizen enjoys security of his person and property whilst living in a peaceful and safe community.

Objective #1 To encourage every citizen to abide by the law.

- Methods:
- a) Education: through TV and other media as well as through the schools. Inculcation of basic values; respect for other people and their property.
  - b) Opportunities for all young people to experience success and to develop self esteem; attack on untreated learning disabilities.
  - c) Support of the family: preparation for parenthood; support for single parents; day care programmes; adequate housing; counselling available where necessary.
  - d) A supportive community: healthy neighbourhood spirit; informal cooperative networks of people.
  - e) Extension of recreational programmes.
  - f) Improved employment opportunities for young people.
  - g) The constant revision of statutes to ensure that laws are enforceable and respected.

Objective #2 To reduce opportunities for violation of the law.

- a) Education concerning security of person and property: self defence for women; how to make your house a less attractive target.
- b) Improved building design, 'defensible space': particularly applicable to multiple dwellings.
- c) Marking of property: 'project identification' extended city-wide.
- d) 'Neighbourhood watch' and 'safe haven' programmes.
- e) Counter-truancy programmes.
- f) Extension of team policing concept of proven effective: greater visibility of police 'on the beat'.
- g) Improved surveillance of organised criminals by C.L.E.U.

Objective #3

To ensure that more violators of the law are apprehended.

Methods:

- a) Provision of adequate numbers of properly trained and equipped police.
- b) Continued support of the Coordinated Law Enforcement Unit (C.L.E.U.).
- c) Encourage citizen responsibility for the reporting of crime.

Objective #4

To ensure that the violator, once apprehended, is dealt with justly, promptly and effectively and that the public is protected.

- a) Alternatives to court proceedings (diversion) should be more widely employed.
- b) Critical examination of the court system in order to improve the efficiency of its operation.
- c) Provision of a wider range of sentencing options: more severe penalties for crimes of violence; reduced use of prison for non-violent offenders; restitution.
- d) Closer attention to the human rights of prisoners.
- e) Improved supervision of parolees and probationers.
- f) More extensive use of successful post-release programmes involving volunteers from the community.

Objective #5

To ensure that the victim of crime receives fair compensation.

Methods:

- a) Provincial fund.
- b) Restitution programmes, both to individual victims and to the community as victim.
- c) Encouragement of civil cases.

Objective #6

To ensure that juvenile violators of the law receive proper care and treatment but at the same time face the natural consequences of their behaviour.

Methods:

- a) Revision of the Juvenile Delinquency Act and other relevant statutes so that juvenile offenders and their parents can be held accountable by means of appropriate penalties.
- b) Provision of 'Accountability Board' in at least one neighbourhood as a pilot project: a court approved citizen panel which determines the amount, form and follow-up of restitution.

Objective #6 - methods.....

- c) Greater emphasis on 'wilderness' type programmes which present young offenders with a significant physical and mental challenge.
  - d) Provision of a secure setting for those young offenders who are incorrigibly violent. Such a setting might ideally be placed on an island and thus be 'without bars'.
  - e) Where serious violations of the law by juveniles occur, the same methods of investigation as used for adult offenders should be allowed.
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