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# Chaos or Reason

COMMUNITY SAFETY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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# CRIME PREVENTION BETWEEN CHAOS AND REASON

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## **Excerpts from the Australian Justice Office Report “Creating a Safer Community Crime Prevention and Community Safety Into the 21st century”, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.**

Australia experiences unacceptable levels of crime. Traditional policing methods alone are unable substantially to reduce crime rates. Although police and other law enforcement bodies must continue to have a strong and effective capacity to investigate crimes and prosecute offenders, more must be done to prevent crime from occurring (p.vii).

There is a clear need to reorient our crime prevention efforts to address the causes of crime and to recognise that crime prevention is fundamentally a community responsibility. Attempts to reduce the costs of crime need to be more widely targeted than at present. While it is important to improve the capabilities of our law enforcement agencies, it is also important to seek ways of dealing more effectively with crime outside of the criminal justice system. This is best done by empowering institutions closer to the source of the problem in the community to play a more active part. It is also important that economic and social policies be developed and implemented with an eye to their potential to influence the conditions which might reduce criminal opportunities and behaviour.

Statistics on crime in Australia are not sufficiently comprehensive and accurate to allow a precise assessment of crime rates. Nevertheless, the available data indicate unacceptable high rates of property and violent crime. In economic terms, white collar crime imposes the greatest costs on the community. For a number of reasons, the criminal justice system is ill-equipped to deal with much of this crime. A substantial amount of crime is either not reported to or detected by police. Often, the criminal justice system is unable to deal with the circumstances which give rise to much crime. A new approach is needed which mobilises the wider community, from individual to government level, in efforts to address the causes of crime and to take measures to prevent crime.

As it approaches the end of the twentieth century, Australia is at cross-roads i its national crime prevention effort. Like many other industrialised and industrialising countries, Australia experiences unacceptable levels of crime. We spend more than \$4 billion each year on the criminal justice system across the nation. But do we get value for money? At this cross-roads, governments could choose to re-allocate their budget priorities and spend even more money on law enforcement. Or, they could look for new ways of tackling the crime problem. This paper opts for the latter route. It contends that, without a new approach to crime prevention and community safety, increased spending would do little more than exacerbate the frustration currently felt by our law enforcement agencies, and do little to reduce the fear of crime existing in many sections of our community. Australian police services themselves acknowledge that traditional policing methods alone cannot succeed in substantially reducing crime rates. In budgetary terms, we may have already reached the point of diminishing returns.

Many professionals, police officers, government officials and academics, who deal with social policy issues, have identified both the need for a new approach and the various basic elements of that approach. But their insights have yet to find expression in a comprehensive and coherent statement of law enforcement policy. It is intended that this paper should promote the development of such a statement.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The role of a key-note speaker is not an easy one. This is because the proper function of a key-note address is to lay the ground work, to set the tone for the conference, to identify the major issues and to provide interesting, exciting and challenging points for further discussion. Another function is to set the proper agenda for group and workshop debates, to get the debates moving on the right track, in the right direction, and to settle or dispose of some of the distracting issues that might hinder, protract, or side-track fruitful exchanges and meaningful discussions.

This is, of course, an awesome responsibility and a rather daunting task. It is a great challenge that I accept with sincere humbleness and modesty. To fulfil some of the functions I outlines, I would propose at the outset to state in rather unambiguous terms some of the basic points I will be covering in my paper. A good number of these points might appear both contentious and controversial. But only by debating them could we hope that the conference will achieve its enunciated objectives.

The following points are among the ones I will be dealing with in my presentation:

- 1) Crime prevention is a very important and very timely topic but it is also a very difficult, complex and thorny issue. Objective, scholarly and dispassionate debates and exchanges on this topic are therefore necessary and are likely to yield good returns in the long run. In other words, they constitute a sound investment of time, effort and funds.
  - 2) It seems that current crime prevention policies and strategies are not working. There is, therefore, an urgent need for altering these policies and strategies, for trying not necessarily new but certainly different approaches.
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- 3) In the emotional and highly politicised area of crime prevention, there is a pressing need to separate the facts from the rhetoric, to avoid chaos and to listen to reason; as well as a need to distinguish between utopian and realistic crime prevention strategies.
- 4) In an area where crime news is widely publicised and highly sensationalised, there is a desperate need to take a realistic view of crime and to change the popular attitude to it. It is necessary, therefore, to recognise and acknowledge the fact that many of the factors that affect crime rates are very difficult or impossible to change and that many crime, including some that evoke great anxiety and fear, are not easily preventable.
- 5) It would also be useful to acknowledge that it is more feasible (and less costly) to change people's perceptions (or rather misconceptions) about crime and their attitudes to crime than to change the crime situation itself.
- 6) It is useful, as well, to realize that a good number of crimes could be prevented not by changing people's biological or psychological make-up, but simply by changing their attitudes. A key principle that should guide crime prevention efforts is that changing attitudes is easier than changing people, that changing situations and environments is easier than changing social and economic structures.
- 7) It is extremely important to recognise that the criminal justice system is not a system of prevention but of intervention. We would be asking too much from our police forces, in fact we would be doing them a disservice, to require them or to expect them to become crime prevention agents.
- 8) In recent years there has been a growing tendency to criminalise social problems of various kinds, to dump them in the lap of the criminal justice system and then to complain that the situation is not getting any better. Not only is criminalisation the wrong answer to these problems, but it also diverts attention from what needs to be done to prevent or to reduce the incidence of the problematic behaviour in question.
- 9) Although the terms "crime prevention" and "crime reduction" are usually used interchangeably as if they are synonymous, a fine distinction could be made between them. Crime prevention is a difficult and elusive task. Crime reduction, on the other hand, that is a reduction in official crime rates could be achieved in many ways, notable by raising the threshold of tolerance to certain minor offences, as well as by decriminalising and depenalising others.
- 10) It is important to recognise that social justice, social equality, etc. are worthwhile goals that should be actively and diligently pursued, not because of their potentially crime preventing effects, but because they are desirable, even necessary, goals to achieve a just, fair, peaceful and harmonious society.

### **Crime Prevention : A Hot Policy Issue**

Having outlined these ten key principles, or these ten golden rules of crime prevention, let me now move to explaining them in some more detail.

Crime prevention is, without doubt, a very important and timely topic. Many countries, including Australia, have established crime prevention councils. Few years ago, the United Nations changed the name of its branch in Vienna to "The Crime Prevention Branch" and the advisory committee that advises the United Nations on crime matters is now called "The Crime Prevention Committee". The United Nations Congress, held once every five years, has crime prevention in its title. The concept of crime prevention is surely gaining momentum. And yet crime prevention is not a new theme and is neither fad nor a fashion. In fact, it is a very old subject. In his eloquent criticism of retributive punishment, Plato, the illustrious Greek philosopher, insisted that prevention should be the ultimate aim of any measure taken against the wrong-doer. Following Plato, thousands of philosophers, reformers and social scientists have all reiterated that crime prevention should be the primary goal of an enlightened crime policy. Almost every textbook in criminology published in the late 19th or early 20th century ended with at least one chapter on crime prevention. Prevention was generally regarded as the uppermost goal to which criminological knowledge would naturally lead.

In the past few years, crime prevention has emerged as a major policy issue. Unfortunately, more often than not, debates on the issue fail to attain a high scholarly level, and in many countries, such as Canada, have been dominated by political rhetoric, ideological and emotional arguments, and have rarely transcended the specific demands of special interest groups.

### **Are Traditional Crime Prevention Policies Working?**

Be this as it may, the fact that we are meeting here today, just a few years away from the 21st century, to talk about crime

prevention, together with the reality that public concern about crime is rising and that demands that something be done about it are growing louder and louder every day, lead to only one conclusion: present crime prevention policies have not been successful, they are not achieving their goal. Something (or many things) currently being done are not right, are not effective, are not yielding the anticipated results.

I do not think you need an expert coming all the way from Europe and Canada to tell you what you already must know, that what we are doing at present and what we have been doing in the past is, to put it rather bluntly, not working. But this is not a reason for despair. It simply means that we have to try harder to know why these crime prevention policies and strategies are failing and what alternative approaches are likely to be more successful. In other words, this is the time to evaluate and re-evaluate what is being done, to take stock, to try to do things differently and to do them better. The time has come to confront the problem head on, to face it squarely, to set aside the rhetoric, the illusions, the dreams, and to base our new approach on some hard solid facts.

This is usually an easy thing to say but a hard thing to do because, for reasons that are beyond the scope of this paper, the response to crime seems to be quite different from the response to other areas of public concern. Response to crime is usually emotional not rational, and this largely explains why crime prevention is one of the areas of public policy where reason fails and chaos prevails. Generally, when people have been trying for some time to change a situation that need to be changed, or to solve a problem that needs to be solved, but to no avail, they will stop to think. They will ask themselves: maybe we are not doing the right thing, maybe this approach is not the best approach, maybe we should be doing things differently. This, needless to say is the only rational way of assessing the effectiveness of any given policy.

Unfortunately, when it comes to the emotional and extremely complex problem of crime and crime prevention, these questions are not asked. There never seems to be any soul searching or any healthy scepticism. Although complaints about crime are not of recent origin, and although efforts to curb, control, reduce or prevent crime are centuries old, there hardly seems to be any real questioning of the basic, conventional, traditional approach to crime. We continue to deal with a dynamic and ever changing phenomenon in the same old way, to advocate more of the same recipes and the same remedies: more police, more prisons, more punishment. Despite persistent calls for new initiatives, new crime prevention strategies, punishment remains the corner stone of crime prevention policy. And despite historical and empirical evidence casting serious doubt on its supposed effectiveness, the faith in general deterrence, special deterrence, vicarious deterrence remains largely unshaken.

It is not surprising that in many western countries the number of police officer, of prison inmates and of prison sentences has reached record highs without any tangible improvement in the crime situation or in crime rates. What is surprising is that this sad and costly outcome does not seem to dampen the enthusiasm or lessen the demands for more of the same: tougher sentences, more penitentiaries, more incarceration! An analogy with medicine might be in order. If the prescribed drug is not the right one for illness the physician is trying to treat, increasing the dose will neither cure the sickness nor make the patient better. By the same token, if punishment is not an effective means of crime prevention, increasing its dose will not make crime disappear. And yet this is exactly what is being advocated by many as the solution to the chronic crime problem. If one is to transpose what the honourable Antonio Lamer, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, said some years ago (1978), in reference to the criminal law to the area of crime prevention policy, one may say that it "...is unique in one very significant way: legitimacy is measured by how closely what we do today corresponds to what we did in the past. If such thinking dominated other areas of public policy, we would still be training our soldiers to dig trenches, we would still be debating whether smallpox vaccinations are an appropriate public health measure and the tractor would be viewed as a novel and probably dangerous innovation" (p.129). Justice Lamer added that "the broad consensus and naive optimism of the nineteenth century has been a disastrous foundation for our approach to the problems of criminality today" (ibid).

If one is to describe the present state in less diplomatic terms than those used by Chief Justice Lamer, one could say that our approach to crime prevention in this age of science and technology amounts to the continued use of the recipes of witch doctors in an age of modern space medicine.

One need not be a social scientist to realize the error of continuing to try to prevent crime using the same obsolete and ineffective recipes of past centuries as if there has never been a science of criminology. What is rather shocking about current policies is the desperate attempt to appease an alarmed and increasingly punitive public rather than to seek or heed expert advice, to give in the demands of interest and pressure groups rather than listen to the voice of reason. The current chaotic situation in which we find ourselves is a direct outcome of the triumph of ideology over reason, of political expediency over science.

Another major error in this field was to adopt the now popular view that crime prevention is a police task, a police duty. Police forces were done disservice when the dubious mission of crime prevention was added to their original functions of keeping and maintaining order and enforcing the law. Not only were they totally un-equipped to deal with this new task but it was completely out of their reach and way beyond their means. Any serious debate on crime prevention should use as its starting point the realisation that the crime one subscribes to, whether we believe the causes of crime to be biological,

psychological, social, economic or cultural; whether we believe in the bad seed or the unhealthy environment, in nature or in nurture; whether we believe that the causes lie in the individual or in society, dealing with these causes, which most would accept as the most effective way of curbing crime, is not and cannot be a police function. Even if we were able to put a policeman or policewoman at every street corner for 24 hours a day, we will not prevent most crimes: violence in the home, sex crimes, white collar crimes, to mention but a few.

At the risk of repeating the obvious, let me remind you that crime is a social problem. Like other social problems, it can only be solved or improved by far-reaching policies that are capable of attaining its deep-rooted social causes. The drug problem is a good case in point because it amply illustrates the utter failure, the futility of the current approach and highlights the urgent need for a different one. The record number of drug enforcement officers and the record number of drug offenders in American prisons are the living proof that present policies have neither solved the drug problem nor improved the drug situation. The Chinese experience is even a more telling one because there have been mass executions of drug offenders for many years. The last that came to my attention were those reported by the press on June 27th of this year when 49 persons were executed in a single weekend in the Southern province of Yunnan alone! If punishment, in this instance capital punishment, is an effective means of solving the problem or preventing the undesirable behaviour in question, how is it, then, that after years and years of mass executions there are still so many drug offenders to kill?

Before moving from this rather lengthy introduction to the more substantive part of my paper let me explain briefly what I see as the primary purpose of my presentation. My primary aim will be to try to inject a note of realism in the usually idealistic, sometime utopian views on crime prevention, a note of healthy scepticism in the grossly optimistic recitations of what could and should be done to prevent crime. I will try to shift the debate from an emotional to a dispassionate level, from an ideological to a scholarly and hopefully objective level.

You certainly will hear a lot from other speakers about primary, secondary and tertiary crime prevention, about direct and indirect prevention, social prevention, community prevention, situational prevention, crime prevention through environmental design, defensible space, goal - or problem-oriented policing, etc., etc. You will be hearing about concrete programs, projects and pilot projects, about target hardening, about neighbourhood watch, block parents, operation identification, and many others. I will refrain from discussing any of this, not only to avoid duplication and repetition, but also because my aim is much more modest. I have to confess at the outset that I have no miraculous recipes to offer, no magic bullets. There is no fast relief in my medical chest. What I would like to do, in the time that remains, is to throw at you some different, I dare not say new, ideas about the general theme of this conference, and to share with you some of what I believe are the reasons why more and more people are feeling insecure and why current crime prevention policies are not working. The tone of my presentation may, at times, sound negative, but this is both deliberate and natural for someone who is assuming the role of a policy critic.

## **CRIME: A REALISTIC VIEW**

The mounting attention being paid to the issues of public safety and crime prevention is, no doubt, a direct consequence of the rising concern about crime and the ever-growing public demands that something be done about it. The pressure that is increasingly being put on national and local politicians, on policy-makers and on the criminal justice system to address the issue of crime prevention requires a better understanding of the nature and origin of public concern about crime. Addressing this concern, a preferable concept to the vague concept of fear of crime, is probably a more feasible and more realistic task than that of preventing crime. Because if it turns out that the so-called crime problem is above all a problem of perception, a misperception, then changing this misperception might be easier than changing the crime situation itself. Addressing public concerns about crime should be a major preoccupation of public policy because the higher the expectations about crime prevention are, the greater will be the disappointment and the ensuing disillusionment when they are not met, and because the more unrealistic the hopes are, the greater will be the frustration when these hopes are not realised.

Since perceptions of the state of crime are not based on the real incidence of crime or how prevalent crime is, and since fear of crime has little to do with the objective risks of victimisation, it is possible to change those perceptions and to reduce the fear without having to bring about any real change in crime rates. In other words, it is much more important and far easier to change people's impressions and beliefs about crime than to change the crime situation itself. Consequently, the question of how public perceptions are formed and how they can be changed becomes more relevant than the eternal question "what causes crime?" or even the more popular question "how to prevent crime?"

The dramatisation of crime by the mass media in Australia and the ensuing public reaction are well described by John Walker (1991) in No. 28 of Trends and Issues published by the Australian Institute of Criminology in Canberra. He writes: The reactions of the community, media and government also shape crime trends, mainly through affecting perceptions about crime statistics. For example, media dramatisation of high profile violent crimes and increased media attention given to violent crime generally leads to a community perception that violent crime is "out of control". This perception lowers the threshold of sensitivity to violence so that there is a greater likelihood of the public reporting minor violent crimes that might previously have gone unreported (for example physical bullying; a punch-up at the local pub). In addition, in response to

these community concerns, police may be more likely to deal with borderline cases as serious assault rather than minor assault, or may charge with minor assault rather than proceed with a discretionary warning. In this way, feedback processes amplify real crime trends through community and police reactions. The community calls for stronger measures to be taken. Courts hand out longer sentences, and so on (p.3).

The discrepancy between the objective state of crime and public beliefs about crime is well documented. In his paper "Fear of Crime: Myth and Reality", Tony Dittenhoffer (1990) quotes the final declaration of the European and North-American Conference on Urban Safety and Crime Prevention (held in October of 1989) which stated:

Fear of crime is a problem for those living in cities, particularly women and the elderly. It is a serious problem. However, in many cases, it is out of proportion with actual crime rates.

One Canadian study which is widely cited to illustrate the perceptual problem I am referring to is the one commissioned by the Criminal Law Review and conducted by Doob and Roberts in 1982. More than 200 adult Canadians were asked a series of questions about the extent of violent crime, and sentencing and conditional release practices in Canada. The results indicated that, generally, Canadians vastly over-estimate the proportion of crime which involves violence, believe murders have increased since Parliament abolished the death penalty (when they have in fact declined), and think people released on parole are far more likely than in fact they are to commit violent crimes soon after release.

In commenting the findings, the Government of Canada document "The Criminal Law in Canadian Society" (1992) states:

In short, the image Canadians have of crime is a violent one - far more violent than statistics indicate is the case. In fact, only six to eight percent of all reported crime is violent. The "average" Canadian believes that the situation is seven times as serious, that more than half of all crime is violent. Two-thirds of Canadians believe murders have increased since 1976, when in fact they have declined, whether measured in terms of numbers of incidents, number of victims, or rates. Four in five Canadians believe many inmates commit crimes of violence shortly after release on parole, with the average response overestimating the actual situation by a factor of five. Similarly, the average response indicated that people believe the courts send far fewer convicted persons to prison than they in fact do, especially for violent crimes such as robbery (pp.16-17).

Evidence from that study, and from others, suggests that when widely held perceptions are checked against objective, or statistical reference points, they prove to be, more often than not, wrong. The policy implications of this are clear. It means that everything that gives, or is likely to give, the impression that the crime situation is bad, is becoming worse, or is getting out of hand, can only contribute to the already widespread misperceptions about crime. Frequently used metaphors, such as "declaring war on crime" are bound to foster or reinforce the impression of a state of siege, of desperate and ever deteriorating conditions where criminals are gaining the upper hand. It goes without saying that when people are constantly bombarded with messages telling them that they live in an unsafe society, they will become convinced that crime is rampant and that their risks of being victimised are quite high.

No surprise then that the number of citizens who admit feeling unsafe is steadily rising. A survey in Adelaide in 1985 found that 35 percent of people in that city felt unsafe walking along at night in their neighbourhood (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1986). When a similar question was asked only three years later, 42 percent of Adelaide citizens said they felt unsafe in the streets at night (Frank Small & Associates Pty Ltd. 1988 - both studies quoted after John Walker, 1991).

Even actions, motivated by the best of intentions, namely to heighten awareness of certain types of victimisation or sensitise us to the plight of crime victims, can contribute to aggravating the problem. In Canada, even government documents, such as the one written by Linda MacLeod and published by the Ministry of the Secretary of State under the title "The City for Women: No Safe Place" 1989), do not convey to the public, in this instance to women, a reassuring message. The media coverage such documents get and the publicity they receive are bound to heighten an already high level of anxiety about crime and lingering fear of victimisation. The same may be said of widely publicised estimates that seem to take on a life of their own and quickly assume the status of facts. Among the most cited is the one about a wife in ten being battered or that one in four females is a victim of sexual abuse, to say nothing about the widely exaggerated estimates of elderly abuse. As you can imagine, the lay person, the ordinary citizen, the uninitiated member of the public does not realize that these are just estimates, and like all estimates are subject to error, even serious error. To them, the difference between an estimate and an actual statistic is blurred and the estimate soon becomes a reality!

The realisation that the problem of crime in Australia, as in Canada, is, above all, a problem of perception raises the important question of what type of crime information needs to be disseminated and how best this could be done. How should crime be portrayed? Should we project a reassuring image or a fear-generating and anxiety-provoking one? Should we convey a message of safety and foster a sense of security or do we want to draw a bleak picture of the crime situation? And if it is true that the fear of crime affects or impairs the quality of life then we should ask whether the portrayal of crime should be done in a manner that is likely to promote or reduce fear.

To defend the disproportionate coverage they give to crime news, those in the media invariably invoke the public's sacred right to know. The selective and highly sensationalised reporting they practise has little to do with the public's need for objective, across the board information. One might also ask: what is the informational value of a person in Australia or in Canada of watching on their TV screen the gruesome details of a shootout in Texas, a multiple homicide in a Chicago restaurant, or a cannibalism case in Milwaukee or Moscow? What purpose, other than morbid curiosity, could be satisfied by such unnecessary information? And if the idea of disseminating statistical information about crime is to help the citizen form a realistic idea about his/her chances of becoming a victim of a certain type of crime, then one has to conclude that popular means of conveying the figures, such as the infamous crime clock, are totally devoid of any informational value because there are enormous variations in the frequency of any given crime between regions, states, cities, and between areas within the city, and because the members of the general population are not equally vulnerable or equally exposed to any given type of victimisation and have, therefore, extremely different chances of becoming victims.

If citizens' views about crime are highly inaccurate and if their perceptions of the crime situation do not withstand an objective crime test, the question is how do members of the general public form their views about crime and why is it that they believe that the crime situation is much worse than it really is. Unfortunately, for you who have to deal with crime, there are so many groups in society that are doing their best to convince Australians that the crime situation is really bad.

### **The Media**

Because violent victimisation is a relatively rare phenomenon, perceptions of, and opinions about, crime are not usually based on actual experiences but on secondary sources of information. Since the mass media play a major role in the construction of the crime picture one might wonder whether the sensationalisation of crime by the media is responsible for the distorted perceptions the general public seems to have about the state of crime.

Few decades ago, before the advent of radio and television, the knowledge of any given crime was usually confined to the locality where the crime has been committed. Nowadays, thanks to the modern techniques of mass communication, crime news travels wide and fast and seems to cater to a public craving for information about crime. The print and electronic media daily give detailed accounts of gruesome crimes and reserve prominent space and prime time for crime news. Hardly a day passes without millions of people being exposed, in the privacy of their homes, to scenes of bloody crimes depicted on their television screen.

The media's quasi obsession with crime, its sensationalisation and overdramatisation of crime news, though understandable, is disturbing. Mundane, average or typical crimes do not make headlines and are not, by any account, big news. What makes the news are the atypical, the abnormal and the extraordinary. The more unusual the crime, the more newsworthy it is. The selection, the filtering and the dramatisation mean that the public is presented with an uncharacteristic and unrepresentative image of crime.

### **The Professional Interests**

Crime provides work to hundreds of thousands of individuals. There are many constituencies, including the police, who use crime to buttress their demands for more money and manpower. Pepinsky and Jesilow (1984) point out that there are few enterprises in which people can hope to be supported more for accomplishing less:

Police are hired in the hope they will prevent and contain crime, and yet it is by demonstrating their failure to do so - by showing that the crime problem is larger than ever - that they can best argue for expansion. Edgar Hoover who headed the Federal Bureau of Investigation for many years was able to convert increases in crime rates into successful requests for greater congressional appropriations for the FBI. According to Mitford (1974), Hoover was constantly trying to create an impression of a "new all-time high" in the rate of crime increase, thus assuring suitable lurid crime-wave headlines. This suited the FBI purposes for the higher the crime rate, the easier was it to pry ever-larger appropriations out of Congress.

### **The Economic Interests**

The police are but one of several agencies in society which have an obvious vested interest in painting a grim crime picture and in emphasising and capitalising on whatever real or apparent increase may take place in crime rates. In addition to the social agencies that stand to gain from a worsening crime situation, there are numerous industries which clearly benefit from a growth in crime and a rising fear of victimisation. Among the most visible of these industries are:

- a) The private security industry: primarily engaged in providing personnel for detective, investigative, patrolling, night watching, or personnel protection services for businesses and/or individuals. It is also involved in cash carrying and the transportation of valuable goods such as jewellery or bonds.
- b) The gadget industry: primarily engaged in the manufacture, marketing, sale, rental, maintenance and monitoring of

mechanical and electronic protective or alerting devices such as burglar, hold-up, and fire alarm systems, sensors, metal detectors, locks, chains, safes, vaults, bullet-proof vests and glass, helmets, whistles, chemical sprays, automatic light and sound switches, armoured vehicles, etc., etc.

Recent TV commercials advertising some of these gadgets such as the mace spray cans are designed to convince women that no female should leave home without it.

Estimates provided by the Australian Security Industry Association Ltd. indicate that these two sectors alone were worth \$1,250 million in 1991-92. This covers the principal areas of manpower (such as guards, surveillance, cash-carrying), alarms (such as monitoring, responding) and electronics (such as access control, closed-circuit TV) (Walker, 1992, p.5).

- c) The personal safety training industry: engaged primarily in training potential victims (and other members of the public who for one reason or another may feel threatened by crime) on how to avoid attacks and how to defend themselves in case they are attacked.
- d) The insurance industry: Another industry that reaps considerable economic benefits from a worsening crime situation is the insurance industry. Home and business insurance against a wide variety of criminal risks constitutes a substantial chunk of the industry's revenue. And the greater the perceived risk, the wider the coverage and the higher are the premiums.

Crime then, is big business. It generates profits not only for the criminal but also for a host of private industries and service delivery businesses. These businesses and industries reap benefits from an increase in the threat of crime and in the risks of criminal victimisation. This is neither an accusation nor a criticism. It is simply to illustrate that as with other goods and services, those related to the threat of crime need to be marketed using different strategies. The following are some of these marketing strategies:

- creating, fostering or reinforcing an impression that certain types of crime are rampant or are rapidly increasing;
- emphasising or exaggerating the threat and the dangers of victimisation by crime. The greater the threat and the higher the risk, the greater is the need for protection, security, prevention, and so on;
- stressing "the pressing need" to take specific and effective measures to prepare and to protect oneself, one's home, one's business against crime;
- highlighting some of the available techniques and new, modern devices for protection against criminal and "terrorist" attacks as well as publicising the available security systems, designs and procedures aimed at reducing or minimising the risks of victimisation and the losses from crime.

### **The Political Interests**

Although crime in Australia might not be as hot a political issue as it is in the United States, it surfaces now and then during electoral campaigns. Some politicians try to capitalise on public's concerns about, and fear of, crime by adopting a tough stand against criminal, by promising to re-establish law and order, and to make the streets safe again. Those in favour of the death penalty try their best to convince the general public that crimes of violence are becoming common place.

### **The Ideological Interests**

For obvious reasons, pressure groups, such as the victim lobby, are anxious to paint a bleak picture of the crime situation, to amplify the risk of becoming victim and the traumatic effects of victimisation. In their missionary zeal to alleviate the plight of crime victims and to have their rights recognised, victim advocates are willing to use the horror story syndrome. They miss no opportunity to take to the radio waves or appear on the TV screen telling us that no street is safe, no home is secure, not person is immune to the predators who are lurking in the dark waiting for any opportunity to attack.

### **Changing The Message**

As you can see, there are many constituencies that join hands in making a concerted effort to spread a threatening message about crime. Is it surprising, therefore, that a large percentage of the general public hold distorted perceptions, impressions, and beliefs about crime? Is it any wonder that the public is demanding that something be done about it and is putting pressure on politicians to take a hard line and to resort to the punitive policies of the past which have been a dismal failure as a way of controlling or preventing crime? The politics of sensationalisation, amplification and exaggeration need to be countered by information and education campaigns aimed at spreading an accurate, reassuring message about

crime.

### **Promoting Acceptance of Crime as a Fact of Life**

Crime, said Durkheim, is a normal, integral, and inevitable feature of social life. Crime, like disease, has always existed and will always exist. No society is or will ever be exempt from crime. This is not a fatalistic but a realistic way of looking at crime. And there is an urgent need to promote a realistic attitude towards crime among a public that is incessantly inundated by violent crime news and atypical crime stories. Rhetoric and slogans such as “declaring war on crime” are not only dangerous because they reinforce current misperceptions but they are sure to backfire. They create expectations that cannot be met and offer promises that cannot be fulfilled. As in the area of drugs, they suggest that the war on crime is a winnable war, that it is possible to eradicate, eliminate, or considerably reduce crime. Since no one can deliver on these promises, those who make them will sooner or later be held to task, and will be blamed for not delivering on their promises.

### **Crime as a Byproduct of Democracy, Freedom and Affluence**

There is a very good lesson to be learnt from what has happened in Eastern Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the demise of the totalitarian state. It is no secret that crime in the police states of yesterday was quite low when compared to western societies. Democratisation has brought with it not only an increase in many types of crime but also new forms of victimisation. The causes of this are beyond the scope of this paper. It is indisputable, however, that there is a social price that has to be paid for the rights, the liberties, the freedoms, the mobility, and the affluence we enjoy. The corollary of all these benefits is relatively high crime rates. And if the choice is between oppression and little crime or democracy and freedom with higher crime, which of the two are we likely to choose?

### **Crime as a Social Risk**

Modern life is a hazardous life. The risk of criminal victimisation is but one of the many risks to which people are daily and constantly exposed. Crime is not a unique category of behaviour nor is it more harmful, more injurious, more serious, or more dangerous than a multitude of other behaviours. There is no doubt that deaths, injuries and losses from victimisation by crime are relatively minor when compared to those by other forms of victimisation (Fattah, 1992).

In Australia, a comparison of causes of death for different age groups (James, 1992) reveals that particularly for those over 55 years old, death rates by homicide are extremely low when compared to deaths in traffic accidents, by accidental falls or by suicides and self-inflicted injuries.

Another study by the Law Reform Commission of Victoria (199\_) found the annual number of homicide victims to be far lower than the number of work-related traumatic deaths, let alone deaths from work-related illnesses. The Victorian average of 74 homicide victims each year was far less than that of victims of suicide (421 for 1985), of fatal traffic accidents (678 in 1985), or of deaths from lung cancer (1,551 in 1985).

In Quebec, for example, five times as many individuals lose their lives by their own hands committing suicide than by the hands of others committing homicide. And in 1991 more people died as a result of suicide than all traffic fatalities including those involving the death of pedestrians and snowmobilers (Globe and Mail, Dec. 16, 1992). The category of strict liability offences illustrates too vividly the fact that in the modern world, in one way or another, as much and more damage is done by negligence, or by indifference to the welfare or safety of others (pollution, second hand smoke, etc.), as by deliberate wickedness (Wootton, 1963).

Sparks (1981) observed that as a cause of injury, crimes of violence in the United States are much less important than motor vehicle accidents, industrial injuries, falls in the home, and the other natural shocks that flesh is heir to in western industrial societies.

According to Elias (1986), there were 20,000 homicides in the U.S. in 1974 contrasted with 14,200 deaths from workplace accidents, 100,000 deaths from workplace diseases, 219,000 to 328,500 pollution deaths, 16,000 deaths from unnecessary surgery, over 20,000 deaths from improper emergency care, 200 to 10,000 deaths from unnecessary prescriptions and untold tens of thousands of deaths from symptoms of poverty such as malnutrition and poor health care.

A major study of medical malpractice in the U.S. released in 1990 (Vancouver Sun, March 1, 1990) and reported by Reuter, provides some startling figures on one minor type of victimisation, namely victimisation resulting from medical malpractice. The study, conducted by Researchers at the Harvard Medical School, reports that in 1984 there were about 7,000 hospital deaths and 27,000 injuries due to the negligence of doctors or hospital staff at 51 hospitals in the state of New York alone. The study further found that 99,000 patients out of 2.7 million in New York hospitals in 1984 suffered injuries during their hospital stay, and 28% of those suffered injuries caused by negligence. The study shows that only two percent of the patients who suffered malpractice injuries that year sued a doctor or a hospital.

## **Transmitting Crime Information**

There are different ways in which statistics on crime can be presented in order to inform the public about the state of crime and to help them make a realistic assessment of their risks of victimisation. In Britain, for example, Clarke (1981) estimated that at present levels of risk the average householder can expect to be burgled once every thirty years (much longer than the average tenancy) and that the average car owner will have his car taken only once every fifty years (longer than he is likely to be motoring). The risk of a person falling victim to homicide in any one year (one in 100,000) was found to be a small fraction of the risks of being killed on the road or dying of cancer. Only one in 175,000 passenger journeys on the London Underground resulted in theft, while one in 8.4 million resulted in robbery.

In another study, Hough and Mayhew (1983) used the findings of the 1981 British Crime Survey to estimate the various risks of victimisation for an average British citizen. They report that, assuming the rates remain at 1981 levels, a "statistically average" person aged 16 or over can expect:

- a robbery once every five centuries (not attempts);
- an assault resulting in injury (even if slight) once every century;
- the family car to be stolen by joy riders once every 60 years;
- a burglary in the home once every 40 years.

The same authors compared some risks of victimisation to the likelihood of encountering other sorts of mishaps. The chances of burglary were found to be slightly less than the chances (as estimated by questions to BCS respondents) of a fire in the home. The chances a household runs of car theft turned out to be smaller than the chances which it runs of having one of its members injured in a traffic accident. The chances of robbery were smaller than those of being admitted to hospital as a psychiatric patient.

Contrast these reassuring estimates of risk with Edgar Hoover's crime clock, an invention intended solely to raise the level of fear of crime and to heighten anxiety and concern about criminal victimisation.

## **Encouraging Victims not to Report**

One way of reducing official crime rates is to raise the threshold of tolerance to minor violations of the law. There are no tangible benefits to having minor conflicts, just because they happen to be defined as criminal offences, brought before the criminal justice system. In the case of civil torts people are encouraged to settle their claims outside the court system and to try to solve the matter privately or with the help of a mediator or an arbitrator. The ever-increasing civil litigation in countries such as the United States has been the source of major complaints. One has to wonder why it is that while attempts are made to curb and restrict civil litigation, everything is being done to promote criminal litigation. The firmly entrenched belief that criminal conflicts belong to the State, not to the parties involved, creates this seemingly insatiable desire to have them dealt with by the State's official agencies. This went so far that in many criminal codes (such as the criminal codes of Canada and of Cyprus) it is a crime to compound a criminal offence, that is to hide it from the authorities and deal with it privately. And yet, at a time when there is a renewed interest in mediation, in victim-offender reconciliation, in alternative mechanisms of dispute settlement and of conflict resolution, there is a need to encourage the offended parties not to report. At a time when legislation is passed to give victims more say in the criminal justice process, there is a need to allow victims to use more discretion and to give them the final say as to what should be done. After all, if those who suffer the harm, the injury, the loss, judge it to be too trivial or are able to settle the matter amiably without resorting to the criminal justice system, why not let them do that. People use their discretion all the time. They do not rush to the hospital emergency room whenever they scratch their knee or hurt their finger. They do not run to the doctor every time they suffer from a slight cold or a stomach upset. They use their discretion to decide when the problem is serious enough to require professional treatment. Efforts to reduce the use of the health system could be extended to the criminal justice system. Unfortunately, the trend in recent years has been in the opposite direction, towards a more extensive use of the justice system. This is when victimisation surveys repeatedly show that the major reason for non-reporting is the victim's judgement that the offence is too trivial. In the 1970s and the 1980s criminologists, worried about the size of the dark figure, were trying to devise ways and means to induce victims to report more victimisations to the police. State compensation to crime victims and victim assistance programs were promoted as vehicles to encourage more victims to go to the police.

Reporting the incidence became a requirement for applying for compensation or benefiting from the service. Insurance companies are also using the criminal justice system to their own advantage by requiring that every insurance claim be preceded by reporting the incident to the police. To my knowledge, no study has tried to figure out the impact such requirements have had on the rate of reporting and consequently on crime rates.

Since most criminal justice systems are working at overcapacity, an increase in case flow through the system can exacerbate the current problems of response and response time, and cause delays in the handling of cases. It can result in shorter time being devoted to each case, more pressure on the correctional and prison systems, and so forth. Since no drastic increases in resources can be foreseen due to current economic conditions, every effort should be made to stop mobilising the system for every petty offence or every minor dispute. Preaching tolerance and raising its threshold is one of the best and surest ways of achieving this goal. The advantage is not only to reduce crime rates and alleviate the system's workload, but also to enable the police to devote more time and resources to the serious types of victimisation.

A re-examination of our view of the dark figure of crime might be in order. The conventional view is that the dark figure is, in every respect, a negative feature of crime and thus everything should be done to bring it down. Actually, the dark figure might be a blessing in disguise and the higher it is, the better things might be for the Criminal Justice System and for society. R.K. Merton (1957) for one, suggests that there is a functionally optimum degree of visibility of various social structures. This degree never coincides with complete visibility. Merton believes that "full visibility of conduct and unrestrained enforcement of the letter of normative standards would convert a society into a jungle. It is this central idea which is contained in the concept that some limits upon full visibility of behaviour are functionally required for the effective operation of a society" (p.345).

Merton cites George Orwell and Aldous Huxley as literary figures who were able to portray the horror of full observability of conduct. He also quotes the Victorian novelist and essayist William Makepeace Thackeray who in his essay "On Being Found Out" was able to portray a horrendous society in which all deviations from social norms were promptly detected, and thereupon punished. Thackeray writes:

Just consider what life would be, if every rogue was found out, and flogged...What a butchery, what an indecency, what an endless swishing of the rod...Just picture to yourself everybody who does wrong being found out, and punished accordingly...The butchery is too horrible. The hand drops powerless, appalled at the quantity of birch which it must cut and brandish. I am glad we are not all found out...To fancy all men found out and punished is bad enough; but imagine all women found out in the distinguished social circle in which you and I have the honour to move. It is it not a mercy that a many of these fair criminals remain unpunished and undiscovered?...I say it is best, for the sake of the good, that the bad should not all be found out...Ah me, what would life be if we were all found out, and punished for all our faults? (pp.126-127).

### **It is Crime Increasing?**

The way crime news is being reported by the media often gives the impression of a crime explosion, that crime rates are rising by leaps and bounds. There is little, if any, evidence to support the widely held belief that there has been a dramatic increase in crime, that it is on a spiralling trend. For many offences, and this is particularly true of sexual offences and of domestic violence, there are good reasons to believe that the higher figures are mainly due to more reporting and better recording. And since the largest increase in the rates of violent crime is usually not in homicide or rape but in the minor types of assault, it could very well be that the statistical or paper increase has more to do with victim's growing willingness to report than a real increase in the offences in question.

Despite their relatively small percentage of the total volume of crime, violent offences usually get a great deal of news coverage that is in total disproportion to their actual numbers. But the bulk of crime in Australia, as in most other countries, is property crime.

In a recent study of crime in a comparative perspective, Heiland, Shelley and Katoh (1992) affirm that crime against property has become the dominant crime pattern for all the countries they analysed including Japan (p.8). Property crime accounted for more than 60% of all registered criminal acts. They found a disproportionate rate of growth in two categories of theft: theft of or from motor vehicles or bicycles and thefts from shops or department stores (p.8). They also note that the percentage of violent offences to the total volume of crime in the countries they studied, had declined except in the United States (p.8).

There are two rather obvious explanations for the observed increase in property crime. The first is the enormous expansion of opportunities for such crime and the second is the increase in the use of drugs. There are, of course, other reasons as well. For example, the number of detected cases of shoplifting depends largely on the level of security in the stores. The substantial increase in the number of store detectives and other security measures in recent years is one reason why these cases have been showing an upward trend. Thus measures introduced to prevent crime could also produce a paper or statistical increase in the crimes targeted for prevention. The fact, however, remains that the increase in property crime can be traced to two main factors: one is positive, that is the affluence we enjoy, and the other is negative, namely a bad drug policy.

We should be happy and content that we live in an affluent society where there is an abundance of attractive consumer goods that can be purchased, enjoyed, and also, to some extent, stolen. We can try through situational prevention, defensible space, environmental design to reduce the amount of stealing that goes on by making it more difficult. The displacement problem, however, reduces the effectiveness of such preventative strategies unless they are generalised. But surely no one wants to sacrifice affluence and abundance because they also lead to more illegal acquisition. No one would prefer to live in an economy of scarcity where there are few things that can be bought or stolen. No one wants a situation similar to what existed in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe or that exists at present in countries like Cuba or China.

Something could be done about the second factor, the drug policy, a policy that seems to be doing more harm than good, a policy whose side-effects seem to largely outweigh its benefits. Police in Australia, Canada, the United States and in the European countries admit that a high percentage of property offences are committed by drug users who need money to purchase their illegal drugs. Although difficult to estimate, a good part of these offences could probably be prevented by a bold radical change in drug policy. Despite desperate efforts by powerful lobbies and pressure groups, more and more countries are publicly acknowledging the fact that the current policy of prohibition has not worked in the past, is not working in the present, and is not likely to work in the future. They are taking a more realistic look at the problem of drugs and are willing to try some new or different approaches. Switzerland, a country known more for its traditional rather than progressive policies, has decided to experiment with dispensing heroine to registered addicts in an attempt to lower the number of overdose deaths and to cut down on the number of property crimes committed by addicts.

Three weeks ago, the head of Interpol warned that the growing trade in illegal drugs is "unstoppable". Mr Raymond Kendall said his 280 staff spent 60% of their time dealing with drug-related crime and added that "There is no evidence at all that the problem is being stopped" (quoted after Wendy Holden in the Daily Telegraph "Traffic in Drugs is 'Unstoppable'". Sept 6, 1993, p.8).

People in different countries, different walks of life, different occupations and professions have widely divergent views as to how to tackle the drug problem. The same surely holds true for the members of this audience. Be this as it may, any serious debate on crime prevention cannot afford to ignore the problem and has to assess the impact that a change in drug policy could have on various types of property offences, as well as some violent offences. Because if one sets aside the emotional and ideological arguments, there seems to be little doubt that a realistic drug policy could turn out to be a major vehicle for crime prevention.

Another policy that seems to have a major impact on crime rates, in this instance violent crime rates, is the gun control policy. Strict gun control could have beneficial effects, one of which is to reduce the number of deaths by forcing a number of potential killers to use less lethal weapons. Canadian assessment of the gun control law implemented in 1979 (Bill C-15) provides empirical support for this proposition (Solicitor General of Canada, 1983).

A report by a number of researchers at the Australian Institute of Criminology in Canberra (Trends and Issues no. 10, 1988, p.1) makes reference to a number of studies in a number of jurisdictions, including NSW, which indicate that the death rate for victims assaulted by guns is several times that of those assaulted by knives or other weapons. The same report indicates that one-third of all reported murders in Australia are committed with pistols. Easy gun availability, on the other hand, is usually associated with high rates of homicide and other serious assaults. There is no doubt in my mind that the substantial difference between the Canadian homicide rate (around 3.5 per 100,000 people) and the substantially higher rate in the United States is due, at least partially, to their different gun control policies.

Crime rates can also be reduced in many other ways. One of these is a policy of decriminalisation and depenalisation. In the 1960s and the 1970s there were incessant calls for these two policy measures as a way of alleviating the work load of the criminal justice system and of modernising the archaic criminal codes, many of which are more than a century old. Criminologists called upon politicians, legislators and policy makers to decriminalise and depenalise a wide variety of behaviours that did not cause serious or tangible harm to others. Many of these offences were included in the criminal code for historical, religious or moral reasons that reflected the thinking and the mentality of last century. Some Government Commissions and Task Forces in the Scandinavian countries went as far as demanding or recommending that minor forms of theft and fraud be decriminalised or depenalised. In Sweden, for example, it was suggested that minor property offences (for example petty thefts through shoplifting in self-service stores) should lie outside the criminal law and be dealt with by measures other than ordinary punishment. It was held to be unreasonable that society should use its already hardpressed criminal justice resources to hunt down shoplifters when the firms in question deliberately make crime easy and draw human beings into a criminal risk zone (Aspelin, 1975). Recent reports from the United States show that a number of states already have or are in the process of privatising the offence of shoplifting rendering it a private matter between the store and the shoplifter.

## **CRIME PREVENTION : A REALISTIC VIEW**

In my introduction I promised to present a realistic view of crime prevention, to tell you what I believe is possible and what is not possible, what is feasible and what is not feasible. I promised to separate the reality from the rhetoric, the attainable from the utopian.

Having been observing and studying crime for four decades in many different societies on three continents, I have reached one definitive conclusion: crime is a fact of life and there is not much that we can do to bring about, at least in a relatively short period of time, a dramatic (or even a modest) reduction in crime rates. Achieving this would require major, radical, structural social changes that are to likely to happen in our lifetime. It is probably unwise to make a statement like this in a conference like this one. But, I sincerely believe that it is extremely important, when talking about preventing crime, to keep this fact in mind because it forces us to take a more realistic look at crime and to rethink our response to it. It is not meant to promote complacency about crime but to highlight how unrealistic are often the demands made on the criminal justice system in this field and how high the expectations about crime prevention are when compared to the reality of what could actually be achieved.

First, we have to realise that many of the factors that affect crime rates are impossible to change. The International Crime Survey showed, for example, that countries with colder climates have lower rates of all types of crime than countries nearer the equator (Walker, 1990). Obviously it is not the weather or the temperature per se that is responsible for the differences but factors associated with it that influence crime rates. Like the weather itself, these factors are not easily changeable and are not likely to change in a relatively short period of time.

Demographic trends which are not very easy to control have also a marked influence on crime rates. The Australian population is expected to reach 25 million by the year 2031. Being one of the most highly urbanised countries in the world, Australia cannot escape the social problems that are common to large urban centres such as property crimes and certain forms of public disorder (Federal Justice Office, 1992, p.27). Changes in the age structure of the population also affect crime rates in various ways. A significant aging of the population can lead to a decline in the rates while a substantial increase in the size of youthful groups (15-24) can produce an upward trend. Since the size of this group, which currently stands at 16% of the Australian population, is expected to decline to around 12% by the year 2031, this could result in a decline in the crimes typically committed by this age group (ibid.p.29). The exact amount of the decline is difficult to predict because it depends on several other variables. An Australian federal justice report (1992) suggests that:

The actual size of this decline will depend on the existence of off-setting increases from other groups (such as the elderly) and the influences of other trends (such as significant long-term youth unemployment and alienation) which may lead to greater involvement in crime and disorder by young people (p.29).

A third set of influences that are difficult to control have to do with the family and household structure: the number of single-parent families, the percentage of women in the work force and the number of dwellings left unguarded, and so forth. Other factors that are not easily amenable to change include the ethnic mix of the population and the degree of radical tension or harmony between the different ethnic groups.

Secondly, there is another lesson to be learnt from the experience of the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe. The fact that these countries have experienced significant increases in crime and have witnessed the emergence of many new forms of crime within a very short period of time without any change in the biological or psychological make-up of the populations involved, proves, if any proof is still needed, that the causes of crime do not lie in the individual, but in the social structure. It clearly shows the inadequacies of the biological and psychological approaches to crime causation and highlights the need for structural, environmental and situational explanations of criminality.

Thirdly, the demise of communism, the decline of the welfare state, and the recent consolidation of capitalism suggests that the end of poverty, of economic inequality, of chronic unemployment is not within reach. It also means that prevention policies that advocate such measures as the primary means of reducing crime will remain at a rhetorical level and have very little, if any, chance of being implemented in the near future. Effective crime prevention requires less utopian and more realistic recipes.

Fighting unemployment, reducing poverty, achieving social justice, racial and gender equality should be actively pursued, not because of their possible crime-reducing effects, but because they are worthy and highly desirable social goals. If the achievement of these goals results in significant crime reduction, this should be viewed as an added bonus, but it should not be the motive behind these policies.

If crime, as mentioned earlier, is a social problem that has deep-rooted social causes, and if the causes of crime lie in the social, economic and political structures, what then could be done in the short term while waiting for the positive structural changes to happen?

At present, there seem to be two promising approaches to crime prevention: the situational and the attitudinal.

## **Situational Prevention**

Situational prevention, a term coined by Ron Clarke (Clarke, 1980; 1992) “refers to a preventive approach that relies, not upon improving society or its institutions, but simply upon reducing opportunities for crime” (1992:3). These opportunity-reducing measures are 1) directed at highly specific forms of crime 2) that involve the management, design or manipulation of the immediate environment in as systematic and permanent way as possible 3) so as to increase the efforts and risks of crime and reduce the rewards as perceived by a wide range of offenders (1992:4). Clarke outlines twelve techniques of situational prevention. They are 1) target hardening 2) access control 3) deflecting offenders 4) controlling facilitators 5) entry/exit screening 6) formal surveillance 7) surveillance by employees 8) natural surveillance 9) target removal 10) identifying property 11) removing inducements 12) rule setting (p.13).

Clarke (1992) cites evidence attesting to many successes achieved by situational prevention particularly in respect to some property crimes. And he affirms that there is, at present, little reason to question its value in dealing with a quite broad range of crime problems. While acknowledging that displacement might be a problem, Clarke argues that displacement can never be complete, can never be 100%.

## **Attitudinal Prevention**

While a number of property offences could be tackled using situational prevention, many crimes of violence could be effectively prevented by changing cultural values and attitudes that are responsible for or that promote specific types of criminal behaviour, particularly violent behaviour. Since family violence, for example, is inextricably linked to social and cultural attitudes, it seems axiomatic that the most effective way of preventing it would be by changing those attitudes that are largely responsible for, or at least contribute to, various forms of family violence.

It is worth repeating that changing attitudes is a much more realistic and feasible goal than changing social structures. Actually dramatic attitudinal changes can take place within a relatively short period of time. One needs only to look at how attitudes to the environment or to animals have dramatically changed in the past few years. Behavioural changes usually, though not necessarily, follow the changes in attitudes. Several examples could be given to illustrate how attitudinal change could result in the prevention of many violent crimes.

Changing prevailing attitudes to child rearing and the mentality of “spare the rod and spoil the child” not only reduces the incidence of child abuse but also the delinquency of those juveniles who react to their abuse and victimisation by acting out. Changing patriarchal attitudes reduces the incidence of wife battering and other forms of violence against women. Changing the cultural attitudes that govern male-female relationships and interactions can effectively reduce the incidence of date rape as well as sexual harassment in study and work places. Changing the prejudices, the xenophobic and hostile attitudes towards immigrants, asylum-seekers, ethnic or religious minorities reduces racial, sectarian and anti-foreigner violence such as gay-bashing or violence against prostitutes. Changing vindictive and vengeful attitudes and the cultural prescriptions of “hitting, striking and fighting back” can effectively reduce the level of violence since violence is predominantly retaliatory in nature and only a tiny fraction is predatory violence. Cultures where there is an obsession with winning have high levels of violence because of the manifest unwillingness to accept or to concede loss or defeat and the explicit or implicit requirement to strike back.

All these examples, and one can give many others, illustrate the urgent need for a major and radical attitudinal change and give some idea about the impact such change could have on many violent crimes. But changing attitudes could also be an effective crime prevention technique in many property crimes as well, particularly white collar crime, and crimes committed by and against bureaucracies and large impersonal corporations or against government agencies.

To illustrate the need for, and the promise of, this approach to crime prevention, let me now examine in some detail few concrete examples where this attitudinal change is likely to be quite effective if implemented.

### **Changing Patriarchal Attitudes**

A great deal of family violence can be traced directly to patriarchal and sexist attitudes that have prevailed in most societies for centuries. Various types of violence, aggressive, and assaultive behaviour against women and children were not only condoned and tolerated but were promoted and encouraged by the culture. Not long ago, violence by husbands against their wives was subject to the doctrine of “spousal immunity” which prevented a wife from suing her husband for assault and battery. The California penal code for example, contained a section on wife-beating that only prohibited assault if it resulted in “traumatic condition” in the medical sense, ie. severe physical injury produced by violence (Strauss, 1974). We often forget that the origin of the famous “rule of thumb” is that a husband was allowed to beat his wife with a stick not thicker than his thumb.

As long as these cultural attitudes persist (and they still exist in many rural communities and among several ethnic groups)

family violence will continue unabated. And no change in the law, no change in police or court practices will succeed in protecting women or children against many types of abuse. But it will take much more than mere denunciation by the criminal code or statements by judges and politicians to change these firmly entrenched attitudes.

One important source of family violence is the imbalance of power between men and women, between adults and children. Women are vulnerable to male violence because power relations in a patriarchal society place women in a subservient and subordinate role. Feminists have forcefully argued that crimes like rape and incest, among others, are not sex crimes but crimes of power motivated not by the quest for sexual pleasure, but by the desire to subjugate, humiliate, dirty and defile female victims. To prevent violence against women the imbalance in power has to be redressed because one important factor contributing to the structural vulnerability of women is gender inequality. In a sexist society, gender roles are not equal. The socialisation process prepares girls for their inferior role in the hierarchy of power and reinforces the values of a male sexist culture. By so doing, it helps perpetuate the myth of male superiority and to maintain existing power relationships. This process is described by Martin (1981) as follows:

The superior role of men is maintained by definition of "masculinity" as strong, active, rational, aggressive, and authoritarian and "femininity" as submissive, passive, dependent, weak and masochistic. These roles are incorporated into the culture by its philosophy, science, social and psychological theory, morality and law. The inequality of the roles is obscured by calling them "natural" or "normal" and by training women to depend upon men in order to maintain the nuclear family as the basic unit of society (p.196).

The way girls acquire their female gender identity, an identity considered inferior to that of the male, is explained by Stanko (1985):

Women, as part of growing up in a male-dominated society, learn that the two genders - male and female - occupy different value positions in society. Men, as men, occupy a higher one. Power, prestige and credibility too are awarded on a gender basis; men, as men, have greater access to the benefits of power, prestige and credibility. It is likely that female children, as part of growing up in an unequal, thus - gendered position, learn that they are less valued and have less prestige than their male counterparts. In acquiring a gender identity, a little girl knows she is a girl; she has been taught about and has observed her world for gender differences and roles. She incorporates a complex set of values and behaviours geared towards becoming and being recognised as a competent female (p.72).

### **Changing the Rod Mentality**

Although victimisation has always played an important role in offending, it is only recently that this link has become the object of research, particularly in cases of battered wives who kill their battering husbands, of abusive parents who were themselves abused as children, of rapists and other sexual offenders who had been sexually molested or assaulted during their childhood. New terms such as "the cycle of violence", "intergenerational abuse" were coined to describe the fact that violence begets violence, that abuse breeds further abuse. There is overwhelming empirical evidence substantiating the link between victimisation and offending. It comes from retrospective studies that trace the lives of delinquents backward as well as prospective studies that follow up abused children. It also comes from victimisation surveys and birth cohort studies. A series of studies by Cath S. Widom (1989a; 1989b; 1989c; 1990) led her to conclude that childhood victimisation has long term consequences for adult criminal behaviour. Brutalisation, desensitisation, retaliation, learning, imitation, identification with the aggressor are all mechanisms that help explain the transformation of the victim into a victimiser.

If victimisation is an important factor in offending, then one very effective way of preventing crime, particularly violent crime, would be to reduce the incidence of victimisation, exploitation, and discrimination. This might sound as a utopian goal or an impossible dream. But there is an obvious area where a good start can be made: corporal punishment of children. Whiting (1963) has shown that cultures with a high crime rate invariably use corporal punishment as their chief socialisation technique, whereas in cultures with a low crime rate, corporal punishment is de-emphasised.

Welsh (1976) suggests that the level of expressed delinquent aggression, particularly in males, is a function of the severity of parental punishment to which they were subjected. He further suggests that since severe parental punishment (SPP) is highly related to aggression, known abused children are likely to have one of the highest probabilities of becoming delinquent of all societal subgroups. Welsh's findings have been corroborated by several subsequent studies all of which report that the aggressiveness of the child is related to the severity of punishment imposed by the parents (Sears, MacCoby and Levin, 1957; Bandura and Walters, 1959; McCord and Howard, 1961; Eron, Walder, Toigo and Lefkowitz, 1963).

A British longitudinal study of 411 boys begun when they were age eight provides strong evidence of the link between severe punishment and juvenile delinquency. Twenty-seven boys (7%) had been convicted of a violent offence by age 18 and 98 (24%) had been convicted of a non-violent offence. Parents of 62% of the violent boys had been judged to use harsh discipline and have a harsh attitude toward their child, while parents of 33% of the non-violent delinquents and 27% of the 286 non-delinquents were identified in this category (Farrington, 1978; West, 1969, 1982; West and Farrington, 1973,

1977) (quoted by Garbarino and Plantz, p.35).

Almost thirty years ago, psychiatrist C.G. Curtin (1963) suggested that abused or neglected children might "become tomorrow's murderers and perpetrators of other crimes of violence, if they survive" (p.386).

In his excellent analysis of physical punishment of children, Philip Greven (1990) insists that it is the root of the aggression and violence that pervades American society and that it is responsible for the American obsession with defence and warfare. Greven offers convincing evidence showing that physical punishment of children consistently appears as one of the major influences shaping subsequent aggressiveness and delinquency of males. He quotes research by Slaby and Roedell (1982) among others, showing that "one of the most reliable predictors of children's level of aggression is the heavy use by parents of harsh punitive discipline and physical punishment" (p.194). Greven affirms that the infliction of pain through physical punishment is one of the primary causes of subsequent aggression, anger and hostility, which often take the form of delinquency and criminality. He writes:

The overwhelming evidence now available from scholarship on the roots of delinquency and crime suggests that corporal punishment - the application of the rod and other implements of discipline - is a major factor in the generation of the rage, aggression and impulses for revenge that fuel the emotions, fantasies, and actions of individuals, mostly male, who become active delinquents or criminals (1990, p.197).

The explanation Greven offers for such outcomes is simple. He maintains that the violation of the child's body and soul by painful punishments generates the anger and the rage that later foster violence against the self and others. That rage, he asserts, is the most common and continuous source for the destructive and aggressive impulses felt, imagined and acted on. Physical punishment, particularly severe ones, further inhibit the development of empathy in later life and one of their most enduring consequences is the stifling of empathy and compassion for oneself and others (p.127).

### **Changing Attitudes Towards Sex**

The longer we continue to treat sex as taboo, as something dirty, unhealthy and impure, as nothing other than an animalistic means of procreation, the longer we keep it hidden in the closet and refuse to discuss it openly or talk about it publicly, the larger will be the number of those who suffer from sexual problems, headaches, deviations and inadequacies. These problems and inadequacies will lead them to prey on children for sexual pleasure, satisfaction and gratification. The puritanical and ostrich-like attitudes of the past need to give way to a healthy recognition of the emotional and sexual needs of adolescents and young people and of their sexual status and sexual rights. The fact that puberty for both girls and boys is now reached at a much younger age than before should be acknowledged. And while everything should be done to protect the most helpless, defenceless and powerless group in society (namely the children) against all forms of victimisation and exploitation, including sexually motivated ones, everything should also be done to prevent discrimination against children by recognising and protecting their sexual rights. It should be remembered that the current rhetoric of protection often disguises the prudish restrictions that we want imposed on adolescents in an attempt to prevent the promiscuity of girls and the homosexuality of boys. There is a need to re-examine the logic and the rationale of prohibition rather than blindly subscribing to the protection discourse in which it is couched. Once the rights are recognised, a lot of what now passes as child sexual abuse would be automatically eliminated. A good number of sexual offences could be prevented by doing nothing other than lowering the age of consent to sexual relations.

It seems paradoxical that now then children of both sexes reach puberty much earlier than was the case in the last century, the age of consent to sexual activities is set higher than it was then. Jenkins (1992) points out that the heterosexual age of consent in England was twelve for most of the 19th century. It was raised to fourteen in England in the 1870s and again to 16 in 1885 (p.72).

Some time ago, the media reported that Holland has reduced the age of consent to twelve years for both boys and girls. A similar suggestion in Australia or Canada would certainly raise a lot of eyebrows because it is generally believed that a liberal attitude towards sex leads to a high level of sexual promiscuity. This, however, is belied by the Dutch experience as the Netherlands has one of the lowest rates of AIDS infection in the Western world.

### **CONCLUSION**

Australia is a lovely country and it is also a fortunate country. When judged by the rates of most serious violent crimes, Australia appears to be a very safe place to live and to be. When compared to other similar nations using the most reliable of all crime indicators, namely the criminal homicide rate, one cannot but conclude that Australia is a peaceful, non-violent society. With the exception of the Northern Territory where the murder rate is exceptionally high, the average murder rate

in Australia, as reported by the Law Reform Commission of Victoria (1992) is below two per 100,000 people. This is almost one half the Canadian rate and almost one sixth the American one.

Despite this, in Australia as in many other societies, concern over the state of crime seems to be growing. The fear of crime that people express when interviewed in public opinion surveys is neither based on actual, personal experience with crime, nor on the objective risks of criminal victimisation. It is largely based on their perception or misperception of the crime situation. Since, in Australia as elsewhere, there seems to be a concerted effort to portray a grim picture of the state of crime, the fear and the concern are quite understandable. It is also understandable that an alarmed public, a public concerned about safety, will put pressure on politicians and policy-makers to do something about crime and to make crime prevention one of the highest priorities.

Australia is fortunate in another respect. It has a National Crime Prevention Council and is experimenting with new initiatives aimed at preventing crime. One of these initiatives has been to set up a steering committee charged with preparing an issues paper on "Crime Prevention and Community Safety into the 21st century". The paper is a very valuable and a very well researched and well-written document. There is very little in the document that one can take issue with. The following statement, for example, is one with which everybody must fully agree. It reads:

If crime prevention policies are to be effective, the activities of all spheres of government and the community need a considerable degree of integration. Achieving this integration requires a national strategic approach to the problems. A national policy can serve a number of purposes. It can articulate a vision and serve as a source of motivation to widen the range of individuals and organisations that play an active role in reducing crime in Australia. It can act as a focus for implementation of agreed measures to overcome the present obstacles to effective crime prevention. A national policy can provide a framework for change by giving a higher profile to crime prevention initiatives (p.vii).

It is hard to add to the recommendations made by the steering committee or to the principles and guidelines it enunciated. This made my task as a keynote speaker particularly difficult. Despite this I have tried my best to highlight some points that are usually missed, ignored or overlooked in the current debates on crime prevention. I decided to assume the unpopular role of a policy critic and to draw attention to some of the reasons that might explain why past efforts at crime prevention have not been very successful. I have tried to present a realistic picture of the state of crime and of the prospects and limitations of various crime prevention strategies. To do so I tried to make a distinction between those that are possible, feasible and promising and the ones that are utopian, archaic, symbolic or unworkable. In doing so it was pointed out that changing situations and environment is easier than changing social structures, that changing attitudes is a more feasible task than changing people's biological make-up or personality. It was also pointed out that changing people's perceptions or misconceptions of crime might be easier than changing the crime situation itself. I also tried to show some ways in which crime rates could be reduced without necessarily preventing the occurrence of the acts that are so defined. This reduction could be achieved by raising the threshold of tolerance, by encouraging victims to make less use of the criminal justice system and to try to settle their minor conflicts and disputes without mobilising the system. Decriminalisation and depenalisation were discussed, among other things, as possible mechanisms of crime reduction. The point was made that serious crime prevention efforts could not afford to ignore the impact that present drug and gun policies have on the incidence of crime in society.

Having expressed the firm belief that the root causes of crime lie not in the individual but in society it was logical to conclude that effective, long term prevention requires radical structural changes that normally do not happen in a relatively short period of time. Two approaches that are likely to yield positive results were outlined: situational prevention and attitudinal prevention. Situational prevention is aimed at changing the environment to reduce the opportunities for crime. Attitudinal prevention aims at changing the values and attitudes that are responsible for, or that promote, the commission of many crimes. The premise is that certain attitudes, such as patriarchal, racist, sexist, xenophobic, homophobic, punitive, vindictive attitudes, are at the root of great many acts of violence in society and that changing them would prevent a good number of those violent acts.

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# AUSTRALIA SAFER FROM CRIME IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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## SUMMARY

This paper argues that Australian State governments should establish community safety and crime prevention agencies to support municipal and community programs that will tackle the causes of violence and interpersonal property crime in an integrated manner.

The first section overviews trends in crime and its consequences for communities in the next decades. It focuses on violence, property crime and traffic crime resulting in harm. Most of these have been rising and are expected to rise further with serious consequences for the immediate victims, but also with negative impacts on communities such as the flight from cities and difficulties to access a tax base.

The second section stresses that major intergovernmental groups such as the United Nations are proposing a strategic response to crime that involves three axes - special measures to deal with organised and economic crime, improvements in the fairness and sensitivity of criminal justice, and particularly preventive approaches to violence and urban crime. The preventive approaches emphasise tackling the causes of crime, through partnerships between police, housing, social services, schools, urban planning and citizen groups. They call for national and regional support for cities to undertake these new tasks as well as investment in social and economic policies that reduce primary factors causing crime and tackle the culture of violence.

The third section gives a synopsis of the main causes of violence and crime that have been identified through accumulated research and inter-governmental discussion, including the Australian Committee of Violence. It stresses the inter-linkages between parenting, school experiences and economic and gender inequality as well as the cultures that reinforce violence, and impact of guns and alcohol. It identifies the spatial nature of these factors within cities, particularly in public housing projects without adequate services and recreation. Some opportunities for crime such as houses empty during the day also generate crime.

The fourth section summarises the limits of traditional methods of "cops, courts, and corrections". Motorised preventive police patrol does not prevent street or domestic crime. The spread of public safe access points such as 999 or 911 have been associated with the allocation of significant police resources to responding to the calls (fighting alligators) without any plan to tackle the causes (drain the swamp).

The fifth gives examples of many of the situational and socio-economic crime prevention approaches that have been shown to reduce crime. Some of these have strong evaluations to substantiate them. These programs such as pre-school programs, anti-bullying programs or job-corps, solve community problems simultaneously such as crime and welfare. The integrative approaches have some evaluation data to support their success, but mostly they are dependent on the accumulation of research to suggest that action should be effective.

The sixth section demonstrated the international trend for national and regional governments to establish agencies to promote more effective crime prevention in an integrative manner at the city level. Each of these has a structure to associate its work with that of different government ministries such as housing, social services, schools or policing. These agencies are attempting to get different social and economic departments to take more responsibility for solving the crime problem. They are also wanting to get citizens to take more responsibility for preventing crime.

The seventh section analyses some of the issues that will make the safer communities approach succeed more in the future. It stresses legislation to clarify the vision of long term approaches to safety and security from crime, funding and technical support from central government for the integrative planning approaches, learning from different countries that are experimenting different approaches, and training and education of key factors.

In conclusion, it outlines a possible agenda to make Australia safer from crime for the 21st century. It stresses the importance of city and national action, of working with the traditional mono-sectoral approach of policing, of revising the primary and secondary school curriculum, and focussing on the family and community.

Crime and fear of crime are serious threats to the stability and social climate of cities, to sustainable development, the quality of life and human rights.

Over the last thirty years, Australia like most democratic industrialised countries have suffered rising rates of violence, more inter-personal property crime, and fear of using the streets because of crime and disorder. These threaten the economic prosperity and quality of life of cities and have occurred while the health, wealth and education of the average resident has been improving.

This paper overviews these trends and their consequences. It identifies major causes of this crime. It summarises the limits of only reacting incident and by incident with cops, courts and corrections. It assembles the innovations that are occurring in some countries and some cities to tackle the causes - showing the type of encouraging scientific evidence available. Its conclusions provide a framework for the next steps in protecting communities around the world from crime.

## **I. CRIME AND ITS CONSEQUENCES**

"If you slowly heat water while a frog is in it, the frog will die. Put a frog in boiling water and it will leap out and live".

The challenge of crime to communities is substantial, but it deteriorates slowly overtime. So no action is taken.

The decriminalisation of disorder offences such as begging, prostitution and public drunkenness have also had an impact on our communities. Sometimes disorder such as vandalism or youths hanging out on street corners lead to a decrease in the use of services (Skogan, 1991). Sometimes disorder such as drug trafficking or prostitution deters people from using services.

### **Trends in Crime**

The rates of violence and interpersonal property crime recorded by the police have increased with few respites in every major industrialised country except Japan since the second world war. These increases average 5% per year - however this means that they are doubling every 14 years.

The most frequent of these offences involve residential break-ins, theft of and from cars, and assaults. The least frequent involve murder, sexual assault, and robbery.

In addition, males perpetrate substantial violence against women and children, particularly within the home that is not recorded by the police.

Crimes associated with the use of the automobile such as drinking and driving increased substantially in the 1960s and 1970s, as police forces gave this offence priority. In addition, traffic deaths have steadied or decreased, though estimates suggest that rates of drinking and driving deaths still exceed murders. Between two thirds and one half of other driving deaths have other causes, some of which include criminal use of cars - dangerous driving in particular.

Use of illicit drugs such as cocaine in North America or heroine in Europe continues to pose its own set of problems. In part, these increase the risk of AIDS, are associated with increased international organised crime, and some marginal increases in property crime to pay for the drugs.

### **Consequences for Communities**

Crime has many negative impacts on communities. It imposes loss, injury, and emotional trauma on individuals. It leads to people moving away or not investing. It creates a significant opportunity cost, when resources are diverted from improving the quality of life to policing and private security.

The dangerous use of cars is a major contributor to these social costs. Of all causes of potential years of life lost, traffic fatalities rank second after heart attacks. Further, the same behaviour that results in deaths also causes significant injuries and property damage (Nathal Research Council, 1992).

The precise dollar amounts of the losses from common crimes such as break-ins, car theft or assault are measured in most individualised countries through "victimisation" surveys of the general public. The National Crime Survey in the USA or the British Crime Survey are now an annual or bi-annual program. For instance, the average break-in results in a loss of approximately one thousand dollars (\$1,000) after insurance repayments, rarely with any physical injury but with some victims suffering continuing emotional difficulties. They also involve significant inconvenience and difficulties with the justice system itself.

Cohen has estimated the average costs of crime in terms of the pain, injury and risk of death to victims. His estimates for the USA show rape at \$51,000, robbery at \$12,000, assault at \$12,000 and theft of a car at \$3,000 (Cohen quoted in National Research Council, 1993). Cumulatively, these losses are substantial. For the USA the cost of the 102,000 rapes recorded by the police in 1990 would have been \$5 billion using these estimates. It would have been \$50 billion if one includes the 90% of rapes that are not recorded to the police (Waller, 1986). For the USA the cost of the one million aggravated assaults recorded by the police would be \$12 billion dollars or \$36 billion including the 66% estimated not to be reported. For England and Wales, residential burglary and theft of a car result in at least one billion each in goods stolen

and not recovered (Home Office, 1993, p.81). For Australia, assaults result in \$300,000 annually (Australia, 1990, xxiv).

Collectively, crime threatens the viability of the community. In some countries, it is known that women and the elderly are using public areas less because they do not feel safe. For Canada more than 50% of women and 60% of the elderly do not feel safe in their own neighbourhoods at night (Waller, 1991).

Citizens ultimately leave districts where they do not feel safe. Often the first to leave are those who are most able to pay taxes for community services.

Multi-nationals do not invest in cities where they feel their investment or the quality of life of their executives will not be adequate.

In the USA, the Centre for Disease Control has defined violence as a health issue and is looking to fund activities to prevent violence. Some commentators ascribe as much as 2% of the US expenditures on medical care to criminal violence.

The expenditures on cops, courts and corrections as well as private security are significant. The USA spends approximately \$70 billion per year, England and Wales \$14 billion (£7 billion) and Canada \$7 billion. Estimates of the expenditure on private security depend on the definition used, but likely would add another 50% or more. England and Wales for instance spent \$3 billion (£1.6 billion) in 1988 on private sector security of which two thirds went on equipment (Home Office, 1993, p.80). Insurance premiums are another major expenditure that is measurable in billions.

## **II. PREVENTION IS ESSENTIAL TO SAFER COMMUNITIES**

“For the harm done by the offender, he is accountable, but for the harm done because we do not use the best methods to combat crime, for that we are accountable”.

### **UN Calls for Prevention to Match Criminal Justice**

In 1992, the United Nations made the prevention of urban crime, violence and juvenile criminality one of its three priorities for its program on crime and criminal justice. The other priorities will tackle international organised crime and fairness within the criminal justice system. Its program sets standards for the world, encourages cooperation between countries, and stresses the provision of technical assistance to developing countries.

In 1989, a group of organisations concerned with the leadership of cities organised the first internal conference on urban safety and crime prevention. It provided a major stepping stone not only to the priority now given to crime prevention internationally, but also to the content of the proposals that are being implemented. The declaration from that conference - “The Agenda for Safer Cities” - was the basis for the resolution on the prevention of urban crime that was adopted at the 8th United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders. This in turn has become a basic document for the UN efforts.

The United Nations defines what is meant by active crime prevention in its statement that:

“a successful program to reduce crime cannot be based solely on the police and criminal justice (and that) it must be matched by an active prevention policy which includes means to reinforce common values so that personal and community responsibility regarding crime is acknowledged, as well as social and community development and the reduction of opportunities for offending” (UN Prevention of Urban Crime, Page 1).

It emphasises “that prevention is the concern of all citizens, the community and all institutions in society” and among others that:

“prevention must bring together those with the responsibility for planning and development, (for) the family, health, employment and training, housing, social services, leisure activities, schools, the police and the justice system in order to deal with the conditions that generate crime” (UN Prevention of Urban Crime, Page 2).

It recommends that active prevention policies require that steps be taken in relation to the family, childhood, youth, justice, violence, urban housing and community development, alcohol, drugs and other substance abuse, police, victims, recidivism and communications.

It draws attention to national measures that must be taken to encourage the efforts of cities and communities financially, to implement long-term solutions, and to provide technical assistance.

The United Nations emphasis on crime prevention is part of a broader movement in the health and environment areas to

focus on strategic approaches to prevention. For instance, the World Health Organisation, in its healthy communities program reminds us that while doctors treating patients one by one are needed, strategically more significant inroads in health promotion have resulted from preventive approaches such as municipal water improvements and mass immunisation programs.

### **Internationally Policing calls for Crime Prevention**

Internationally some leaders of policing have also come to the conclusion that the factors associated with crime must be tackled. This has been stated by senior officials from INTERPOL in meetings organised by UNICRI - a UN research and development group on crime based in Rome.

Among the seven conclusions from a major international conference on the future of policing in 1990 are (Canada, 1991, p.269-270):

1. Crime prevention must be dealt with seriously, and in a manner that addresses the underlying factors... This will demand... resources and concerted action...
4. Much that is... traditional in police organisation... must be seriously questioned and changed. Police can no longer operate in self defined professional isolation...
5. Research and evaluation of crime prevention activities is essential.
7. ... crime prevention is based in the local community, serves community defined needs, and is community controlled and led. Police are one of many resources that the community can draw upon.

### **Urban Safety Congress calls for Action and Funding**

Over 1,600 mayors, city councillors, police executives, social development leaders and government representatives met in 1991 in Paris to exchange experiences and decide how to implement the Agenda for Safer cities (European Forum for Urban Safety, 1992).

They called for the extensive implementation of crime prevention models that have been proven effective. They reminded governments that they are unlikely to reduce crime until they spend substantially more on these preventive approaches.

They identified five steps that represent the conclusions from a vast mobilisation of expertise and interest in active crime prevention from across the prospering and disadvantaged world. They provide some perspective on the trends in crime and crime prevention that are set out in the rest of this chapter. The full text provides suggestions as to how governments could reallocate the necessary funds to meet these needs.

1. Governments must invest now to meet socio-economic and urban needs, particularly the needs to alienated groups such as young persons at risk.
2. Governments must establish national crime prevention structures to recommend improved national policies, undertake research and development, and foster the implementation of effective crime prevention programs, particularly by cities.
3. Municipalities must establish crime prevention structures to mobilise the local officials who control policies relating to housing, schooling, youth, families, social services, policing and justice.
4. The public must be encouraged by local, regional and nation governments, international agencies and non-governmental groups to participate in comprehensive crime prevention and to understand the importance to urban development of implementing effective ways of making communities safer from crime.
5. Developed countries should support the creation of an International Centre for the Prevention of Crime, consistent with the objectives of the United Nations and which might become affiliated with it.

### **III. CAUSES OF CRIME**

"Social problems are the causes of crime that we must all work on if we are concerned about our future..." New York City Police Commissioner.

#### **Research and Logic Stress Multiple Social Causes**

Australia has undertaken an encyclopedic review of what is known internationally about the incidence, causes and remedies of violence (Australia, 1990). Its review of factors interacting with each other to explain violence include early childhood experiences in the family that are uncaring and violence, a culture sustaining violence, economic inequality, gender inequality, cultural disintegration, alcohol and drug use, media influences, peers and schooling as well as some personality and biological factors.

The major longitudinal studies undertaken across the industrialised world have identified the effect of inconsistent and uncaring parenting in early childhood on the development of persistent offending, particularly for disadvantaged males (Crime Concern, 1992, Canadian Criminal Justice Association, 1989). These studies follow samples of young persons from their early childhood experiences to the peak of their involvement with inter-personal crime in their teens and twenties (Home Office, 1993, p. 25). They show that there is a group of young persons who are disproportionately involved in crime - 7% of a sample account for 70% of the offending (National Research Council, 1993).

These factors are similar to what government criminal justice experts conclude when they work to arrive at consensus internationally. For instance, the United Nations (Prevention of Urban Crime, 1990) has identified a list of factors that are conducive to crime.

These include:

- citizens without prospects of social integration
- inadequate parental upbringing
- inadequate servicing of housing clusters
- alienation from schools
- alcohol, drug and substance use
- media encouragement of inequality

The Australian National Committee of Violence provides the most comprehensive review of the explanations and remedies to the cycle of violence. Violence by parents often leads to violence by the children as they grow up.

There may also be an important overlap between the persons involved persistently in street crime, crime against intimates, crime on the school yard and crime on the road. Not only drunk drivers but drivers involved in frequent accidents may have similar background experiences to the persistent offender (Willett, 1963).

The US National Research Council (1993, p.391) states that "a more successful strategy for preventing later violence might involve simultaneously targeting the individual and other areas such as school, peers and family factors that are amendable to change". It also points to benefits from controlling violence on television.

Area studies show a high inter-correlation between the distribution of offending and socio-demographic characteristics of disadvantage (eg. Skogan, 1993, Buendia, 1989). A recent Statistics Canada report (1993) for the 111 "Selected Municipal Areas" of over 25,000 in Canada showed impressive correlations between rates of offences recorded by the police and indicators of social and economic disadvantage. Robbery and break and enter were all highly correlated (greater than 0.3) with the male unemployment rate, the proportion of low income, lone parent families and persons living in rental housing. Several high correlations were also found for these same variables with serious assault, sexual assault, theft and more serious drug offences.

### **Situational Explanations Stress Opportunities and Facilitators**

Clarke (1992) has developed a theory of situational crime prevention from his compendium of successful projects. He groups ways of reducing opportunities of crime into the categories of "increasing the effort, increasing the risks and reducing the rewards".

For "occasional" offenders, the opportunity may create the crime. Occasional offenders are those involved in only one or two offences. If one can remove the opportunity, then occasional offenders will not be tempted into offending (but persistent offenders will look for another target). for instance, occasional offenders will not break into a residence where they are unable to find many objects to steal and if they are likely to confront somebody or be seen. Indeed the research confirms that the rates of break-ins are lower where the household income is lower, the house is rarely left unattended, and where the entries are easy to see (Waller, 1989a).

Victimological research (Van Dijk & al., 1992) emphasises that more property crime occurs as there is an increase in the availability of consumer goods that are easy to steal and carry in situations where the offence will not be observed.

The availability of guns, particularly hand guns, has led to increases in crime committed with these weapons.

The US National Research Council has placed an emphasis on the effect of availability of alcohol on increasing violence. "Long term heavy alcohol use is a predisposing factor for violent behaviour at least for adults who showed chronic aggressive behaviour and alcohol abuse in early childhood or early adolescence" (1993, p.13).

#### **IV. LIMITS OF TRADITIONAL "COPS, COURTS AND CORRECTIONS"**

"any logical thinking person would tell you that the traditional approaches are not solving the problem". "In the USA we deal with social failures by using the criminal justice system to sweep the debris under the rug" (Webber, 1991). New York City Police Commissioner.

In the last 30 years, there has been an accumulation of research knowledge on the extent to which these approaches work. The conclusions stress the limits of traditional policing and prison responses to reducing crime. They underscore the possibilities of reducing fear of crime and the need to tackle the problems underlying crime professionally in order to reduce crime itself.

##### **Limits of Traditional Law Enforcement**

A police officer on every street corner reduces crime on those street corners and police dismantling of organised crime groups displaces those groups. But police leaders are increasingly calling for different uses of both police and non-police resources to deal with crime.

The last thirty years of research on the effectiveness of traditional police methods has put in question the way significant amounts of police resources are used. Much of this research has been done for the police community by the renowned Police Foundation in the USA.

For instance, the ability of routine preventive police patrols to reduce street and domestic crime or fear of crime is now in doubt. One of the first Police Foundation projects was the famous "Kansas City Experiment", where the level of routine preventive patrol was doubled in certain areas while it was eliminated in others. After a year, victimisation surveys and police data on crime were used to test whether crime had been affected by the change in patrol levels. No differences were found so it was concluded that preventive patrol does not have any general effect on crime rates, public confidence in the police or fear of crime.

It has been estimated that an urban police patrol officer might be within 100 yards of a burglary every 8 years (Clarke & Hope, 1984, cited in Waller, 1989b). Even then he or she would be unaware of the event as an offender, such as a burglar, may be going through an entry not visible from the car. These patrols are not relevant to violence in private situations, such as sexual and physical violence against women and children.

A further limitation on the impact of police patrols is that the chance of an offender being convicted after arrest is not high. For burglary for instance, it is less than 50% (eg. Home Office, 1993, p.29-30).

Many North American, Australian and some European police agencies were organised around this type of patrol to the extent that as much as one third of the total budget was devoted to this. As a rough guide, the costs of policing a city of one million would lie in the range of US \$150 million per year. One third of this amount is \$50 million - representing one thousand or more employees. The system of administering, controlling and financing policing varies from one country to another. In North America, many cities administer, control and finance the police. In Europe, the state plays the major role.

These studies did not look at the effect of preventive patrols on traffic crime. Approximately 40% of traffic deaths (number two cause of potential life lost) are associated with drinking and driving. When studies were undertaken of the other 60%, a high proportion were found to result from various types of aggressive dangerous driving that is prohibited under penal laws (Willett, 1963).

Another project showed that a small proportion of the population who make the national emergency number call "911" consume the vast majority of the patrol cars that are available to respond to calls. About 10% of the locations in a community account for 60% of the calls for service. About 10% of the victims account for about 40% of the victimisation. About 10% of the most serious offenders account for about 50% of the offences (Stephens in Canada, 1991, p.228; see also Sherman in Tonry & Morris, 1993, p. 159-230). Further it is estimated that only 2% of the calls really require instant response. In many progressive North American police departments another one third of police resources are now devoted to this activity. There are no studies to confirm the exact proportion, though common sense suggests that it is significant.

Unfortunately, this reactive approach does not lead to reductions in crime, because it does not tackle the underlying causes,

but only deals with symptoms.

An ongoing series of national victimisation surveys in England, the USA and many other industrialised countries have shown that less than 50% of crimes against personal property and persons such as robbery and break and enter are reported to the police (Van Dijk & Mayhew, 1993). For many types of common crimes suspects will be charged in less than 10% of the cases.

Even the efforts to make the police more community based - as opposed to problems oriented - have generally resulted in only limited success in crime reduction (Skagan, 1992). Foot patrols experiments show reductions in fear and improvements in public confidence in police but few changes in crime rates.

### **Problem Oriented Policing Proven Effective**

“In the face of steadily increasing crime, drug abuse, violence, calls for service and declining resources” police leaders are encouraging officers to look at the underlying causes, shifting the focus from incidents to problems, and turning to partnerships with communities.

One important policing success story occurred in *Newport News* where a police officer got major changes out of city hall to a public housing project and so reduced residential burglary by 35% (Sparrow & AL., 1990). This approach emphasised “problem oriented” policing, where analysis is undertaken to understand what lies behind the crime problem.

The Newport News project has become a classic example of what can be done through problem solving. A housing project built on a temporary basis in 1942 had become the worst housing in the city in 1984 with 23% of the units hit by burglary each year. A police officer was assigned to solve the problem. After a survey of the residents, he discovered that there were many physical problems with the building as well as the burglary problem. He prepared a brief for his police chief on the situation with recommendations to several other city departments. In 1986, the proposals were accepted.

The police services of the City of Edmonton, Alberta have produced a manual of their success stories, which follow the problem oriented approach.

It is these approaches that are being used by the Montreal Urban Community Police in its ACES project and its department wide approach to crime prevention.

Problem solving approaches to dealing with crime are sometimes abandoned due to the pressure for calls for service. So police management must shift resources away from routine preventive patrol into problem oriented policing, while maintaining a balance between response to calls for service and draining the swamp by tackling the problems that underlie those calls.

The government of Ontario has set a model for the world of legislation that might find this balance. In 1991, they adopted the Ontario Police Services Act (1991). This enunciates six principles that must underlie policing. These include making the safety and security of persons and property the first principle for policing in Ontario and requiring police to work with the community in its achievement. It elaborates four other principles which refer to victims, human rights, multi-culturalism and representatively. The principles must apply to municipal police service boards, police chiefs and police officers. While training and complain procedures should focus on these principles, full implementation is still awaited. Individual police chiefs for cities are providing many model programs and encouraging the inter-sectoral partnerships that will in fact make the difference to crime levels. The Regional Municipality of Kitchener-Waterloo provides one exciting example.

### **Limits of Prisons**

In the 1970s, an accumulation of research on the effectiveness of the prison experience concluded that the offenders' likelihood of being re-arrested within two years of release was unchanged from his time of admission to his date of release. The conclusion was that prisons do not rehabilitate offenders (Waller in European Forum for Urban Safety, 1992).

Some limited experiments had shown that carefully planned programs can reduce recidivism that tackle the situations or the attitudes that brought the offenders to prison.

Further prisons - which account for about 25% of the law enforcement and criminal justice expenditures in industrialised countries - do little to reduce crime overall. The USA lived a 300% increase in prison population reaching 435 per 100,000 compared to a European average rate of close to 100 per 100,000. In short, the United States has four times as many people incarcerated per capita as any other industrialised nation, while it still leads the world on rates of murder, rape, robbery and probably family violence and deaths involving criminal violations on the road. In short, if prisons were sufficient to assure community safety, the USA should be the safest, not the most crime prone, industrialised society (Horner, 1993).

## V. TACKLING UNDERLYING PROBLEMS

“It is better to drain the swamp than fight the alligators”.

There are many examples of projects that have been implemented to reduce crime, where independent evaluations confirm their impact.

### **Situational Crime Prevention Proven Effective**

Evaluation of situational crime prevention confirm that crime reduction is achieved without significant displacement in many cases. Clarke (1992, p.23) points, for instance, to:

“While steering wheel locks seemed to achieve little in Britain, their installation on all cars, old and new, in West Germany was followed by a 60% reduction in auto theft”.

He also cites the reductions in aircraft hijacking internationally as a result of passenger screening, the elimination of professional bank robberies as a result of increased risk and declining profits, and the lower availability of hand guns in England resulting in fewer assaults that end up as murder.

As a result of the many evaluations of situational crime prevention, Clarke has produced some principles that will help in its use in the future. These methods must increase the effort through target hardening, access control, deflecting offenders or controlling facilitators. They must increase the risk through screening, formal surveillance, surveillance by employees or natural surveillance. They must reduce the rewards through removing targets, identifying property, removing inducements or rule setting.

Many of these principles are described in a handbook “Reduction of Opportunity for Crime: Handbook for Police Officers” (Canada, 1985), which gives police officers, architects, city councillors and urban planners a quick reference to the practical applications of crime prevention through the reduction of opportunity in rural and urban communities. It also includes a glossary. A video tape explanation is also available.

There are two major limitations of the situational crime prevention approach. The first is that it may only lead to displacement of crime from one target to another - often from the rich to the poor. This can be avoided, if the program is universal and the crime occurs mostly because of the opportunity.

The second major limitation is that the techniques has limited effectiveness with persistent offenders. Again universal application can even be effective with persistent offenders, though the displacement may be to other types of offences.

### **Seattle Community Crime Prevention - Professional Citizen Mobilisation**

Probably the best known crime prevention programs in the English speaking world are those called “Neighbourhood Watch”. Unfortunately, these programs have not been evaluated everywhere, though evaluations of such programs in the USA, Ontario and England show only very short term reductions in break-ins during the first few weeks without any sustained reduction over time (eg. Rosenbaum, 1986).

However the Seattle Community Crime Prevention Program in the 1970s was a neighbourhood watch program with several differences in the skill management techniques that were used to implement it. As a result, it achieved and maintained for three years, a 50% reduction in residential burglaries for participating areas of the city which started with 1 household in 16 being broken into.

One major difference from the typical neighbourhood watch program was that it resulted from an initiative of the Mayor of Seattle rather than the police department.

The principles of the process are set out in Canada (1983) and Waller (1989). They include a systematic diagnosis of the problem, followed by professional implementation of the program and then independent evaluation. To do this, the Mayor of Seattle established a special office called “Law and Justice Planning” whose job it was to:

Step 1 *Identify the crime problems facing Seattle in order of priority;*

It developed for the city a criminal justice plan, which examined trends in the nature and extent of crime both in Seattle as a whole and in specific census tracts (Seattle, 1980). Data used for this analysis came from telephone victimisation surveys, public attitude surveys and crime data in police records. The latter system is computerised and is similar to those available to, but rarely used for, the planning proposed by most major police departments in

North America.

The plan was developed in consultation with each of the major city agencies such as the police, human resources, schools and recreation. Then it was presented to the City executive with a problem statement as to what needed to be done.

This plan is similar to the plans required in France and England in national strategies for safer communities. It is also similar to the Community Action Plans for Crime Prevention described below for the 8 largest cities in Texas in conjunction with the US National Crime Prevention Council.

**Step 2** *Develop and ensure the implementation of projects to reduce these problems;*

In Step 1, residential break-in was identified as one of its three priority problems. The planner then examined the literature on the explanations and counter measures against break-ins and discussed the problem with experienced experts. At that time, it was decided that break-ins occurred in residences because:

- a) inadequate use was made of locks (more recent research questions this assumption for houses)
- b) stolen goods were easy to sell to fences, and
- c) the offence could be committed without fear of confrontation.

So they designed a project that would encourage residents to use locks (Security precautions), make stolen goods harder to fence (operation identification), make confrontation seem more likely (lived-in look) and make arrest more likely (neighbours watching out and calling police).

The project was housed in the City Department of Community Development - not the police department. Staff were recruited and it was set in action. The City of Seattle had a population of approximately 500,000. Fifteen civilians worked on the community crime prevention program. It had a director, a community organiser in charge of a team of five other community organisers, four technicians involved in security checks, a researcher who did community profiles, a researcher involved in data collection, and two secretaries.

The Seattle Community Crime Prevention Program also employed volunteer block captains, and other volunteers that were needed to make the program work.

Leaflets were prepared for use in the small group meetings so that residents would have a document that provided the details on security in the home, on the street, and in the block watch. It is essential to the success of the Seattle program that these were not distributed door to door, but were given out in small "micro-group" meetings. A micro-group consisted of the neighbours who lived next door, opposite, and behind the host of the meeting rather than people who lived in the larger neighbourhood typically used in neighbourhood watch programs.

Also the micro-group meetings permit much more audience participation which is well established as a motivator to get residents to understand both their purpose and significance as well as encourage them to use the material.

**Step 3** *Evaluate the effectiveness with which the crime problem is reduced and recommend the appropriate manner in which successful projects should become part of the permanent service of the City of Seattle;*

The evaluation examined the extent to which residents cooperated with this crime prevention program as well as whether there was any change in the break-in rate. The evaluation looked at whether there was any displacement effect into other areas. It did not look at displacement into more serious crimes though this would have been readily apparent as a 10% change in break-in would result in a 100% change in robbery if that was the direction of the shift.

The conclusion from the evaluation was that the program had been successful involving residents in the program. Further, as a result of this activity there was a fifty percent reduction in residential break-ins within one year in those residences where the program was implemented (Rosenbaum, 1986; Waller, 1982).

More recently the evaluations of the *Kirkholt* project in England and Wales (see Clarke, 1992, p. 223-229) have confirmed that the same methods of micro-groups focussing on making residences seem lived in with informal surveillance can lead to substantial reductions - 75% - in burglaries.

### **Social Development Proven Effective**

The *Delft Anti-Crime* program provides a Dutch example of an effective social development program organised by the city administration (Borricand, 1992; Graham, 1990).

In a social housing project with problems of crime and community decay, the City of Delft instituted a comprehensive approach involving (i) social measures such as recreational facilities for young persons and a detached street worker, (ii) improvements in supervision of the buildings by reintroducing concierges, and (iii) administrative measures that decreased the number of families in the housing estate with large numbers of children.

The project was evaluated with the following dramatic results, that the number of offences reported per 100 housing units dropped from over 70 to the average rate for other housing projects of around 30 in the course of a three year period.

The plans were developed in consultation with the residents. Overall the measures were very successful in other ways. The appearance of the buildings was brought back to an acceptable level. Municipal authorities, estate management and residents worked together.

As a result of the evaluation of this project, the Dutch government is contributing to the costs of introducing 150 caretakers into housing estates with social problems. The funding is organised on a decreasing basis, so that it will eventually be taken over by the estates.

In the USA, the *Eisenhower Foundation* has tested a number of programs that invest in disadvantaged youth, often within a quasi-family setting. There are examples of reductions in the potential for persistent offending with teenagers, where gangs have been redirected to positive activities that involve them. Although the samples are small, they provide strong evidence - often with reductions of over 50% in crime rates - for further policies and programs based on these efforts.

For instance, the *House of Umoja* is a residential facility for high risk youth in the community. It is run on the principles of an extended family with all residents signing a contract on the house rules. The two adults in the House assist with individual counselling, advice on education needs, and assistance on vocational training and job location. It places emphasis on the development of self-esteem and peer pressure.

The evaluations of House of Umoja show promise more than irrefutable evidence. Certainly the arrest rates of the participants are substantially lower than for teenagers in the surrounding area.

Another example is the *Perry Pre-school* program, which was initiated as one of a number of experimental head start projects. In this particular one, a special child care program was offered to children aged between 3-5 identified as "at risk" because of the situation of their parents. The program was evaluated by comparing the long term results of the group in the program with a comparable group of children not in the program. This evaluation showed a 20% reduction in arrests and many similar reductions in illiteracy, school competition and the use of welfare.

The program was developed in Ypsilanti, Michigan, in 1962. Black children aged 3 and 4 from low income families were selected and assigned to experimental and control groups. The experimental group received a daily pre-school program for two and a half hours that was supplemented by a home visit each week for about an hour and a half. The children were in the program for two years and were then followed up for research purposes until age 19.

The US Senate has evaluated this as a saving of \$5 in welfare and criminal justice costs for every \$1 invested in the program. In addition there are the savings in the quality of the lives of the persons who were not the victims of offences and the development of the community that avoided losses in investment.

Another example is the *Job Corps* program which provides job training for disadvantaged youth in a context that provides family style structure and support. The results show a 30% reduction in arrests among those who experience the program relative to a control group who did not. This is the equivalent of \$1.45 in direct savings for every \$1 invested.

The US National Research Council (1993) notes that violence is in part learned behaviour: that is, some children learn early that violence gets them the results that they want. So the success of the Norwegian program against *bullying* may be important. The 1983 program emphasised positive involvement from teachers and parents, setting firm limits on what was acceptable using non-violence sanctions. The result was a 50% decrease in bullying with other decreases in thefts, vandalism and truancy.

### **Integrative Partnerships Show Promise**

The effect of inter-agency cooperation is much more long term and harder to quantify. However the preliminary evaluations of the French integrative partnerships through their municipal crime prevention councils show reductions in crime levels across the board. For instance, in the municipalities that first established the municipal crime prevention councils, there were reductions in crime compared to neighbouring communities of between 10 and 15%. This is a major when compared to evaluations of crime prevention projects where the percentage may be higher but the overall numbers of crimes reduced

may only be a very small percentage of all crime in the municipality.

The staff needed to promote an inter-agency committee on crime prevention is not large. It would take some time of the personnel responsible for crime analysis and some time of a senior officer to work with city officials to help them take the responsibility for organising the meetings and acting as an executive secretary to the committee.

The projects that are developed vary from area to area, but include programs to help at risk kids spend their summers out of the city centres where there are few amenities to team work between police, social workers and social housing estates to focus on problems of crime in public housing or the problems of runaway children.

## **VI. NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION FOCUSES ON PARTNERSHIPS IN CITIES**

“Some men look at the world and ask why. I look at the world and ask why not?”

So countries have been experimenting with individual projects for several years. However, the successes have not been used universally in any great degree. It is only in the last decade that countries have begun to set up national agencies to prevent crime. We now see countries such as France, England and Wales, the Netherlands (Borrigan, 1992; Waller, 1989b), Sweden, Australia (particular States), and New Zealand (Waller, 1991) taking these success stories and promoting them across their countries. Canada (particularly the province of Québec) is talking about the same approaches (Canada, 1993; Québec, 1993).

Unfortunately most of these agencies have only embryonic funds and are often hamstrung by the lack of clear legislation that ensure a constructive independence from police agencies, or sets out objectives, a mission and ways to operate.

However, all of these governments have a system for research, development and evaluation, as well as some training programs. They also have some significant funds available to assist local projects. Increasingly the funds are tied through contracts to some type of community action plan for crime prevention that is consistent with what is known to reduce crime.

### **National Crime Prevention Centres Emphasise Integrative Action**

In 1974, Sweden legislated its National Council on the Prevention of Crime. This is a government agency under the Minister of Justice, whose aim is to bring about a long term reduction in crime, alleviate the consequences of crime, and improve public safety.

Its development program is working with municipalities and neighbourhoods on local crime prevention projects, based on a response to the results of long term studies looking at the factors associated with the development of criminal careers. Its research program is concerned with crime and anti-crime measures on violence, immigrant crime, drug abuse and traffic offences. Its information program focuses on policy makers, teachers, police officials and journalists.

It is focussing on projects at the city level such as the Stockholm-project and five projects in other municipalities spread across Sweden. Each of these projects is built on the result of longitudinal research that identifies that social and economic factors that are linked to crime.

In 1983, France established a national crime prevention council chaired by its Prime Minister. This council was influenced by the Swedish model, but involved members of parliament, ministries, city leaders, community representatives and experts in the task of proposing ways to prevent crime. It responded to the Bonnemaïson (1983) Commission recommendations from hearings held by a group of mayors into problems of urban safety.

Today, the council has been integrated in to the national council of cities, but there are over 735 municipal crime prevention councils that involve the regional directors of the housing, education and social services ministries as well as the police and justice leaders. The efforts in France included many programs to tackle the social situations that generate crime, such as youth unemployment or housing estates without recreation and child care services.

One part of the success of the municipal crime prevention councils is the system of “contracting” between the national government and the municipalities, where funds are dependent on the establishment of the municipal council and its analysis of the local crime problems and the remedies available through the housing, social services, school or policing agencies.

In the early 1980s the governments of the Netherlands and England and Wales established governmental units responsible for “crime prevention”. These crime prevention units brought together police, administrators and researchers with some funds to stimulate local projects and distribute information.

One of their activities has been the provision of public information to individual citizens on what they can do to protect themselves individually from crime. The best known document is "Practical Ways to Crack Crime", which has been distributed in many millions of copies to British households.

In 1988, the unit initiated The Safer Cities program to reduce crime, to lessen fear of crime and to create cities where economic enterprise and community life can flourish. The program provides direct funding of \$500,000 plus more substantial indirect funding from other ministries as well as technical assistance to twenty cities - now being extended to 40 cities with lower funding per city - with high crime rates, socio-economic problems and in receipt of state urban support. Each project is staffed by a coordinator, an assistant coordinator and a personal assistance, all recruited locally. The Home Office finances staff salaries and the running costs of all local project offices.

The 20 cities involved in the program have initiated 2,700 crime prevention and community safety measures with close to \$35 million for a population of England and Wales of 49 million. This is less than half the total expenditures on crime prevention - other funds are allocated to research and development, crime prevention unit salaries, training, Crime Concern and public information.

In 1993, the Home Office Minister announced the development of a new National Board for Crime Prevention and decisions to double the number of Safer Cities projects. The National Board will be chaired by the Minister. It will bring together representatives from business and voluntary sectors, industry, commerce and the retail world. There will also be a ministerial group on crime prevention that will bring together 12 government departments to support a general thrust to remove the causes and the opportunities for crime.

In the Netherlands, more than one hundred cities have crime prevention officers whose tasks include both opportunity reduction and social development approaches to crime prevention. Although the Dutch approach is similar to the British, there are three important differences. The first is that a senior official is responsible for the prevention directorate. He reports to the deputy minister as do the director of prisons, courts, etc. As a result, the Dutch criminal justice policy reflects a more logical position for crime prevention throughout its areas of influence.

The second difference is that 10% of all crime prevention funds are spent on evaluation; as a result the Dutch have a good idea as to which of their situational crime prevention programs reduce crime and so into which they can invest more funds.

The third difference is that its budget is already over \$60 million for a population of about 16 million compared to the British budget of approximately \$30 million for a population of close to 50 million.

In 1992, the British government appointed the Morgan Commission to examine what to do about crime that research surveys confirmed was rising. Its recommendations stress the importance of active crime prevention that involves both opportunity reduction and social development approaches. They also stress the importance of municipalities and countries taking a more active role in bringing the various agencies together to plan both short and long term ways to deal with crime. Increasingly British cities have community safety departments that are promoting ways to reduce fear and to reduce crime.

### **Crime Prevention Trusts Promote Integrative Projects and Planning**

In 1980, the *Eisenhower Foundation* was created into the USA to implement the recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Violence from the 1960s. The Foundation has held regular annual debates on public policy on violence in the USA. It has also developed its own program of crime prevention projects addressing the special problems of inner city youth in the USA.

The National Crime Prevention Council in the USA grew out of efforts in the early 1980s to get an advertising campaign going to get citizens to take personal precautions to prevent crime. This has been the basis for a coalition of over one hundred and twenty national and regional organisations working collaboratively on crime prevention. In the last few years, it has turned more of its attention to ways to address the situations that generate violence and drug abuse.

One of its projects is establishing municipal inter-agency crime prevention councils in Texas, where the city of San Antonio has recently created the first official municipal crime prevention commission. The Texas Community Action Plans for Crime Prevention involve a city coordinator in each city, whose job it is to facilitate a process of diagnosing the crime problem, reviewing the various activities that are associated with causing or preventing the growth in crime and then developing plans of action to prevent crime.

This project brings together the key agencies and citizen groups that are interested in the crime issue as well as many of those groups who can tackle the root causes of violence.

A particularly important part of its work has been to help both the public and the media understand the importance of these

preventive approaches to reducing crime. So the plans for prevention have been discussed in the media. Opportunities are also provided for citizens to attend consultation meetings to make suggestions or express concerns about the directions of the plans.

Although some surveys show that the public believes much more in prevention than governments do, the media have been slow to provide this information. Their treatment of crime focuses on the sensational and exceptional, thus contributing to increasing fears of crime and flight from cities. They are also often consumed by playing “gotcha” with police and judges to ensure that individual justice is protected rather than “gotcha” with governments that are allowing the causing of crime to fester.

Crime Concern in the United Kingdom was created as a private trust to stimulate crime prevention activity. It works with police, business, local government, the probation service and voluntary organisations. Its work initially was focussed on neighbourhood watch, crime prevention panels, crime reduction programs, youth initiatives and business and crime. However, it has played a catalytic role in assisting local authorities take responsibility for making their communities safer from crime. Further, many cities have not developed community safety units. It has also played a major role in attracting private sector funding to deal with youth crime prevention.

## **VII. SAFER CITIES NEED LAWS, ACTION PLAN CONTRACTING, COLLECTIVE LEARNING, TRAINING AND FUNDING**

“Together we can make a difference”.

Beyond investing in preventive approaches that work, through structures that provide leadership, there are five considerations that seem essential to the continued success of any crime prevention policy in improving housing, social integration and livable environments in cities.

### **Legislation Provides Direction for Long Term**

There is a need for legislation that clarifies the importance of improving the safety and security of persons and property. This can be achieved through a modification of the mandate of ministries of the interior to make them ministries of public safety and security. But such changes must also establish structures to bring together housing, urban planning, education, policing and social services ministries in a strategic planning exercise that has some implementation mechanism.

The Swedish legislation for its crime prevention council has provided a long term approach to prevention and permanency in the pursuit of ways of making communities safer from crime. Whilst it is a solid approach, its separation from a minister identifiable accountable for safety and security makes it difficult to attract funds comparable to the UN vision of matching policing and criminal justice with active prevention.

While the French point to the large number of municipalities involved in crime prevention, many speculate that the decreased crime prevention council provided needed specificity for crime prevention. In particular the lack of focus on safety and security makes it difficult for adequate funds and technical assistance to be invested into the programs that work. This is compounded by the lack of any evaluation of what works or what might be done to make it work: so ideology rather than science dominates the decisions.

The British tend to shy away from legislation, when administrative measures can be used. So it is not surprising to see their crime prevention unit evolving pragmatically without legislation. Despite the strong evidence of British and international projects that work and the logic for tackling the well established causes of crime (as discussed above), making cities safer from crime remains a minute proportion of the funding and leadership going in to the crime problem. The requirement in the Children’s Act provides one glimmer of hope whereby local government is required to take reasonable steps to encourage children not to commit criminal offences. This Act generally provides for welfare and social services for young persons.

The Dutch have achieved major innovations in relation to crime prevention, through the emphasis that 10% of all central government funding for prevention be devoted to evaluation. The director of prevention reports to the same top public servant as the director of prisons and courts. As a result, its work has influence on the policies of the Ministry of Justice and commands respect from other departments.

### **Contracting for Community Action Plans for Crime Prevention**

Each of the governments makes extensive use for the limited funds of a contracting system, as a way of ensuring that different government and community agencies work together at the local level. In countries such as France, England or the

Netherlands it has become a part of the process for ensuring that crime prevention is effective.

Increasingly the approach calls for (i) an analysis of the crime problem and the conditions that generate it, (ii) a review of the activities tackling those conditions and ways to improve them, (iii) implementation of improvements, and (iv) evaluation of the implementation and its impact on crime so that improvements can be made.

There is a need for this planning to include efforts to forecast developments in crime, policing and the environment in which these will occur. Environmental scanning has become a buzz word for these approaches in North America as police forces and others have adopted the methodology. It is important that these exercises are themselves inter-sectoral; so that the agencies that can influence the undesirable trends are involved from the beginning of the process.

Unfortunately, the contracting process may also lead to the loss of skilled personnel who are unable to be confident of continuing employment. so cities are developing and implementing these contracts.

### **International Centre for Prevention of Crime Accesses Best**

Inter-governmental organisations, governments, cities and non-governmental groups want to exchange experience around municipal approaches to crime prevention, national policies, community policing and victims of violence. International momentum has grown to locate an International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC) in Montreal, which would provide continuing energy to strengthen crime prevention efforts across the world.

The ICPC can contribute to keep governments and communities informed of the latest developments in urban safety and crime prevention, assist in training leaders and practitioners, and fulfil the obligations to the world to help cities control urban insecurity so that they can develop socially and economically.

Few of the proven and logical crime prevention projects are being used universally within the country where they were developed and most communities are not using the methods that work. So the ICPC will respond to the challenge to get proven successes used more. It will adapt the knowledge and experience from successful policies and experiments in one country to combat the threat in another.

It will facilitate the exchange of skills, knowledge and resources of what works to prevent crime between countries and communities. The mission of the ICPC is to strengthen crime prevention and promote communities safe from crime across the world. It will provide technical assistance to governments and cities, financial assistance in developing countries, workshops, seminars and training courses, and position papers and reports. It will have programs on municipal crime prevention, national crime prevention policies, community policing and victims of crime.

### **Training Centres Provide Skills**

There is an urgent need to train the political leaders, executives and practitioners who would implement the policies, programs and projects that will reduce crime. this requires new training programs. In many cases, the cut-backs on government spending provides training facilities that could be redirected to this. Universities, colleges and schools are also important parts of the education and training approach.

The Eisenhower Foundation has proposed the establishment of a special training program for the people who would replicate the many successful inner city programs that the Eisenhower Foundation has helped pioneer.

In England, there is a special Crime Prevention Centre, which is responsible primarily for the training of police officers in crime prevention. It has run some courses for insurance professionals and architects. The Kentucky based National Crime Prevention Institute offers a range of courses to police on how to reduce the opportunities for crime, encourage citizens to take some precautions against crime, and improve relations between police and the public. Both of these would require some re-orientation.

### **Funding of Prevention Provides Community Safety**

Faced by rising crime and rising costs of policing and prisons, the many governments that have developed some crime prevention policies expected it to provide an affordable means of reducing crime. Although the expenditures on crime prevention in these countries remain less than 1% of the expenditures on policing, courts and corrections, many of the individual projects have been shown to reduce crime by 30, 50 or even 70%, through expenditures that are relatively modest.

In these countries, the expenditures on explicit crime prevention policies has been increasing rapidly. For instance in the Netherlands in 1993, the budget for crime prevention was \$60 million, which is equivalent to 1% of the total annual

expenditure on police, criminal justice and prisons.

Ultimately the ability of cities to make their communities safer from crime will depend on the redirection of public and private funding from approaches that are limited in effectiveness towards those that are proven to be effective or have a good chance of being effective because they are based on carefully acquired knowledge or logical approaches.

## **VIII. CONCLUSION FOR AN AUSTRALIA SAFER FROM CRIME**

“Crime is like the weather, we all talk about it but we never do anything about it”.

“The path to hell is paved with good intentions”.

Set out below is an agenda for making for making Australia safer from crime for the 21st Century. It follows from this analysis of crime and its consequences, of the causes of crime and of the limits of outdated mon-sectoral approaches involving traditional cops, courts and corrections that Australia will be slowed down by the failure to focus on safety and security from crime and from continuing to allow scarce resources to be diverted to traditional law enforcement.

So this agenda recalls what has been proven to work, builds on research and logic, reinforces the pioneering efforts of a growing number of countries and cities to make effective prevention a reality and thus give us safer cities that are sustainable. The agenda is based on the content of this paper as well as the agenda accumulated from the international conferences, including recent meetings organised by UNICRI (1993) for the Commonwealth of Independent States in Moscow, during which initial decisions were taken to establish an inter-agency crime prevention approach for Moscow itself based on research and logic, as well as work by ISPAC (1993) to encourage implementation of the UN Declaration on Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power.

### **An Agenda for Australia Safer from Crime**

National and local governments should develop specific crime prevention projects, utilising the experience gained with projects that have been proven effective in reducing crime. Useful models exist of governments which have national crime prevention structures, of cities which have established municipal crime prevention structures, and of individual projects which have reduced various types of criminal activity.

Law enforcement and criminal justice should be matched by active crime prevention policies that reduce the opportunities for crime and tackle the socio-economic situations that generate offending. In this, municipalities may be strategically based to bring together those who can influence the conditions that generate crime. State governments should provide financial and technical support.

Comprehensive crime prevention programs should involve long term action that is responsive to short term needs, with priority to partnerships that find better solutions for child poverty, youth, schooling, housing and policing.

State governments should ensure that state crime prevention structures are established that encourage improved national policies, undertake research and development, promote training, and foster the implementation of effective crime prevention programs, particularly by cities. The Australian Federal government would likely take responsibility for research, evaluation and general coordination. State governments would form “round tables” or commissions on community safety and crime prevention that would provide funding, training and development.

Leaders of cities should develop crime prevention structures to mobilise partnerships between local officials responsible for policies that can influence crime, such as urban planning, housing, schooling, youth and family policy, social services and policing.

The public should be encouraged by local, regional and national governments, and non-governmental groups to participate in comprehensive crime prevention and to understand the importance to community development of implementing effective ways of making communities safer from crime.

Governments, city leaders, police officials and others who can influence the factors generating crime should promote the international and national exchange of ideas and experience. In particular, they should establish links with the United Nations network or institutes, including the proposed International Centre for Prevention of Crime (Montreal).

Policing agencies should seek ways to promote the safety and security of persons and property in collaboration with citizens and agencies, through means that address strategically the factors that generate insecurity.

Governments should give priority to socio-economic and urban needs, particularly the needs to vulnerable groups such as

children, women and minorities.

Particular attention should be paid to the prevention of violence against children at early ages, and to the prevention of violence in situations where it commonly occurs, such as in school or the workplace. "Facilitators" which contribute to the extent and severity of violence, such as alcohol, firearms or depictions of violence in the media, should be controlled.

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Borricand, Jacques (1992) La Prévention de la criminalité en milieu urbain, Aix-en-Provence: Institut de sciences pénales et de criminologie.

It overviews crime prevention policies in Britain, Canada, France, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain and Sweden with chapters written by leading persons in those countries. It covers the role of local victimisation surveys in crime prevention.

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This book looks at crime trends and policies in eight of the world's major cities from Tokyo to Lagos. It overviews the importance of strong traditional social controls and equality to crime prevention as well as the difficulties of urbanisation, industrialisation, population growth and mobility. It stresses the gap between the calls for global crime prevention planning and their implementation as well as limited progress with secondary crime prevention approaches.

Canada (1993) Crime Prevention in Canada: Towards a National Strategy/Prevention du Crime au Canada: Vers une Stratégie Nationale, Standing Committee on Justice and Solicitor General (Chairman Bob Horner).

It proposes a federal role in crime prevention, including a national policy, a national council, funding, ministerial responsibility, the international centre, a preamble to the Criminal Code, victimisation surveys, violence prevention, selected criminal justice responses and specific powers of arrest. It focuses on a combination of opportunity reduction, social development and community based policing. It overviews trends and costs of crime in Canada, the factors associated and the safer communities approach.

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This RCMP conference brings together international expertise on the future of policing. The themes relate to the state, local issues, inter-agency cooperation, social development, voluntary organisations and the private sector, institutional changes and leadership, issues for Justice, Solicitor General and RCMP as well as women. It makes recommendations about dealing with crime prevention seriously, tackling underlying factors, focussing on youth and minorities, targeting crime and disorder, changing traditional policing, increasing research and evaluation, fostering partnerships between different agencies, and stressing the role of local community.

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This extensive volume contains a social strategy for crime prevention as well as overviews of longitudinal studies, crime prevention in Canada, France England and the USA. The strategy was developed by the CCJA in association with CCSD, CCCY, CACP, FCM and NAFC. It analyses why people commit crime, what needs to be done in Canada, who should do it and how to make it happen.

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This demonstration report shows the strong correlations between selected socio-demographic variables and crime for Census data and Uniform Crime Reports for Canada in 1986. It discusses QUICKSTAT, which can be used for doing this analysis at a municipal level as a tool for crime prevention planning.

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It provides a comprehensive analysis of the theory and experience of reducing opportunities for crime. He overviews the twelve techniques of situational crime prevention under the headings of increasing the effort, increasing the risks and reducing the rewards - covering everything from steering locks, CCTV, concierges to PINs. The 22 chapters give details on successful case examples.

Crime Concern (1992) Family, School and Community: Towards a social crime prevention agenda. Swindon.

This report provides a major synthesis of both the British and the International research on the role of the family, school, community and housing in causing crime as well as directions for a common agenda to tackle these causes.

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One of its many publications of the effectiveness of social prevention projects and on national policy that would reduce drugs and crime in the USA. This Foundation was established to implement the recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Violence. It is based on the principles that (i) research and evaluation must be the basis of effective prevention and (ii) replicating the successful programs with training and funding in support is the way to develop policy.

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It focuses on partnerships between housing, social services, schools, police and other agencies, in a long term approach that is responsive to the short term, with financial support, and with political leadership at local national levels.

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For the 1991 International Conference on Urban Safety, Drugs and Crime Prevention in Paris, this book brings together the final declaration, an analysis of the discussions, the introductory report on trends in crime and crime prevention, and the scientific report on research and crime prevention policy. The conference included many ministers (of justice, police and youth), mayors, police leaders, community workers, researchers and crime prevention specialists.

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This uses imaginative graphics in communicating basic information about crime and criminal justice to politicians, journalists and the public. It includes sections on crime and victimisation trends, use of police, courts and prisons as well as

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The recommendations include those that will prevent violence and improve urban policies for safer communities as well as ways to respond to those persons who suffer victimisation.

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This landmark book synthesises the systematic knowledge on the causes of violence from a biological, psychosocial, situational, public health and social perspective. It focuses on alcohol, drugs, family violence and firearms. It recommends efforts improving early childhood development, anti-bullying programs in schools, socio-economic structure, police intervention in illegal markets for guns and drugs, and violence related public health research spending.

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A leaflet overview of the T-CAP program - Community Action Plan to Prevent Crime, developed as part of MUSCLE (Mayors United for Safe Community and Law Enforcement). T-CAP is the first major effort in the USA to apply the best of British, Swedish, French and Dutch thinking.

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It explores the links between fear, crime and disorder (groups of youths on street corners, vandalism, street prostitution, begging ...). The decriminalisation of disorder poses a major problem to municipalities, which has not been faced. It recommends action by police, community, economic development, designing out, and care and treatment.

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This policy announced the first Minister for Crime Prevention in the world.

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Drawing on the experiences, such as those of Los Angeles, Newport News and London, it explores innovative police approaches to dealing with spiralling crime rates and demands for service. It gives examples of how problems oriented policing working with communities has transformed drug infested neighbourhoods, crumbling public housing projects, and racial conflicts. It proposes reconstituting the police values, accountability, partnerships and experimentation.

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This resolution calls for active prevention policies reinforcing common values, social and community development, and reducing opportunities for offending. Prevention must match police and criminal justice policies. It recommends action in relation to family, childhood, youth, justice, violence, housing and community development, alcohol, drugs, police, victims, prevention of recidivism, and communications. These require support at the national and local level.

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Negative trends in crime are challenging industrialised nations. This report goes from UN decisions to examine relative rates in crime, the social factors associated with crime, the limits of police, courts and corrections, the trends in prevention in selected countries, examples of successful projects, and proposed permanent crime prevention structures, funding and legislation, ways to tackle the social causes and ways to work with the public.

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This overviews national trends in crime prevention for France, England and the Netherlands. It summarises the recommendations on crime prevention of the Council of Europe's committees on both crime problems and local and

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It discusses concrete ways to reduce residential break-ins in Canada by improving the programs such as neighbourhood watch. It looks at the potential for community based policing to achieve real reductions in crime. It concludes with the police role in promoting community agency responsibility for crime prevention and the arguments for allocating resources to citizen and community agency crime prevention.

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# DEVELOPING A NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY POLICY

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Thank you for the opportunity to speak at this conference. I am here to present the central ideas from the Discussion Paper issued last year by the Federal Justice Office, *Creating a Safer Community - Crime Prevention and Community Safety into the Twenty-first Century*. The theme of this Conference mirrors the theme of the Discussion Paper closely. The Discussion Paper presents the case for rational forward-looking action on improving community well-being. It rejects the alternative approach - that of chaos - as inappropriate given the enormity and seriousness of the issue at hand.

As Australia approaches the twenty-first century, it is at a cross-roads in its national crime prevention effort. Like many other countries, Australia experiences unacceptable levels of crime. More than \$4 billion is spent each year on the criminal justice system across the nation. At this time, governments could choose to re-allocate their budget priorities and spend even more money on law enforcement. Or, they could look for new ways of tackling the crime problem.

Without a new approach to crime prevention and community safety, increasing spending will merely exacerbate the frustration currently facing our law enforcement agencies and will do little to reduce the fear of crime existing in many sections of our community. Australian police services themselves acknowledge that traditional policing methods alone cannot succeed in substantially reducing crime rates.

## The Need For a National Crime Prevention and Community Safety Policy

As crime is a quality of life issue affecting all Australians, it must be addressed nationally. The Discussion Paper suggests that all sectors of the community ought to be more involved in crime prevention. We must move away from an over-reliance on police and other law enforcement and regulatory bodies in our attempt to control crime. This in no sense diminishes the role or the functions of police services. Rather, through the development of more effective partnerships with the community our national policing efforts will be enhanced.

A national policy will serve a number of purposes:

- It will articulate a vision and serve as a rationale to broaden the type and number of individuals and organisations that play an active role in reducing crime in Australia;
- It will act as a focus for implementation of agreed measures to overcome the present obstacles to effective crime prevention;
- A national policy will give crime prevention a higher profile in government and in the community;
- A national policy will assist in achieving a unified approach to the crime problem as requested by police, crime prevention advocates (Hogan, 1991) and those dealing with juvenile offenders (Sidoti, 1992);
- A national policy will reduce the ad hoc approach which has seen the establishment of unconnected programs.

Key components of such a policy include vision, values, political leadership, responsibility, coordination and integration of policy and evaluation. Strategic actors will include community organisations, governments, public administration, policing, the corporate sector, professional organisations and the media. The participation of these actors, among others, will contribute to the development and implementation of a successful community safety and crime prevention policy.

For crime prevention and control policies to be effective there is a need for integration and coordination. This needs to occur across the three spheres of government and within and between government departmental elements and the community. At present, most agencies not assigned a specific crime control function do not realise, do not acknowledge, or do not place a high priority on the impact of their functions on crime. This problem could be overcome by making all agencies aware of the role they play in creating the conditions for crime to flourish.

An effective national crime prevention policy must recognise that solely relying on law enforcement to prevent crime is unrealistic. A strategic approach must focus on acting proactively, rather than responding to crises as they occur. Although crime prevention has always been part of policing, it has been unable to engage all parts of government, other law enforcement agencies and sections of the community to prevent crime and maintain community safety (Sutton, 1992).

Law enforcement interests are often not the primary concern in government decision-making. A national policy will assist the community define its responsibilities and thereby bolster effort towards achieving community safety. It will articulate the principles which support crime prevention and law enforcement endeavours.

A national approach to community safety and crime prevention builds upon a number of programs developed within the law enforcement arena since the early 1980s. Australian police services have increasingly adopted community policing strategies. The broader community is a vital part of this initiative. As it became obvious that increasing police numbers produced little in the way of reducing crime statistics some State Governments developed major crime prevention strategies and partnerships with their communities. These initiatives will benefit from integration with similar efforts in other jurisdictions and portfolios. A national policy will help in achieving this integration.

The Federal Government holds the primary responsibility for national economic and social policies. As a result it has a crucial role in addressing the environment in which criminal activity exists. It is important that a national problem be tackled by all parts of the Australian community. As a result, the integration of Federal, State, Territory and local government initiatives, combined with community efforts, will elicit the most effective means of tackling crime and improving community safety.

### Towards a National Crime Prevention and Community Safety Policy

There are a number of essential ingredients when developing such a national crime prevention and community safety policy. It requires recognition of the need for change, people with enthusiasm and vision for change and commitment to change.

It requires acknowledgment that the current criminal justice system is not coping as well as it could be with the demands placed on it. People who can move beyond established views and practices and develop new possibilities will be needed if we are to move away from our present over-reliance on a government focus from crime prevention, to one involving a wider range of institutions and organisations, communities and individuals influencing the social environment in which crime occurs.

### Fundamental Principles

The principle elements of such a policy might include:

- **Vision**

This refers to the ability to develop a just and safe society through integration of government policy and inclusion of community views through consultation and the development of partnerships.

- **Values**

This refers to the ability to identify the central beliefs of the Australian community so these can start to be addressed through programs and policy development.

- **Political Leadership**

Bipartisan support in reducing opportunities for crime by consideration of the impact of crimes across all areas of policy-making is essential when framing such a policy.

- **Responsibility**

Another key component will be convincing the community that crime control is the responsibility of all members of society.

- **Co-ordination and Integration**

Awareness of the need for integration of policies to avoid any unintended consequences which may create opportunities for crime will be critical to the success of such a policy.

- **Evaluation**

Unless objects evaluation is undertaken of crime prevention programs, little will be known about what works.

## Integral Participants

### **The Community**

The community needs to be encouraged to take responsibility for crime prevention by becoming involved in decision-making. In order to achieve this end, government bodies must consult widely with the community and not impose their own solutions.

Peak community agencies may identify crime problems affecting them which will be useful in finding community solutions.

Education imparting values and identifying actions which may lead to a safer community will play a major role in this approach to crime prevention.

It is vital that the community becomes involved in the development of crime prevention strategies on a national level, through participation in the decision-making process when programs and services are planned and through taking responsibility for local crime prevention measures.

### **Governments**

Governments have a role in crystallising a vision of Australian society and in providing leadership to achieve that goal. Through strategic planning and information provision (dissemination and evaluation information on crime prevention programs and policies) governments can encourage the community to develop and deliver the most appropriate crime prevention plans for their own local communities.

There are various ways governments may meet these roles including:

- through liaison with communities on policy initiatives for reducing offending;
- through the establishment of broadly based social policy committees to consider crime problems;
- through support from government research bodies;
- through periodic legislative review to ensure laws reflect community standards; and
- through publicity about the value of crime prevention initiatives.

### **Public Administration**

Public administrators have a key role to play in assisting the community to achieve its vision of a safe and secure environment.

Government bureaucracies can assist through integrated policy development and program delivery.

Municipal and local councils already undertake many crime prevention initiatives as local service and program providers. It is from this sphere that programs of best practice will emerge as long as objective evaluations are adopted.

Public sector employees need to interact across horizontal and vertical levels of government policy development and program delivery, and to look more broadly to non-government sectors and the wider community to achieve crime prevention objectives.

For the community to support its public sector, clear policies on ethical behaviour need to be developed and implemented within government departments. The Public Sector has made significant advances in this area by reducing corruption. This needs to expand as a priority to establish government efforts towards crime prevention.

### **Policing**

The focus of policing into the twenty-first century will be the maintenance of peaceful public behaviour most visibly through operational police work. This will be achieved through continued emphasis on community policing.

Recent and continuing professionalism of the police occupation is being developed by initiatives of the Commissioners of Police and the Australasian Police Minister's Council. This is evident in police training which places greater emphasis on working with the community to address existing crime concerns.

Police will remain a focal point for community crime prevention as they continue to hold a mandate to protect public security. Due to this authority, their organisational structure and geographic distribution they have the capability to react promptly when required.

Police share the crime prevention role with other agencies, organisations and the wider community. Greater emphasis will need to be placed on a crime prevention approach, if it is to become central to the police structure, operations and ethics.

Police, as leaders and facilitators in the crime prevention field, should encourage the community to take some responsibility for crime prevention.

### **Corporate Sector**

As corporate citizens, the business and corporate sectors legally and morally have a responsibility to contribute to community life by safeguarding employees, customers and clients and the security of their products.

Businesses have a responsibility to facilitate crime prevention by limiting the possibility of fraud and other corruption within the work environment and to assist law enforcement agencies in their activities.

By upholding a high ethical standard in their business practice, the corporate sector will continue to be held in high regard by much of the community and will consequently continue to influence public attitudes to crime.

The corporate sector may assist crime prevention efforts and the wider community through funding and involvement in crime prevention activities.

### **Professional Organisations**

Professional Organisations have a similar role to play as the corporate sector. By upholding high ethical standards, members of these groups can influence public attitudes to crime and the role of crime prevention.

### **The Media**

The media, widely defined, is influential in determining ways in which we view society, learn about and conceptualise its problems and define its solutions (Wardlaw, O'Malley & Stobo, 1992). The media represents the world through images and reflects citizens attitudes and opinions and this influences general social attitudes and beliefs. As a result the media has a responsibility to exercise its power objectively and reliably. As such the media is a necessary element in any major crime prevention policy.

### **CONCLUSION**

Clearly there is a need to re-orient our crime prevention efforts to address the causes of crime and to recognise that crime prevention is fundamentally a community responsibility. Attempts to reduce the costs of crime need to be more widely targeted than at present. While it is important to improve the capabilities of our law enforcement agencies, it is also important to seek ways of dealing more effectively with crime outside the criminal justice system. This best done by empowering institutions closer to the source of the problem in the community to play a more active part. It is also important that economic and social policies be developed and implemented with an eye to their potential to influence the conditions which might reduce criminal opportunities and behaviour. A national policy, as part of a broader national strategy on crime prevention and community safety will contribute to achieving a safer and more secure society in Australia.

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# NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION: CAN REASON TRIUMPH OVER CHAOS?

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**\* Since the first author wrote the majority of this paper and is its presenter, any errors or omissions are principally her responsibility. The remarks contained in this paper are the sole responsibility of the authors. They are NOT statements of policy or practice for either the Commonwealth Government, Federal Justice Office or the Public Interest Advocacy Centre.**

Compared with many other Western countries, Australia's interest in crime prevention has lagged by a decade. Now practically all State, Territory and a number of Local Governments are working on crime prevention initiatives. This has led to national initiatives sponsored by the Australasian Police Ministers' Council (APMC), such as convening a National Conference on Community Safety and Crime Prevention held in Melbourne on 19 November 1992. Conference outcomes included endorsement 'in principle' of a national strategy for community safety and the formation of an Australian Community Safety Council (ACSC) to meet before September 1993.

This paper outlines the case for a national strategy as a reasoned approach. It argues that Australia's federal structure, which assigns responsibility for employment, industry and a wide range of social and welfare services to the Commonwealth and leaves States and Territories responsible for criminal justice, has created particular obstacles to the development of a coordinated national approach. Nonetheless, such an approach is needed, if Australia is to begin to address some of the underlying structural problems - such as long term youth unemployment - which may contribute to crime and other anti-social behaviour. A national strategy provides the vehicle for articulating a clearer vision and more consistent policy directions for crime prevention, avoids duplication of effort and should ensure more adequate evaluation. The clear conclusion is only through a national strategy and its implementation can reason triumph over chaos, or at least a lack of action.

For more than a decade, the seriousness of the crime problem has been identified in many countries, including Australia. The limitations of law enforcement in particular and criminal justice solutions in general have been increasingly reiterated. A growing body of research suggests that the impact of traditional criminal policy on crime trends has been minimal, since the root causes of crime lie outside the purview of the criminal justice system. Solely relying on law enforcement to prevent crime is unrealistic (Solarz, 1993).

Initially in this paper, we will summarise some of the international trends through the United Nations and other country's initiatives in crime prevention that provide encouragement and models for the distinctively Australian approach to national crime prevention presently under consideration.

"The United Nations (UN) has been developing its role in crime prevention and community safety. This is evidenced by the restructuring of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs to create the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch and the convening of the Second International Conference on Urban Safety, Drugs and Crime Prevention, Paris, 18-20 November 1991. Australia was well represented by a large delegation headed by the then Attorney-General, Michael Duffy" (Duncan, 1993, pp. 5-6).

The challenge identified by that Conference was to provide "new expectations of community safety, given that we have already created in communities' expectations of health, life expectancy, education, leisure, household appliances and freedom, but at the same time have allowed crime to increase" (Waller, 1992, p. 6).

"Furthermore, the specific challenges are to: curb unacceptable levels of interpersonal violence, property crime, illicit drug use and fear; recognise that safety from crime has deteriorated during 40 years of progress in respect to other quality of life issues; acknowledge world class cities are increasingly unsafe for residents and visitors alike; and recognise that paying for more police and prisons is not enough to stem the tide and is no longer affordable" (Duncan, 1993, p. 6).

The international focus is now clearly on "prevention rather than repair - 'draining the swamp of alligators rather than fighting them' - moving beyond band-aids for communities that are haemorrhaging. It focuses on prevention by those who can change the situations that generate crime" (Waller, 1992, p. 6).

In 1990, the UN provided "a blue print for the action" when it adopted the resolution on the "prevention of urban crime", developed at the 8th United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders. "The resolution states that prevention must bring together those with responsibility for dealing with the conditions that generate crime; that is, those with responsibilities for planning and development, the family, health, employment and training, housing, social services, leisure activities, schools, the police and the justice system" (Waller, 1992, p. 7).

"The (UN) resolution calls for strategies to combat attitudes and values, such as intolerance, the glorification of violence, particularly as portrayed in the media, and those which reinforce inequalities in society. It calls for practical assistance to

victims of crime and the prevention of recidivism of offenders.

It sees the solutions as involving partnerships between different spheres of government and different social, urban and criminal justice agencies. These groups must be involved in the diagnosis of the problems and the formulation of coherent and targeted responses" (Waller, 1992, p.7).

The UN resolution "calls on national governments to: implement long term solutions, yet to be responsive to short term needs; and ensure the co-ordination of the public, private and voluntary agencies that can deal with the situations that generate crime.

Governments must look to approaches that are 'preventive', that is, tackling the situations that generate crime before it occurs. They must include: prevention efforts that reduce crime through social and community development; the reduction of opportunities for crime; community and modern policing; and the fostering of common values, consistent with United Nations standards. Special efforts are necessary to restrict the availability of guns and substance abuse" (Waller, 1992, p. 7).

If Australia needed further convincing that the UN endorsed approach to crime prevention is our best hope for crime control, "the USA affords a glaring example of the limited impact of criminal justice responses". Despite expenditures exceeding (USD) \$70 billion on police, courts and corrections and imprisonment rates higher than for any other country releasing incarceration data, every hour approximately 200 Americans become victims of violence. In 1991, the US Senate Judiciary Committee concluded from FBI data on violent crime that in 1990 the USA "led the world with its murder, rape and robbery rates" (Weiner, 1991). Clearly, costly repressive measures alone fail to deter crime (Horner, 1993, p. 2).

In February 1993, the Canadian Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General "unanimously (agreed that) crime prevention is the best policy choice. This Committee accepted that crime will always be with us in one form or another, and will require police, court and correctional interventions. At the same time, it argued that our collective response to crime must be shifted to crime prevention and focus increasingly on at-risk young people and on the underlying social and economic factors associated with crime and criminality. This comprehensive approach involves partnerships between governments, criminal justice organisations, and community agencies and groups. And it situates the crime problem in a community context and sees its solution as a social question" (Horner, 1993, p. 2). Many witnesses before this Committee noted that a major limitation to this approach was "a lack of awareness among politicians and bureaucrats that responsibility for crime problems goes beyond law enforcement and the criminal justice system" (Horner, 1993, p. 12).

In spite of this apathy in some politicians and bureaucrats, a wide understanding of the need to adopt preventive strategies has grown internationally and is reflected in the UN resolution that member nations must look to "approaches that are 'preventive', specifically, tackling the situations that generate crime **before** it occurs" (Waller, 1992, p. 7). To facilitate crime prevention those with responsibility for dealing with the conditions that generate crime must be brought together; that is, those with responsibilities for "planning and development, the family, health, employment and training, housing, social services, leisure activities, schools, the police and the justice system" (Waller, 1992, p. 7). Both social and situational crime prevention strategies at primary, secondary and tertiary levels are necessary components in an effective law enforcement and crime control strategy (Horner, 1993, p.15).

The Canadian Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General has recommended the adoption of the safer communities approach to crime prevention, based on the following principles (Horner, 1993, p.12):

- the community is the focal point of effective crime prevention;
- the community needs to identify and respond to short and long term needs;
- crime prevention efforts should bring together individuals from a range of sectors to tackle crime; and
- strategies for preventing crime should be supported by the whole community.

The Committee identified one inhibiting factor in the development of the safer communities approach as the segmentation of programs and services and recommended better coordinated responses to crime including both vertical and horizontal coordination. "Vertical coordination integrates responses among the various levels of government. Horizontal coordination involves inter-departmental and inter-agency cooperation at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. (It was stressed that) the safer communities approach integrates various strategies to reduce fear and prevent crime. These strategies include the reduction of opportunities to commit crime, social development and community-based policing as well as traditional legal measures" (Horner, 1993, p. 15).

The safer communities approach to crime policy is clearly under consideration in Canada and generally recommended by

the United Nations. Countries such as France, the Netherlands, Sweden and New Zealand have developed and actioned such policy directions for some years now. To summarise their initiatives:

In France, the widely hailed and so-called Bonnemaison Approach is based on the general philosophy of “Opposing Crime: Prevention, Repression, Solidarity”. Although initially developed by a Committee of Mayors, the Central Government plays an important role through the Conseil National de Prevention de la Delinquance (CNPD). The CNPD is presided over by the Prime Minister and includes among its 80 members, mayors, members of Parliament, representatives from the six ministries, trade union and employer groups, and from national organisations involved in crime prevention and people ‘specially qualified’ by their knowledge and experience. The National Council is required to meet at least once a year as a plenary body, and it is at these meetings that general policies are formulated (King, 1989, pp. 6-7).

“There are now over 500 Crime Prevention Councils at local level and the number is increasing. Crime prevention is generally planned and implemented by each town or city council. The police, who are represented on local crime prevention councils, are guided to a certain extent by community requirements... Funding for crime prevention is provided by the national government to a large extent (at the rate of less than A\$9m per annum), but (is also) supported by local government and the private sector. There is a national agency known as the National Committee for Districts of Social Development, which examines local crime prevention programs, assesses them, ensures they do not overlap adjacent areas and sees that no council area gets more advantage than another.

Ultimately, a written contract is drawn up between the national and local government, where each undertakes to achieve the objectives of the crime prevention program proposed. Funding is then provided to do this. Crime prevention programs are directed towards social justice strategies including:

- education of young people;
- re-training of those who failed to cope in the education system;
- better housing;
- employment;
- adequate health services;
- aid to victims of crime;
- better conditions for immigrants and ethnic minority groups;
- drug abuse treatment;
- after school activities for the young; and
- provision of youth, cultural, training and recreational centres in each council area...

In summary,... the ‘Bonnemaison’ strategy (has) in fact (been) replicated in many cities and towns across France (driven by their national crime prevention strategy and) provided there was:

- commitment by Government;
- an organisation established to coordinate local strategies and policies;
- funding;

and at local level, there was a crime prevention council chaired by the mayor with representatives from the:

- crime prevention bureau;
- victims of crime unit;
- community youth centre;
- cultural centre (education);
- training centre (training, education and development);
- private industry;
- medical unit; and
- police...

The Crime Prevention Council (CPC), with the representatives referred to above, meets regularly to review developments and plan future initiatives as part of the community policing process. The Crime Prevention Council produced very detailed records on the outcomes of the various programs and their budget costs. It appears that their successes in Epinay were due to strong leadership by the Mayor and his deputy with a willingness by everyone to participate in the problem solving by open communication at frequent meetings. In other words, they discarded some of the traditional rivalries between professions” (Cornish, 1991, pp. 187-191).

The Netherlands has a “centralised bureaucracy which formulates policy for the government on crime prevention”. Most of their crime prevention policy is described in their Government’s policy paper Society and Crime (1985) and is based around

three principles:

- “Crime must be dealt with not just by prosecution of offenders, but by society as a whole.
- Distinctions must be made between serious offences and common crimes.
- There must be close coordination between the police, prosecutors and local government” (Cornish, 1991, p. 191).

“The Prime Minister chairs a Committee whose members are the heads of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Interior. They have a budget of A\$5 million per year for subsidising seventy different municipalities with 250 crime prevention projects. The universities are also given a large budget to conduct independent research into crime prevention methods.

The government in Holland believes that more police and more resources put into the police forces and courts are not satisfactory ways of tackling crime prevention; they believe there needs to be a Minister, preferably one with a high profile, specifically responsible for crime prevention. The feature about Holland is that unlike Australia, much of the programming and determination of enforcement procedures is carried out by local government under the direction of the local mayor. In Holland, local mayors are appointed by the government;... in contrast to France (and Australia) where they are elected” (Cornish, 1991, pp. 191-192).

Professor Irvin Waller (1992) has argued: “Sweden provides the single best model for the future with its national agency (BRA) with the independence to keep an eye on the long term while learning from those countries that have developed partial approaches to crime prevention” (p.39). Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention or BRA, “uses:

- research knowledge as a basis for action;
- evaluation to refine action;
- opportunity reduction to reduce occasional offending;
- social development to reduce the numbers of persistent offenders;
- understanding of partnerships between agencies at the local level; and
- a national agency to provide research, development, training and evaluation assistance at the local level” (Waller, 1992, p. 39).

“Although a Council in name, it is actually a research institute, with a purely advisory capacity. It does not have the power to issue directives. Its principal activities consist of surveys, research and information clearinghouse functions. With its staff of 40 persons, it operates as a separate agency under the Ministry for Justice. Its role is to promote crime prevention measures in different sectors of society and work for the coordination of measures taken by the government and individuals against crime” (Lidgard & Jones, 1992a, p. 9).

“New Zealand has a Prime Ministerial Safer communities Council, which is a body consisting of: key Ministers of the Crown representing Police, Justice, Labour, Housing, Education, Transport, Social Welfare, Health, Internal Affairs, Youth Affairs, Women’s Affairs, Maori Affairs and Local Government; and Mayors of four municipalities to preside over the development of a pilot programme, for an initial period of two years (from July, 1990), in the promotion of safer communities and a strategic approach to crime prevention” (Lidgard & Jones, 1992a, p. 7).

In New Zealand, “the development of crime prevention is as a distinct, but complimentary process within the general crime justice system. As central government withdraws further from the delivery of social services, the onus on providing resources for local government, and in turn, the communities themselves, grows accordingly. The job of central government agencies is to help develop policies and facilitate their application at local level - not to be the (service) providers. It is important to instil the feeling that the ownership and control of the various approaches is located at local level. Any attempt, in the New Zealand context, to impose crime prevention on communities is going to be met with hostility.

The idea of promoting a broader approach to crime prevention than had hitherto prevailed was first examined seriously by an Interdepartmental officials Committee on Crime Prevention (New Zealand, 1989), which was charged with analysing the French crime prevention initiative and to apply the key principles to the New Zealand situation. The Committee were concerned with establishing criteria for projects, liaison with local government authorities, and for considering funding issues” (Oughton, 1992, p. 19).

The Officials Committee identified five major objectives for a New Zealand Crime Prevention initiative (Oughton, 1992, p.

19-10):

1. To foster recognition that crime and crime prevention are issues that concern all the community and that the control of prevention of crime cannot be the responsibility of the various agencies of social control and law enforcement alone.
2. To provide a forum at the local community level to identify crime problems affecting that community and coordinate the resources and expertise of local government, government departments, statutory authorities, private organisations, educational institutions, individuals, and where appropriate, relevant cultural authorities and other organisations to address the problems identified.
3. To facilitate and promote local initiatives focusing on crime, its prevention, and the context in which crime occurs.
4. To promote the development of effective crime prevention initiatives, which are suited to New Zealand; in particular, taking account of the status of the Maori people.
5. To promote and support worthwhile crime prevention projects.

"Many of the perceptions underlying the development of crime prevention initiatives in France and other countries were seen to have their parallels in the New Zealand context. New Zealand had not only seen a significant rate of increase in offending rates at all levels, but this had been matched by an increase in the concern about crime, and the fear of becoming a victim of crime.

The interest of the Department of Justice in crime prevention derived from its concern to 'protect the community and to promote social order'. Traditionally, these goals had been pursued through the corrections system, including the provision of rehabilitative services. These are all reactive measures. That is, they take place after a crime has occurred. The Department (of Justice) believed, and still does, that proactive measures are required, particularly to divert young people from entering what is seen as the 'cycle of crime'.

In the sense that it is designed to contribute to community protection, and community stability, crime prevention is integral to community well-being and community development. It is, therefore, related to the responsibilities of most governmental agencies. Certainly, no one agency has a monopoly on crime prevention and, except in certain respects, this responsibility is not the sole prerogative of centralised bureaucracies. Efforts to make communities safe, or healthy, and to promote productive and cooperative activities within communities need to be made by central government in partnership with local communities" (Oughton, 1992, p. 20).

"On 6 April 1992, (the New Zealand) Cabinet established the Crime Prevention Action Group (CPAG) with a brief to develop a strategy for crime prevention and make specific proposals to achieve that strategy (CPAG, 1992, p. 1). CPAG released a "Strategy Paper on Crime Prevention" in October 1992 using the following "definition of *crime prevention* provided by Kaiser (Graham, 1990):

*"... all those measures which have the specific intention of minimising the breadth and severity of offending, whether via a reduction in the opportunities to commit crime or by influencing potential offenders and the general public".*

CPAG argued that "an effective crime prevention strategy needs to take a comprehensive approach combining the active involvement of the community and the focused management of Government's resources. One of the central themes of their report was the need for the New Zealand Government to adopt a strategic approach to crime prevention because:

- crime results in substantial economic, personal and social costs to New Zealanders;
- the predominant response to crime has been directed at the processing of offenders rather than focusing on prevention;
- responses to crime by police, the judiciary government and private and public sector community groups have been fragmentary and uncoordinated, resulting in conflicting objectives, duplication of effort, competition for, and poor utilisation of resources;
- there have been calls for a strategic approach to crime prevention from both within New Zealand and overseas;
- overseas experience indicates that strategic planning is effective in addressing problems caused by

criminal offending" (CPAG, 1992, p. 2).

Waller in evidence before the Canadian Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General contended: "Canada is one of the few industrialised countries in the world without a national program to prevent crime" (Horner, 1993, p.23). It seems that Canadian and Australian interest in crime prevention has lagged by a decade compared with many other Western countries. Fortunately for now approaching two years, the Australasian Police Ministers' Council (APMC) has finally begun the long process of developing a national community safety and crime prevention structure and strategy for Australia. This action was "prompted by a number of things including: community concern about crime in general; the movement towards community-based structures overseas and within most Australian States and Territories; the increasing number and diversity of crime prevention programs in Australia; and a feeling that the contribution that social policy can make to reducing crime has not been adequately explored" (Jones & Lidgard, 1992, p. 1).

As you can see by the aforementioned, APMC action was in the context of international pressures on Australia to act on crime prevention from a national perspective. At the same time, the impact of internal pressures for action should not be underestimated.

For example, at the conclusion of the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) sponsored "National Overview on Crime Prevention" Conference held in Adelaide, 4-6 June 1991, Michael Hogan gave a paper entitled: "Towards a National Approach to Crime Prevention". It set out a challenge to mature crime prevention in this country by bringing together criminal and social justice policies. The co-author and presenter of this paper was a member of that audience and then worked for the ACT Government in Police Affairs and Law Enforcement. On her return from Adelaide, she sent a copy of Michael's paper to staff with the Office of the Minister for Justice, then Senator Tate. By September of that year, she started work for the Law Enforcement Co-ordination now Policy Branch of the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department and before the year ended found herself working on national crime prevention policy.

After that digression, we must return to Michael's seminal paper and the central framework necessary for a coherent policy for national crime prevention. He prefaced his remarks with this continuing challenge:

*"It is time for a national approach to crime and its prevention. It is costing the country too much money and too much waste of scarce human and economic resources; there is too much inequality in the treatment of people between jurisdictions; there are international obligations to be fulfilled; there is much to be learnt from the lessons of the rich diversity of schemes at State and local levels; and much to be gained from a coordinated, comprehensive, and co-operative venture" (Hogan, 1992, p. 180).*

The Hogan challenge for a national approach to crime prevention included (1992, p. 180-181):

- The exercise of some executive responsibility within the Federal Government:
  - (a) with the Attorney-General or Minister for Justice taking overall coordinating responsibility for Crime Prevention; and
  - (b) supported by other relevant Ministers in a specially convened Cabinet sub-committee.
- A National Crime Prevention Strategy should be developed in consultation with all levels of government and the non-government sectors. The Strategy would articulate the driving principles and goals, specifying the potential roles of various agencies, and announcing some program initiatives.
- A research centre addressing crime prevention would need to be established along similar lines to the UK Home Office Crime Prevention Unit. Alternatively, the Australian Institute of Criminology is already well placed to build upon its research, program evaluation, data analysis, education and training in the crime prevention field, to fulfil the role of a National Research Centre and Information Clearinghouse for Crime Prevention.
- Just as the Economic Planning Advisory Council has produced a study of the national impact of immigration, a National Study on the Impact of Crime and Criminal Justice would be extraordinarily valuable.
- Funding, possible a joint Commonwealth/State initiative, would be necessary to consolidate, promote and expand upon the existing rather paltry efforts. This should encourage the 'bottom up' approach of local initiatives, with a solid commitment to evaluation.

In this final section, we summarise the APMC background. Major Australian State initiatives likely to be the subject of more

detailed presentations at this Conference are summarised in Attachment A. "At the 21st APMC meeting on 22 November 1991, the then Victorian Police Minister introduced a paper entitled A National Approach to Crime and Violence. Drawing on the Victorian experience with their Public Safety and Anti-Crime Council, and also on relevant overseas experience, the paper argued for a social policy approach to crime prevention through the establishment of a national council.

Police Ministers were attracted to the ideas in the paper, but wanted the benefit of a more detailed examination. They therefore resolved:

- (a) to support in principle the establishment of a National Safety and Crime Prevention Council noting that the membership of such a Council will be subject to further consideration; and
- (b) to establish a Working Party chaired by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department to undertake the necessary preparatory work to enable the Council to hold its first meeting in the latter half of 1992.

Within the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, responsibility for this work was placed with the Federal Justice Office (FJO), which is continuing to facilitate the proposal. Chaired by the FJO, the working Party comprised representatives of most Australian police agencies, the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs (DILGEA), and the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET). The Working Party prepared a report for the meeting of APMC on 22 May 1992 which assessed the recommendations of the Victorian paper and offered options for progressing the issue.

After considering the Working Party's report, Police Ministers at their meeting on 22 May decided to endorse the need for a national strategy on crime prevention and community protection, and to constitute the APMC as an interim Australian Community Safety Council (ACSC). The interim ACSC met in Melbourne on 15 July 1992 and received a further report from an Implementation Task Force chaired by the FJO on the structure and funding necessary to support the proposal. At this meeting, Ministers endorsed an Australian Community Safety Strategy (Attachment B) and agreed to sponsor a National Conference on Community Safety and Crime Prevention before the end of 1992" (Jones & Lidgard, 1992, p. 2-3). This conference was held in Melbourne on 19 November 1992. **The Australian Crime Prevention Council (ACPC) was represented by Clive Begg, President and Judge Andrew Wilson, Vice-President.**

APMC met on the following day and subsequently circulated their resolutions (see Attachment C). This is quite extraordinary for Ministerial Council resolutions to be released publicly. Among these resolutions was an agreement to form an Australian Community Safety Council (ACSC) to meet before September 1993. You may have noticed that the close of September is upon us and the ACSC has not had its inaugural meeting. On 21 May 1993, a detailed paper describing membership, funding and the draft agenda for such a meeting was circulated for the consideration of APMC Ministers. Given the Federal election in March and subsequent budgetary processes, the funding question remains outstanding. Until it is resolved, a meeting of the ACSC is unlikely to occur.

In addition to its work in support of the APMC initiative, the Commonwealth Government has been considering these issues in some detail. The culmination of this work was presented in an Issues Paper entitled: "Creating a Safer Community: Crime Prevention and Community Safety into the 21st Century", which Senator Tate, the then Minister for Justice released at the conclusion of the National Conference on Community Safety and Crime Prevention last November. The Commonwealth Government has sponsored and encouraged debate on these important community issues. Through Cabinet, the Government has also endorsed the need for better integration of program elements with community safety applications. Some evidence of this integration can now be reported. The first author has been drafted onto Inter-Departmental Committees working on crime prevention related issues, namely the Study into Community safety and Crime Prevention being conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology for the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Commonwealth Working Party on the Protection of Frail Aged in the Community organised by the Office for the Aged, Department of Health, Housing, Local Government and Community Services. She will miss this work following her transfer to the Office of Evaluation and Audit, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Commission (ATSIC).

Given the lessons of a number of overseas countries, leadership through the United Nations and encouragement from a number of Australian States and Territories through the Australasian Police Ministers' Council, a partnership with all three spheres of Australian governments, the private sector, trade unions, community groups and crime prevention experts have been developing a national approach to crime prevention and community safety over the past nearing two years. Progress has stalled due to the perennial question of funding. In this era of deficit reduction, crime prevention has a hard road to convince the economic rationalists that it can deliver savings.

Against this canvas, there is also sustained pressure for careful examination of the nation's crime problems and a nation-wide approach to crime prevention and control strategies. The Commonwealth Review of Law Enforcement presently being researched by Dr Grant Wardlaw and other staff of the Federal Justice Office (FJO) illustrated the pressure to review

present policies. It is now well recognised within Australia that traditional methods alone are unable to reduce crime rates and that crime prevention methods need to be developed to bolster the fight against crime.

This Conference and the Australian community in general needs to be asking: Is Australia getting value for money for the \$4 billion we invest each year on the criminal justice system? When will all Australian governments, on a truly bipartisan basis, consider re-allocating their budget priorities to address crime prevention and community safety?

Where to for now? For part of the answer, we borrow some words from Superintendent Phil Cornish (1991, p. 194), SA Police, when he wrote with reference to Canadian assessments of international crime prevention initiatives:

*They believe that the French model of localised community responsibility for crime prevention was good, but that it probably needed some of the Dutch evaluation programs built into it. They felt that in Canada, the local councils had to do more for crime prevention.*

We believe these remarks could equally well summarise the international lessons that need to be applied in Australia as well as Canada and concur with Professor Irvin Waller (1992, p. 39), when he remarked:

*For any country to succeed (in crime prevention), it must move from devoting less than 1% of the budget to a significant percentage such as 5% or 10% and provide the means to ensure that programs address the situations that generate persistent offenders.*

To not act in this way will sentence Australian crime prevention to operations in a waterhole rather than taking up the challenges and fulfilling the promise of the 19 November 1992 National Conference on Community Safety and Crime Prevention, which the first author described as a watershed. We argue strongly that only then can the reason of national crime prevention triumph over chaos or at least the present lack of action and funds.

As our final word, we concur with the sentiments expressed by Serge Bruneau (Horner, 1993, p. 24): "Crime prevention should not be perceived as an expenditure, but rather as an investment".

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# ATTACHMENT A

## MAJOR AUSTRALIAN STATE AND TERRITORY CRIME PREVENTION POLICY AND STRUCTURE INITIATIVES

Waller (1992, p. 38) described:

*In general terms, crime prevention in Australia has been focused on neighbourhood watch for a decade. Many of these receive financial assistance from insurance companies.*

*In 1988, the State of South Australia announced a new crime prevention strategy, which included the appointment of a minister for crime prevention. In practice this minister is also the Attorney-General. The government and community must examine and identify causes and social problems that may lead to criminal behaviour and attack the crime problem on a broad front. Explicitly influenced by the local crime prevention councils in France it has added to its law and order measures the formal development of community based crime prevention strategies.*

Lidgard and Jones (1992a, pp. 9-10) noted: "Major Australian initiatives in crime prevention have been developed by the South Australian and Victorian Governments. There are also indications of interest and work along similar lines in the ACT, Queensland and Western Australia jurisdictions".

South Australia "moved to address crime prevention in a strategic way in 1987". The 'Together Against Crime' Strategy was launched "in August 1989, with a commitment to \$10m over a five year period". One of the three main areas of activity, which emerged as the cornerstones of the implementation process, included the establishment of "a broad-based, representative group (called the) 'Coalition Against Crime'. This group comprises over 40 people representing Government agencies, peak community bodies, business interests, union interests, Police and both sides of politics. The Coalition essentially provides a focus for discussion and development of crime prevention issues, particularly those which impact at the broad State level. The Coalition is chaired by the Premier, with the Attorney-General and Minister for Crime Prevention serving as the Deputy Chairperson and reports to Cabinet" (Millbank, 1992, pp. 53-54).

Dr Adam Sutton, formerly with the South Australian Attorney-General's Department, now the VICSAFE Fellow, Criminology Department, the University of Melbourne, has argued that the Coalition Against Crime (CAC) has a particular role in the task of educating the media and the public on the new approaches, that is to look beyond the reactive approaches, and to support better understanding of community-based prevention.

The first step in the South Australian Government's five year crime prevention strategy was to endorse five basic objectives. These were (CPPU, 1989, p.9):

1. To increase funding and support for police and other agencies involved in the detection, investigation and punishment of offenders.
2. To increase State budget allocations for crime prevention and encourage justice agencies to dedicate higher proportions of their resources to it.
3. To increase the number of specific projects - such as Neighbourhood Watch - which prevent crime by reducing opportunities or restricting access to catalysts such as alcohol or drugs.
4. To extend the range of government and non-government bodies participating in crime prevention and implementing programs with crime prevention potential.
5. To establish and maintain consultative structures and procedures which will:
  - enable the State to pursue consistent and far-reaching prevention philosophies;
  - encourage cooperation between agencies both within and outside the public sector; and
  - ensure that key initiatives are evaluated adequately.

The Coalition Against Crime is supported by five working groups, which address:

- Alcohol, Drugs and Crime;

- Urban and Housing Design;
- Community-based Crime Prevention;
- Preventing Violent Crime; and
- Education, Communication and the Media (Millbank, 1992, p. 54).

Sue Millbank, Manager of the Crime Prevention (formerly Policy) Unit of the South Australian Attorney-General's Department, noted:

*Crime Prevention in South Australia is approached strategically, with all sectors of the State community participating at the local and State levels, and across business, community, non-government and government... Over 1,500 people are directly involved in the Strategy.*

*The strategic approach encompasses social crime prevention and crime prevention through community development as well as situational analysis. This mode is used as both a program and project level. (For example consider) programs (e.g. Local Crime Prevention Committee Program, Coalition Against Crime) and... projects (e.g. Partnership for Personal Safety; Reducing Violent Crime in an around Licensed Premises; Marion Safe Shopping Project).*

The benefits and success... achieved through (this) strategic approach to crime prevention and community safety" (Millbank, 1993) will be documented for the South Australian Government in a meta-evaluation of all their Together Against Crime funded activities. Dr Garry Coventry, Director, National Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, La Trobe University is expected to produce this report in March 1994.

Victoria launched its Integrated Anti-Crime Strategy on 30 August 1991. The then Premier, Joan Kirner, announced that the Strategy was coordinated through a Public Safety and Anti-Crime Council (PSACC). This Council comprised of a maximum of 15-20 members. These included: 7 Ministers, the Attorney-General, the Ministers for Police and Emergency Services and Corrections, Community Services Victoria, Municipal, Ethnic and Community Affairs, Transport, Education and Training, Planning and Housing; the Chairperson, Community Council Against Violence; the Chief Commissioner of Police and 5-10 key Business, Union and Community representatives. Its role was to:

- set strategic directions for anti-crime/violence prevention programs involving the government and the community;
- coordinate the activities of agencies/groups working in the anti-crime/violence prevention area; and
- provide financial support for crime and violence prevention initiatives from government, non-government and private sector sponsorship.

Since the fall of the Kirner Government, the Liberal Government on 20 August 1993 relaunched the VICSAFE - Partnership against crime policy with a "Discussion Paper on Community Safety and Crime Prevention - A Blueprint for Action". The Statewide structures include: Victorian Parliamentary Crime Prevention Committee, Community Council Against Violence and an Interdepartmental Committee on Public Safety and Crime with a proposed "VicSafe" Community Safety Forum.

New South Wales has relatively recently entered the public forum with plans for its Statewide crime prevention initiatives. At the inaugural meeting (26 February 1992) of the APMC Working Party on National Crime Prevention, Inspector Steve Ireland of the NSW Police Service argued:

*"There is a dawning realisation, perhaps belatedly, that police and criminal justice agencies have been too successful in capturing responsibility for crime. The solutions to the crime problem have all too often been seen in terms of more police and more corrections. In New South Wales, almost \$2 billion per year is spent, but unfortunately the criminal justice system is becoming less and less effective in slowing the rate of growth of crime.*

*Police, as is well known, are not made aware of all crime. It follows that the criminal justice system does not deal with all crime occurrences. Indeed, some victimisation surveys suggest that the level of unreported crime may be double the level that is reported. If the victimisation surveys are correct, and there is not reason to doubt that they are, the potential return on investment, in terms of crime reduction, from increased resource allocation to the criminal justice system will not be very high. It is imperative, if there is to be a significant reduction in crime, that some or a significant proportion of responsibility and action, be shifted from the criminal justice system to the community" (Lidgard & Jones, 1992b, p. 4).*

With this in mind, the New South Wales Police Service proposed a State Community Safety Plan. The Plan recommended the creation of a State Ministerial Community Safety Council to deal with community safety and crime prevention. Inputs of business and community leaders were to be sought by this Council, thereby drawing together those with authority, influence and expertise. The significant contribution of local government and the community was also to be incorporated.

An Office of Community Safety was proposed in order to integrate community safety efforts and has been tasked with planning Community Safety action and planning out crime, including Crime Impact Statements. A small scale community grants scheme were proposed, generally paralleling the South Australian and Victorian systems. Funding was expected to be provided jointly by government and the private sector (Lidgard & Jones, 1992, p. 4).

This proposal was unacceptable to the then Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Hon Ted Pickering MLC. However just prior to the 19 November 1992 Conference, there was a change of Minister, now the Hon Terry Griffiths, and a consequent change in the NSW Government position. This was clearly articulated in his remarks to that Conference, when he said:

*...[I]n my short time as Minister for Police it has been apparent that crime is a very complex social phenomena that until very recently was seen as the sole province of the criminal justice system... It is very clear that the criminal justice system, while performing a very important function cannot be looked to for further reduction in the levels of crime.*

*Australia has committed vast resources to the criminal justice system, police, courts and prisons, I believe it is fair to say, in the belief that the system has the answers to criminal behaviour.*

*I am afraid that as seductive as this proposition is; a single solution for a complex problem can be very compelling; crime and safety is now recognised as a very complex problem that demands comprehensive action.*

*This comprehensive action must come from the wider community, government departments, the private sector, unions and other agencies. commitment of ever increasing resources to the police, courts and prisons will be subject to diminishing returns in terms of crime reduction...*

*For the present, while all levels of government make allocations for programs, functions and activities that could be seen as related to crime prevention and community safety, no specific allocation is made to the prevention of crime.*

*This should not be seen as surprising, as without an appreciation of the wider causative factors and possible solutions to the problem of crime, no allocation will be made.*

*I believe that the time has come for us to take a different view, not just about allocation of resources but, that the whole of our social system and crime is interrelated.*

*We need to understand that social, economic and personal factors and the decisions of governments in terms of planning and resource allocation can have a profound effect on crime and the fear of crime...*

*With a revised view of crime and the broad social and economic factors influencing its occurrence we will be more likely to improve the current situation and plan it out of the future...*

*It is my view that we need to act at all levels, at the individual level, at the community level, at the State and at the National level.*

*I am currently examining a proposal put forward by my police service for a comprehensive approach to the problem of crime and community safety in New South Wales.*

“Following (this Conference), the NSW Police Minister, Terry Griffiths requested the NSW Police Service to develop a Community Safety Plan for the State of New South Wales. A research and evaluation process both within Australia and overseas resulted in the development of a multi agency community based options. Subject to approval, it is proposed that the first, or ‘micro community’ phase will be piloted within a number of Local Government Areas (LGA’s) later this year (1993)” (McCamley, 1993, p. 7). The “blue print for the future of crime prevention in New South Wales includes: ‘Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design’ (CPTED),... ‘Crime Prevention through Social Development’... and lastly, the multi-agency ‘Community Safety Plan’” (McCamley, 1993, Abstract).

In addition the NSW Juvenile Justice Advisory Council (JJAC), established by the then Minister for Justice, the Hon Terry Griffiths, in 1991, has recommended in its 1992 Green Paper, **Future Directions for Juvenile Justice in NSW**, that the NSW Government adopt a “coordinated approach to juvenile crime prevention” as an “integral part of an overall approach to

creating safer, healthier and better communities". The JJAC made detailed recommendations, including a broader membership and role for the Justice Sub-Committee of Cabinet, the creation of a special public and private sector fund to resource local crime prevention initiatives, the establishment of a unit to resource such initiatives. The NSW Government has announced its intention to release a White Paper setting out Government policy in November 1993.

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Government through its Attorney-General, Terry Connolly announced on 14 September 1993 its Community Safety Strategy. Their Community Safety Strategy "will address the underlying causes of crime and criminal behaviour, as well as the community's concerns about crime and safety, and provide a focus for proposals aimed at combating crime". A Community Safety Committee will be formed and "chaired by prominent Canberran Ken Begg and will comprise a broad cross section of the community (to) implement the strategy by gauging community concerns about crime and developing ways and means of reducing crime. Sub-committees will analyse and address crime problems on specific issues and, in particular, 'problem' areas around the ACT. A Ministerial Council, to be chaired by the Attorney-General, with representation from women, youth, the Aboriginal community and the business sector as well as the Australian Institute of Criminology, will advise the Government on the Strategy. The Council will also comprise the Secretaries of the Chief Minister's and Attorney-General's Departments and the Chief Police Officer" (Connolly, 1993, p. 1).

"The (ACT) Government has allocated \$150,000 for the Strategy in 1993-4, with the bulk going towards start-up funds for proposals developed by the Community Safety Committee. These may be complemented by subsequent private sector funding. The balance will fund the implementation of the Safety House Scheme and a study into community safety in urban design, as well as administrative support for the committee" (Connolly, 1993, p. 1).

# ATTACHMENT B

## AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY

- A. The concern of the Australian community about crime within our society calls for an intensifying of the criminal justice response to this real social issue and for a more sophisticated approach to understanding criminal and anti-social behaviour. A more effective strategy for promoting community safety and preventing crime lies in tackling the underlying causes of the problem rather than dealing with the symptoms. Such a strategy would include a proactive approach to situational safety and crime prevention, to programs of social prevention aimed at changing patterns of behaviour and values, and to interventions for developmental prevention of crime with high risk area and groups. Crime prevention, as an approach, however, is not simply a matter for police and criminal justice agencies, but is a concern for the whole of the community. The bringing together of all those involved in planning and development, for the family, health, employment and training, housing and social services, leisure activities, schools, the police and the justice system, in order to deal jointly with the conditions that generate crime.
- B. The key objectives of the Strategy will be to:
- Develop effective partnerships between government and non-government agencies, public and private sector groups in community safety and crime prevention.
  - Design, develop and delivery programs which enhance the safety of the community and minimise its exposure to crime.
  - In particular, encourage and support innovative and imaginative approaches to:
    1. social factors which give rise to crime;
    2. the social dynamics of the fear of crime and the consequences of this fear for groups within our community;
    3. managing the risk of crime;
    4. facilitating more effective media participation in community safety and crime prevention;
    5. encouraging positive approaches to issues of individual and community safety, particularly in the commercial arena;
    6. encouraging social awareness of public safety and crime prevention, especially through our education systems; and
    7. developing crime prevention impact statements as an integral part of corporate decision-making.
  - Ensure evaluation is an integral part of the design of all community safety and crime prevention programs.
  - Ensure that the development of community safety and crime prevention programs throughout Australia takes account of relevant International experience and is consonant with United Nations standards and strategies.
- C. As a forum for the discussion of community safety and crime prevention issues, the roles of the Australian Community Safety Council are to:
- identify community safety concerns and opportunities in both urban and rural areas and developing appropriate community safety strategies;
  - endorse national community safety and crime prevention models of best practice;
  - foster policy related research and development in community safety and crime prevention;
  - improve partnerships and linkages between community safety and crime prevention policies, programs and personnel at a National, State, Territory and Local level;

- encourage Local Government, as part of its role in integrated local area planning, to undertake the role of effective community consultation with residents, service providers, service users and other key people;
- encourage broad-based participation in community safety and crime prevention program design and delivery and identify barriers to such participation; and
- facilitate the implementation and evaluation of practical community safety and crime prevention programs.

## **ATTACHMENT C**

The APMC resolved on 20 November 1992:

- (a) to note the views of the community representatives at the National Conference on Community Safety and Crime Prevention on 19 November 1992;
- (b) to note the unanimous support at the Conference for a national community safety strategy and for participation in the development of a strategy by the three spheres of government, community groups and the business sector;
- (c) to endorse the Australian Community Safety Strategy agreed by Ministers in July 1992 as the basis for further development of a comprehensive national community safety strategy;
- (d) to agree to broaden the membership of the Australian Community Safety Council to include local government, community, private sector and expert representation;
- (e) to agree that the first meeting of the ACSC shall be held in Australia before September 1993 on a date to be confirmed;
- (f) to ask the Commonwealth member, Senator Tate, to report, for out-of-session consideration, on the question of the precise membership of the ACSC, the resources required, and on a possible agenda for its first meeting;
- (g) to agree that the Commonwealth Federal Justice Office will provide secretariat support to the Council and facilitate the development of agenda papers by Council participants; and
- (h) in order to achieve the above, each Minister is to promote the commonwealth's Issues Paper in each jurisdiction and report results of the community consultation back to the Federal Justice Office by end March 1993.

## **CRIME PREVENTION - WHICH DIRECTION NOW?**

His Honour Judge Andrew Wilson, National Vice President: The Australian Crime Prevention Council

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- **THE AUSTRALIAN CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL - a “foundation for the future” or “a future foundation”?**
- **THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF CRIMINOLOGY - an Institute “of Criminology” or “of Crime Control”?**
- **THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY SAFETY COUNCIL - a “watershed” or a “water-hole”?**

### **SOME HISTORICAL FACTS**

#### **THE AUSTRALIAN CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL (ACPC)**

The Australian Crime Prevention Council was established in 1967 when what was then known as the Australian Prison After-care Council widened its charter and changed its name. Police Departments and others concerned about the need to emphasise the prevention of crime became, without overlooking the treatment and after-care of offenders, involved in what was then the only National body with the ultimate specific objective of promoting a just society through crime prevention.

Whilst ACPC has not always received consistent financial support from Federal and State governments and whilst its membership numbers and its levels of influence have fluctuated, it has helped to develop better public understanding of the problems of crime and it has encouraged participation by citizens, corporations, organisations, departments and authorities in the implementation of crime prevention strategies. ACPC has played a key role in the development of community support for (and understanding of and participation in) crime prevention initiatives at Federal, State and Local government levels as well as within the community at large. ACPC, through its Conferences, Seminars and Journal has provided (and continues to provide) a forum for the free discussion of crime prevention issues.

In the course of a review of ACPC’s role as a leader in the crime prevention field in 1973, the then Honorary Secretary of ACPC, in proposing a blueprint for the future development of ACPC, said:

“The time has come for this Council to develop an organisational structure which no longer depends wholly upon voluntary effort, goodwill and generosity. Membership of and interest in this Council (both from the viewpoints of government support and involvement of people) is such as to require at the very least the setting-up of a Secretariat...”

In the same Address, the Honorary Secretary said:

“It is vital that we maintain a close liaison with the Australian Institute of Criminology. In a sense this Council and the Institute are in partnership. Each has a separate role and neither is in competition with the other...”

and also said:

“This Council has an opportunity and a responsibility to offer its services, its man-power resources and its diversification of skills to social and economic planning and... the authorities being set up by governments (Federal, State and Local) throughout this country. It is important that we make it clear to governments (if necessary by firm and direct representations) that crime prevention (is an important aspect of planning).”

#### **THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF CRIMINOLOGY (AIC)**

In 1971 the Australian Institute of Criminology was established as a joint venture of the Australian government and the State governments. the ACPC had been one of those who had advocated the setting-up of the AIC and played an active part in its establishment. The AIC has always been based in Canberra.

The contribution made by AIC to criminological research in Australia over the last 20 years is well-recognised. The J.V. Barry Memorial Library is a valuable National asset and, through it, AIC has operated as a clearing-house for criminological

information. An examination of the continuous program of Conferences organised by AIC reveals the breadth of topics discussed at venues right around Australia; the prevention of crime is a recurring theme.

A responsibility of increasing importance for AIC and any peak organisation in the crime prevention field should be the evaluation of existing initiatives and strategies designed to prevent crime. The establishment of mechanisms for the development and implementation of innovative programs is yet another such responsibility. Regrettably AIC has not been recognised as (perhaps because it has not yet become) a National clearing-house for crime prevention strategies and initiatives. After all, undertaking responsibility in the prevention arena is only one of many functions which AIC performs; research is its primary function.

## **THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY SAFETY COUNCIL (ACSC)**

Early in 1992 the Australasian Police Ministers Council resolved to sponsor a National crime prevention strategy. As a result, the Australasian Police Ministers Council formed itself into the ACSC "to act as a forum at which Commonwealth, State, Territory and Local governments can meet with a wide range of community organisations to discuss new approaches to crime prevention and establish mechanisms for the development and implementation of innovative crime prevention programs".

In the Forward to an Issues Paper called "Creating a Safer Community - Crime Prevention and Community Safety into the 21st Century", published at the time of the establishment of ACSC in late 1992, Senator Michael Tate, the then Minister for Justice, said:

"(This Issues Paper) is not intended as a blueprint for the future. Such a blueprint must emerge from community discussions and consultations".

The Minister had earlier stated in a letter dated 27th August 1992 addressed to Mr Clive Begg, our National President"

"The Australian Community Safety Council initiative... should represent a watershed in crime prevention and community safety initiatives in this country".

Following a National Conference on Community Safety and Crime Prevention held in Melbourne, Victoria, on 19th November 1992 a communique was released from the Office of the Federal Minister for Justice to the effect that ACSC would be constituted of government, community and corporate sector representatives in partnership to deal with the complex issue of crime prevention.

In that communique Senator Tate expressed the hope that "structural barriers to an effective strategy" would be eliminated.

## **A COMPARISON BETWEEN ACPC, AIC & ACSC**

A comparison between the constitution and records of ACPC and the record of achievement of AIC in the crime prevention field and the material published prior to and immediately following the formation of ACSC demonstrates that there is a remarkable similarity between what we (in ACPC and AIC) have been striving to achieve (albeit, as far as ACPC is concerned, without adequate funding or resources) and what is being proposed for ACSC.

Many of the proposed roles of ACSC have a corollary in the Constitution and records of ACPC.

It would not come as a surprise to anyone to learn that each of ACPC, AIC and ACSC "endorse the need for a National strategy on crime prevention and community protection". There is no opposition in principle to such a concept.

The ACSC, if it is to succeed, must be broadly-based and it must have the support of both the government sector and the private sector.

AIC, with its more than 20 years of experience in the field and as an independent statutory body having high professional standards and a record of service to the community, is a peak instrumentality appropriate to be directly involved in the structure of ACSC.

ACPC with its more than 25 years of involvement in the crime prevention arena, with its Branches, with its diversity of membership and with its independent standing, is a peak non-governmental organisation appropriate to represent the private sector within the organisational structure of ACSC.

The key to the success of any National organisation or Council is to be found in its structure. Without implying any criticism of the Australasian Police Ministers Council, which is to be congratulated upon its recent initiative, ACSC ought not to

remain for too long as constituted by the Australasian Police Ministers Council. After all, this was only to be an interim arrangement. Interests from non-police sectors of government and from the community are “unlikely to accept the Australasian Police Ministers Council as the ACSC” for very long. ACSC, as presently constituted, is unlikely to be seen as having “the ability... to deliver a social model of crime prevention encompassing the policies and programs” of other portfolios and interests.

ACSC could not expect to become either a National clearing-house for crime prevention strategies and initiatives or a centre for the evaluation of such strategies and initiatives without the support of AIC and ACPC. Participation by ACPC would involve, at the very least, membership of the ACSC and the sending of representatives (as participating delegates) not only to meetings of the ACSC but also to meetings of its Standing Advisory Committee.

For ACSC to succeed in this semi-governmental community safety initiative there must be widely-based community participation. It is hard to imagine that ACPC would not be seen as a peak non-governmental organisation appropriate to represent the private sector within its organisational structure.

If this new National body in the field of community safety and crime prevention is not to be a voluntary organisation funded at least in part by governments (and it is accepted that ACSC has not developed in that manner) then emphasis needs to be placed upon community participation.

As our National President, Mr Clive Begg, put it in a speech to the citizens of Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton in November 1992 entitled “An Argument in Favour of the Development of a National Strategy on Community Safety in Australia - the Broadening of Crime Prevention Action beyond the Police, the Courts and Corrections”:

“Crime prevention is not solely the responsibility of government and its policing agencies but is a matter of participatory involvement by the whole of society - government, non-government organisations, individuals, corporate entities and particular interest groups or classes within the community - this cannot be emphasised enough”.

Our President went on to express the hope that:

“Community Safety will become a dynamic, integrated and realistic undertaking as a consequence of the creation of ACSC”.

He had earlier stated:

“The development of a National Strategy on Community Safety involving all arms of government in partnership with corporate and community organisations is an important and logical evolution that will strike at the causes of crime by integrating social policy development in the areas of education, employment, welfare and policing. This model has (become the ACSC)”.

If the “structural barriers to an effective strategy” are not eliminated, ACSC, far from representing “a watershed”, could become immersed in a “water-hole” of failed expectations and uncoordinated linkages. A strategy aimed at achieving integration could result in disintegration.

## **WHAT IF THE ACSC FAILS?**

One does not have to be a “prophet of doom” to ask a question such as this; just a realist. After all, AIC has “had its moments” when its future usefulness has been in question and its very existence has been put “under a cloud”. ACPC has experienced “ups and downs” and survived the “body blow” it received in the 1980s when Federal Government funding was withdrawn.

If the ACSC were to fail in the achievement of its objectives and if, whether through the existence of “structural barriers” or otherwise, it were to sink into a “water-hole”, the challenge for both AIC and ACPC will remain. Provided that there are adequate resources (both in terms of funding and personnel) AIC and ACPC could do no better than to galvanise themselves into cooperative action and to collaborate with a view to facilitating the implementation of a National crime prevention strategy focussing on community safety. Whatever the fate of ACSC, the opportunity would still exist for all Australian governments and the community to work together towards a truly integrated and National approach to the prevention of crime.

To have a chance of success such an approach would need to emerge, as Senator Tate correctly put it, “from the community’s consideration of its own needs” rather than as a result of a strategy being “imposed on the community from above”.

## WHAT IF THE ACSC SUCCEEDS?

If the ACSC were to succeed in developing a National community safety strategy with both AIC and ACPC playing a role in the structure of the new body, then some re-assessment of the role of ACPC would be clearly called for. If our participation was to be welcomed by ACSC, might not our Branches provide scope for linkages being established between the new National body and the States and Territories? Might it not be time for ACPC to consider changing its role (and, necessarily, its Constitution) to focus more on the encouragement of **RESEARCH** into, **EVALUATION** of, and **ACTION** to implement, crime prevention strategies and programs?

Might not our new role be more in keeping with a Foundation than a Council? If so, who would be our benefactor? Might not our Mission Statement remain:

“... promoting a just society through crime prevention”

but with the focus for the future being on social-planning, policy-making and policy-implementation?

With anew emphasis on the encouragement of **RESEARCH, EVALUATION** and **ACTION**, we could expect to be seen (as we have been throughout our history) as social-planners, as policy-contributors and as crime-prevention-lobbyists. Our activities could concentrate on the publication and distribution of the Journal, the conducting of Biennial National Conferences on Crime prevention, the holding of the occasional Crime Prevention Expo, and the making of recommendations for **research** into, **evaluation** of, and **action** to be taken to implement, innovative crime prevention strategies and programs.

ACPC is an independent organisation; it is within the private sector; it has links with government at all levels; and it is registered as a charity. It needs to be a company limited by guarantee. Its membership comprises representatives including police, the courts, corrections, the voluntary sector, the business community, education, welfare, forensic psychiatry, criminology, the security industry, minority groups and the victims of crime.

The traditional and somewhat verbose objects of ACPC, whilst, in so sense, being abandoned in principle, could be left off the ACPC formal “Agenda” as we approach the 21st Century. I am referring to objects such as:

- a. To promote and to aid in the education of both youthful and mature people as to the desirability and benefit to the community of the maintenance of proper standards of social behaviour.
- b. To promote and to increase public awareness of the problems and needs of victims of crime.
- c. To promote and increase public awareness of the problems and needs of offenders and their families.
- d. To promote and to aid in the removal of social injustices and the establishment and maintenance of criminal justice systems of the highest order.
- e. To promote and to support the provision of assistance and advice to those who might otherwise be tempted to offend.
- f. To promote and to support programs, methods and facilities intended to assist in the rehabilitation of offenders.
- g. To encourage, assist, support and coordinate the work of persons and organisations involved in all or any of the above fields of endeavour.

The objects of ACPC which should remain on the formal “Agenda” (and in the Constitution) are:

1. To promote a just society through crime prevention.
2. To encourage research into, evaluation of, and action to implement, crime prevention strategies and programs.
3. To develop public awareness of the problems of crime and of methods that are properly available to prevent crime and reduce recidivism.
4. To encourage participation by citizens in the prevention of crime and the alleviation of social injustice.
5. To provide a forum for the free discussion of crime prevention issues.

6. To encourage, assist and support the work of persons, corporations, organisations, departments and authorities involved in the prevention of crime.
- 7,8... (Non-contentious objects including supporting the Branches, disseminating information, seeking support from the government and private sectors, and investing moneys etc.)

Might not ACPC become:

**CRIME PREVENTION BEYOND 2000**

- an Australian Crime Prevention Foundation

or

**FOUNDATION CRIME PREVENTION**

or

**THE AUSTRALIAN CRIME PREVENTION FOUNDATION?**

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**SUMMARY**

1. The Federal Minister for Justice has said that the Issues Paper describing the proposal to establish an Australian Community Safety Council is “not intended as a blueprint for the future”. He has further said: “Such a blueprint must emerge from community discussions and consultations... The Australian Community Safety Council initiative should represent a watershed in crime prevention and community safety initiatives in this country”.
  2. The Minister for Justice has made it clear that the Australian Community Safety Council is to be constituted of government, community and corporate sector representatives in partnership to deal with the complex issue of crime prevention.
  3. A comparison between the Australian Crime Prevention Council and the Australian Institute of Criminology and the Australian Community Safety Council demonstrates that there is a remarkable similarity between what the Australian Crime Prevention Council and the Australian Institute of Criminology have been striving to achieve and what is being proposed for the Australian Community Safety Council.
  4. There is no opposition in principle to the concept of a National strategy on crime prevention and community protection.
  5. The Australian Crime Prevention Council, with its more than 25 years of involvement in the crime prevention arena, with its Branches, with its diversity of membership and with its independent standing, is a peak non-governmental organisation appropriate to represent the private sector within the organisational structure of the Australian Community Safety Council.
  6. The Australian Community Safety Council could not expect to become either a National clearing-house for crime prevention strategies and initiatives or a centre for the evaluation of such strategies and initiatives without the support of the Australian Institute of Criminology and the Australian Crime Prevention Council.
  7. If the “structural barriers to an effective strategy” are not eliminated, the Australian Community Safety Council, far from representing “a watershed”, could become immersed in a “water-hole” of failed expectations and uncoordinated linkages.
  8. If the Australian Community Safety Council were to fail in the achievement of its objectives and if, whether through the existence of “structural barriers” or otherwise, it were to sink into a “water-hole”, the challenge for both the Australian Institute of Criminology and the Australian Crime Prevention Council would remain.
  9. If the Australian Community Safety Council were to succeed in developing a National community safety strategy, then some re-assessment of the role of the Australian Crime Prevention Council would be clearly called for.
  10. The Australian Crime Prevention Council should consider changing its role (and, necessarily, its Constitution) to focus more on the encouragement of **RESEARCH** into, **EVALUATION** of, and **ACTION** to implement, crime prevention strategies and programs.
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11. A new role for the Australian Crime Prevention Council may be more in keeping with a Foundation than a Council.
12. Some traditional objects of the Australian Crime Prevention Council could be omitted from its Constitution.
13. The Australian Crime Prevention Council might become:

**CRIME PREVENTION BEYOND 2000**

- an Australian Crime Prevention Foundation

or

**FOUNDATION CRIME PREVENTION**

or

**THE AUSTRALIAN CRIME PREVENTION FOUNDATION**

## **CRIME - NO LONGER A POLICE PROBLEM?**

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In the more open societies of the world, the last ten or twenty years has seen a dramatic increase in reported crime, and an equally dramatic increase in the resources granted to police, who are traditionally seen as society's main defence in the so-called "war against crime". This paper takes it as axiomatic that much of police time is not spent dealing with crime but with other social problems, although the traditional view held by police officers is that making arrests for crime is their *raison d'être*. This traditional police involvement with crime occurs during or after its commission, and therefore has little to do with crime prevention. However, police time spent with the community on any matter may be effective in preventing the occurrence of crime, even though it does not result in an arrest. It will be shown that police initiatives unsupported by other agencies are limited in their impact, since the causes of crime lie far beneath the sphere of social change that can be engineered by police alone. It is, therefore, unfair to charge the police with the sole responsibility for prevention of crime. If the argument that solving the crime problem is not the primary task of the police is shown to be sound, then this raises two further questions, that of whose problem crime is if it is not that of the police, and that of defining the role of the police, if they are not to be thought of primarily as society's defence against crime.

An analogy to be borne in mind here is that of health care and the medical profession. Even as recently as thirty years ago preventative medicine was imprecise, and consisted of little more than self-evident general advice from a family doctor such as "Give up smoking, it's bad for your chest" or "Lose weight, you are over-taxing your heart", since doctors saw their main role as dealing with each sick individual in the manner necessary at the time. These days most general practitioners will offer routine cholesterol tests and urine checks, will measure blood pressure and weight as a matter of routine, will advise on how to maintain and improve general health, etc. In addition, there are a plethora of clinics and centres offering health and lifestyle advice of all varieties from university-trained dietitians, nurses and physiotherapists through well qualified fitness experts to 'new-age' followers of alternative lifestyle and medicine. The crime prevention advice given by traditional patrolling police officers has been general and platitudinous, such as reminding drivers to lock vehicles, and women and children to avoid dark quiet pathways during the evenings - the modern community policing role, it is to be hoped, is more closely analogous to that of a doctor in the 1990s advising on health. This analogy between preventative medicine and crime prevention will be used again in due course.

What this paper will do first is to present an informal breakdown of crime into various general categories, to illustrate the varying ways in which different types of crime may be amenable to preventative strategies. Secondly, it will suggest that crime prevention strategies fall loosely into one of four types, and describe them. Then it should be practicable to look at the role of police in dealing with the various categories of crime, from which the precise role of police in crime prevention strategies should become apparent. It is not suggested that police have no role to play in dealing with crime beyond the arrest of suspects, but rather that the traditional view of police as the prime movers in this regard (a view held by police themselves as well as the public they serve) is not strictly the case.

Crime itself ought, perhaps, to be looked at more closely since it covers a multitude of illegal actions. There are steps which can be taken to reduce the incidence of domestic burglaries, but these have almost nothing in common with the steps that can be taken to reduce computer fraud, and I am not aware of any general means of reducing the number of domestic murders. Perhaps the most useful division to be made here is between large-scale and small-scale crime - this, like the categorisation of crime prevention strategies that follow, is a model postulated for simplicity in this paper. An example of large-scale crime is substantial fraud perpetrated against a major company, perhaps by the use of computers, perhaps not. The profit from this crime or series of crimes is likely to be enormous, the matter is probably meticulously planned and involves little or no personal violence - in all respects a white collar crime. One of the distinguishing features of large-scale crime is that it is committed with great thought and care so that the perpetrators are led to believe, often correctly, that the chances of detection are slim, and the chances of success are high.

Other large-scale crimes are the import and manufacture of drugs in bulk. Once again, the profits here are extremely high, the crime is well planned and the persons involved are unlikely to be users of the drug themselves, unlike the street-level dealers. There is often a complexity about large-scale crime which is normally absent in small-scale crime which, particularly in major frauds, makes it difficult to decide whether or not a crime has been committed: often no clear dividing line exists between sharp business practice and criminal activity. An important aspect of large-scale crimes is that they rarely have any noticeable effect on the public: even the vast losses to the taxpayers of Western Australia through the "WA Inc." affair have not caused the hardship on a personal level that would have resulted from a domestic burglary or a car theft. An increase in car registration fees, for example, or an increase in tax on cigarettes will be easily forgotten, even though the cost over a few years may be quite high. If there is any theft, then someone loses; whenever huge sums are stolen the losses are either covered by insurance or so spread around that no single individual notices.

Small-scale crimes, by contrast, have a much greater effect on the public since they are far more obvious. Most burglaries, petty thefts and car taking fall into this category, as well as all street crime and public disorder. the important characteristic

of this category of crime is that it exists overtly so that the general public cannot fail to be aware of it. Delinquent youth is clearly visible on the streets of cities, as are drug addicts and street prostitutes, leading to "no-go" areas, particularly for the law-abiding middle class or the more nervous members of the public. This is less of a problem in the cities of Australia than in American and European cities: Central Park, New York and the Bois de Boulogne in Paris are tourist meccas by day, but very dangerous places at night, while certain estates and districts such as Hackney in London and the Reeperbahn in Hamburg are avoided completely by those without specific business there.

Not only are small scale crimes more obvious to the public itself, but the perpetrators themselves tend to be fatalistic about the possibility of arrest and detection. Those who make a living by prostitution, begging, or unlawful street trading, which are punishable in most jurisdictions by a small financial penalty and rarely by imprisonment, view arrest and a court appearance as a minor nuisance, and a fine as a form of income tax or business expense (indeed, some companies are willing to accept parking tickets in employees' expense claims). An example of this is a conversation overheard some years ago between a police officer rounding up the prostitutes working London's Earls Court Road, and one of the women involved: "When were you last nicked, Mary?" "About three weeks ago Larry". "OK, your turn then, in the van". Bittner (1990) is replete with such examples, although he uses them to draw conclusions in a completely different context.

The extent of small scale crime has a serious and deleterious effect on the quality of life in two main ways. Firstly, it is highly visible, graffiti being a paradigm of this. Secondly, even if most individual members of the public will never be the victims of crime, the incidence of it is such that there is a well justified fear of crime within the community. It is at this level that members of the community are affected directly by crime: by reading of car theft and burglary in the local newspaper; by seeing graffiti on bus shelters in their own neighbourhoods; by seeing the signs of drug abuse in public places and by being distressed by the presence of persons behaving in a disorderly fashion. There is a side issue here about the extent to which publicity concerning crime is valuable - if the media use crime reports to engender a community awareness of crime this is a positive, worthwhile action: if, however, sensationalism leads to fear of crime, publicity is less valuable. The distinction between the two is a fine one. It is, perhaps, worth stressing here that this type of crime is not specifically an Australian problem - indeed using international comparisons crime, like pollution, is less of a problem in Australia than in many other countries of the world. However, despite Perth and Brisbane being much less affected by crime than Los Angeles or Miami, the problem is still there: it is to be hoped that it is more tractable through being less entrenched.

The third type of crime to be mentioned can best be designated personal crime. The categories postulated for the purposes of this paper are defined not by any formal criminological criteria, but for their amenability or otherwise to crime prevention strategies, and for police action. Personal crime, then, can be described a crime that is committed by one person against another for very definite reasons concerning the perpetrator and/or the victim. The paradigm case is that in which the two parties are known to each other, and there is a degree of ill-feeling which manifests itself in criminal action. This can range from a feud between neighbours to domestic murders, and even to serial offenders who choose a particular type of victim. The important characteristic for this paper is that it is the character of one or both of the protagonists or the relationship between them that leads to the crime.

Next, various crime prevention strategies are to be categorised. These will be defined first and then described in rather more detail. The first strategy, which is analogous to the medical analogy used before, is the discovery and removal of the causes of crime. Secondly, the opportunity for crime can be removed, thirdly persistent offenders can be removed from the milieu in which crime may be committed by them, and finally (and perhaps the most commonly thought of tactic in crime prevention) is target hardening, or making crime more difficult to commit. After some explanation of these strategies, each will be applied to the categories of crime discussed above, and the role of police in each analysed.

A considerable number of studies have been made, of which many have concentrated on the juvenile law-breaker, into why individuals, groups, or classes of persons commit crime. It is, I believe, incontrovertible that the incidence of criminal behaviour is linked with such factors as drug or alcohol dependence (Skene, 1986), poor educational attainment, family breakdown (Tapper, 1993), physical or other abuse as a child (Wilson & Arnold, 1986), and various other symptoms of social deprivation. This is as clear a correlation to workers and researchers in the criminal justice system as the correlation between smoking, large alcohol consumption, overweight or an ill-balanced diet and an early death is to the medical profession. The point to be made here is that analogous to the way medical science can identify aspects of an individual's lifestyle which are likely to increase the chances of that person contracting some major illness, so a number of social factors can be identified which, if present in an individual's life or environment, increase the likelihood of that person taking part in some criminal enterprise. Identifying the causes of crime is some way from eradicating them, since human behaviour is governed by individual choice, social pressure, conscious and unconscious decisions etc.

Removing the opportunity for crime is a strategy for potential victims to ensure their safety. Valuable family heirlooms cannot be stolen in a domestic burglary if they are kept at the bank, people cannot be mugged in known high-crime areas which they never visit, and persons who commute by public transport will not have their cars stolen from a city car park during the working day. However, such steps for removing the opportunity for crime requires an adjustment to the individual's way of life with the danger that some people may become so concerned at avoiding the possibility of becoming

a victim as to change their lives to an extraordinary extent. The terrified old lady who never sets foot across her own doorstep is an exemplar of this, the equivalent of the health fanatics who allow concern for diet and exercise to alienate themselves from the occasional pleasure of an evening spent with a good book and a bottle of port.

The antithesis of removing the opportunity for crime is removing the offender. Most obviously, this involves the offender being sent to prison, or in some other way being placed under formal state restriction. In can, more rarely, involve parents sending a young offender to stay with relatives in the country to avoid the temptation of the city. There is a danger here (as there is with individual rather than concerted efforts to remove the opportunity for crime) that this removal merely relocates the crime elsewhere. The work of the Department of Corrections and others in rehabilitating offenders also, in a sense, removes offenders from society. Little more explanation of this strategy is needed.

The final strategy that needs to be considered is target hardening making the commission of the crime more difficult. This encompasses many things, from the simple expedient of remembering to lock dwellings and vehicles left unattended to increasingly sophisticated technology to prevent particular occurrences. Target hardening also includes the design of an environment which would by its nature tend to reduce the chances of successful crime, for example including well-lit public footpaths in open areas, and avoiding dark hideaways. Once again, it is not within the ambit of this paper to explain in great detail the latest development in making crime more difficult, merely to delineate the sort of methods constituting each strategy in order to distinguish them.

How, then, do these strategies apply to each of the categories of crime delineated? With regard to large-scale crime, the causes are probably intractable. Any person who sets about planning a major crime for an extremely large profit will try and ensure that the likelihood of detection and conviction are minimised. The risk involved will be analysed, and the crime will not be committed unless the chances of success are high. The reason such a crime is committed is a combination of greed and hubris, neither of which is amenable to any currently available methods of social engineering. Attacking the causes of large-scale crime is therefore, virtually impossible.

Removing the opportunity for crime is almost as problematic. Computer crime cannot exist without computers - to dispense with computers would remove the opportunity to commit the well-planned, highly productive, almost undetectable frauds that can be committed by those with access to and knowledge of modern computer technology. However, the reliance of the modern world on computers is such that this is not a valid option. To take another type of large-scale crime, a society without a significant drug culture has no need of large scale suppliers, thus there is no opportunity for the large scale drug manufacturer or importer to operate. Unfortunately, the possibility of Australian, American or European society being without sufficient drug users to make large scale drug offences profitable is remote, so much so that arguments have been made for decriminalising drug abuse to reduce associated crime and costs to society (Marks, 1990). Removing the offender from large scale criminal enterprises is not easy, but is a more productive approach than addressing the opportunities of the causes. This can only count as a crime prevention measure if the offender is removed in the middle of a series of crimes, so that the remainder are not committed, or caught in flagrante delicto or so soon afterwards that the victim suffers negligibly from the crime. As has been seen recently in American and Italy in action taken against organised crime in general and the Mafia in particular, prevention requires more than just the removal of one offender (Trahair, 1987). This is a matter in which police have a considerable role to play, and will be discussed further.

Prevention of large-scale crime by target hardening has two aspects, that of improving the technology so that commission of the crime is made more difficult, and that of changing the odds so that the chances of detection and successful prosecution are increased. Poe's aphorism about any code that can be devised by the wit of man can be broken by the wit of man applies equally to security technology. However complex a security system for any particular purpose one man can devise, another, given sufficient time and resources, can counter. The more sophisticated a security system is the more sophisticated must be the means which will defeat it - therefore, the improvement of security technology is a highly efficient means of crime prevention, whose value is commensurate with the value of the objects or material which it protects.

Changing the odds of detection and punishment is a valid deterrent to large-scale crime. One must assume here one of the postulates made in the description of large-scale crime, that it is planned carefully and the risks calculated and minimised. The risk factor in crime has two parts: the risk of detection, and the risk of penalty following successful prosecution. Suppose that someone planning a crime calculates the chance of detection at 20%, the chance of conviction if prosecuted as 50% and the likely penalty on conviction as five years imprisonment. There is, therefore, a 90% chance of accomplishing the crime without penalty, and a 10% chance of serving five years imprisonment for it. These results then have to be set against the expected profits from the crime. The feasibility of the crime changes as the probability of detection changes, or the expected penalty varies. The calculating large-scale criminal will expend considerable effort on remaining undetected or minimising the availability of evidence for a successful prosecution and expects to remain unconvicted. The stakes are raised, so to speak, when the penalties increase, when even a minimal risk of conviction may bring with it such a harsh penalty that executing the crime is not worthwhile.

There are various examples of this principle to be seen. The practice in many South-east Asian nations of carrying out the

death sentence for drug smuggling would make some refrain from this crime. It is, of course, quite possible that those physically caught in possession are not the main offenders, but person of limited intellectual capacity, or those desperate enough to take a paid risk for another who will reap the bulk of the profits. On a more mundane level, compare the West Australian and British approaches to drink-drive. The police of Western Australia have authority to carry out random breath tests on motorists, and frequently exercise this power. The chances of detection, then, are high, attracting a fine of several hundred dollars and three months driving disqualification. British police have no power to demand random breath tests, so the chance of detection for the drinking driver are much lower. If caught, however, penalties are much higher, since the offender can expect a fine in excess of five hundred dollars for the first offence, and a minimum driving disqualification of one year, although quite often this is often 18 months and a loading of 50% or more on insurance premiums for the next ten years. Both approaches are effective in reducing the incidence of drink/drive offences.

If the risk factor can be increased, then, the thoughtful criminal might be deterred, and the crime thus prevented. Quite clearly this is possible, but expensive. Both the American and Italian national governments have expended huge resources in their respective attempts to destroy the Mafia, and the English Serious Fraud Office was set up specifically to deal with the sort of major, planned fraud that is paradigmatic of large scale crime as described here. Such major investigations are, at least in part, the task of the police, as will be shown.

So much, at this stage, for the prevention of large scale crime - let us now turn to small-scale, which, as has been indicated, is of more concern to the public as a whole. The crime prevention strategies discussed earlier all have a place in the context of small-scale crime - if this were not so, then there would be no such concept as crime prevention. The issue for this paper is not the validity of the strategies themselves, but the extent to which their implementation is the role of the police. The remainder of this paper concentrates on this issue, and the public's expectations of the police with regard to the problem of crime.

The four categories of crime prevention with regard to small-scale crime are, again, elimination of causes of crime, removal of the opportunity for crime, removal of the offender and target hardening. Each of these are far more applicable to small-scale crime than to large-scale crime, as will be outlined, although not in any great details. The causes of small-scale crime are, as has already been mentioned, linked to a variety of social factors. These will not be analysed here, although a few general observations can be made concerning what can be done about some of them. Alcohol and drug dependency are certainly linked to crime, so strongly that in some major American cities the vast preponderance of street crime is drug or alcohol related (I have heard, anecdotally, the figure of 90% mentioned, although I have not been able to discover the research which shows this). Freeing the individual from drug dependency is possible, but not easy and certainly expensive (Alder & Read, 1992). As well as being causes of crime, these dependencies are problems in their own right (Dobinson, 1989), as are other factors as family breakdown (Tapper, 1993) and the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system. For some of these deeper roots of crime, little can be done to prevent them: all counselling and other efforts to maintain the family unit are powerless to prevent a breakdown through death by disease or accident.

Removing the opportunity from crime is in theory possible, but the affluence of modern Australia means that there is a great deal of property about to be stolen. Car theft in China, where there are only 250,000 vehicles amongst 4,000 million people, is not a significant problem. Reducing the amount of property would reduce the opportunity to steal it, although rationing ownership of cars, for example, would be unacceptable. Some serious suggestions for removing the opportunity for crime are equally unacceptable to significant sections of the community. For example, late evening attacks on women could be prevented if no woman was out after dark without a male escort - however effective this might be, it is, in effect a curfew on women. Imagine the corollary: rather than remove the potential victim, remove the potential offender by placing any male about after dark without a female chaperone immediately under suspicion, i.e. shifting the curfew to the male population. Uncontroversial steps can, however, be taken to remove the opportunity for crime: not leaving one's car in an open, public car park removes any opportunity for a thief to operate.

Removing the criminal is a possibility in preventing small-scale crime, although how long the criminal can be removed for is an important issue. If the criminal, once identified, is rehabilitated then the criminal is effectively removed from society permanently. The possibility of removing the criminal is always contingent on identifying the criminal, which is a traditional police task.

Finally, making crime more difficult is an important and at some levels relatively easy means of crime prevention. Locking doors and windows, installation of burglar alarms and even the purchase of a dog are all effective means of making burglary more difficult to commit. Relevant issues here are whether the property to be protected is worth the cost of the precautions, and what are reasonable precautions, given the likelihood of any given type of crime, and the likeliest perpetrator. It is worth remembering that preventative measures applied to a house may well prevent that particular house being burgled, but will not prevent burglary in that the offender may well select a more vulnerable home.

Before moving on to consider the role of police in these various areas of crime prevention, it is worth examining the popular perception of the role of police with regard to crime, a perception which seems to be held by both police and the public they

serve. Consider another medical analogy, and compare the public reaction to the increased incidence of skin cancer and juvenile crime. Skin cancer is not, perhaps, totally eradicable, but protection of the skin from the sun is an effective preventative measure. Although most people now are aware of the precautions to take following intensive advertising campaigns and Australians in general are far more circumspect with regard to the sun than perhaps any other nation of people (Australian children are usually extremely well protected), the incidence of skin cancer in Australia continues to increase. It may well be the case that those people who are now showing symptoms of the disease damaged their skins some years ago, so it is too late to apply preventative measures - certainly my impression is that current sufferers have had many years exposure to the sun. Most general practitioners are now adept at recognising and dealing with skin cancer, and the medical profession in Australia appears to consider skin cancer to be largely preventable by taking precautions which are not particularly onerous, and relatively easily dealt with if tackled early, primary responsibility has been moved from the profession to the public to take precautions and bring possible instances to notice.

With regard to juvenile crime, the perception is much different. There is sufficient correlation between various forms of social deprivation and instances of juvenile crime to hypothesise a causal relationship (Wilson & Arnold, 1986, for example). Unfortunately, although one can expect a higher occurrence of criminal behaviour from a group of disadvantaged youth than from youth in general, it is not possible to specify which individuals within that group will commit crime. The utopian crime prevention strategy, then, is to ensure that no child suffers any form of social deprivation. Clearly this is impossible: poverty and poor education can, at least in theory, be eradicated, but nothing can be done to ensure that no child suffers the death of a parent or exposure to peer group pressure. It is, however, possible for society as a whole to be sensitive to social deprivation, and take steps to ameliorate it, and certainly to identify young offenders at an early stage and attempt diversionary measures to prevent such young persons adopting a criminal lifestyle (Heslop, 1991). The precise role of the police in this process will be examined in detail in due course, but as a successful strategy requires the participation of a number of agencies, at the very least other parts of the social services and the justice systems (Jefferies, 1991). As with skin cancer, there are measures which will reduce the incidence of the problem, and once identified, measures which can be taken which will prevent young people having more than one or two encounters with the criminal justice system.

Unlike the position of the medical profession with regard to skin cancer, where the public perception is of the doctor as the person who puts right the damage when preventative measures have failed or been omitted, parts of the criminal justice system are considered to be responsible for the incidence of crime. There is no criticism of the medical profession for the high number of cases of skin cancer diagnosed and treated, yet the police and courts in particular are expected to have the answer to juvenile crime - even, perhaps, to be the answer to juvenile crime. The medical profession is not called upon to defend itself when skin cancer rates rise, nor to explain why there is no cure for AIDS or even the common cold, yet police management is morbidly sensitive to crime statistics. The precise extent to which police can be effective in preventing crime by addressing its causes will be examined in due course: the question raised here is why responsibility for crime is placed upon police in particular, and whether police are correct in their tacit acceptance of such responsibility.

If the causes of crime are deeply rooted in society itself, and are linked to such diverse factors as ethnicity, youth unemployment, child abuse and family breakdown, then one single agency cannot be singled out as responsible for the increase in crime. As with skin cancer, it is a problem for every member of society to be dealt with by society collectively. It is not specifically a police problem, nor is it a court problem, or a social services problem: all these agencies have their function in addressing the issue, but society cannot abdicate its responsibilities to the agencies either individually or collectively. The police service in particular must define its role in crime prevention, and accept the limitations of that role - in that sense, the perception of crime as a police problem must be changed.

Having discussed the various strategies for crime prevention in relation to both large-scale and small-scale crime, it is now possible to assess the part that police have to play in these. As will be shown, it is a highly significant part, but one which will require some reassessment of the role of police. The aspects of crime prevention over which police are the sole responsible agency are few, and in most strategies police must act in conjunction with other agencies.

With regard to large-scale crime, it has already been argued that there is virtually nothing that can be done by anyone to remove either the opportunities for, or the causes of, crime and certainly not by police. The most promising proposal was to alter the cost:benefit ratio of crime so that the calculating criminal would decide that the likely benefits did not outweigh the costs of detection and conviction. This involves removal of the offender, the third strategy to be discussed, so the role of police in each will be considered together. The police function here is that of an investigative agency, both to detect the offence and identify the offender, but also to collect sufficient evidence to present to a court. This may well involve other agencies, for example Customs in the case of drug importation, accountants and computer experts in the case of major frauds, and overall legal advice on what evidence is required to construct a sound prosecution case. Police have long been crime investigators, a role in which they are pre-eminent, and this is precisely their function here.

The difficulty that arises is that for detection to be effective as a means of crime prevention, it must have sufficiently high success rate in the detection of offenders to change the cost:benefit ratio. This requires a level of expertise and organisation at least as high as that of the criminal, which involves a major commitment of resources in terms of equipment,

manpower and training that will increase rather than decrease with the increasing sophistication of crime. This is an area where police can be effective against crime, but the cost of such operations will always be high, and will continue to increase.

The role of police in reducing large-scale crime through target hardening is limited. The field of computer security is highly specialised, as is the technology of physical security, both of which are changing and improving rapidly. The degree of expertise in security that a consultant can offer is so far beyond that of a police officer that there is little police can offer in this respect to prevent large-scale crime. The most important role, perhaps, is that of discovering the method by which the crime was committed and informing other potential victims that they may guard against a similar crime.

Personal crime has also been shown to be relatively difficult to prevent. If the crime involves parties which are known to each other, feuding families or jealous spouses for example, then police are notoriously helpless unless the offences are truly major occurrences like arson or serious assault. When the personal crime is of a lightly different nature, for example the serial rapist, then police action involves removal of the offender. Here, though, the requirements of detection are not the same as that for large-scale crime discussed above - there is no need for police expertise in specialised areas, although external consultants may be required in particular cases to prepare, for example, a psychological profile of the offender to assist in detection: police skills here are not specialised as they would be in a company fraud squad, but there is a reliance throughout the investigation on painstaking thorough enquiry by detective officers, and diligent collection of laboratory forensic specimens.

The best option then, for preventing personal crime is to remove the offender, which relies on police as an investigative body. It follows that police can only take this action after at least one reported offence, although subsequent offences may be prevented. Removal of the opportunity for crime may be effective, for example when the crime results from a feud and the victim moves away or goes into hiding, but this requires a major decision by the victim in which the police have no role to play. Making crime more difficult also involves action being taken by the victim or potential victim, and the police role is limited to offering common-sense advice such as "Change the locks on all your doors" or "Do not take a short cut through the park after dark if you are alone".

The main emphasis in crime prevention is on the prevention of small scale crime. The outlines of the strategies have been shown: what now remains is to point out the role of police with regard to them. The causes of crime lie deep, and are not matters that police can deal with. What police can do, however, is to identify particular social problems in a particular area to facilitate a joint initiative for a multi-agency approach. This type of policing is discussed in detail in texts on community policing such as Goldstein (1990) and Schaffer (1980). The paradigm case of this is the derelict city block which becomes a haunt of drug addicts and dealers, prostitutes and petty thieves. Traditional policing methods of arrest at random or serial arrests and organised raids, which Bittner (1990) claims are less often arrests of an individual for a specific offence than arrests to clear or tidy a problem irrespective of individual culpability, are ineffective. However, when local housing authorities can be persuaded to either board up, renovate or demolish such a city block, then the focus of crime is removed, and crime decreases. The argument for community policing runs that if this approach is consistent throughout a city, then there will be no such crime, and crime overall will drop, but if some areas of the city are policed by traditional reactive methods, then the crime may be relocated there.

The more police are involved with the community, the more aware they will be of the appearance of factors which may lead to crime. No other agency is as well placed to notice an increase in the number of youths congregating, apparently aimlessly, in a particular corner of a shopping mall or park, or an increase in drug addicts around a particular pub or club. While it should not be seen as the role of police to devise activities for unemployed youths, it is certainly a constructive police approach to crime prevention to be instrumental in organising something. This has the advantage of preventing accusations of police harassment of particular racial or age groups by the continual application of powers of search and checking names with the covert aim of breaking up an apparently motiveless group or moving it elsewhere. Police are, however, not trained as youth workers, nor should they be expected to take on this or any other welfare role - what police can do is identify the need for such an agency in a particular area or amongst a particular group, and, in effect, help to target society's approach to removing the immediate causes of crime. Whether the funding is available for any effective action to be taken is, of course, a major constraint.

Police action with regard to removing the causes of crime relies on two factors: the police awareness of the possibility of crime, and the unique position of being a patrolling agency and able to identify potential trouble spots before real problems become entrenched. Police officers can look at things through a criminal's eyes, and can offer advice on "designing-out" crime - for example, a ballet school in West London attracted a collection of minor sex offenders and voyeurs which became a fairly serious problem of which the school directors were unaware. On police advice, the studio windows were replaced with frosted glass, and the problem disappeared virtually overnight. Ultimately, the decision on whether or not to remove the opportunity for crime will normally be made by someone other than police: however, this is more likely to be an informed decision if crime prevention advice is given, for which in most circumstances police are the best equipped.

Removal of the offender is, ultimately, not the sole responsibility of the police. The longest police are entitled to remove anyone from the streets is until the person arrested appears in court, normally the following day or very shortly after. The function of police is the identification of the suspect, and the collection of enough evidence to constitute a prosecution case.

In some respects mere identification of the offender might be enough - the task of police Child Protection Teams in London is to determine whether an offence has been committed, and under what circumstances a prosecution might succeed: there then follows a multi-agency case conference to decide whether a prosecution would be in the best interests of the child, or whether maintaining the family unit while the offender undergoes voluntary therapy or some other option would best serve the victim. No satisfactory decision can ever be made on what is to be done with an offender until the offender is identified (the Jackdaw of Rheims is an example of what can go wrong if this is tried!) and police are, once again, best fitted for the task of identification.

The task of police in target hardening is much the same as that in removal of criminal opportunity. On the level of small-scale crime, there is little use for the most sophisticated and expensive security equipment: most cycle locks are adequate to deter bicycle thieves, yet few are proof against large bolt cutters. Police are best placed to be aware of current local crime fashions and the most popular methods, and can offer specific advice to counter these, as well as more general advice to make individuals less likely to be victims of small-scale crime.

There are general conclusions to be drawn from this concerning the police role in crime prevention. There are two unique features of policing which must be taken into account: firstly, police have an awareness of crime and an expertise in criminal investigation; and secondly, police are accessible to all members of the public at all times, either in response to a call for assistance or during patrol. No other agency is oriented towards crime, nor does any other agency actively seek work in quite the way a patrolling police officer does. It would seem most efficient to use these features to the fullest in developing the police crime prevention role.

With regard to large-scale crime, any preventative measures are likely to have a very high cost. As this type of crime becomes more sophisticated, so must the means to prevent it become more sophisticated. The only feasible role for police in preventing large scale crime is in detection, where continued success is the only way of deterring potential criminal activity. This will require that some branches of the police service become increasingly specialised, requiring a commitment of manpower and financial resources which increasing budgetary constraints render unlikely.

With regard to small-scale crime, police officers at street level are better placed than almost any other agency to collect information. Bittner (1990) suggests that police are reluctant to share information, even with other officers, and argues the main focus of police patrol is that of maintaining order, rather than preventing crime. It has been argued above that there is little police can do alone to prevent crime, however much information they have - information collected by police can be put to best use if it is shared with other agencies and acted upon jointly.

Consider an example here. Pat is 15 years old, and is losing interest in school. Individual teachers become aware of occasional truancy, but Pat always has some vague excuse if questioned. After a few weeks, a patrolling police officer finds Pat out of school loafing around a shopping mall with a group of other person of about the same age, some of whom have been arrested for minor offences. The usual police reaction (graphically described by Bittner, *op.cit.*) is to take names and addresses and generally make life unpleasant for the group so that they congregate elsewhere - as a crime prevention measure, this has minimal value. The "us and them" attitude shown may even be counter-productive in that Pat may cement his membership of the group to the extent of joining in their criminal enterprises. Alternatively, the information that Pat is becoming a member of a group of disaffected youths may prompt diversionary measures to be taken, either for Pat specifically, or for the whole group. This, of course, requires that there exists an agency willing and able to act upon such information. There is an ethical issue here of invasion of privacy, and the extent to which police are justified in reporting Pat's non-criminal behaviour for action by others. This ought to be considered in policing theories, although it is beyond the ambit of this paper.

As has been discussed above, the first step towards removing an offender is identification of that offender. Traditional police action once an offender is identified is to instigate court action - as has been shown in the British approach to child abuse within the family, this is not always the best course of action, sending an offender to court, once the offender has been identified. Suppose, for example, an adult has commenced stealing because of alcoholism, or compulsive gambling, or some other such cause. It sent to court it may well be some time before conviction and the imposition of a legal sanction if no treatment is sought. However, were police to refer the individual to a suitable agency, then the possibility of further offences committed by this individual might be reduced. Once again, there are ethical issues arising from police being seen as judge, jury and executioner which need resolution.

These hypothetical examples suggest that police information which is crucial to crime prevention can be better used if there exist other specialist agencies which are both willing and able to make use of this information. What is required is a multi-agency approach to crime prevention. Modern theories of pro-active policing or community policing involve police being more closely involved with the communities they serve, and therefore in a much better position to gather information. This

information is not worth collecting if there are no means of putting it to use. Police officers who take domestic disputes seriously and note that the children of the disputants look hungry and ill-cared for when police attend a marital fight are apt to be disillusioned if no agency will take any action with respect to those children.

In conclusion, then, it has been suggested that concentrating police patrol efforts on arrests for crime is not a particularly effective way of utilising police resources. If, however, the value of police as active gatherers of information concerning crime and potential crime is used to the full by both police and other agencies, then there is much that can be done to reduce crime. Furthermore, modern policing is designed to increase this information-gathering role, but it will help little if the information is under-utilised. The extent of police information-gathering also raises ethical issues, which are unresolved and are beyond the scope of this paper. It has been argued that although police have a vital and unique role to play in crime prevention, they are unable to undertake this alone. The police role in truly effective crime prevention can only be as part of a multi-agency approach, and it is both unjust and unacceptable to hold police accountable for the rise in crime.

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# **POLICE PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY POLICING - DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATION TYPES IN NORTH QUEENSLAND**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Although social changes and organisational trends have influenced policing styles and strategies, the primary principles and objectives of policing have remained constant over time. Policing styles have evolved in a circular fashion, from the preventive period envisaged by the Fieldings and Peel in the early 1800s, through to the reactive period based on the complaint-react model in the early 1900s, and recently in the 1970s returning to a proactive approach where community participation in and sharing of police functions in society is acknowledged, encouraged and accepted. Policing ends have remained unchanged. However, changes have occurred in the means of achieving these ends.

Community policing is a relatively new concept for Queensland police, although the need for change in policing strategies away from the reactive approach, has been acknowledged by world police leaders during the past two to three decades (Schaffer, 1980; Skolnick & Bayley, 1988; Brown, 1989). The move towards community policing requires organisational change and support, and successful implementation depends on acceptance of the concept by both police and the community. In turn, acceptance is dependent on clear understanding of the concept of community policing.

## **COMMUNITY POLICING IN QUEENSLAND**

The implementation of community policing in Queensland is the result of the Fitzgerald (1989) Report. It represents a dramatic shift in policing style, away from the traditional reactive approach towards a more proactive approach. Although the concept is relatively new, its underlying principles can be traced back to some of policing's oldest traditions. The perception of a growing gap between the police and the public and a growing awareness of the limitations of traditional policing methods were the driving forces behind the development and implementation of community policing.

A total change in emphasis from reactive to proactive functions and methods of the Queensland Police Service resulted from the Fitzgerald Report (1989), and subsequent legislation in the form of the Police Service Administration Act, 1990. This Act places responsibility on both police and the community, not only for the preservation of peace and good order in society, but also for crime prevention and detection, and punishment of offenders (Booth, 1990; Crompton & Lake, 1991; Lill, n.d.).

The Fitzgerald (1989) recommendation that, in the interests of police productivity, flexibility, efficiency and accountability, community policing must be introduced as the primary policing strategy for Queensland was based on the following observations:

1. Research suggests that police activities based on the complaint-react model have little effect on the incidence of crime.
2. Saturation patrolling may reduce crime in the target areas, but often moves it to other areas.
3. Most crimes are solved, not through criminal investigations, but because someone has either given information that enables identification of the offender or has been able to identify or apprehend the offender immediately.
4. Police have not adapted to social changes and are not adequately equipped to deal with extensive criminal behaviour in the community.
5. Crime rates and the rate of solving crimes are not necessarily affected by increasing the size of police services.
6. Preventative policing strategies should be an essential part of normal police activities.
7. The community must be aware of the seriousness of crime in their community.
8. The community must be willing to provide the necessary resources to support community policing initiatives.
9. The community should be involved in policing their society so that attitudes change but the community's social character is preserved (Fitzgerald, 1989; Booth, 1990; Booth, et.al., 1991).

The Queensland Police model of community policing incorporates the four central elements of community policing put forth by Skolnick and Bayley (1988). This involves change at operational, managerial and organisational levels.

1. **Community Based Crime Prevention**

The best known program based on the three primary facets of community based crime prevention is the Neighbourhood Watch Program, focussing on public surveillance, property marking and home security.

2. **Reorientation of Patrol Activities**

In order to provide a proactive service, police are encouraged to become more visible and less threatening to the community by undertaking foot patrols instead of motorised patrols, and through involvement in non-emergency situations, for example Adopt-A-Cop programs, Blue Light Discos, public displays, and lectures.

3. **Increased Police Accountability**

To enhance congruency between police and community priorities, public comment about policing needs, methods and strategies is actively solicited and the public is to be informed about policing priorities, tactical approaches and behaviour so that they can participate in planning and supervision of police operations.

4. **Decentralisation of Command**

Decentralisation and the shift of responsibilities to lower ranks is considered necessary in order to take advantage of specific information that can come through greater police involvement with the community and the resultant feedback about policing needs, strategies and priorities. Command decentralisation results in a participatory management style, allowing operational flexibility so that police strategies can be responsive to local conditions (Bolen, 1986; Skolnick & Bayley, 1988; Waring, 1990; Booth, et.al., 1991; Lill, n.d.).

The Queensland Police Service Community Policing Support Branch developed a four year strategic plan (1991-94) aimed at creating a holistic model of community policing. The stated objectives of this plan include educating police about the concepts of community policing; educating the public about their responsibilities in relation to community policing; encouraging joint community policing initiatives with other agencies; designing and implementing systems which will facilitate changes within the Service necessary to the adoption of community policing as a philosophy and style of operation; and developing and implementing evaluation processes to clearly identify specific projects which provide the best return on investment (Booth, et.al., 1991).

The official Queensland Police definition of community policing states that it is "...an approach to police work which recognises and fosters an partnership between police and the community. It involves police and community working together to identify and solve policing problems" (Booth, et.al., 1991:3). Whilst this definition takes into account the joint police/community problem-solving nature of community policing, it does not specify other important characteristics of community policing. Although it is not possible for any definition to include the whole range of characteristics of community policing, it is possible to construct a definition which reflects its major components.

For the purposes of this study, Community policing was defined as:

...a participatory style of policing, in which all sectors of the police and the public share equal responsibilities to ensure that a partnership based on two-way communication, mutual trust and respect develops and is maintained; that policing policies and practice reflect the community's needs; that the community's policing needs are identified and prioritised according to police/community consensus; and that strategies are developed and implemented according to this consensus in an attempt to prevent, control and reduce problems in the community.

Many see the move to a problem-solving policing style as a positive move, with the police 'getting back to the people' and becoming more like a 'country cop', available to and willing to become involved with their community. Others see it as a negative move, reducing the power and authority of, and undermining the strength of the police.

## **POLICING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATION TYPE**

It has been suggested that police in small stations, especially in rural areas, are more likely to practice community policing because the 'us' and 'them' separation between police and public does not exist. These police are perceived as having a greater appreciation of what is actually going on in their community through the development and maintenance of good communication networks and close liaison with citizens (Kirkpatrick, 1990; South Australian Police Department, n.d.).

Police in small stations are believed to be more likely to understand and accept the concept of community policing than those in larger metropolitan stations. This is primarily because they are considered to have been practising community policing, understand the importance of a strong interaction between police and public and spend more time working with the community on social service activities. These police are thought to be well known and respected by, and supported by their

communities; there appears to be a mutual awareness of community and policing problems; and policing priorities appear to be set by informal mutual consensus (Kelling, Wasserman, and Williams, 1988; Bayley, 1990; Kirkpatrick, 1990; South Australian Police Department, n.d.).

## **POLICE PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY POLICING**

The purpose of this exploratory study was to investigate community policing in depth, to collect information about how police understand the concept and to examine whether this varies between police in different kinds of stations.

This paper focuses specifically on the understanding of the concept of community policing by police engaged in general duties only at seven different police stations in the Townsville area. Questions regarding police perceptions of community policing were addressed through a series of interviews conducted by the author in mid 1991.

### **Aims**

1. To trace the development of community policing in Queensland.
2. To investigate police understanding of the concept of community police and to consider the differences, if any, in the degree of understanding between different types of stations.

### **Methodology**

The population for this study was made up of 214 police personnel engaged in general duties at the following stations: Townsville (N=138), Kirwan (N=25), Charters Towers (N=22), Home Hill (N=6), Giru (N=2) and Rollingstone (N=1). The population was divided into three strata, according to station type, according to the number of personnel at each station, and whether or not a specialist unit/section is part of that station.

Stratum 1 (Country) consisted of three stations with General Duties staff only, with up to 10 personnel. Stratum 2 (Town) consisted of three stations with General Duties staff and up to 5 specialist units, with 11 to 25 personnel. Stratum 3 (City) consisted of one station with General Duties staff and 6 or more specialist units, with more than 26 personnel.

A simple random sample was taken from each stratum and these three sub-samples were then joined to form the total sample of 12 officers. Disproportionate stratified random sampling allowed a larger sample to be taken from the smaller strata to give enough cases for a reliable comparison between strata.

Country, with a population of 9 personnel in 3 stations, a sample of 3 cases, one from each station, was drawn. Town, with a population of 67 personnel in 3 stations, a sample of 6 cases, two from each station, was drawn. City, with a population of 139 personnel in one station, a sample of 3 cases was drawn.

### **Results**

Information regarding respondents' knowledge of community policing was collated according to thematic analysis, where common themes were identified and categorised. These commonalities were then summarised and compared between strata. Twenty-eight discrete themes characterising community policing were selected by the author from the literature, and interview content was analysed according to the presence or absence of these themes in responses. The presence or absence of themes in responses was taken as an indication of the respondent's knowledge, or lack of knowledge, about community policing.

These themes were categorised according to the four basic elements of community policing community-based crime prevention, reorientation of police activities, increased police accountability and decentralisation of command. (Some of the 28 themes may fall into more than one category.)

Table 1 shows a breakdown of responses, according to station type, indicating individual themes relating to each of the four elements of community policing. Identification of a theme in responses is indicated by an asterisk (\*).

**TABLE 1: Community Policing Themes Identified by Respondents**

Individual themes characterising community policing according to the four basic elements	Identification of themes in responses		
	STATION TYPE		
<b>ELEMENT 1: COMMUNITY BASED CRIME PREVENTION</b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>TOWN</b>	<b>CITY</b>

Community involvement in policing	*	*	*
Community feedback to police		*	
Community education about community policing	*	*	*
Communication between police and community	*	*	*
Commitment to a collaborative problem-solving partnership between police and the community	*	*	*
Police support of community self-help capabilities			
Police understanding of the social composition of their community		*	
Police involvement with and responsiveness to the community	*	*	*
Community knowledge of police activities	*	*	*
Police supported by the community	*	*	*
Police supervised by the community			
Community is active in solving own crime problems	*	*	*
Community participation in decision -making regarding policing priorities and strategies	*	*	*
Community membership and/or representation on community-based crime prevention programs			
Community is responsible for implementing police ideas	*		
<b>Number of Themes Identified by Respondents</b>	<b>10 (66.6%)</b>	<b>11 (73.3%)</b>	<b>9 (60%)</b>
<b>ELEMENT 2: RE-ORIENTATION OF POLICE ACTIVITIES</b>			
Daily contact between police and community on a non-emergency basis	*	*	*
Development and maintenance of mutual trust and respect between police and community	*	*	*
Integration of investigative and preventive policing strategies	*	*	
Police effectiveness and efficiency is measured both quantitatively and qualitatively			
Police services are decentralised to a neighbourhood level	*		
<b>Number of Themes Identified by Respondents</b>	<b>4 (80%)</b>	<b>3 (60%)</b>	<b>2 (40%)</b>
<b>ELEMENT 3: INCREASED POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY</b>			
Police priorities are set consistent with community expectations of police actions		*	*
Police act as agents of community development,	*	*	*

advising, mediating, educating, etc. the public			
The community is recognised as a source of police power/authority	*	*	*
Police develop self-appraisal techniques			
There is both internal (police) and external (public) consensus of police functions and services		*	
<b>Number of Themes Identified by Respondents</b>	<b>2 (40%)</b>	<b>4 (80%)</b>	<b>3 (60%)</b>
<b>ELEMENT 4: DECENTRALISATION OF COMMAND</b>			
Increased communication between ranks	*	*	*
All ranks are involved in objective formulation and prioritisation	*	*	*
Decision making is allowed at all rank levels through a flexible management	*	*	*
<b>Number of Themes Identified by Respondents</b>	<b>3 (100%)</b>	<b>3 (100%)</b>	<b>3 (100%)</b>
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF THEMES IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>19 (68%)</b>	<b>21 (75%)</b>	<b>17 (61%)</b>

Knowledge of the four elements of community policing was fairly evenly spread amongst station types: each of the three strata identified more than half of the total 28 themes. Town respondents identified more than half of the themes relating to each of the four elements of community policing, suggesting that these police have a broader knowledge of community policing than police based in Country or City stations. Country respondents scored low (less than half) on themes relating to increased police accountability, and City respondents scored lowest on themes relating to reorientation of police activities.

### Community-Based Crime Prevention

Only Town respondents identified community feedback to police and police understanding of the social composition of their community, whilst only Country respondents identified the community's responsibility for implementing police ideas. Themes not identified by any respondents related to the police support of community self-help capacities, community supervision of police and community membership on community-based crime prevention programs. Common themes identified by respondents related to the community's responsibility to participate in policing, and the supportive and collaborative nature of the police-community relationship.

The findings suggest that there is little difference between stations in knowledge of community-based crime prevention, although City respondents identified the least number of themes. It is interesting to note that Country respondents failed to identify themes relating the feedback from the community, and police being knowledgeable about communities' social composition, when the literature clearly states that police in smaller stations have a greater understanding of what goes on in their communities, have the community's trust, and through an active relationship with citizens, community problems are addressed jointly by the police and the public (Bayley, 1984; Kirkpatrick, 1990; Waring, 1990; South Australian Police Department, n.d.). One would also expect Country respondents to identify themes relating to police support of communities' self-help capabilities because of the nature of this relationship.

### Reorientation of Police Activities

The one theme not identified by any respondents relates to the use of both quantitative and qualitative measures of police effectiveness and efficiency. City respondents did not identify the integration of investigative and preventive policing, and only Country respondents identified the decentralisation of police services to a neighbourhood level. Common themes identified relate to the relationship between the police and community being based on non-emergency, daily contact and characterised by mutual trust and respect.

Both Town and Country responses suggested that police based at smaller stations are more aware of the need for change in the focus of policing, acknowledging the importance of working in close cooperation with their communities. These

results may be explained by the very nature of the relationship between police and citizens in small stations. As stated previously, this relationship is characterised by constant interaction between police and citizens, police are well known and generally involved in several social activities and adopt a consultative role in their dealings with the community (Bayley, 1984; Kirkpatrick, 1990; Waring, 1990; South Australian Police Department, n.d.). City respondents identified less than half of the themes relating to the reorientation of police activities. This may be explained by the fact that police in larger stations are more likely to be involved in emergency situations, and spend more time reacting to complaints, therefore having less time to spend on proactive activities.

### **Increased Police Accountability**

Country respondents did not identify the theme relating to the consistency between police priorities and community expectations, and only Town respondents identified the theme relating to internal and external consensus of police functions and services. The theme relating to police developing self-appraisal techniques was not identified by any respondents. Common themes identified related to the police role of adviser, mediator and educator of the public and recognition of the community as a source of police power and authority.

Country respondents indicated less than half of the themes relating to the element of increased police accountability. Based on the relationship between police and citizens in country areas identified in the literature, one would expect Country respondents to identify themes relating to the consistency between relating police priority setting and community expectations, and the development of self-appraisal techniques by police. Because of the presumed intensity of this relationship, perhaps police in smaller stations do not consider it necessary to consciously do this. Community and police expectations are believed to be the same, therefore, police may consider it unnecessary to develop self-appraisal techniques. Community members are able to assess police performance on an individual basis, whereas in metropolitan areas the relationship between police and citizens is generally not as intimate.

### **Decentralisation of Command**

All respondents indicated knowledge of all themes relating to the element of decentralisation of command, suggesting that there is no difference between station types in police understanding of this element.

### **Summary of Results**

- There was little difference between stations in respondents overall knowledge of community policing.
- Town respondents appeared to have broader knowledge of community policing than either Country or City respondents.
- Town and Country respondents were more aware of the need for change in focus of police activities, acknowledging the importance of police working in close cooperation with communities.
- Country respondents identified few themes relating to increased police accountability.

### **Conclusion**

Although these findings suggest that these respondents have a fairly broad knowledge of community policing regardless of where they are stationed, there are some areas in which this knowledge is lacking in some stations. It seems essential that, before police can fully accept and therefore successfully implement community policing, they must have an in depth knowledge of the concept. Once police demonstrate a clear understanding and acceptance of and a commitment to community policing, they can begin to educate the public. Until such time as police are able to do this, the community will be unable or unwilling to understand, accept, or commit themselves to the concept. In order to achieve this, police must be able to freely access information about and training in community policing. Provision of such information and training must be a continuous process, otherwise it will be seen as a 'flash in the pan' and significant changes in attitudes and/or behaviours will not occur.

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# CRIME PREVENTION CAN BE G.R.E.A.T.

Jill M Bolen

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## INTRODUCTION

I thank the Australian Crime Prevention Council (ACPC) for giving me the opportunity to deliver a paper at this important Conference. I recently noted in the Annual Reports to Parliament of the Queensland Police Force for the years 1970 and 1971 comments about the Australian Crime Prevention, Correction and Aftercare Council. Among other things it said the Council was "a vital consortium of people whose concern is to curb the growing incidence of crime in Australia and provides for the coordination, inter-communication and cooperation of all engaged in the various aspects of crime prevention, justice and correction" (QPF Annual Report; 1971, p.13).

As well, I noted in that same document that the Queensland Government provided an annual grant of \$750 to the Council; and in today's terms that would be roughly \$7,000. At one stage there was a partnership with and deep commitment to the ACPC on the part of the Police Department; look at the very successful conferences on Child Abuse, co-sponsored, during the mid 1980s. Let's hope there can be a rejuvenation of police involvement in this very important organisation.

It is by working together, for common aims, that progress will be made in the area of crime prevention. However, when we talk about "crime", we must be sure we are all talking about the same activity. To make sure of this, I will initially present some background information about the nature of crime.

Essentially, my message is that crime prevention can be "great". That is the acronym I have used to highlight the issues I see as relevant to reducing the incidence of crime in our society. And it is my belief that the incidence of crime, against people and their property, can be reduced. GREAT in my paper refers generally, but not exclusively to the following topics that are relevant to crime prevention: GENDER, RESEARCH, ECONOMICS and EQUALITY, ACTION and TIMING.

I will briefly examine those five topics in relation to future crime prevention strategies. The issues raised encompass both the notion of **situational crime prevention** and of **social crime prevention** (Pinkerton James, 1993, pp. 12-21). I will then make a number of comments on the complexity of the problem. I will conclude the paper by highlighting the benefits of ensuring that crime prevention is put squarely on the agenda of government, at all three levels.

## BACKGROUND

In 1991 a Crime Victims Survey was completed in Queensland by the Government Statistician's Office (GSO, 1992). That survey was an "initiative of the Queensland Criminal Justice Commission with the objective of extending the range of data on the characteristics of crime and crime victims in the State" (GSO, 1992, p.1).

What that document has told us is something most of us who are interested in the field knew - we have a problem. All jurisdictions, in Australia and in most other Western civilisations, have the same or similar problems; they have conducted similar surveys with similar results. Crime is on the increase. No government, community organisation, individual, or business, has sufficient resources on its own to prevent crime.

Where crime continues to rise, not one of those groups has the resources to provide diversionary programs, help victims, maintain reactive policing services, provide mediation and court systems, build jails, employ community corrections officers, and the like. However, with an integrated approach, we have the resources to make a difference. And it is becoming increasingly obvious that we must aim to prevent offences from occurring in the first place.

In looking to the future, we must also acknowledge that various factors are contributing to the fact that crime is changing. By that I mean both in its form and location. The way governments define crime, and the resources available to police and other law enforcement agencies to investigate it, will have as much impact on our future society as will those in the community who make the choice to commit crime.

Perhaps it will be that we will see an extension of generic crime prevention groups and a greater mobilisation of the public against crimes that will be committed. Nixon highlights a third phase of crime prevention in her paper on 'New South Wales: Crime Prevention Directions for the future' (1991, p. 5). While not limiting the definition of crime, she asserts that this third phase has as its general objectives: the coordination, consolidation and integration of government initiatives to prevent and discourage crime, the encouragement and support of people involved in crime prevention and to reduce crime.

Those objectives are consistent with the thrust of the recent publication of the Federal Justice Office Issues Paper titled "Creating a Safer Community - Crime Prevention and Community Safety in to the 21st Century" (1992). Let us trust that there is sufficient goodwill on the part of politicians and policy makers to ensure the implementation of strategies alluded to

in that Issues Paper.

To get back to the major issues which I consider most relevant to the task in hand, that of preventing crime and thereby enhancing our quality of life, I will explain my acronym GREAT.

## **GENDER**

The issue of gender is particularly relevant when talking about violent crime. Homicide statistics, for example, show that women are considerably less likely to commit this offence than men and when they are victims, which is in just over a third of cases, (AIC, 1989, p. 7) many of the crimes are committed by the spouse, partner or ex-partner of the victim.

Statistics and studies into rape, incest and other offences of sexual assault also provide valuable data on the victimisation of women - in the vast majority of cases at the hands of men, and of men they know. In a Gender Analysis of the 1991 Queensland Crime Victims Survey by the Queensland Government's Women's Policy Unit, some very important issues have been highlighted:

- more women than men in Queensland felt unsafe when walking alone after dark in their own area; and
- although smaller in percentage terms, more women than men in Queensland felt unsafe in their own home at night (1992, pp. 26-27).

The analysis showed (1992, p. 30) that fear is the direct "inverse to the reality of the actual violence experienced by women". Although women are more vulnerable to violence in private places (1992, p. 30), including their own homes, it may be that because of their lifestyles, women are spending more time in private than in public. That would then expose them increasingly to the threat and actuality of violence.

At the National Conference on Violence in Canberra in 1989, Dr Christine Alder analysed many of the research findings about socio-economic determinants of violence (1989). Dr Alder concluded that "(a)n examination of the material on violent crime indicates that to reduce this form of crime in particular, we will have to address not only economic inequalities, but also gender stratification and male power" (1989, p. 23).

This to me means that government policies and cultural practice will have to be discriminatory, in favour of women, to redress imbalances of the past, both socially and economically. Social change will be necessary as it is through meaningful policy initiatives that women will participate as equals in Australian society (Public Sector Management Institute, 1990, p. 168).

Currently, we must be mindful of the backlash which is putting the meagre gains made under challenge from those with a vested interest in continuing the oppression of women. Small gains have been made in employment opportunities for women, and through the provision of services such as refuges for battered wives and for support services for survivors of rape, incest and sexual assault. But the catchcry today seems to be what about the "battered men" and "boys".

There is no inclusiveness about this type of question; it is always asked in terms of care of either women or men. The purveyors of this line also seem to favour the enhancement of services for victims who are men and boys to the detriment of victims who are women and girls; what should occur is that the appropriations of resources should take cognisance of the needs of both sexes. The situation gets worse when policies and strategies are premised on the need for better locks, surveillance equipment, and other mechanical "crime prevention" techniques.

This is because women and children are the poorest members of our society. Groups of women are further disadvantaged when insurance companies raise premiums because people don't have a fortress where one there was a home. It is also true, as I have indicated, that women are more at risk inside their homes - and the locks and bars - than outside. However, while I single out the gender bias in society as being a major issue to be considered in crime prevention strategies, "g" can also refer to guard-dogs for example.

On the one hand we have people telling us to get a guard-dog to protect us and our property. On the other hand, technology is now being used to "pacify" dogs who do their jobs, for example to stop them attacking the meter readers or postal officers. Used by the wrong people, for the wrong purpose, a dog may be silenced or subdued sufficiently to allow crimes to be committed on the unsuspecting and/or their property.

("G")overnments have the responsibility for protecting people and their property. However, the crime problem is too great and too diverse to be left to government, alone, and at any level, to solve.

There may always be people willing to commit crime. Hence our ("G")oal should be to make people feel safe and be safe, as well as minimising risk to property and other resources. Our quest should also be for ("G")lobal solutions because of the

mobility of people in this day and age.

While specific problems require specific strategies, there must be some base level of program or strategic solution to the problems currently being encountered. The question then continues - what do we know really about anti-social behaviour and the crime problem?

## RESEARCH

There's an adage related to this topic that is worth re-stating: "If you think you're doing something new, you haven't read the literature". While generalisations can be wrong, it is worthwhile to remember that the problems we have are not necessarily unique to our economic, geographic or social situation. We can and must learn from the experiences of others and when the trail ends, we then set about blazing a new trail.

Police alone will not prevent crime. Increasing police numbers and having greater police "visibility" to deter criminal acts is, I believe, predicated on a belief that fear of the police and other "external controls" are somehow effective in reducing anti-social behaviour and criminal acts. Another major flaw in this line of thinking is that it overlooks the issue of violence committed on women in their homes, unless police are also to patrol inside private residences. That reign by "fear" or "control" adds to the violence in our society.

The objective of having police arrive in two or three minutes at a crime scene is fundamentally flawed in instances other than where an offender is on the premises. Also, if we stop bank robberies, the displacement effect is the proliferation of the offence of robbery against softer targets like the convenience stores, fast food outlets, and service stations; once those outlets are "steeled" against that type of crime, ordinary citizens will become greater targets. If we have saturation policing, the various anti-social behaviours and crime problems will just resurface in another area or subside for the duration of that resource intensive strategy.

While reactive policing is necessary, it alone will not solve the problem. Other issues need to be addressed. For example, ("R")acism, whether exhibited orally, in writing, or physically, can not be tolerated. In our multi-cultural society, we must accept differences so that we can enjoy leisure and work together - irrespective of race or religion. This leads to other issues; we need to place a greater emphasis on the three "r's" - respect, rights and the accompanying responsibilities.

("R")espect for people and their property will lead to the enhancement of appropriate social mores which I believe are essential to reducing crime and other policing problems in our society. Importantly, we must provide suitable opportunities for people to themselves - self esteem is vital in terms of personal development and maturity, and the accompanying behaviours. If people respect themselves, they too will respect the ("R")ights of others.

Rights for all people, the victimised and the offenders, should be fundamental to our way of life in this society. That principle may show itself in a variety of ways. For example, The Protective Behaviours Program has as one of its themes: "We all have a right to feel safe all of the time". Research has shown that people can be debilitated by the fear of crime.

Hence programs and policies must reflect this reality as much as the other circumstances that may reduce the actual incidence of crime. However, one can not have rights without the accompanying ("R")esponsibilities. Responsibilities fall on all of us, individually, and collectively from governments through to business and community groups. Indecent competitiveness does no-one good in the long run; working together to get the job done will ensure that the responsibilities are taken seriously and undertaken in a consultative way to the satisfaction of most, if not all.

Most importantly, at government level, we must balance the resources in society. If the gap between the haves and have-nots widens, some of the accompanying frustrations will present in negative ways.

## ECONOMICS and EQUALITY

Social change will be necessary. Day (1987, p. 8) highlights the division between the haves and the have-nots by examining the private residential enclave concept; the implications of this type of development, for the wealthy, evokes a "nightmarish prospect of the ultimate privatisation". Specifically, Day was referring to such developments as the Sanctuary Cove Resort and others wherein the wealthy members of society reside in a development bounded by their own security regime (1987, p. 7-8).

The trend recently has been towards security devices such as video surveillance, alarm systems, locking devices, bar codes to gain entry to buildings, etc. What happens to the poor who cannot afford this type of security? As mentioned previously, banks and other financial institutions now spend vast amount on security systems and armed guards. What about the small business person who cannot afford such additional security measures? And it is not just at the enterprise level that economic considerations and imbalances must be redressed.

In Alder's analysis on the socio-economic determinants of violence (1989), she highlights various research findings on the implications of the unemployment rate for both property crime and violent crime. She contends that (1989, p. 7) "it is apparent that the discussion of the relationship between unemployment and crime is inevitably linked to that of the inequality and crime relationship".

Citing Braithwaite, Alder also asserts that there are "reasonable theoretical grounds" and "substantial empirical evidence" to suggest that a redistribution of wealth and power would diminish crime" (1989, p. 7).

The progress in ("E")ngineering has had many positive consequences and enhancements for people and their way of life. Conversely, there have been negative experiences when people take advantage of design flaws to prey on victims and otherwise misuse engineering and technological enhancements for their own selfish ends. This in our ("E")nvironment too can make a difference.

Recently we have seen houses turned into fortresses, video surveillance in our shopping centres, new developments that fail to take the needs of people into account by providing means of public transport and/or recreation and sporting facilities, or the rape of our natural environments wherein people can take time out to rejuvenate themselves and enjoy the peace and tranquillity of being at one with nature.

These too are issues that need to be addressed. And lest by now you think the task is becoming too hard, the consequences of failing to take action are worse.

## **ACTION**

It is therefore time we rolled up our collective sleeves and started to address the problem in a meaningful way. While some degree of success can be cited in activities to date, the overall picture indicates that more productivity is required. Action is required by all of our society, individually and collectively. The production of glossy brochures, snappy advertisements for the mass media, and other community relations activities are a small part of the solution.

the sensationalisation of crime in the media - particularly on television, in the newspapers and in the movies does not help, it merely serves to increase the fear of crime in our communities. It would be far better to positively encourage people to be involved in activities aimed at crime prevention rather than seeing them react, often violently, when alleged offenders are being taken to court after being apprehended for some of the more monstrous crime committed in our communities; and no doubt we can all cite examples in recent years in Australian jurisdictions when mobs have gathered outside court houses calling for the re-introduction of the death penalty for those alleged offenders.

Let's work for a more harmonious society. People in social groups would probably not see their activity as one of crime prevention but in many cases it would be. Let us remove the gender imbalances experienced by many women - this too can result in a reduction in the incidence of crime and fear of it. Let's work to ensure equality in society; balance the gaps between the haves and have-nots, the young and the elderly, and the various other sub-groups within society both in economic terms and other ways that would enhance people's quality of life.

These are the ways we can reduce crime - not just the symptoms but the actual causes of crime. It will take time and tenacity to work it through. Differing problems require different solutions. For example, while juvenile involvement in crime was a major cause for concern during the 1970s and 1980s, what steps are we taking to protect the ageing members of the population? And will the crime rate drop automatically, or will the form the crimes take change?

## **TIMING and TENACITY**

We must begin now to mobilise all the resources we have to bring about a society wherein both people and their property are free from criminal acts. It is timely to build on the basic foundations that have been laid, but it will take time. Thus there is a need for tenacity on the part of all of us if we are to build a strong foundation for future action.

We cannot rely on technology for the answer. Sure, video surveillance will assist to identify offenders after they have committed the crime, in some instances. Improvements in vehicle design may deter some would-be offenders. Lock, bars on the windows, and making fortresses of our homes and businesses may keep some offenders out. But these activities are band-aid solutions that negatively impact on our quality of life.

In the mid-1980s, the Federal Office of Road Safety undertook a survey to ascertain what issues were relevant to people in the broader community with a view to developing their strategies to enhance safety on the roads. Not surprisingly, their first task was to bring the issue onto the public agenda.

In the greater scheme of things, it is possibly the case that most people do not worry about crime prevention until they are

personally affected by crime. Also, we have to balance the need for crime prevention strategies to be given prominence in the greater scheme of things, with the need to ensure that we do not raise the level of fear in our community at the same time.

If politicians and public officials will not take the lead, then we must work together to push the issue now. We cannot be into patch-protection; where we can work together we must, where there are resources, we must share them. We can support those who are prepared to take time, on our behalf, to gain public backing for the cause. As in all good planning techniques, we should make our initial goals achievable but keep our eyes on the broader mission.

## **COMMENT**

You have probably noticed that I have omitted comment on the specific needs of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and other Ethnic Groups. As well, I have not addressed the specific needs of youth or the aged. That omission is not to undervalue the specific problems encountered by such groups, but such an assignment would need far more time than that allocated to me. The relevant point is that we must acknowledge the complexity of society and the sub-groups within it; we will then be cognisant of the social characteristics and circumstances of differing groups in our society when developing crime prevention strategies.

The realistic position is that there have been varied attempts to get the broad issue of crime prevention on to the public policy agenda in a committed way. With governments being elected for three or four year terms, they should be committed to taking action despite the fact that another party may reap the benefits; as we know, there is always the distinct possibility that governments retain power for an extended period and consequently, a failure to take action may see that same government blamed for escalating problems.

There is an urgent need for leadership in this field of crime prevention. Generally, the police have not taken the lead, and while it is debateable that it is their role, they are ideally placed to undertake the broader educative role in relation to the benefits of effective crime prevention strategies; they are also well resourced so as to provide meaningful support to others working in the field - support either by direct involvement in programs or research data.

Some governments have tried to coordinate the necessary programs and services such as in South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales, with varying degrees of success. For instance, in Australia there is still a dearth of standards in relation to the tools used in crime prevention.

## **CONCLUSION**

Together, we can make a difference. People power has worked in major issues world-wide such as in the Philippines against a corrupt government, and in breaking down the Wall separating East and West Berlin; both locally overseas, the feminist movement has been responsible for having issues such as rape, criminal assault in the home, and child abuse put squarely on the agendas of governments. We must work together to have the issue of crime prevention put on the agenda and then ensure meaningful action occurs. That action, as I've said, can include positive development in the following areas:

- “G”: the subjugation of women needs to be addressed urgently so that all people will be free to enjoy life. To avoid the displacement affect, “g”eographically and by crime type, the effort needs to be “g”lobal.
- “R”: we need to learn from the research undertaken and commit resources to further action research if we are to move forward. As well we need to remember the three “r’s” - respect, rights, and responsibilities.
- “E”: the economic inequalities must be reversed; or will the poor be left to feel, it not be made, vulnerable to criminal exploitation? It is arguable that as Australians we live in an egalitarian society - let us ensure that all people can feel safe and be safe in their homes and in public.
- “A”: the foregoing indicates that action is necessary; not just from governments, not just from police, not just from community groups and individuals, not just from business, but from the integrated whole of the society in which we live.
- “T”: timing will be important; the potential for success can be wasted if we become complacent or dispirited. and “T” for tenacity in our quest; we must continue on in the pursuit for a safer, better society. Let us ensure that the issues raised in our Federal Justice Office Issues Paper “Creating a Safer Community: Crime Prevention and Community Safety into the 21st century” are not left to wither on the vine.

We should not be into patch protection - exclusive ownership and arrogance will be to the detriment of each of us in the

long term. That lesson is relevant and well told in Aesop's Fable "The Bundle of Sticks". In that story we have the old man, with many sons who were continually quarrelling with each other. When all other efforts to reconcile them failed, he called the sons together to show them the folly of their ways.

Tying together a bundle of sticks, he commanded each of them to try to break it. Inevitable, not one had the strength to break the bundle. Next the old man had the bundle untied and he gave a single stick to each son and commanded him to break it; that was done with the greatest of ease. The moral of the story; unity is strength. If we can live and work together in harmony with respect for each other, and our resources - public and private alike, we will repel attempts to harm us.

We must encourage people to become involved - now, and empower people so that they can participate - now. We have a very astute and concerned populace. We must harness and channel that energy and creativity towards realistic crime prevention strategies by tackling issues such as those I have raised.

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## THE MEDIA AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

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This paper will examine the media's role in reporting crime and its implications for community safety. Topics covered will include certain inbuilt structural, cultural and operational biases of the media and of particular sections of the media and the influence these have on community safety. The most prominent bias is towards the undefined concept of "newsworthiness". This will lead to questions on both the accuracy of the media's portrayal of crime and on the effects of this portrayal, on the community and on policymakers and enforcement agencies. Various alternatives to the media picture of crime will be considered.

I have been asked to speak to you about the media's role in promoting community safety, or conversely, the media's role in inhibiting community safety. I should also add that I am speaking as an individual, and not in this instance as a representative of the Criminal Justice Commission.

I though I might first approach this in an anecdotal way by referring to an incident that occurred fairly early in my journalistic career.

Periodically, around the Australian Coast, a human bumps into a shark. In a very small minority of such cases, the shark attacks the human. This is causative of a rash of stories about shock and horror shark attacks in the media. Inevitably, they interview someone called Vic Hislop who uses the opportunity to push a program of shark genocide.

I think it was about 1984 that somewhere on the Queensland coast a passing shark took a passing bite out of a passing human. I was working in the Sunday Mail at the time and the Chief of Staff raced up to me in great excitement and asked me to write a backgrounder on shark attacks to go with the news story. So I did.

From memory, my first paragraph read like this: "In the past 75 years, sharks have eaten 49 Australians. In the same period, Australians have eaten 1,345,782 sharks".

The story wasn't run and I was never asked to write it again.

Let us put this in the context of what we are about today - still community safety, but about sharks and not crime. The overwhelming majority of people entering the water don't come into contact with any sharks at all. The minority who do tend to be divers and surfers who are really intruding into the sharks world in a big way. But even in the majority of these cases, nothing happens - sharks and person look each other up and down and each swim their separate ways. In a lesser number of cases, the shark has been unlucky enough to run into Vic Hislop or someone else with a spear, hook or net and is very much the worse off for the encounter. And, in an infinitesimal number of cases, shark attacks human and just some of these attacks are fatal.

You can see in this case that the common media image of a coastline ringed with dangerous marauding man eating sharks is not a particularly accurate reflection of reality. But this distortion of reality has enormous influence. All around Australia there are a large number of people who will not dip a toe into the water because they have a subconscious expectation that toe will be taken by one of the numerous, dangerous, marauding man-eating sharks around. Also government agencies spend money setting nets and hooks out to sea; the stated intention here is to protect bathers from unanticipated encounters with sharks but I have a suspicion that the real purpose is to protect the tourist industry from media sharks. At any rate, we catch some sharks and as well, some turtles, some dolphins and odd whale and surfer. This is what you could call an unintended consequence of policy, something that we will come back to.

More people come into contact with crime than will ever come into contact with sharks - of the aquatic variety anyway. Is the media's portrayal of crime any more accurate than its portrayal of sharks? Let's take a hypothetical case, let's say an inner city mall. Assume that of all the thousands of contacts between persons in this mall, late one night there is one that can be described as a mugging. The story makes the paper, the local police union uses it as an opportunity to berate the government over the insufficiency of police number and resources, and some, who know the mall is a dangerous place where you are likely to be mugged, avoid it. Actual or potential muggers on the other hand, now know that the mall is a place where there might be easy pickings or, at the very least, as a place where they can enjoy the congenial company of other muggers. Since the number of muggings is likely to be in some way related to the relative proportions of potential muggers and potential victims, what we have here in this hypothetical case is a classical example of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

In real life, many things bear on the relative safety of malls other than the coverage they receive in the media. However, I am sure you see the general drift - the question is why does the media do the things the media does. And the answer, in brief, is that there are all sorts of historical, and structural and cultural reasons that we get the media coverage that we get.

The first barrier to understanding is probably that we treat the media as a homogenous entity, this grand generalisation we call the media. Historically, the media as we know it today is a very recent phenomenon, but it can be seen to have a number of ancestors.

First, and not to be neglected, is what you call the tradition of the village gossip, the collector and disseminator of information of undoubted prurient interest even if often doubtful accuracy. Here (National Inquirer, Picture, etc.) is the village gossip in the last 20th century. Now you might ignore these magazines, but here are some clippings from the Courier-Mail to show that the village gossip tradition is not neglected in the major metropolitan daily. I'm not picking on the Courier-Mail - could have found similar material in the Sydney Morning Herald though I will admit it might have taken me a bit longer.

Second, there is what I call the Times of the activist tradition which traces back to the 18th century when the first newsletters, including one called The Times - were furtively circulated in Paris and London coffee shops and profoundly subversive institutions - which they undoubtedly were. In asserting a right to report upon, analyse and criticise the trade of authority however, these newsletters naturally provoked Newton's opposite and equal reaction.

First, not surprisingly, there was the effort to ban both the newsletters and the coffee and criminalise all those associated with them. I think it has been said in relation to other substances that prohibition has a very doubtful record of achievement where there is significant demand for the substances or services in question. So it was with newspapers and coffee. Second and still with us, there is the effort of the trade of authority to control the media, through taxing it, imposing legal liability upon it, controlling its content, manipulating the flow of information it receives or through a variety of other, more subtle methods that could most accurately be described as fitting into the categories of extortion, bribery or seduction. This what I call the propagandist tradition - it is not just the old Pravda - all governments, however liberal in the old sense of the word, employ people involved in more or less subtle information control and manipulation and media bribery, extortion and seduction and the fruit of their labours can be seen reflected in all the media, to a greater or lesser extent. Sad, but true.

Another tradition, which grew up in the mid 19th century, saw the media as basically an educator, an extension of schooling which was then being extended to reach more and more of the population. I call this the Christian Science Monitor tradition for two reasons - firstly because that newspaper was the most prominent early embodiment of the particular tradition, and secondly as a reminder that "education" is rarely neutral - often what might appear to be education would often be more accurately be described as activism or propaganda. The Christian Science Monitor was, and is, a very fine newspaper - but it doesn't much question the tenets of the faith.

Then there is what you might call the Citizen Kane tradition, where the media seeks to exert power in its own right and for its own interest, in defiance of or to the great peril of those elected to the trade of authority. This practice isn't as prevalent as it once was or, at least, it isn't as blatantly obvious. However, it is still there and given a little time I could no doubt pick out an example from this morning's paper.

Lastly, there is the commercial tradition, given to us most persuasively around the turn of the century by some of the same people who were later used as the role models for Citizen Kane. In this tradition, which I call the Randolph Hearst tradition, the media is basically a business and its business is to attract readers, listeners, viewers and revenue, and to maximise the profits accruing to the large public companies or individuals that own the media. Once again, I can refer here to the Daily BMW - I'm sorry The Courier-Mail.

The point of this dissertation is that every single one of these traditions still exerts a powerful influence on the media of today. Further than this, I could say that I could pick up any copy of any major newspaper on any day and point out examples of pure unadulterated gossip, of activism, of propaganda, of education, of misuse of media power, or of mere grubby commerce.

By now, you are probably asking how we journalists live with ourselves. When journalists and editors and producers sit down to decide what to cover, how to cover it, and how to defend their decision later it all revolves around a concept called "newsworthiness". Something has news value, or it hasn't. Looking around here now, it is pretty obvious, is it not, that we do not have much "news value". However, there is something further to consider - the editor of the Sydney Morning Herald uses the same justification as the editor of the Truth - surely they are not talking about the same thing.

Go back to our traditions of the media and ask the question, what is news? Is it gossip, the more salacious the better? Is it information that should be shared and that might through better understanding lead to a better society? Is the information our rulers want passed on? Is it some privately funded continuing education program? Or is it simply the information and the presentation that will get the highest ratings?

And, just at the point when you were wondering when I would ever get back to the topic, what is crime to the media? Well, I

don't know of a single media outlet that covers all varieties of crime on an equal basis. What is reported reflects the balance, with a media outlet, of all the competing traditions that have contributed to the modern media. You might pick up the paper and see crime accurately described and thoughtfully analysed. However, you are more likely to get a fairly shallow pot-pourri of the more juicy crimes, those that involve sex and violence and famous people and also periodic assertions that some form of crime that is reasonably prevalent - like housebreaking - is now out of control. And from this shallow and very selective coverage, you are quite likely to get calls from the government to do something about alleged waves of juicy crime or relatively prevalent crime. The remedies proposed are usually as shallow as the original analysis and extensively they rely on more and better ways to catch baddies and bigger and better punishments for baddies who get caught. And if a government or an opposition want to push a law and order barrow up to a forthcoming election, well a lot of the media is going to be very cooperative. Similarly, if some arm of the media wants to push a law and order barrow, you can equally confidently predict that there will be no lack of politicians willing to jump aboard.

What this means in effect is that those who rely on the media for most of their information about crime don't have much knowledge of crime and hence, aren't well equipped to determine an appropriate response to it. Unfortunately, this includes most of the population who vote and, I am afraid, most of those whom they vote for. When crime seems threatening, which it sometimes is and sometimes is just made to appear, both the response deemed and the action, if any, taken is likely to be pretty basic. I am reminded of the words of the American social commentator H L Mencken:

*"For every complex social question there is a simple answer - and it's wrong".*

So what do we do? Well some of the media does respond to exhortations to lift their game, if the exhortations come in significant bulk or from quarters of significant influence. A lot of the media is, however, quite deaf to this sort of appeal.

Next, those interested in or concerned by crime should be alerted to the dangers of relying on a purely media diet of information. In general, they are likely to be misinformed and led to favour simple answers to complex problems or, if they are likely to be held responsible for taking some action, inclined to indulge in the legislative knee jerk response or some appropriately publicised heavy handed enforcement. In either case, the response may well compound the problem but we will all feel good doing it.

Probably most significantly, those who do have knowledge of crime without being criminal and those who have expertise in crime research should do much more than they currently do to get their information into the media. We don't do ourselves, or the community any good, by being such shrinking violets.

Later on, I will be speaking about some possible deficiencies in our crime research, from the point of view of community safety. But for the moment, that's enough from me and I hope I have given you something to think about. Thank you.

## **CRIME PREVENTION - NOW FOR THE HARD QUESTIONS?**

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Many years ago I addressed the Australian Crime Prevention Council and basically accused them of being a well-meaning body of men and women but one whose conceptual and theoretical understandings of what was involved in crime prevention were naive in the extreme. Since that talk it has been a long time between invitations to speak to this august body and I suspect that after this talk, it will be even longer before I am invited back again. In the intervening years I have been involved - before, during and after my time at the Australian Institute of Criminology - in many crime prevention projects. These included the only overall evaluation of crime prevention approaches yet published in this country (with Ivan Potas and Adrian Vining). It is heartening to see such an upsurge in crime prevention generated by the Council, governments, business and academia. However, we still maintain that there are some very real difficulties in how the term is used, implemented and conceptualised.

In our examination of the current situation of crime prevention in this country, we have elected to focus on juvenile justice policies and programs for most of the more comprehensive and recent work has been done in this area. But we need to begin by asking some basic questions: who comprises the group we call "youth", do we take a justice or a welfare approach to their situation, and are they predominantly victims or offenders? In addition we need to examine the broader questions: how do changes in public attitudes (like victims rights and law and order lobbies) affect youth policies, and how does fiscal constraint and political expediency alter the policy directions? This paper explores these questions and then examines recent juvenile justice developments in Western Australia and Queensland. It critically analyses the schemes in these States to arrive at the view that the justice and welfare models are not additive and that is therefore time to take a new approach - namely a social development model to crime prevention.

### **CONCEPTUALISATION OF YOUTH**

As is the case for other social institutions (health, welfare, education, etc), the criminal justice system focuses on young people as a distinct group by providing separate and specific services, legislation, agencies and programs. The result is that youth are identified by an age category (albeit a significant social indicator in Australian society), which often fails to take into account other social variables like class, race, location, interests and so on. While some programs attempt to recognise the heterogeneity of young people by focusing on particular categories (like Aborigines, unemployed, rural, etc) this targeting by age or by specific sub-group leads to serious negative consequences in the criminal justice arena. It is important to emphasise that while a youth culture (or cultures) exists, it is not homogeneous and is significantly affected by social variables such as geographic location and socio-economic factors. So how do we conceptualise young people in Australian society?

Conflict conceptualisations are evident in the six approaches, identified by Drury and Jamrozik (1985) that underlie policy for young people. These are:

1. Young people are a distinct social group with common interests who require specific policy and service options.
2. Young people are in transition from children to adults and remedial policies aid this process toward adulthood.
3. Young people have multiple problems and so services and policies are designed to overcome personal deficits.
4. Young people are victims and remedial programs aim to address this disadvantage.
5. Young people are a threat to society and this encourages the need for greater social control mechanisms.
6. Young people are social change agents benefiting from programs aimed at encouraging their participation in community and society.

These six approaches have been applied at various time and in various ways and some operate simultaneously resulting in confusion in both public and government attitudes towards young people. On the one hand, young people are treated with paternalism as victims who have serious problems, at the other extreme, they are subject to punitive treatment in an attempt to maintain social order. Such conflict results in overall confusion in policy and in the services and programs offered to young people because of the very different theoretical and conceptual bases which underlie them.

Of these six approaches, the first (having common interests) demonstrated our inability to conceptualise young people as being a diverse group with varying needs. The second, third and fourth approaches (in transition, have multiple problems and being victims) reveal our tendency towards a welfare model for youth. The fifth approach (as threats) clearly shows a

justice perspective. It is the final model (as a conduit for social change), though rarely applied, which points the way to the social development model needed if we are to make our juvenile justice system more successful than it has been in the past.

It is clear that a major conflict exists between a commitment to the welfare of younger people versus a commitment to community stability and the maintenance of "law and order". In addition, the more recent orientation in criminal justice policy to focus on the rights of victims has resulted in a further blurring of the thrust of juvenile justice policies and attitudes towards young people generally. As the previous categorisations show, young people are viewed, sometimes simultaneously, as disadvantaged victims and as out-of-control perpetrators. In a period when victim rights are in the ascendancy, young people are increasingly categorised more exclusively in the perpetrator group. Yet people, especially young people, are not exclusively "violated victims" nor "violating offenders" (Sandor, 1993, p. 104).

Most data on reported crime show young people, especially young males, are the group in Australian society most likely to be over-represented as both offenders and victims (Sandor, 1993). They should not be placed into mutually exclusive categories with arbitrary boundaries. Indeed, young people are victimised within the juvenile justice system, where for Aboriginal youth for example, violence is a routine part of interaction with the police (see Cunneen, 1993). And as Sandor (1993, p. 104) suggests "it is distinctly offensive when an appeal to the victim's lobby is used as a cloak for punitive measures or a short-cut on the just treatment of suspected offenders". He says that "the rise of a victim-focused discourse is paralleled by a corresponding intolerance for the foibles of young offenders" (Sandor, 1993, p. 105).

Within the more recent, although ever-present, push for "law and order" arises a further contradiction in the categorisation of young people resulting in more punitive measures. This is the widespread belief that crimes by young people are increasing and many new programs are based on this mistaken assumption. Yet the data shows that the view of juvenile offending as being out-of-control is erroneous. The Criminal Justice Commission in Queensland (1992, p. 46) found that while there has been an increased involvement by juveniles in crime in the last 30 years "since 1989-90 juvenile involvement in cleared crime appears to have declined". And in Victoria, the Children's Court figures show that there has been little change in "crime against the person or property" but it is offences against "good order" that have increased dramatically (Sandor, 1993, p. 105). This "law and order" push further confuses the categorisation of youth and the policies and programs that result.

At the same time as there has been a greater emphasis on viewing youth as a threat to society, there has also been a general concession by governments and policy-makers that traditional forms of juvenile justice are far from satisfactory. As Braithwaite (1992, p. 2) says "the Western criminal justice system is an abject failure" and criminal justice authorities are now recognising this in light of economic rationalist perspectives which force them to review the ever-increasing cost of justice programs. Governments have now embraced crime prevention initiatives in a bid to halt escalating costs and to keep young people out of the criminogenic environment of custodial settings. The "overall has been towards community-based correctional, educational, and re-socialisation programs rather than overt punishment" in most instances (Graycar and Jamrozik, (1993, p. 271).

In light of the increasing number of jobless youth, there has been a further move toward education and employment programs as measures of social control in the belief that dropping out of school is positively correlated with higher rates of juvenile crime. But the view that hoards of youths who are not in jobs or in school will create huge crime waves is contradicted by sufficient evidence that shows that the correlates of crime are much more complex (see Jajoura, (1993). Nevertheless, "by the year 2000, 95% of 20 year olds will be in education or training" (Graycar and Jamrozik, 1993, p. 259). Yet most of these programs are remedial and stem from "political expediency" (Graycar and Jamrozik, 1993, p. 270) rather than any inherent efficacy in thwarting juvenile offending or in offering greater opportunities for young people. However, they do herald a resurgence of the welfare approach toward youth problems.

## **CRIME PREVENTION SCHEMES**

Given this confusion of attitudes towards young people and the recent moves in seemingly opposing directions towards justice and welfare models, it is instructive to examine two particular instances which exemplify both models. In most Australian States the justice and welfare models have managed to operate simultaneously. Juvenile correctional centres are decreasing in number and frequency of use and the shift is towards community based programs which offer supervision, community work, restitution activities, weekend camps and so on.

Even when residential centres are still operating, they have attempted to utilise current theories and take a soft approach. However, some research indicates that there are no differences in recidivism between the gentler institutional settings and more punitive "boot-camp-style" ones (Greenwood and Turner, (1993). These "soft programs" are seen as progressive re-socialisation models and could be classed as welfare approaches. By and large however, the changes in juvenile justice in recent years have been largely cosmetic in that they still operate within the paradigm of young people as victims of offenders rather than as potential social change agents. And they still operate by targeting individuals rather than by

developing communities (which is our suggested ecological approach).

## **Western Australia**

In Western Australia juvenile justice as exemplified by the Crime (Serious and Repeat Offenders) Sentencing Act 1992 is based on a justice model. It represents the "youth as threats to society" perspective given above. By and large, juvenile justice in WA is held up as the epitome of a "law and order" approach to crime. It is suggested that "police policy towards juveniles (is) shaped by a process of stereotyping groups of juveniles", where "police are likely to stereotype 'violent' groups on the basis that their disorderly behaviour cannot be safely predicted" (Beresford, 1993, p. 9). The public image of juvenile justice in WA is one where police exercise discretionary powers to a greater extent than elsewhere; where the policing methods are characterised by high-speed car chases of juvenile offenders and beatings seen as acceptable in police cells.

Western Australia has the highest police to citizen ratio in the country. The Parliamentary Select Committee on Youth Affairs (1992) stated that there were 94.6 police contacts per 1,000 juveniles compared to 38.8 for the nation as a whole. Over-policing to the level of harassment is evident, such as the practice of "name-checking". Harassment is also at a more serious level where "there is a widespread perception among youth workers to entrenched police brutality towards some young people" especially socio-economically disadvantaged youth, repeat offenders and Aboriginal youth (Beresford, 1993, p. 10).

The methods adopted are also more punitive so that more young people are arrested rather than summonsed (74% versus 24%) and dealt with by the Children's Court rather than the Children's Panel (Beresford, 1993). Detention rates are also high as judged by the evidence that only "12-15% of youth detained in maximum security remand actually received maximum security recommendations" (Beresford, 1993, p. 11).

Beresford (1993) characterises the WA juvenile justice system as being one where over-policing and harassment pervade; where more punitive methods are used widely; and where there is targeting of socio-economically disadvantaged youth. This "law and order" approach has not shown any positive effects in terms of reducing rates of juvenile crime, severity of crimes nor recidivism levels. Indeed the result is that juveniles are twice as likely to come into contact with police and receive severe mandatory sentences (Beresford, 1993). While some worthwhile community crime prevention schemes do operate in the State, they are overshadowed by this justice model approach.

## **Queensland**

More recent changes in Queensland take the perspective of "youth as disadvantage", "youth as threat to society" and begin to extend to "youth as social change agents". The Juvenile Justice Act 1992 also endorses a justice model by including the use of cautions, the establishment of a Children's Court and greater sentencing options for young people. However, it is part of a broader package of measures aimed at softening the approach to crime by its non-statutory element, the newly-conceived Youth and Community Combined Action - and it is this link which provides the welfare model approach.

YACCA is based on an ecological or community development approach where 20 "high-crime" areas have been targeted across the State. Reference groups, comprising police, welfare, church and other local leaders, are in the process of being informed in each area and youth workers provide the link with other agencies. It involves the provision of school lecture programs, youth forums, camps, recreation activities and skills training programs (Hil and Seaton, 1993). Also, there are included provisions for Aboriginal and Islander people where elders can be involved in cautioning and avenues for Aboriginal communities to be involved in reparation schemes (Imlah, 1992, p. 9).

The Queensland scheme appears to address contemporary theories based on research evidences as a model of juvenile crime prevention. It adopts many features of the Bonnemaison scheme with the emphasis on improving jobs, better education and training and increasing recreational activities. It is able, in theory at least, to be responsive to community needs and demands as there is not overall blueprint of how the local YACCA programs should develop. There also exists an evaluation model to provide feedback to the program.

However, it is open to criticism as good rhetoric or window dressing. The scheme is based largely on justice and welfare models that confuse the attitude toward young people and result in individualistically applied programs. For while the YACCA programs are targeted at agencies, they do lead to marginalisation of youth into "disadvantaged" or "at risk" groups. Changes planned for the future in some areas that are already up and running, may broaden the scheme. It is hoped in these areas that mainstream groups (such as Scouts, youth clubs, sport clubs) will also be involved in YACCA to take away the stigma attached to it.

Furthermore, the scheme does not have strong bi-partisan political support - a feature of the Bonnemaison scheme on which it is based. It also assumes that juvenile crime is increasing, which is not supported by the data (Criminal Justice Commission, 1992) and by an understanding of changes in methods of police reporting. It inadvertently targets "at risk"

groups with the inherent dangers evidenced in Western Australia of increasing levels of net-widening and harassment. Because it takes a community approach, there are possible consequences of targeting and criminalising entire communities which creates a “panopticon” for the high-crime areas selected (see Sackett, 1993). Finally, there has been a lack of consultation and public debate on the scheme and its introduction. While training is to be done at the community level with local involvement, there is not widespread community support for the scheme and on this, it will surely falter.

## Conclusion

It is clear that the justice and welfare models have failed individually and can no longer co-exist, that is, they are not additive. Those characteristics that indicate that juveniles require welfare assistance are the very ones that often bring them to the attention of police. This paradox has been supported by some substantial research evidence (see Gale et al 1990; James and Polk, 1989).

We also need to avoid targeting communities which are characterised as “problematic”. Many new crime prevention initiatives have been based in areas with high crime rates and where the relations with police and local juveniles are poor (see James and Polk, 1989). This would seem to be an obvious rationalisation where resources are limited. However, this form of reactive view - focusing on areas where trouble is expected - results in the “panopticon” adopted by Sackett (1993) to describe the situation of contemporary Aboriginal communities. Police and welfare agents are then stigmatising entire communities on the basis of crime rates. Community crime prevention should be more than a facilitator for the public to take their own protective measures; more than having the public act as social control agents; more than the public being de facto police. It should involve the development and integration of communities to avoid crime before it commences. It should be proactive rather than reactive.

Both the justice and welfare models have little to offer in the 1990s. They may work for “employed young people from middle class nuclear households” (Jackomon, 1992, p. 65) but not for the many who are not. We need to move from the individualistic approach that targets young people and “at risk” groups as problems, threats to society or disadvantaged to one which “accentuates the positive and creative citizenship of all young people. This shift necessitates institutional changes and not behavioural management” (Coventry, Muncie and Walter, 1993, p. 21 in Hil and Seaton, 1993). The justice and welfare models should be replaced by “social development” approaches (Hil and Seaton, 1993).

It is time to move from highlighting (and stigmatising) “at risk” groups toward a genuine concern with community development and an injection of resources into communities. We need to address or return to the cultural theorists (eg. Cloward and Ohlin and the Chicago School) to provide strongly bonded communities and not just work on an individual model of crime prevention.

We see such a “social development” model as taking up the sixth approach given at the beginning of this paper - one where young people are viewed as social change agents who should be encouraged to participate in their communities. What a social development model does not embrace is:

- the targeting and stigmatising of individuals and/or groups;
- the saturation of communities with further control measures which result in a panopticon of guards watching the guards watching the guarded; and
- making the police the central pivot around which crime prevention programs operate.

What a social development model does is to:

- target communities as the object to be improved rather than individuals;
- initiate programs that will ignite communities to use their own resources and personnel to improve social and economic conditions; and
- see crime prevention as integrally tied to improving the community as a whole and not as an “add on” focussed only on criminal behaviour.

While there is much to be applauded in the recent moves in community crime prevention, especially in Queensland, there is still room for severe criticism. We need to be clear about our conceptualisation of youth; we must recognise that the justice and welfare models conflict; and we should be defining what we mean by community crime prevention. Until we have seriously addressed these issues we are naive to expect our new initiatives to be successful.

## And Now for the Hard Question!

1. As we have argued youth crime has been approached from a justice and/or welfare perspective. Often these perspectives conflict and are counterproductive both for the young people and for crime prevention. Are we willing to untangle this conceptual mess?
2. It is clear that the criminal justice system, and especially the juvenile justice system, is a theoretical and policy disaster area. There is little evidence from anywhere that it deters juveniles from committing crimes, protects the community or somehow rehabilitates young people. Isn't it time for politicians and policy-makers to forget their political agendas and try some radically new approaches?
3. This conference is full of well-meaning academics and practitioners, most of who are espousing the values of crime prevention and condemning a heavy-handed approach to preventing juvenile crime by the police and other criminal justice agencies. Yet, we would argue that there is not a shred of systematic and consistent hard evidence to indicate that current crime prevention strategies in Australia, and elsewhere, actually achieve the goals that are espoused for them. Why are we unwilling to undertake comprehensive evaluations of large-scale government programs when clearly such evaluations should go hand-in-hand with the implementation of these programs?
4. The voluntary groups and private organisations are often loud in their condemnation of police control of crime prevention programs and draconian punishment tariffs for offenders. Yet there is little evaluation of the alternative programs that they suggest, there is an unwillingness to critically assess their own role as quasi-state agents, and few have moved towards a social development approach to crime prevention. Why this criticism of others but not of themselves?
5. Lest it be thought that we are advocating a return to police dominance, let us be clear that, with some exceptions, we are highly critical of the police conceptualisation of crime prevention. The police generally equate crime prevention with neighbourhood watch, safety audits (the new buzz word) and a range of "dob-in" programs such as Operation Noah (for drugs) and Operation Paradox (for child molesters), and countless other schemes where citizens are encouraged to spy on each other. We would argue that there is no evidence to suggest that these dob-in programs have markedly affected illegal drug use, the rate of child molestation nor the tendency of juveniles to commit offences. When will the police recognise that crime prevention goes well beyond actions that they can control generally, and dobbing-in schemes specifically?

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## **TACKLING YOUTH CRIME IN THE UK**

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Over the past decade, penal reformers and juvenile campaigners in the UK have had remarkable success in persuading the criminal justice system to adopt a more rational community-based approach to the sentencing of young offenders. Almost everywhere a greater proportion of young offenders have been diverted from court proceedings by the use of cautioning, and the use of custodial sentences has dropped significantly. Importantly, there has been a considerable cross-party political support for these measures to such a degree that crime did not really figure as a party political issue in the 1992 General Election.

However, despite these reforms, public concern about crime, and youth crime in particular, has never been higher. Reported crime levels have continued to rise remorselessly. There are frequent media horror stories about young offenders, including the killing of a toddler by older youths which caught the nation's heart strings. Many pundits believe that the criminal justice system has been emasculated by recent changes in policy and practice, and that both the main political parties have gone soft on crime. On housing estates, small numbers of highly delinquent youth are reportedly making life impossible for other residents, and the police and criminal justice agencies seem powerless to prevent it.

Against this background of increasingly liberal juvenile justice policies, rising crime and moral panic, it is essential for professionals not to be deflected from their carefully laid plans to tackle youth crime issues in a rational and deliberate way. Crime Concern, the UK's national independent crime prevention development organisation, has taken the lead in developing a practical local response to these issues which consults and brings together the concerns of all the different local interest groups, and diminishes the likelihood of a 'knee jerk' response.

In the UK, the vast majority of central and local government resources devoted to the crime problem are spent on police, court and offender services - ie. responding to crime rather than preventing it. Less than 1% of police budgets go to prevention. Yet the Government's own research (Mayhew and Aye Maung, 1993) shows that less than 1 in 3 crimes committed get reported and recorded, and of these less than 1 in 4 gets cleared up. Eventually only 3% of offences actually committed result in a caution or conviction. We are left, therefore, with an anomalous situation in which 99% of the resources are focused on just 3% of the problem. This grossly inequitable imbalance of expenditure between crime prevention and response needs urgently to be addressed.

### **POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT**

The UK, like much of the developed world, has been going through a major economic recession during the past two years. Public sector funding has been increasingly cut back. At such time, individual agencies and departments tend to abandon peripheral activities and retreat to the inescapable core of their statutory duties. Unfortunately, youth crime prevention does not form part of the statutory function of any local or national agency. Thus, while there is considerable sympathy with this cause, there is little money available to fund new programmes.

Fortunately, pressure is now building to change this situation. The Home Office working group report Safer Communities (Morgan, 1991) argued that local authorities should be given a statutory responsibility for community safety. The Morgan report was a benchmark which has stirred up considerable debate and activity within local government. Local authority associations in the UK have taken up this case, arguing that they would be able to do much more if a legal obligation were laid upon them to undertake this work. However, central government in its wisdom has decided not to do this but to leave crime prevention as a permissive activity. Many local councillors and officers agree that they cannot devote serious resources to it until it becomes a recognised part of the core role of local government.

In addition to the basic policy framework represented by the Morgan report, a number of central government programmes have emphasised the role of crime prevention and community safety in recent years. The Safer Cities programme, which has been funded by the Home Office in selected towns and cities throughout the UK, has encouraged a partnership approach at the local area level. There has also been a community safety component in other government funding programmes such as the Urban Programme and City Challenge (both for deprived areas). Many towns and cities have developed crime prevention projects and programmes using these funds, which have now unfortunately been discontinued.

A major positive has been the de-politicisation of crime prevention. Crime Concern and others have worked hard to establish a cross party consensus about what needs to be done in community safety. This has been a central factor in growth of support for this work.

Despite the increasing range of activity on the ground, there is as yet no single or coherent community safety movement. Crime Concern has been active both nationally and locally in developing the beginning of such a movement by helping forge genuine partnerships between the different interest groups, by raising the profile of the work through its publications and

conferences, and by developing new practice through its own programmes and projects. The existence of an independent national resource agency has been vital to the development of this work.

Although much of Crime Concern's work is about local partnerships, it is recognised that this is not a substitute for national policy change. This is particularly important in the area of youth crime prevention, where many local partners, particularly residents, believe that only government action on the economy and jobs can improve the fundamental difficulties which young people today face in the UK.

## **ABOUT CRIME CONCERN**

Crime Concern is an independent national organisation established with government finance in 1988 to stimulate, promote and support a partnership approach to community safety and crime prevention. It is a charity supported by all the main political parties and works closely with local authorities, the police, businesses and local communities in many different parts of the country. Crime Concern sets up practical projects, runs training courses, produces 'how-to' publications and provides local consultancy and evaluation services. It is strongly committed to youth crime prevention, and has run a wide range of youth projects and programmes in different parts of the UK over the past three years.

## **ABOUT YOUTH CRIME**

Youth crime is one of the major social problems of the post war period. It can have a devastating effect on urban neighbourhoods; it is a major cause of concern in local communities; and it affects the quality of life of millions of people.

The issue of youth crime often generates more heat than light. Many people hold strong views about how to deal with juvenile offenders. The debate is fanned by the high profile media attention given to this issue in the UK at present.

Most adults are concerned about young people as offenders - especially in relation to property crime, the perceived threat of violence from gangs of youths on the street, and joy riding in stolen cars. Adults are traditionally not good at listening to or believing young people's concerns. But surveys and consultations with young people show that they themselves are much more concerned about becoming the victims of crime, especially personal violence. In recent surveys of young people Crime Concern has found that approximately 80% are worried or very worried about their personal safety - a figure only exceeded by their worries about doing well at school or getting a job.

Young people are the frequent victims of crime such as robbery, harassment, theft, bullying and - in the home - physical/sexual abuse. These offences are substantially under-reported and successive surveys and consultations have shown them to be major preoccupations of a significant proportion of young people. Many young people say that their experience of adults and the police is frequently adversarial, and that adults often do not respond to their very real fears and concerns about victimisation. In addition, those young people who give rise to the most concern because of their visibility on the street are less likely to be at school, work, or attending existing leisure provision.

It is vital that adults listen to and believe young people about their experience of crime because:

- policing and other social control measures ultimately rely on the consent of the population. If we want young people to support our law enforcement structure we must listen and respond to their concerns as well as imposing our own (even when instinctively we do not want to believe what they tell us, eg. police intimidation or harassment, sexual abuse by adults)
- young people know much more about the crime that is being committed in an area - research shows that they witness three times more crime being committed than do adults (Kinsey et al, 1992)
- young people have time, energy, skills and commitment that can be used to help prevent crime if they believe it is in their interests to do so.

In the UK, young people make a significant contribution to the overall crime problem, both as offenders and victims:

### Young People As Offenders:

- 20% of known offenders are under 17
- 26% of known offenders are 17-21
- the peak age for burglary is 17

- 25% of car crime is committed by boys aged 10-16
- much vandalism and minor crime is committed by 8-12 year olds
- the peak age for offending is 18 for males and 15 for females (Home Office, 1993)

#### Young People As Victims:

- young men are the most frequent victims of assault. A 10-15 year old is ten times more likely to be assaulted than a man over 60; and a 16-24 year old is 20 times more at risk (Home Office, 1992)
- 68% of children are victims of bullying at some time in their school careers. 10% of primary/middle school children are bullied every week (Spence, 1992)
- 5% of children are thought to be the victim of sexual or physical abuse
- a recent survey found that 60% of young women are very worried about sexual harassment and assault - and 60% of actual assaults are never reported (Crime Concern, 1992)

It is not a simple task to find out how much youth crime is being committed. The British Crime Survey (Mayhew and Aye Maung, 1993) suggests that one third of crimes committed ever get reported to the police, and only 3% of offenders are actually caught and convicted. It is therefore necessary to consult local agencies and communities to establish what is actually happening on the ground. Questions of how to treat or punish young offenders are trivial compared with questions about the causes of crime and how we might prevent - more realistically, reduce - juvenile offending. Yet according to the Morgan working group report (1991), few areas in the country have yet developed a strategy to reduce crime committed by young people.

Crime prevention can be looked at in two ways. Firstly, there is the defensive, opportunity reduction approach which focuses on physical security and improving the design and management of the built environment. This will always be an important feature of crime prevention, but few people are really satisfied with an exclusively defensive approach. The second approach seeks to address the social conditions and blocked opportunities associated with high levels of youth crime and anti-social behaviour. An effective youth crime prevention strategy should address the educational, social, recreational, housing, training and employment needs of young people, particularly those who are most at risk of drifting into crime.

#### **DIFFERENT RESPONSES TO YOUTH CRIME**

During the 1980s much attention was focused on diverting identified young offenders from prosecution and custody. Multi-agency cautioning panels and youth justice agencies have successfully increased the use of cautioning and reduced the use of custodial sentences for juvenile offenders in many parts of the UK. This has helped to minimise the involvement of young people in the criminal justice system and has arguable reduced levels of re-offending, thereby contributing to a reduction in crime.

These are important and socially necessary responses, but it is very difficult to rehabilitate young offenders once they have reached mid to late adolescence, and there are grounds for believing that high quality, early prevention programmes may be effective at reducing delinquent outcomes. More attention is now being paid to diverting young people from crime in the first place.

To address youth crime prevention effectively, Crime Concern has found that it is necessary to address the range of problems facing young people and not just one aspect of them. It isn't only young people themselves who have to change - often local agencies may also need to modify their approach or the way in which they provide their services.

Youth crime problems have multiple causes and are rarely the same in any two neighbourhoods. Therefore pre-packaged, single-issue responses rarely work for long. Local solutions are required for local problems. However, while the content of any response to youth crime needs to be decided locally, the process by which this is done can also critically influence its chances of success. People hold many different views about the causes of youth crime and feasible (or desirable) solutions. Lasting solutions require a wide cross-section of the community to be involved in defining the approach to be taken, agreeing local priorities and combining their resources to tackle these priorities together in a planned way. A commitment to consultation and partnership forms the underpinning of this strategic approach to youth crime.

In practice, the process requires the existence or creation of a local partnership which involves all of the different interest groups - different local authority services, the voluntary sector and local businesses. Some local authorities in the UK have

recently established corporate youth crime prevention groups in response to the 1989 Children Act, which requires them to take measures to prevent young people in their area from committing crime. In these areas, the necessary structure to develop a strategic approach to youth crime is already in place. Where this is not the case, setting up a new multi-agency group is often a necessary first step.

Much has been written and said about the difficulties inherent in multi-agency working - most of it is true. For such a group to work, it needs to have a clear impetus, high-level support and a practical methodology for action.

It is when resources are tight that multi-agency approaches come into their own. It is no longer possible for individual agencies to nurture and develop their own pet schemes, instead they have to let go of their own cherished solutions and negotiate with other agencies to maximise what is possible to achieve together. This process is not easy or straightforward, and must have a coherent plan and structure to avoid becoming just another talking shop. That is the purpose of the structured approach to youth crime prevention devised by Crime Concern. It has a number of key principles:

- Bring together all the stakeholders in an area.
- Consult and involve young people from the start.
- Look systematically at the issues and problems in the area.
- Design local solutions for local problems.
- Base action on facts not fears - and on what we know works.
- Don't just respond to crisis - put some effort into tackling causes.

## **A YOUTH CRIME AUDIT**

Undertaking a youth crime audit is the first step in developing a strategy to reduce levels of offending by and against young people. It draws together facts and opinions in a way that clarifies the issue and motivates different groups and organisations to take action on the problem. The information needed is of three kinds:

- Statistics on youth crime.
- Views of agencies.
- Views of young people and local communities.

### **1. Generating a local picture of youth crime, offenders and victims**

To shape an effective response to youth crime it is necessary to build up a picture of youth crime in the area, including type and extent of offending by geographical area, time of day, age group, school attendance or employment status. It is essential to obtain a basic picture of what is happening before planning a strategy.

Although very important, recorded crime statistics are not sufficient on their own to provide a complete picture of crime. Other agencies also hold data that can improve our knowledge of the youth crime problem, eg. council for racial equality (racial harassment), women's unit (domestic violence), youth service (stop and search), housing department (neighbour disputes), environmental health (noisy parties).

Data on crime, deprivation and other risk factors can then be overlaid on a map to identify key places and times at which to concentrate responses. The targeting (or otherwise) of existing responses can be appraised. Comparisons can also be made with other areas - both within the locality and elsewhere.

### **2. Consulting with agencies**

In addition to obtaining statistical information about youth crime, it is important to find out what agencies think are the most pressing problems. Consulting agencies can raise their awareness of youth crime problems, give a useful indication of areas in which each agency would support action, and stimulate a response.

It is also useful to obtain a picture of youth provision in the area. Many people believe there is a link between the nature and extent of youth provision and youth crime. The way that services are delivered is particularly important - they need to

be relevant and accessible to young people; even-handed and non-stigmatising in their impact; and they should encourage young people to 'own' the service.

### **3. Consulting with residents and young people**

The third arm of a youth crime audit involves consulting with local community organisations and with young people themselves.

Residents' organisations should be asked their views about the crimes and incivilities which cause most concern to adult residents; where they occur; and when. This can best be done through one or more community meetings.

Consulting young people is the most essential part of the whole exercise. Crime Concern places the consultation and involvement of young people at the heart of its youth crime prevention work. Undertaking a youth consultation has three main purposes:

- To obtain young people's views directly on the nature, extent and importance of offending by and against young people.
- To interest and involve young people in this issue so that they become part of the solution as well as part of the problem. consulting young people is the key to their effective participation and involvement.
- To mobilise agencies to respond to young people's concerns.

Most youth consultations comprise a questionnaire, streetwork, focus group discussions and a written report.

#### *THE QUESTIONNAIRE*

This is a useful way of consulting a large number of young people individually about what they think, away from the pressure of the peer group. While it may be possible to consult with all young people in a small area, it is more common to select a sample. This sample may be chosen at random to reflect the age and sex balance of young people living in the neighbourhood, or it may be selected to reach specific groups of young people thought to be at greater risk of involvement in youth crime, eg. youth on the streets, users of a particular club or facility.

A confidential questionnaire is usually administered in groups by local workers in schools, youth clubs, training schemes and children's homes. It is important to involve local agencies in this process rather than undertaking it as an external piece of research, because it is these mainstream existing agencies which will have to respond to and take on young peoples' concerns. The questionnaire topics are determined locally through discussion with the field workers and young people, and are often amended after a pilot run of the questionnaire. The common range of topics includes:

- Victimisation of young people in relation to all types of crime.
- Young people's attitudes towards crime, and which crimes they consider to be the most serious.
- Whether they are under any pressure from peers to offend.
- Whether they wish to admit any offending of their own.
- Their views about the local agencies and services, including the police, schools and youth service.
- Truancy and exclusion from school.
- Their use of leisure facilities, and perceived shortfalls.
- What would make the area safer and stop young people committing offences.
- What they would be prepared to do themselves to help this process.

The questionnaires are entirely confidential and are sealed up in envelopes by the young people themselves as soon as they have filled them in. No personal identifying information is included. Confidentiality is emphasised at all stages in the exercise, and very few have refused to take part. In fact, young people are usually delighted to have their opinions asked, and appear to answer the questions honestly and without artifice.

## *STREETWORK*

To ensure that the consultation reaches all young people - including those who are not interested in youth programmes, and who may be absent from school - the questionnaires are supplemented by street work interviews to seek out those young people most at risk. This is done on their own territory, and requires a degree of skill. Nevertheless, even in the most difficult and crime-prone urban areas, young people on the street have been willing to talk openly about their beliefs, concerns and aspirations.

## *FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS*

Small discussion groups or workshops for young people in the area provide greater depth of information and opinion. These groups are particularly useful for finding out young people's priorities, and for generating enthusiasm to tackle them. Groups can be targeted at different age-groups and should preferably be run by an adult known to, and trusted by, the majority of young people taking part.

## *THE REPORT*

The questionnaires are computer analysed and the findings fed back to young people in the same groups which originally completed the questionnaires. A fuller report is produced for local agencies. Its impact will be greater if young people can be involved in helping to write it and to present it to the agencies and organisations in the area.

## **FROM CONSULTATION TO ACTION**

Following the audit, Crime Concern aims to encourage the development of a youth strategy to help mobilise the resources and energies of agencies, organisations and young people themselves. This can make a significant contribution to reducing the harm young people do themselves and others. It can also reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods, shopping areas and other public spaces.

## **RESPONSE BY YOUNG PEOPLE**

A major purpose of the youth consultation is to generate interest and momentum to tackle the issues by young people themselves. It is therefore essential to feed back the findings from the survey as quickly as possible, and to encourage a response. Crime Concern has sometimes done this by convening a series of feedback meetings in schools and local youth agencies to discuss the findings of the questionnaire and identify issues which the young people themselves would be interested in taking forward.

Outcomes have included young people organising a youth conference on territorialism and drugs; campaigning for better youth facilities; and organising an anti-bullying campaign. In all cases it is helpful if an adult can be identified (often a teacher or youth worker) who can help the young people over a sustained period of time to develop their ideas. It must be remembered that such action groups are inherently small scale and transitory compared with the large number of people initially consulted, and it is therefore important to encourage them to stay in touch with their grass roots constituency of opinion.

This approach contrasts with the more traditional method of organising young people around crime prevention issues in the UK, the youth crime prevention panel. Many youth panels take as their starting point adult concerns about crime, and adopt a community service model. Small groups of socially committed young people may provide a service to others in their community, eg. by fitting locks on old peoples' doors or by security stamping bicycles. Such groups are, of course, worthwhile but rarely involve the more deprived and delinquent young people in the community, and do little to identify or address young people's own concerns.

Crime Concern has worked hard to transform the selective, community service model of youth crime prevention panels into a more broadly based youth-centred approach. This has been tackled through a national newspaper called Youth Express which is distributed free three times a year to all secondary schools in the UK; through national conferences; and by producing and disseminating a resource pack for youth panels. A major new programme about to begin will develop youth action programmes on this model throughout the UK.

## **RESPONSE BY AGENCIES**

Following the audit, agencies are encouraged to consider their existing programmes as well as investment in new projects. This is usually done through the multi-agency group. Priorities are negotiated and an action plan is drawn up. Crime Concern tries to ensure that local partners adopt a comprehensive approach and examine underlying causes as well as immediate concerns. A more detailed discussion of this approach can be found in Bright (1993).

A comprehensive response to youth crime might have five main objectives:

1. To tackle the risk factors in early childhood associated with offending.
2. To reduce the number of young people who become involved in criminal and anti-social behaviour.
3. To reduce the number of children and young people who become victims of crime.
4. To reduce levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in public places.
5. To involve young people in crime prevention.

***Aim 1: To tackle the risk factors in early childhood associated with offending.***

While it is difficult to agree on the causes of crime, it is not difficult to identify those factors which increase the risk of children and young people becoming offenders. These risk factors include poverty; family conflict and breakdown; reception into care; social isolation; poor schooling; poor play and recreational provision and inadequate housing. Removing or ameliorating one or more of these risk factors will reduce the likelihood of later delinquency (Farrington, 1987). Early childhood services are of interest to crime prevention because there is some evidence that services for preschool children, support for high-stress families, parenting-skills training and parental involvement schemes in primary schools can reduce some of the risk factors associated with later offending (Schorr, 1988). The disappointing results of remedial programmes targeted at adolescent and young adult offenders has fuelled this interest.

It is important to emphasise that not all children suffering these disadvantages grow up to be delinquent, nor has it proved possible to identify which individuals will go on to offend. Attempts to label individual children as 'pre-delinquent' are, at best, misguided and, at worst, run the risk of reinforcing the very label they seek to avoid.

However, young people from families that exhibit these symptoms are at significantly greater risk of becoming offenders than the population at large. It therefore makes good sense to target specialist supportive services at areas where there are many such families and where juvenile delinquency rates are high.

Early childhood services are not designed principally to reduce crime but rather to improve health, educational and emotional development, to reduce child abuse and to improve family functioning. Research shows, however, that certain types of child rearing are more likely to propel children into delinquency than others (Farrington, 1987). It suggests that family discord and stress and low income are linked with higher rates of delinquency. Unsupported young mothers (particularly if they are unemployed) may become indifferent and reject their children. Socially isolated families are associated with high levels of abuse, neglect and later delinquency. Children raised by a socially isolated parent living alone are more likely to fail school at an early age, truant from school, fight in school, drop out of school and become delinquent (Schorr, 1988).

Family support programmes aim to provide practical help and advice to families suffering social and emotional problems. Specialist services of this nature have been provided in the UK by charities such as Family Service Units and some local authorities. However funding difficulties have confined them to a relatively marginal role.

It is widely recognised that helping people to understand and deal with routine family management issues (such as budgeting, child care, discipline and health) can improve family functioning and reduce the likelihood of family discord and breakdown. For example, family support programmes in the USA involve the provision of immediate, intensive help, have strong ties to neighbourhoods and involve parents as partners. Research shows that they can reduce child abuse and neglect and reduce the use of out of home care. They are also cost effective.

Pre-school education aims to address the educational, social and health development of children and can have many long term benefits. The High Scope/Perry Pre-school Programme in the USA is one of the very few to have looked at the link between pre-school education and the inhibition of delinquency. It shows convincingly that pre-school participation can increase the proportion of young people who as adults are literate, employed and enrolled in post secondary education, and can reduce the proportion who truant from school, were labelled as having severe learning difficulties or had been arrested (Schweinhart, 1987).

The key elements of a successful preventative pre-school programme are child-initiated learning, an emphasis on meeting developmental needs, small classes (1 teacher to 10 children) and parent involvement. Special training for teachers is essential (Schweinhart, 1987).

***Aim 2: To reduce the number of young people who become involved in criminal and anti-social behaviour.***

Services and opportunities can be developed with and for young people which provide them with attractive and accessible alternatives to crime. These may be classified under the headings of:

- youth work and leisure provision;
- schooling;
- training for employment; and
- housing.

Youth work and leisure provision.

There is widespread support for the idea that social and recreational programmes for young people will engage their interest in constructive activities and, as a result, they will be less likely to drift into offending. However, a sharper focus needs to be applied to youth work since few programmes in the UK currently include a delinquency prevention as one of their main objectives. Consequently, the potential of youth work to reduce juvenile offending has not been fully realised in practice (Graham and Smith, 1993).

In addition, the areas with the highest concentrations of youth crime are those which are usually least well covered by youth work programmes. Where they do exist, they are sometimes poorly funded, weakly managed and exhausted by their efforts to support young people with very difficult problems.

It is necessary to provide a mix of social and recreational activities, projects in the community, group work, advice, information and counselling and help for young people to access education, training and employment opportunities. They can operate from clubs and other premises or from the street.

Many believe that youth agencies could play a bigger role in the prevention of delinquency without compromising the principles of youth work by performing a supportive, enabling role rather than a controlling one, focusing resources on areas with high concentrations of young people at risk rather than on specific or potential offenders, developing the use of outreach and detached youth workers, working with other agencies and developing a clearer and more precise definition of outcome by identifying specific aims, objectives and methods of work.

Schooling.

'School effectiveness' research suggests that the organisation and management of schools has a substantial effect on student performance and thereby on the likelihood of young people drifting into crime. Strategies which attempt to change the culture and organisation of schools have attracted considerable interest. Schools which are able to offer students of all abilities a sense of achievement and which are able to motivate and involve them in the life of the school are likely to reduce the incidence of truancy, vandalism and other negative outcomes.

Conversely, schools which - inadvertently or otherwise - concentrate on academic success at the expense of practical and social skills, categorise pupils as deviants, inadequates and failures and refer responsibility for the behaviour and welfare of their pupils to outside agencies and institutions can increase the likelihood of producing high rates of delinquency (Graham, 1990).

Training for employment.

Unemployment is the highest risk factor associated with offending amongst young adults. Research by the Apex Trust shows that ex-offenders in employment are three times less likely to offend than those who are unemployed. Occupational guidance and training schemes can help to stimulate an interest in young people who might otherwise rule themselves out of employment. 'Employment rescue' programmes developed by outreach projects in some inner city areas demonstrate impressive success with young people likely to drift further into offending. Counselling programmes can help to overcome difficulties which may cause them to leave a job unnecessarily.

Housing.

Homelessness or unsatisfactory accommodation frequently features in the circumstances behind a high proportion of youth court appearances. Family conflict and the search for employment often cause young people to leave home. There is, however, a serious shortage of affordable accommodation for young people in most areas. For those not in employment, state benefit levels have been reduced for the under 25s adding to the difficulties. Shelter estimates that there are over 155,000 young homeless people under the age of 26 in the UK. Not only are they at risk of drifting into subsistence crime; they are also at risk of being the victims of violence, substance abuse and sexual exploitation. Specialist advice and increased opportunities for affordable accommodation are required to avoid these outcomes.

***Aim 3: To reduce the number of children and young people who become victims of crime.***

Understandable anxieties deter children and young people from reporting offences committed against them - particularly those which have involved personal interference. Victim surveys of sexual abuse regularly show that less than a quarter of such incidents come to the attention of those who could help. Often the cases which do come to light reveal a pattern of suffering extending over many years. Approachable and effective victim support services can play a significant part in preventing repeated suffering.

Some primary schools are encouraging their children to take the view that they are entitled to live in a safe environment free from interference. It is hoped that such approaches will make it easier to discuss these offences and create a stronger willingness to denounce those minded to attempt them.

Simple defensive strategies can be helpful in some situations and more imaginative methods of teaching them are being developed. Proper advice to victims (of all ages) can help them to break out of cycles of assault which may have continued over several years.

***Aim 4: To reduce levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in public places.***

Anti-social behaviour by young people in public areas such as town centres and public parks and outside football grounds is a major source of intimidation, particularly for the elderly, women and children. Crime and anti-social behaviour by young people in shopping centres can deter customers and reduce trade, profits and jobs.

Localised preventative activity will inevitably be required. This may involve:

Situational solutions: improving the design, management and policing of the area to reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour. This will also involve improving training and support for staff so that they are better able to manage and defuse conflict.

Considering the needs of those who cause trouble can lead to the provision of alternative facilities such as youth activity projects, special coffee bars, alcohol recovery schemes and crisis accommodation.

Often a package of measures will be necessary. Crime Concern has been involved in a number of innovative and creative approaches to resolving city centre crime and nuisance problems.

***Aim 5: To involve young people in crime prevention.***

The many youth consultations undertaken by Crime Concern have highlighted the following issues as being the most important to young people:

- avoiding victimisation - they want practical help and advice to avoid problems such as bullying, drugs and violence in the home.
- better opportunities - they ask for improved access to leisure and training facilities to stop temptations to drift into crime.
- a better start in life - they want people in positions of influence to get to the heart of the factors that produce delinquency.

A frequent request is their wish to be involved in developing solutions to these problems. One of the most encouraging aspects of youth crime prevention is the growing enthusiasm with which young people wish to be involved in organising preventative initiatives.

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# THE YOUTH CASTE - THE LEGACY OF ADULT HEDONISM

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**“Home is a state of mind, not a state of the world...(it is) not the same as joy that things are going well, or the willingness to invest in enterprises that are obviously headed for early success, but rather, an ability to work for something because it is good. Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out”.**<sup>1</sup>

This Paper is about Hope - the hope that young people will be recognised as constituent members of the community, and the hope that they will be afforded respect through equal participation when decisions are made about them. It is also about the hope that the adult community will be sensible in its relations with the young and set aside selfish indifference and illogical fear when the legitimate concerns of these people are raised. It is also about the hope that the self-indulgence of adults, its collective hedonism, that has created a youth “caste” will give way and common sense will prevail.

This Paper will explore the issues of community safety (crime prevention)<sup>2</sup> in relation to juvenile offending behaviour, the response by governments to this issue, the role of specialist and community practitioners to the problem and the ongoing victimisation of youth throughout the industrialised world.

The observations within this Paper are based upon the experiences of the writer during a Study Tour jointly funded by **ACRO Australian Community Safety & Research Organisation Incorporated** and the **Queensland Corrective Services Commission** conducted in the Autumn of 1992.

In raising the issue of juvenile justice it is important to differentiate between systems that may be useful for known juvenile offenders and structures that would be useful to minimise criminogenic activity by those “at risk” within the community. For the purpose of definition “known juvenile offenders” are characterised as those whose actions have already brought them to the attention of the Criminal Justice System whilst “at risk” persons are those for whom economic, social and environmental factors are most likely to lead them into conflict with the law. A thesis will be presented that more appropriately defines the latter categorisation.

It will be argued that it is strategically disadvantageous to fragment the resources available for juvenile justice across a number of government departments. In Queensland, resources available for juvenile justice can be found in the Department of Family Services, Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, the Queensland Corrective Services Commission, the Education Department and the Department of Sport, Recreation and Tourism. Furthermore, parts of the complex jigsaw can be found in the Police Service, the Attorney-Generals’ Department and the Department of Health. The absence of a cohesive Strategy is limiting the capacity of meaningful and active responses to the rising incidence of juvenile crime. It will be argued that the Juvenile Crime Prevention Strategy adopted by the Queensland Government does not go far enough to mandate relationships between the participating government agencies and that the program logic may be flawed or redundant in the context of other successful overseas initiatives. The matter of a National Strategy on Community Safety will also be explored.

The duplication of infrastructure, the differing ideological positions between these various government departments and the historical failure of inter-departmental consultation requires a fundamental reappraisal of the philosophical position that directs efforts in the area. It will be advanced that a separate Department of Youth should be established that reigns in the resources currently captured to other government departments with the specific purpose of coordinating community safety programs for both known juvenile offenders and potential juvenile offenders.

**It will be advanced that should a portion of the \$4 Billion (perhaps as low as 1%) expended on the Criminal Justice System in Australia (ie. on courts, police and corrections) be diverted for creative preventative measures that deal with crime causation, definable outcomes that reduce fear in the community and lessen the incidence of youth crime could be expected.**

## BACKGROUND

To anyone who has travelled it is evident that the most vulnerable amongst the poor, the lumpen proletariat of world communities, are the children of poverty and indifference. They are the most conspicuous victims of the tumultuous recessionary decline of the past three decades. **In a hedonistic and adult controlled world these children have**

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**evolved into a caste that is ignored, abused and exploited.** Whether they be the babies comforted by their Romanian mothers in Trafalgar Square, the prepubescent prostitutes in the forecourt of the Louvre, the teenage dumpster dwellers smashed out on crack opposite The Plaza in New York, the itinerants scooped up nightly from the beach of Waikiki to be bused to a tent city out of town, the shell game gamblers of Brussels, the juvenile tapdancers on Bourbon Street or the kids in the Valley or on Kings Cross, they remain the grim indictment on a society that has failed to contemporise its view and response to the changed circumstances of the 1970s, 80s and 90s and the byproduct of this period.

The haunting tragedy of these children begging arms, offering themselves for sex, escaping the reality of their world through drugs or hustling for money is indelibly etched in the psyche of every city in the industrialised world from the most affluent to the least. In a consumerist world these children are disposable and their plight irrelevant. Those older (and, we are told, wiser) play blind, deaf and dumb to the misery of these wretched people.

Whilst it can be argued that the circumstances for the young were not deliberately manufactured and that governments, on the face of it, have enacted various forms of legislation to protect the interest of this class of people (and, less we forget, it remains the popular adult misconception that they are the “responsibility of their parents”), it remains the case that world communities are nonetheless complicit to their ongoing victimisation and exploitation through fundamental inaction at a local level. Older people are satisfied to cloister themselves in the security of their own homes and pontificate in the most general of terms that all youthful persons are basically evil and should be controlled by more police that should be made available “by the government”. There appears to be no collective will to recognise the particular needs of this class that have arisen in response to the extraordinary social devolution since the 1970s.

Children tend not to have status in most societies. They cannot vote, they do not contribute to the (legitimate) economy. They lack the political organisation to present as a pressure group in their own right. The paucity of their education and (positive social) experience mitigates against their comprehension that their circumstances are not of their construction nor that there are remedies beyond violence and self-abuse. In those places that have social security, they generally do not have access to it, where there is none, there is absolute despair.

There is no question that children are being displaced from their homes at earlier ages for a range of reasons including family disharmony, economic necessity and domestic violence. In some cases the decision is voluntary, in others it is forced upon them. Given the lack of opportunity for equitable access by the young to community resources normally available to adults (including social security, health care, emergency housing and the like) it is not surprising that many of these displaced youth become involved in criminal activity. This progression becomes a matter of necessity and survival.

The community of young citizens in the street or in our schools is a microcosm of the total community - it is reactive, it is optimistic and cynical, its members have specific needs. Should these needs be not met by the collective community, one would expect a degree of animosity to develop between those who have and those who do not have. This conflict cannot reasonably be resolved by recourse to moral arguments, although this appears to be the general community view (eg. “go home to your parents”).

The netwidening of children into crime production and the inability of governments to realistically accommodate solutions is highly relevant to any discussion on community safety and juvenile justice. Crime is being generated by juveniles at an alarming rate with “careers” in offending behaviour being forged as a result. The long-term implication of culturing an offending ethos has been, and will continue to become with intervention, the maintenance of unsafe communities. An enlightened position recognises that social and environmental factors are most closely linked to offending behaviour than any presumption of genetic or individual maladjustment. Initiatives that respond to these factors should be set in place that will positively impact to reduce crime. Furthermore these initiatives need to target all persons at risk of marginalisation from the mainstream of society and involve them in the process of strategic implementation.

This is a pragmatic rather than “bleeding heart” position - the cost of non-intervention is measured in our courts, our prisons and in protective services. It is imperative that world communities not be polarised further and that the commendable notions of equity and fairness are put in practice for all classes of citizenry, including our youth. The further development by youth of a subcultural or tribal ethos that promotes aggression, mistrust and disdain is not sustainable and is inconsistent with the expectation for all citizens to live peacefully. Conversely a failure to relieve, in a non-patronising manner, the burden of race intolerance, gender inequity and extreme economic disparities (which provide the catalyst for most crime) is opportunistic and mischievous. Any debate that moves society in the direction of escalating punitive measures in dealing with reactive behaviours by juveniles, for example, should be challenged. Rather the debate should promote the creation of systems whose effect will be to minimise the potential for these behaviours occurring in the first instance. Most importantly change will not occur without the active support and participation by the affected group. In the past adult administrators have promoted Programs for implementation that have not developed from an understanding of the needs of the group. Both the government and non-government sectors are guilty of attempting to impose their own perception of what is appropriate rather than seek the information directly from consumers. Having built the framework of their own empires they then, patronisingly, assume responsibility for the Programs with gratuitous input from young people. They feel good, but

what of those that they aspire to help.

## **A PROFILE OF JUVENILE CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

So what of the crime committed by juveniles. Much of the crime committed by young people is non-violent, opportunistic and, as is argued by practitioners from **Crime Concern** in the UK, is often caused by boredom and lack of access to recreational and social activities.<sup>3</sup> This view is shared by other similar organisations that are involved in crime prevention strategies overseas.

Information contained within an unpublished Survey of Banyo (Queensland) juveniles conducted in 1991 involving 341 respondents suggests a similar position.<sup>4</sup>

In a report titled **Youth Crime Prevention - A Coordinated Approach**, Frank Warburton writes that as many as 90% of juvenile boys (10-16 year olds) commit a delinquent act at some time, although only a small percentage are involved in serious criminal activity and thus become the main responsibility of the police and the courts.<sup>5</sup>

Most jurisdictions recognise that whilst juveniles are significantly over-represented in delinquent or less serious criminal behaviour the vast majority are likely to grow out of delinquent behaviour of their own accord and without official intervention.<sup>6</sup> There is some evidence to sustain the view, in fact, that inappropriate intervention can increase the tendency for further criminal behaviour, a point recognised in a report produced by a British Government Inter-departmental Group on Crime in 1983 which concluded that "all young people go through a difficult period in adolescence and many commit offences of some sort. The great majority grow out of criminality but there is a danger that the wrong sort of reaction to their offences could propel some into further crime".<sup>7</sup> The bulk of juvenile crime consists of offences that are inconvenient however they do not threaten public safety or the fabric of society. "Commonplace crime" can, nonetheless, seriously reduce the quality of life for other community members and certainly contributes to the level of fear in which people live.

**The youth crime problem too often is translated into a youth problem. By virtue of their conspicuousness in groups youths are characterised as threatening and are therefore perceived by adults in the community to a risk to their safety. In these circumstances the fear of crime is generalised into a fear of young people. The effect of this condition is that communities that are already divided, polarise further.**

In considering the development of meaningful crime prevention strategies a distinction needs to be drawn between those who commit crime **occasionally** and those who commit crime **persistently**.<sup>8</sup> Longitudinal studies that have followed a sample of children from birth to adulthood show that while persons from many different social circumstances occasionally commit crime there is a small group of disadvantaged youths who **persistently** are involved in a variety of offences over a long period of time - studies in the USA and the UK illustrate the point with 50% of reported crime being committed by a small number of offenders (6% - 8%). In Solihull (UK) 19 youths are said to be responsible for 65% of all crimes reported to police.<sup>9</sup> The London Home Office suggest that 5% of young people convicted commit 70% of the offences for which a conviction is obtained within their age range.

The behaviour of young people is not created in a vacuum. The relationship (or lack thereof) between juveniles and adults, the response of local agencies to anti-social behaviour, the availability of services and opportunity for the young, the role models presented, social and economic factors are more significant indicators to a person's predisposition to crime than any presumption of personality disorder or maladjustment. Criminal behaviour for all age groupings is manifestly a reaction to a combination of social circumstances.

## **UNEMPLOYMENT, POVERTY, INEQUALITY and YOUTH CRIME**

Various studies into juvenile offending behaviour have consistently correlated poverty with school age pregnancy, poor health, family stress, failure at school and violent crime.<sup>10</sup>

In a recent study in the UK, Simon Fields established a direct correlation between recession, declining consumption levels and rising rates of property crime. He concludes that "on the theoretical side, strong evidence has emerged of economic causes of crime. The precise nature of these causes deserves to be further unravelled, and further research in this field could yield evidence of the scope for initiatives and policies designed to mitigate the criminogenic impact of these economic causes".<sup>11</sup>

The Vera Institute in New York, in its survey of prison inmates in that city, has suggested that, while certain types of potential offenders may be unaffected by unemployment, most groups will be affected by a lack of "quality" jobs.

Farrington et.al. in the Cambridge Study in Delinquency Development demonstrates the detrimental effect of relative deprivation during childhood on subsequent offending patterns. In this Study it was demonstrated that crime rates were

higher during periods of unemployment (for the 411 boys participating in the research) than during periods of employment, particularly for offences involving material gain at ages 15-16 for the most delinquent youth and for youths who had lower status jobs when they were in employment.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore the work of Wolpin, Levenson and the Vera Institute indicate that juvenile unemployment and deprivation may be significant factors in the development of criminality amongst young people and young men in particular.<sup>13</sup> The studies of Steven Box<sup>14</sup> and Ian Crow<sup>15</sup> support these findings.

Mannheim analysed the linkage between crime and unemployment during the 1930s recession, establishing that crime trends correspond closely to fluctuations in unemployment.<sup>16</sup> He raised the warning over forty years ago that "Long term unemployment may show its effect even many years after being brought to an end and it is capable of changing permanently the whole attitude of a family towards society". A more recent study by Phillips, Votey and Maxwell in 1972 echoed this view suggesting that one of the main outcomes of substantial, long term unemployment is to undermine and destabilise communities and that this, in turn, produces high crime rates.

Other researchers such as Wilkinson (1991) suggest that inequality rather than poverty has the most stressful effects.<sup>17</sup> In concurring with Wilkinson, Elliott Currie writes that "the trend toward growing inequality, in short, is increasingly international in scope, international in its consequences. And it is deeply implicated in the pattern of crime."<sup>18</sup> Currie concludes that "...real social crime prevention - like the prevention of other social ills - is now more than ever dependent on our capacity to build more effective movements for social action and social change. Movements that can effectively challenge those forces - now international in scope - that are ripping apart communities from Harlem to Glasgow to Bogota; that are dimming the life chances of vast numbers of people in the developed and developing worlds. In terms of building organisations committed to the long-range effort to replace a society based increasingly on the least inspiring of human values with one based upon the principles of social solidarity and contributive justice."<sup>19</sup>

**A reasoned youth crime prevention strategy should necessarily include an anti-poverty component. It may be argued that most other risk factors stem from poverty - unwanted, neglected and abused children, failed educational systems, domestic violence and so forth. Complementary government programs that afford good quality schooling, quality family support, occasional and full child care will ease the burden on families that become dysfunctional as a consequence of poverty.**

A social crime prevention strategy must also be cognisant of the relationship between unemployment and crime and include proposals to reduce long term and youth unemployment. Training, particularly during the crucial transitional period between school and employment, is critical.<sup>20</sup> Young people should be guaranteed a training place or employment as soon as they leave school. **At the same time the recognition that an apparently permanent underclass of unemployed persons (which substantially includes youth) is inevitable must lead to a position where alternative productive and non-exploitative activity is cultured within the community.**

The UN Resolution on the Prevention of Urban Crime stated that:

"Municipalities are strategically placed to bring together those who can change the conditions that generate crime, but other levels of government must provide financial and technical support;

- Comprehensive crime prevention must give priority to partnerships that find better solutions to problems of child poverty, youth, schooling, housing, policing and justice, and;
- Crime prevention must involve long-term action that is responsive to short-term needs".

## **GOVERNMENT POLICY, JUVENILE JUSTICE and the NON-GOVERNMENT SECTOR**

The attitude of government, worldwide, to issues in juvenile justice in the past has been to concentrate on either punitive remedies or the development of pre-court diversion schemes which effect is to increase the use of non-custodial sentences for juvenile offenders.

The adult and juvenile correctional systems which have, in the majority of world jurisdictions, the mission of public protection and retribution have failed to deliver either. Escalating crime rates and consistent rates of reoffence by offenders (at 70% within three years of an initial release date) indicate that the promotion of institutional incarceration for adult offenders is not conducive to meaningful crime reduction. The same hold true of the institutionalisation of a majority of juvenile offenders.

In the case of juvenile incarceration the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules) advance a compelling argument against the use of institutions:

“Little or no difference has been found in terms of the success of institutionalisation as compared to non-institutionalisation. The many adverse influences on an individual that seem unavoidable within any institutional setting evidently cannot be outbalanced by treatment efforts. This is especially the case for juveniles, who are vulnerable to negative influences. Moreover, the negative effects, not only of loss of liberty but also of separation from the usual social environment, are certainly more acute for juveniles than for adults because of their early stage of development” (1985, Rule 19).<sup>21</sup>

The Riyadh Guidelines (UN Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, 1990) assert, in part, that:

“Emphasis should be placed on preventative policies facilitating the successful socialisation and integration of all children and young persons, in particular through the family, the community, peer groups, schools, vocational training and the world of work, as well as through voluntary organisations. Due respect should be given to the proper personal development of children and young persons, and they should **be accepted as full and equal partners in socialisation and integration processes**” (writer’s emphasis).<sup>22</sup>

Nonetheless, the incarceration of juveniles is by far the preferred option throughout the world. The UN principles pale into insignificant rhetoric in the face of a vengeful society. In the USA for example there are 53,000 youth in public correctional facilities across that country (*Note: Barbara Allen-Hage, Children in Custody 1987, Washington DC, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1988*). As a federal system the custodial and other remedies applied are many and varied across State jurisdictions and are widely dissimilar in certain cases. Incarcerated youths in many States are placed in chronically overcrowded conditions where abuse and substandard conditions are the norm and which have little or no effective treatment and educational programs. Assaultive behaviour involving Staff and juveniles is evident as is the predatory behaviour (both sexual and gan oriented) amongst juveniles forced to co-exist in dormitory accommodation with questionable supervision. Gang culture is the dominant philosophy.

In California there is a plethora of juvenile custodial facilities that are modelled on the authoritarian and austere adult correctional system in that State. Long term lock down of prisoners, minimal staff with a security orientation (coupled with a proliferation of privately run and managed facilities whose profit motivation is not guided towards prisoner interventions to reduce the likelihood of further offence upon release) epitomise the methodology of these Centres. Not surprisingly imprisonment as a sanction is more commonly practised in this State. The more “creative” initiatives for juveniles in California still retain features of the custodial environment (those being discipline and profit).

The Department of Youth Authority in California has control of some 5,860 youthful offenders (supervised on parole) with a further 8,292 in institutions and camps (as disclosed in a flyer produced by that Authority in 1992). A small number of juveniles detained in institutions can participate in the Free Venture Program auspiced by the Department of Youth Authority. This Program is a joint venture arrangement between the public and private sectors in that contracts are established between the State and private companies utilising prisoner labour to undertake services. The published goals of the Project are to:

1. Reduce the cost of incarceration by utilising a portion of their (offenders) wages (20% of the net) to reimburse the State for room and board during their institutional stay.
2. Increase their accountability for their offences by utilising a portion of their wages (15% of the gross) to pay restitution to crime victims.
3. Increase their responsibility to society through the payment of taxes and family support.
4. Increase their opportunities to obtain marketable employment skills by working in settings and occupations comparable to those in their communities.
5. Experience the rewards of planning for their future by withholding a portion of their wages (40% of the net) in accumulated savings for financial responsibilities and family support when on parole.
6. Increase their success on parole as a result of improved work habits and job skills, and understanding the workings of personal responsibilities in realistic work settings.

Contracts with Trans World Airlines, Best Western International and others have been negotiated by Free Venture with a small number of offenders providing services from within the correctional centres. It would appear however that the Project is more concerned with assisting a move towards self-sufficiency for Correctional Centres than any other agenda (*Note: Comments from Governor Deukmejian reported by Steve Wiegand and Robert Gunnison on September 9, 1988 in the Sacramento Chronicle*). The concept of utilising prisoner labour creates a minefield fraught with a number of industrial and ethical concerns particularly about the use of this labour at the possible expense of unemployed persons in the community.

This is an issue raised in the same article cited previously by the California Labour Federation, AFL-CIO. Some evaluation of the long term benefits through a longitudinal study may be useful to determine whether employment was gained by participants following their release and whether this employment (and Project participation) impacted to reduce reoffence.

By contrast the state of Massachusetts has adopted a different approach and reformed its juvenile justice system by closing long term high cost custodial institutions some 20 years ago. In the 1970s Massachusetts determined to do away with its custodial training schools as the primary focus for that state's serious youth crime problem. These were replaced with a wider range of small secure treatment programs for violent offenders and a much larger number of highly structured community based programs for the majority of its offenders. In a booklet entitled **Unlocking Juvenile Corrections** published by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency in 1991, the program is described thus: "First, DYS reserves long term incarceration for the violent and chronic offenders - approximately 15% of the total DYS population. Today, these offenders are initially placed in secure facilities for an average of 8-12 months, followed by placement in community based programs. Failure to abide by a youth's 'conditions of liberty', results in a revocation, whereby the youth is placed again in a secure facility usually for a shorter length of stay. For the less serious offenders, DYS relies on intermittent and relatively short periods of secure confinement followed by longer term community placements. A traditional approach to juvenile corrections begins with an extended period of confinement (usually 9-12 months) followed by supervision in the community by parole or after-care workers. ...By contrast, 85% of DYS youth experience a short period of secure confinement during a diagnostic stage and then are placed in a variety of non-secure settings. DYS case managers closely supervise and review placement changes. Consequences for youth misconduct can result in returning to a secure program for a short period of time, or moving to a more structured community program." (*National Council on Crime and Delinquency, Unlocking Juvenile Corrections Evaluating the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, Massachusetts 1991, pp. 3-5*).

In a recidivism study conducted by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (in San Francisco) 820 DYS youths were tracked for a four year period after leaving DYS programs. The results of this project found that DYS had been more successful at reducing crime amongst juveniles than any other state in the USA claiming a 23% reincarceration rate for DYS youth. By comparison the reincarceration rate in the same year (1989) demonstrated a 62% rate for those released from Californian juvenile institutions (*Source: Massachusetts Department of Youth Service, Background Paper, Juvenile Justice in Massachusetts; and Overview, 1991*). The experience of moving juveniles through community based correctional facilities is proving to be cost effective and successful in achieving the goal of reducing the potentiality for reoffence - a matter illustrated similarly in the programs for adult offenders conducted by the Queensland Corrective Services Commission. In the 1989-90 Annual Report of the Massachusetts DYS the various programs offered by that service are described in the following way (Private contractors with DYS operate all community based programs as well as a number of secure programs, while DYS operates several of the small secure treatment and detention units for serious offenders. Whilst each facility and provider functions autonomously they are nonetheless required to abide by departmental and state regulations):

1. **Secure Treatment** - long term residential programs for youths committed to DYS on serious offences that warrant placement in a physically secure facility. The programs provide academic and vocational training, individual in-group counselling.
2. **Secured Detention** - short term residential programs in physically secured facilities for youths awaiting trial and serious charges or for those awaiting placement in the secure treatment program. The programs provide a full academic curriculum, vocational training and interim counselling.
3. **Transitional Management Programs (TMPs)** - short term evaluation programs for committed youths awaiting presentation to the classification panel for serious crimes or youths awaiting placement in community based programs for non-violent crimes. TMPs provide a full academic curriculum, with a group and individual counselling.
4. **Shelter Care** - short term residential programs in staff secure (24 hours supervision) facilities for youths awaiting trial on charges not warranting a secure facility. Programs provide a full academic curriculum and interim counselling.
5. **Group Care** - community based residential homes for youths who are committed to DYS for non-violent offences and can be placed in a community setting without risk to the public. The programs offer a full academic curriculum, group and individual counselling and vocational training.
6. **Foster Care** - community based residential care and private homes for less serious offenders or youths transitioning back to the community who would benefit from a supportive family environment but cannot return to their own homes. Youths receive academic and vocational training in the community.
7. **Non-residential Services** - a wide range of community based programs for youths still in the custody of DYS but

living in their own homes or foster homes. Services include intense case work supervision through outreach and tracking, education, individual and family counselling, vocational training and job placement assistance (Source: *The Massachusetts Department of Youth Services, Annual Report 1989-1990, Massachusetts*).

In an article titled **How to stop our kids from going bad** published in the Boston Sunday Globe, 11 February 1990, the juvenile offender in Massachusetts is described in the following way: "Of the 1,700 youths committed to DYS, 48% are white, 31% are black, 19% are Hispanic and 2% are Asian. He or she is poor, virtually illiterate, a chronic truant or school dropout with no marketable job skills. Many are children of teenage parents and nearly 50% have already repeated the cycle. They are years below the legal drinking age and most of them have serious drug and alcohol problems.

**Studies show that one in four young people living in the US (seven million youths) are in danger of destroying their life opportunities unless intensive community supports are developed to improve their skill experiences and the quality of life in their families and communities"** (Source: *Focus, The Boston Sunday Globe, 11 February 1990, Boston Massachusetts*).

It is evident that the attitude of juvenile correctional administrators in Massachusetts is quite different from other states in America. The recidivism rate of 23% (as disclosed by the San Francisco Report) is in stark contrast with the reported recidivism rate of 62% for California for example. What this indicates is that programs which reduce the potential for reoffence are linked with the issues that lead to the commissioning of crime with remedies undertaken in the community itself rather than in institutions. The Massachusetts approach is favoured in States such as Pennsylvania, Illinois and Utah. Deinstitutionalisation has also been conceptually applied in Texas, Florida, Maryland and others.

The concept of Boot Camps (also known as shock incarceration programs) has gained renewed popularity throughout jurisdictions across the US. Originating from survival training programs in World War II, Boot Camps were first trialed in the corrections industry in Colorado in 1962. In more recent times they have evolved into "Outward Bound" programs which involve adventurous outdoor activity whose outcome is to develop self-confidence and self-esteem for participants. From a correctional administration viewpoint Boot Camps provide a cheaper alternative to custodial incarceration. There is little evidence to support the proposition that the Camps reduce rates of reoffence so that economic considerations alone would appear to drive the rekindled interest in the concept. Whilst participation in these camps is voluntary, the choice for offenders is between a term of imprisonment or a shorter period at a Camp. There is a clear vested interest of the part of the offender to opt for Camp participation albeit for the wrong reason. In truth the Camp is at best an interlude before offenders are returned to their "normal" community which, in the vast majority of cases, is criminogenic. Furthermore, as with correctional institution philosophy generally, there is no "outpatient" or follow-up involvement within the community to reinforce the notions promoted at the Camps.

Perhaps the greatest flaw in the argument advanced for Boot Camps is vested in the military model itself. This model assumes that the imposition of discipline will lead to effective regulation. The military model has only been proven to be effective when it is applied to a carefully selected, largely volunteer population with a clear sense of direction. The purpose of military training and discipline is to ensure conformity in the achievement of common goals and to desensitise participants to some of the more horrific duties they are required to perform.

To instil a sense of common purpose in offenders who are essentially in conflict with the system that is supervising them would seem to be contradictory in the extreme.

Whilst cost-savings to a burgeoning prison population may be achieved in the short term by adopting a Boot Camp/Outward Bound methodology, in the longer term no tangible advantage for either the offender participants nor the general community would appear likely.

Juvenile offenders cannot be coerced into modifying their behaviours. In the absence of longer term strategies applied in the community and well distanced from the "correctional" system, the implementation of warm, fuzzy "quick fixes" and authoritarian regimen will ensure the maintenance of the status quo and crime rates will continue to grow.

A further possibility is the implementation of Intensive Probation/Parole Supervision Orders. This notion is not new having been set in train during the 1960s and 1970s in the California Community Treatment Project, the San Francisco Project and the Special Intensive Parole Unit. The commonly shared goals of these various Projects are frequent face-to-face contacts, random drug screening, community service and restitution. These are goals that could be reasonably married to the more contemporary concepts of community based and managed accommodation options, integration and education models utilising pre-existing community resources and community responsibility for training, employment and support. Whilst there has been some important political mileage from conventional community service orders during the past few years, there has been a developing mood (with some probable justification) that community service per se does not address the fundamental problem of crime and may be perceived by some who are subject to such orders as a "soft" option, or worse, a joke. This was certainly the case in the Netherlands where public pressure in relation to community service orders required

a reappraisal of the option whilst the writer was in the Hague last year. There is no doubt that similar concerns about this Project will be raised throughout Australia in time.

Legislation enacted in Queensland for adult offenders should create the opportunity for a broader range of experimental models that will move the mandate for correcting offending behaviour beyond the mainstream corrections industry and into the community. The application of a similar concept for juveniles should become an urgent consideration.

**It should be said that whilst measures of a diversionary nature have assisted in the reduction of involvement by youth in the criminal justice system in the short term, they have inadvertently moved attention from the primary prevention focus, ie. the diversion of young people from crime in the first instance. In the longer term, therefore, one could predict a significant increase in the number of juvenile offenders before the courts and an increase in the punitive measures required to address this problem.**

In Australia, and not unlike the majority of adult correctional systems, interventions for juvenile offenders have been largely built upon the flawed premise that criminal behaviour is an individual problem not generally referenced to broader social conditions - that a strategy that particularises the maladjustment of the juvenile is the appropriate methodology. The social worker domination within Family Services departments throughout the country places a premium on one-to-one caseload relationships between the client and the professional. This approach militates, in the view of this writer, against the implementation of worthwhile crime prevention initiatives. The approach tends to foster passive non-interactive relationships as opposed to active or participatory relationships. A failure of this model of intervention is evidenced by the graduation of juveniles inevitable into institutions of various forms (either statutorily or socially sanctioned). Proposed new legislation in Queensland should have regard to the community based models successfully operating in jurisdictions such as Massachusetts or Hawaii (or indeed in the adult correctional system in Queensland itself). In considering a legislative base for future juvenile justice systems it may be useful to consider the process adopted in Hawaii. In that place it was recognised that authorities for the various elements of the juvenile justice system were disbursed amongst several government instrumentalities - each adopting its own methodology in meeting the requirements of the Acts pertaining to each. Following representations to the Governor of that State a Bill was proposed which was enacted on July 1, 1991. The effect of this Act was to create a Directorate of Youth Services whose purpose recognised that:

- (1) The State of Hawaii has the responsibility to provide its youth a fair and full opportunity to reach their full potential and become law-abiding citizens of our community by providing and encouraging services, which will strengthen their physical, emotional, social, education and moral development;
- (2) There is a need for a strong state commitment to the needs of youth and families. Of particular concern are those youth who come into conflict with the laws of our community. To achieve this commitment, there is a need for statewide planning and system coordination; oversight of activities and services; and evaluation and monitoring of the effectiveness of these services. In addition, a single entity is needed to serve as a central intake agency, and to coordinate the delivery of services, and provide a clear sense of responsibility and accountability for youth services. This agency must have sufficient statutory authority to ensure that its directives and mandates are complied with by the various affected agencies.

A policy for youth was established which articulates the following prescriptions:

- (1) It shall be the policy of this State to concentrate on the prevention of delinquency as an important strategy which can be planned and implemented on behalf of youth and their families. The State shall encourage community involvement in the provision of services for youth including, as an integral part, local government, public and private voluntary groups, public and private nonprofit groups, and private-for-profit groups in order to encourage and provide innovative strategies for these services. To maximise resources and services to youth in need of services, agencies shall develop standards of care, methods to coordinate services, and evaluate and monitor these activities. For youth with special needs, the furtherance of this policy requires all agencies to recognise that their jurisdiction in meeting these youths' needs are not mutually exclusive and that they will work jointly under the coordination of the office of youth services;
- (2) When youth at risk or their families request help, state and local government resources shall be utilised to complement community efforts to help meet the needs of youth by aiding in the prevention and resolution of their problems. The State shall direct its efforts first to strengthen and encourage family life as the most appropriate environment for the care and nurturing of youth. To this end, the State shall assist and encourage families to utilise all available resources. For youth in need of services, the State shall secure those services as are needed to serve the emotional, mental, and physical welfare of youth and the best interests of the community, preferably in the youth's home or in the least restrictive environment possible. When youths must be placed in care away from their homes, the State shall ensure that they are protected against any harmful effects resulting from the temporary or permanent inability of parents to provide care and protection for their youth; and

- (3) This policy for youth shall be implemented through the cooperative efforts of state and country legislative, judicial, and executive branches, as well as other public and private resources. Where resources are limited, services shall be targeted to those youth in greatest need.

Particular definitions within this Act are worth reproduction:

“Youth at risk” or “youth in need of services” means any youth who has been arrested, or who has had contact with the police, or who is experiencing social, emotional psychological, education, moral, physical, or other similar problems.

“Youth service system” means any youth services, facilities, or community-based programs provided through the family court and public and private agencies receiving state funds.

“Youth services” means public or privately funded programs which provide developmental, preventative, protective, recreational, treatment or rehabilitative, services for youth at risk including: after school programs, foster care services, residential group homes, independent living programs; child nurturing and family living programs; camps; playground programs; services to youth with school-related problems including educational neglect; services to youth who are found to be subject to neglect, abuse, or exploitation; employment/training programs; ;diagnostic, preventive, and remedial medical and mental health services to youth, including chemically dependent, physically, mentally, and emotionally disabled and handicapped youth; information and referral services; and the legal services to assure the rights of youth.

“Establishment; purpose”. There is established with the department of human services for administrative purposes only the office of youth services. The office of youth services is established to provide services and programs for youth at risk under one umbrella agency in order to facilitate optimum service delivery, to prevent delinquency, and to reduce the incidence of recidivism among juveniles through the provision of prevention, rehabilitation, and treatment services. The office shall also be responsible for program planning and development, intake/assessment, oversight, as well as consultation, technical assistance, and staff training relating to the delivery of services.

The office shall provide a continuum of services as follows:

- (1) An integrated intake/assessment and case management system;
- (2) The necessary educational, vocational, social, counselling and mental health services;
- (3) Community-based shelter and residential facilities;
- (4) Oversight of youth services; and
- (5) Other programs which encourage the development of positive self-images and useful skills in such youth.

In a controversial move the Director of Youth Services appointed (Wayne Matsuo) significantly reduced “correctional” bedspace available for juvenile offenders. The writer had long discussions about the stepped security system for adult offenders in Queensland (which moves offenders into community based and managed facilities within the normalised community) which was of great interest to his own perception of juvenile justice reform.

It is the case that in a number of jurisdictions juvenile justice approaches have tended to develop in an ad hoc manner with responsibilities being spread across a number of government departments (eg. Family Services, Community Services, Corrective Services, the courts, police departments and so forth). As a result a clearly defined approach to the problem in a holistic sense is absent.

Rivalry between these government departments and a lack of cohesive policy tend to cloud the vision for an effective approach to the problem of youth crime. In Hawaii this matter has been recognised and is being responded to. Other jurisdictions are urged to consider this matter particularly in light of the results of the Massachusetts experience.

## **AUSTRALIAN INITIATIVES**

There have been some encouraging developments within Australia in recent years. In 1988 South Australia announced a Crime Prevention Strategy and a ministry for Crime Prevention was created. In practice this Minister is also the Attorney-General. The Strategy was explicitly influenced by the local crime prevention councils in France which adds to the portfolio of law and order measures though the formal development of community based crime prevention strategies.

In October of 1992 the Queensland Government announced its commitment to a Juvenile Crime Strategy to combat

juvenile crime in that State. The Strategy involves two major initiatives:

- establishing a range of community based programs to prevent young people being caught up in criminal behaviour in the first place; and
- new legislation consisting of two Acts to deal with young offenders in the courts and to strengthen the juvenile justice system.<sup>23</sup>

In a Green Paper titled **Information Paper on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Program** (later to be known as the YACCA Program) the Queensland Government cites as the Program Goal of YACCA “to enhance the capacity of communities to engage young people in community life”<sup>24</sup>

The principles underpinning the Program include:

- active and productive participation in community life and the opportunity to contribute to community wellbeing are believed to be essential to the growth and development of young people;
- young people have the knowledge, vision and desire to participate as active partners in community life and have a right to the opportunities and resources to do so; and
- recognition of the importance of family and social networks that serve to integrate young people into the wider community.<sup>25</sup>

## **THE NATIONAL STRATEGY ON COMMUNITY SAFETY - RESOLVE OR REACTION?**

During 1992 various discussions occurred to develop a national strategy on community safety in Australia. In November of that year representatives of National, State and Local Governments, non-government organisations and academics met in Melbourne to consult on this Strategy.

Whilst the matter of a National Strategy on Community Safety will be expanded upon elsewhere some comments should be made in this Paper. In the first instance, the creation of such a Strategy is constrained by the federal system. The political diversity of State governments and the power of these jurisdictions under the Australian Constitution creates a significant problem for the federal authority in implementing a cohesive policy of any nature.

This problem is exacerbated by a fundamental contradiction for a federal government to put in place a strategy that acknowledges economic and social causation to crime whilst, at the same time, having in place macro-economic strategies that are designed to constrict the labour market (which of itself may contribute to those social causes [unemployment being the most obvious]).

A further impediment is that several of the nations’ police ministers still hold a situational perspective when it comes to crime prevention. At earlier meetings of the Australasian Police Ministers Council some Ministers expressed the view that increased police numbers and police powers would constitute a reasonable strategy.

## **CORRECTIONS AND AN COMMUNITY SAFETY - A CASE OF THE WRONG END BEING REFORMED FIRST**

The Queensland Corrective Services Commission is a statutory authority responsible for corrective services in Queensland. Its strategy of community based and managed corrections is at the forefront of correctional thinking in the world. Its Director-General, Keith Hamburger, has publicly pointed the finger at the social factors that lead people into prison and agitated, as far as is possible for a public servant, for a re-evaluation of systems external to the control of the correctional industry. In an address titled **Prison, Punishment, Social Breakdown - The Impact on Youth**, Hamburger recommends that “we must develop strategies to identify early in their school life the children who at risk of becoming my clients. Classroom teachers can do this - they can look around their classrooms and tell me right now who will be my clients in ten years time. They are in the main the children who come to school without breakfast, have been emotionally or physically abused, have no-one to go home to and have no positive role models...Social reform is an issue that requires...an understanding that we won’t solve or contain the problem of crime by spending money on more police and more prisons. Governments and the community must put their resources up the front end to protect and positively develop our children”.<sup>26</sup>

## **SOCIAL ACTION: A STRATEGY FOR INTERVENTION**

Policies generated for a reduction in criminal behaviour particularly amongst youth should be developed which:

- incorporates the full range of problems confronting young people which may involve the provision of

educational, training, recreational and employment opportunities together with a level of support that may be otherwise absent from their lives. Long term, as opposed to ad hoc, projects which are resourced and co-ordinated should be given the highest priority;

- recognises that it is not only the attitudes of the young that need to change. Young people have an enormous amount to contribute provided that they are given the forum for contribution and respect afforded. A positive attitude towards youth by the adult community is considered prerequisite to effective crime prevention in dealings with youth;
- accepts that change is not the unique responsibility for young people - the police and other local agencies (youth services, housing, etc.) may also need to modify their approach and/or the way in which they provide services; and
- accepts that youth have ownership of the process for program design and implementation.

## **PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT FOR JUVENILES**

A realistic approach to juvenile crime issues must be addressed within the environment in which the problem exists, and should be managed by the class for whom the problem exists. Mohammad must come to the mountain.

The success of this style of approach, which is addressed by Crime Concern's representative at this Conference, can be measured against crime statistics for the regions in which an action strategy has been implemented in various parts of the UK. In the case of the Junior Youth Project - Milton Keynes (as reported by **Crime Concern**) a significant reduction in crime activity has been registered comparing a pre-program set of data (1986) with 1988 statistics (eg. all auto crime [-18%]; shop theft [-25%]; criminal damage [-7%]; burglary [-36%]; all crime [-25%]).<sup>27</sup> In the case of the **Top End Youth Action Group** - Paisley, comparing crime statistics for the years 1985 and 1988, the rates of reduction in crime activity is highly significant (Vandalism/Malicious Damage [-22%]; Petty Assault [-32%]; Reckless/Wilful fire-raising [-55%]; **Supply/Possession of Drugs [-100%]**; Total Selected Crimes [-30%]; All Crimes [-5%]).<sup>28</sup>

Juvenile Crime Prevention Strategies that have been successful in the UK appear to have the same characteristics which may best be summarised as a social action approach involving:

1. discussing problems with young people (consultation);
2. enabling them to identify problems;
3. facilitation (offering options and helping to find solutions); and
4. assisting them to bring about change.

Various consultations have occurred throughout the UK seeking out the views of juveniles from across a range of social and economic backgrounds. The following comments in relation to these surveys are raised:

- Most young people perceived themselves as potential victims rather than potential offenders;
- Major concerns expressed centred upon physical safety and wellbeing;
- The most promising crime prevention target is likely to be potential/occasional offenders who are capable of being influenced;
- Generally young people believe that services are imposed upon them rather than viewing themselves as customers of the services;
- The recurring challenge appears to be to find the ways to involve young people in the **design and execution** of community safety strategies; and
- Young people should be perceived by adults as valuable customers of services rather than victims of them.

In relation to the Banyo Survey, mentioned earlier, crime was exposed as being the greatest concern amongst the juvenile respondents (28.1%) - particularly for females, with lack of recreational facilities (15.1%) and boredom (13.9%) also presenting as matters of concern. A significant number of respondents isolated "community irresponsibility" as the major

cause of the problem (17.5%) and tended to “blame” local government for the way in which it is handling its responsibilities. When in need of help respondents indicated that “friends” provided the usual source of support (24.1%) with only 4% seeking advice from teachers, 6.8% from police, 0.4% from religious workers, with 5.6% not seeking any outside assistance. **A further result indicated that 78.4% of youth were willing to set up some of the initiatives they identified.** Unfortunately many of the issues raised by respondents through this Survey were not apparently considered appropriate by the adult controlled Steering Committee. It has been reported by the worker that these recommendations were subsequently rejected, his services were terminated, and the Committee proceeded with the implementation of a Project that was lowest on the priority list promulgated by the respondents. In the opinion of the writer this result does not augur well for the YACCA Program in Queensland which has targeted pre-existing “interagency” groups as Program administrators. The professional, political, religious and moral “baggage” carried by well-meaning adults may in fact stifle the project.

## EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Experience throughout the world has shown that it is difficult, if not impossible to “rehabilitate” frequent offenders once they have reached mid to late adolescence. The message is clear - we need to implement preventative strategies at an earlier age.

The advancement of strategies at primary and secondary school levels to instil socially acceptable patterns of behaviour is essential if a crime prevention strategy is to find success and reduce criminal activity in later life. Issues such as personal safety for primary students and grounding in the dual concepts of obligations and responsibilities for secondary students (coupled with an action strategy for implementation with open and honest access to information) will significantly redress current inadequacies in the education system.

### “CRUCIAL CREW” - TARGETING 9-11 YEAR OLDS<sup>29</sup>

Originating from a study by Joe Lurch and his colleagues in the UK (Greenwich Junior Citizens Award), **Crucial Crew** evolved as a response to a concern at the lack of effectiveness of traditional crime prevention work in schools. The showing of videos such **Never Go with Strangers** and general talks with students didn’t appear to be taken seriously by students.<sup>30</sup>

Lynch et.al. came up with the idea of letting children experience and participate in a range of realistic situations which were potentially life threatening or which simulated crimes taking place which were preventable. The scheme is based upon the view that:

- children learn by doing;
- crime prevention and personal safety education can be challenging and exciting;
- everyone is concerned about crime prevention and personal safety; and
- the most effective way of tackling crime prevention and personal safety is a partnership approach.<sup>31</sup>

Throughout the UK Crucial Crew Programs have been launched. An average of fifteen different organisations work together in each area giving the scheme its own local characteristics. Typical organisations include the police, probation, fire services, ambulance services, coastguards, British Gas, Education departments, British Rail, Transport Police, Social Services, Electricity Boards and British Telecom.

## AIMS OF THE CREW

To provide an enjoyable way of teaching children to:

- become more aware of personal safety;
- learn how to react to dangerous situations;
- make a contribution to crime prevention;
- avoid becoming the victims of crime;
- know what role the emergency services play; and

- foster good citizenship.<sup>32</sup>

## WHAT IS THE SCHEME?

The scheme consists of real life role plays (known as sets) which are arranged in the form of a course. The sets are organised on a self-contained site large enough to accommodate all the sets and include roads and buildings. The children set out on the course in groups of three or four. At each set the children are presented with a number of tasks and problems and are assessed on their responses. If they are unsure on how to respond and make a mistake they will be advised of the most appropriate and sensible course of action.

## TARGET GROUP

The scheme is aimed at children nine to eleven years who are at an age when they are becoming more independent. A central theme is realism which is appealing to this age group. Police and schools that have participated with the scheme believe that this is a highly effective method of preventing children becoming the victims of crime and suffering personal injury.

## A HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATIVE INITIATIVE

In 1991 Staff of the Queensland Corrective Services Commission developed a Program designed for presentation within schools titled **Youth, Education, Responsibility, Awareness Program**. The creation of this Project is consistent with a strategy endorsed in the Commission's **Strategic Plan 1992 - 1996** document which "invites "significant community support of Queensland Corrective Services Commission goals, greater community responsibility for correctional issues and an emphasis on partnership with community agencies in service delivery", by "developing and implementing education and information programs targeting specific community groups and agencies".<sup>33</sup>

In the introduction to their Program Woodroffe-Hill, Matthews and Rowley infer that offending behaviour amongst juveniles is fundamentally resultant from dysfunctional socialisation processes:

"During the stages of a young person's life when they are susceptible to socialisation an emphasis appears to be placed on their conforming to the desires of others, to be what others may wish them to be. The issue of relevance at this stage, particularly when considering caring for the young, is the degree of autonomy and personal responsibility promoted within the child during the process of socialisation. Socialisation of the young is influenced by those with whom they are associated, for example children are modelled initially by their parents then by teachers and peers after entering the school arena. In many instances the influences upon the child are not always conducive to an optimum life-style and in many cases this is caused by unknowing or unthinking role models".<sup>34</sup>

The presentation of relevant information on a range of criminal justice, crime prevention and human relationship issues by credible role models **outside the educational context** with a view to recommending transportable options for behaviour **beyond the school room** should underpin the logic of any crime prevention Program introduced into secondary schools. Unlike similar educational programs primarily designed to change attitudes about the prisoner class, the Woodroffe-Hill et.al. Project is more concerned about active behaviour change through participation. Minimal modification to this Program would be necessary to introduce it into the school system.

Students in mainstream educational facilities, also form part of the broader juvenile "pool" within the community. The information on responsibilities and obligations learnt from a Program within the school environment should prove invaluable at another time when the juvenile steering committee (discussed earlier) is formed. The information will flow outside the educational system to others within the community in a "train the trainer mode", with information assimilated passing from one group of juveniles to another - at a peer level. As part of a general logic which moves responsibility for juvenile community based programs **to juveniles**, the "tools" for operationalising the strategy, through an **Education, Responsibility Awareness** Program, could achieve considerable savings in training time for the steering committee.

The Woodroffe-Hill et.al. Program is designed for presentation by correctional personnel or other "experts" in criminal justice, requires two, two hour sessions with the overall Program outcomes evaluated through questionnaires.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

To prevent offending through providing methods by which the students may improve their possibilities of individually succeeding.

## PROGRAM STRATEGIES

Information and techniques to be used in the Program will include:

- Questionnaire: Pre-program evaluation;
- Introduction to the Program;
- Personal experiences of the educators in respect of Corrections;
- Reason for participation by the educators;
- The power of peer influence;
- Responsibilities of individuals;
- Independence and self-esteem;
- Decision making;
- The importance of setting long and short-term goals;
- The Courts;
- Screening a relevant video;
- A question and answer session; and
- Post-program evaluation.

## **PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

At the conclusion of the Program participants should have sufficient information to enable them to:

- Understand factors which contribute to offending;
- Comprehend the consequences of offending;
- Understand the power of peer influence;
- Accept responsibility for their own behaviour;
- Know the importance of maintaining self-esteem while providing methods of legitimately doing so;
- Understand the importance of making the right choices and provide them with some basic decision making tools; and
- Be able to set long and short-term goals and understand the need for doing so.

The Program has been trialed in several Queensland High Schools including Kelvin Grove, Everton Park, Nashville, Runcorn, The Gap and Mackay and has been well received at these venues.

## **POST PROGRAM STRATEGY - SCHOOLS BASED, YOUTH DIRECTED CRIME PREVENTION PANELS**

The information acquired from the beforementioned Program must have relevance. It should provide the impetus for the development of an action strategy beyond the Program itself. A particularly successful vehicle in this instance is the **schools based, Youth Directed Crime Prevention Panels**.

There are over 250 such panels operating in England and Wales. Youth Panels provide the forum for young people to:

- consider crime and the way it affects other young people, schools and communities;
- identify the problems which they consider most important;

- develop their own responses to these problems; and
- take action to tackle other local problems.

Crime Concern UK have developed an **Action Pack** for youth wishing to establish a Panel in their school. Developed through consultation with juveniles the Pack systematically shows how to set up and run a Panel and to develop a work program.

Some examples of school based crime prevention panels include:

- A program in Blackburn, Lancashire where the panel developed a “School Watch” project in response to a concern about graffiti and vandalism at the school. The Panel researched the problem, identified others that could contribute to long term success of the initiative and encouraged those who attend the school to take responsibility and ownership of the problem. Their activity contributed to the development of strong school pride, a sense of belonging and ultimately an interest by the community and students in discouraging behaviour that would affect the positive image of the school.<sup>35</sup>
- In Northamptonshire the Panel at that school decided to investigate shop theft by using a questionnaire technique which encouraged students to present solutions to the problem. A Report, **Hands Off**, was subsequently published and distributed to shop owners recommending advice on staff training, store layout, the display of goods and the use of visible deterrents. It also provided tips on how to prevent shop theft.<sup>36</sup>
- The Norden Youth Crime Prevention Council was concerned about the level of alcohol abuse by students. They compiled a questionnaire for fourth and fifth year pupils asking about their drinking habits. The Report published as a result of the survey, **How Much, How Often, A Study of Alcohol consumption by the Under Sixteens**, established that drinking alcohol seemed to be the accepted norm for young people between the ages of 13 and 16. Various reasons were put forward for this, the main one being that there was little else for young people to do in the area. The results of the Survey were published by the Panel to Brewery heads and local youth workers.<sup>37</sup>

Other projects undertaken by these panels include studies on bullying, drink driving, racism, sexual harassment, the elderly, peer influences and many more.

Clearly School based Crime Prevention Panels are a powerful tool in teaching, through practice, ways of isolating issues of concern for students and resolving these problems **through participation**. The Panels are owned by the students, facilitated in the first instance by an **outside education** agency to which invited significant others (headmaster, teachers, community representatives) are co-opted for advice, resources and support.

Having observed the relationship between principals, teachers, parents and students at close quarters, it is evident that many of the topics that are likely to be raised by the students (particularly on human relationships issues) may not be palatable to some of these groups of adults.

Indeed a degree of hostility by adults (directly and peripheral to the school system) is to be anticipated. This matter will need to be carefully managed, nonetheless, as the positive outcomes of such a model (through the powerful medium of information) outweigh the moral quirks of others for whom the information is already available. This is principally why an **outside education** agency is advanced for the facilitation of this Project.

Whilst it may be argued that Human Relationships Education is already available to Queensland students, a degree of reticence on the part of some principals, teachers and parents militates against effective implementation, in that each perceives the other as the “responsible” party in the dissemination of information. The net effect of this dilemma is that nobody discharges any responsibility and implementation is, by and large, a matter of rhetoric rather than practice. The influence of inside and outside school agents in challenging the implementation of programs that advance options on contentious issues such as contraception, abortion, sexual preference and so forth acts against the best interests of the people for whom such information is critical.

## SUMMARY

**The Issue of juvenile crime prevention is of great importance to the welfare of world communities. The culturing of an offending ethos amongst our children, left unchecked, will propel them into adult offending patterns that will create unacceptable social and economic imposts.**

**Statistics on juvenile crime in Queensland are not dissimilar to those recorded in other jurisdictions and indicate an alarming rate of involvement by youth in unlawful activity. Whilst this involvement is primarily inconvenient and does not threaten public safety, the activity is substantially contributive to a reduction in the quality of life for others and is compounding the fear being experienced by community members.**

The youth crime problem too often is translated in a youth problem. By virtue of their conspicuousness in groups youths are characterised as threatening and are therefore perceived by adults in the community to a risk to their safety. In these circumstances the fear of crime is generalised into a fear of young people. The effect of this condition is that communities that are divided, polarise further.

Researchers have linked offending behaviour to social circumstances with poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunity, inadequate education and lack of equality being prescriptive to aberrant behaviour. An anti-poverty component to a crime prevention strategy would be appropriate in the circumstances. Training, particularly during the crucial period between school and employment is also critical.

Surveys conducted overseas and locally involving youth confirm that boredom and a lack of participation in mainstream community activity exacerbate the juvenile crime issue. A precis of the survey results suggest that:

- Most young people perceived themselves as potential victims, rather than potential offenders;
- Major concerns expressed centred upon physical safety and wellbeing;
- The most promising crime prevention target is likely to be potential occasional offenders who are capable of being influenced;
- Generally young people believe that services are imposed upon them rather than viewing themselves as customers of the services;
- The recurring challenge appears to be to find the ways to involve young people in the design and execution of community safety strategies; and
- Young people should be perceived by adults as valuable customers of services rather than victims of them.

A proactive intervention strategy is advanced that will encourage participatory management by disaffected youth in isolating the issues of concern to them, finding solutions and, with the support of relevant adults, implement a plan of action. The essential features of this strategy are:

1. Discussing problems with young people (consultation);
2. Enabling them to identify problems;
3. Facilitation (offering options and helping to find solutions);
4. Assisting them to bring about change;
5. Assign ownership of the Project to youth; and
6. Encourage partnerships between key community stakeholders and the Project.

A model is advanced which urges that an inter-agency group be formed as a consequence of youth consultations and issue isolation (rather than before) to avoid "pollution" of the Program by pre-conceived adult views. A sponsoring agency would facilitate the project in a caretaker mode until the inter-agency group is formalised. The sponsoring agency would however, retain financial and administrative control throughout the life of the Project.

Specific Social Action models which are proving successful overseas are recommended for implementation; including Crucial Crew (targeting 9-11 year olds), the Tough Consultation/Interagency Projects in school (Obligations and Responsibilities training) and in school Crime Prevention Panels.

It has been suggested that governments need to implement holistic strategies to deal with holistic problems. This will require resourcing and the resolve to effectively manage this resourcing to meet the global nature of the social problems that confront world communities. The residual effect upon the general citizenry of such an approach will positively influence

the lifestyle for all.

At the beginning of the Paper I spoke of hope, that is “not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out”. It does not make sense that young people should be seen as a discrete “class” (or as it has been argued, “caste”) nor that their need to participate in the normal processes of community should be blocked by others who lack the sensitivity to recognise their inherent right to do so. It does make sense to treat all people with dignity and in equal measure irrespective of their age, gender, race or code of beliefs. It does make sense that the culture of hedonism that has consumed the community during the past three decades should be exposed as the fraudulent structure that it is in the maintenance of systems that are convenient and expedient but not gender, race nor age relevant.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Havel, V. Disturbing the Peace.

<sup>2</sup> In raising the issue of crime prevention one is inevitably drawn to the distinction between situational and Social crime prevention. Situational crime prevention comprises measures directed at specific forms of crime which reduce the opportunity for these crimes to be committed through the management, design or manipulation of the immediate environment in which they occur (Hough et al 1980). Situational crime prevention is akin to what is referred to in adult correctional parlance as "static security" - locks, bolts, surveillance, etc. Social crime prevention has some equivalence to what is referred to as "dynamic" security - or those measures whereby participatory management and equity issues are implemented to reduce tension and effect harmonious relations. Unfortunately most discussion on preventative measures focus substantially on situational intervention. This Paper will be oriented towards social crime prevention.

<sup>3</sup> Crime Concern (1990) Youth Crime Prevention - Handbook for Good Practice, p.6, London. (also note NACRO [1989] Growing Up on Housing Estates)

<sup>4</sup> Liyanage, G. et. al. (1991) Banyo and Districts Youth Research, Unpublished Paper. (Some additional reference will be made of this Paper at other stages of discussion and the Results of the Banyo and Districts Youth Research Paper, together with association documentation, appear as Appendix 3)

<sup>5</sup> Warburton, F., NACRO Youth Crime Team (1991) Youth Crime Prevention - A Co-ordinated Approach, p. 4, London.

<sup>6</sup> Juvenile Crime Committee (1991) Policy Paper 3, NACRO, Preventing Youth Crime, p. 11, London.

<sup>7</sup> Home Office (1983) Crime Reduction: Report of an Inter-departmental Group on Crime, London.

<sup>8</sup> Waller, Irwin (1991) Introductory Report - Putting Crime Prevention on the Map, International Conference on Urban Safety Drugs and Crime Prevention, p. 16, Conference Proceedings, November, Paris.

<sup>9</sup> Waller, I. op.cit.

<sup>10</sup> see Children's Defence Fund (1990) A Vision for America's Future, Washington, D.C.: CDF.

<sup>11</sup> Field, S. (1990) Trends in Crime and their Interpretation: A Study of Recorded Crime in Post-war England and Wales, Home Office Research Study, London.

<sup>12</sup> West, D. (1982) Delinquency: Its Roots, Careers and Prospects, Cambridge:Harvard University Press.

<sup>13</sup> Sviridoff and Thompson (1979) Linkages between Employment and Crime: A Qualitative Study of Riker's\* Releasees, Vera Institute of Justice, New York.

\* (Riker's Island is located in New York and consists of ten prisons which accommodate some 22,000 inmates, who are under the care of the Commission for Corrective Services, New York - the majority [in the high ninetieth percentile] are black and illiterate)

<sup>14</sup> Box, S. (1987) Recession, Crime and Punishment, MacMillan.

<sup>15</sup> Crow, I., Richardwon, R., Riddington, C. and Simon, F. (1989) Unemployment, Crime and Offenders, Routledge.

<sup>16</sup> Mannheim, H. (1940) Crime and Unemployment, Allen and Unwin.

- <sup>17</sup> Wilkinson, R.G. (1991) The Guardian, 12 June 1991.
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- <sup>19</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>20</sup> Nuttall, C. (1992) Understanding Crime, Presentation to NACRO Crime and Social Policy Committee, 22 April 1992, London.
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- <sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, p. 185, United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (The Riyadh Guidelines), United Nations Resolution 45/112, December 1990, New York, 1992.
- <sup>23</sup> Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs (1992) Action on Juvenile Crime, Pamphlet, Brisbane.
- <sup>24</sup> Department of Family Services, Aboriginal and Islander Affairs (1992/3) Information Paper on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Program, (supplement to the Community Services Development State Plan 1992/3) p. 2, October 1992, Brisbane.
- <sup>25</sup> *ibid*, p. 3.
- <sup>26</sup> Hamburger, R.K. (1991) Prison, Punishment, Social Breakdown - The Impact on Youth, Address to a Young Liberals Conference, Unpublished, Brisbane.
- <sup>27</sup> (1990) Youth Crime Prevention - A Handbook for Good Practice, p. 12, Crime Concern, London.
- <sup>28</sup> *ibid*, p. 14.
- <sup>29</sup> The information for this section is drawn from a Publication titled How you can help make children more aware of the dangers that surround them, published by Kingfisher and designed by **Crime Concern UK**, 1991. A copy of this publication, which is a step by step guide to establishing a **Crucial Crew** Project is held by the writer.
- <sup>30</sup> Crime Concern Trust Ltd (1991) How you can make children more aware of the dangers that surround them - Crucial Crew, p. 8.
- <sup>31</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>32</sup> *ibid*, p. 12.
- <sup>33</sup> Queensland Corrective Services Commission (1992) Strategic Plan, 1992 - 1996, p. 10, Brisbane.
- <sup>34</sup> Woodroffe-Hill, J., Matthews, P.J., Rowley, N. (1991) Youth Education Responsibility Awareness Program, p. 1, Queensland Corrective Services Commission.
- <sup>35</sup> Blake, D., Crime Concern UK (1991) Youth Crime Prevention Action Pack, p. 34, London.
- <sup>36</sup> *ibid*, p. 36.
- <sup>37</sup> *ibid*, p. 40.

## YOUTH CRIME - AND OTHER GOOD LEARNING EXPERIENCES

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Youth crime is here, always has been and always will be. There are many claims of increases in the youth crime rate, however there is no conclusive evidence to prove this rate has increased. There are even reports which refute these claims and suggest this crime rate may have actually decreased over recent years. One thing is guaranteed, and that is that young people will continue as they always have, to test the boundaries, expectations and behaviours as they grow and develop into mature adults.

I am not suggesting that we should pay little attention and just accept this as a passing phase of development. However we often need to reframe our thoughts and actions if we want to have a positive influence on the young people. To treat young people as criminals will only encourage them to see themselves as criminals and then act accordingly. To have young people grow with respect and understanding, we need to encourage them through example.

As mentioned earlier, the youth crime rate may not be increasing as many media reports would have us believe. A report from the Criminal Justice Commission suggests a slight decrease may be occurring in this offending rate. "As well as the number of juvenile offences, the rate of juvenile offences declined in the period 1985/86 - 1990/91. For total offences the rate dropped from 4958 to 4045 per 100,000" (O'Connor, 1992, p. 15). This report does warn of the poor quality of the data used to gather these statistics. A more recent report from the Australian Bureau of Statistics also reports a decrease in number of appearances in Children's Court in Queensland for 1991-92. This represents a decrease of 3.6% on the previous year (ABS, 1993, p. 1).

Regardless of the current pattern of offending, it is my belief that everyone offends during their lifetime, and particularly during this early period of their life. Recently released report on cannabis use reports that 30% of the Queensland Population over the age of 14 years have tried cannabis (CJC, 1993, pp. 31-33). Those people not included in this 30% should consider whether they had been present in a room when cannabis was being passed around; involved in a school yard fight or other form of assault; used abusive language, taken small objects such as lollies which did not belong to them or received such items; walked through a school yard without permission or similarly ventured onto other unattended property. Any one of the above situations could lead to a court appearance.

In a recent survey of young people (13-17) in the Logan and North Albert area, 40% of the respondents admitted to "getting into fights and punchups" (assault); just under 50% of young people reported that they themselves had shoplifted (QUT, 1993, pp. 50-55). These are just a few common situations which lead me to believe that offending is a common experience.

When looking at the above statistics, it is obvious that not all young people get charged although the majority have offended, as with adults. When considering the percentage of young people who have been charged we should be aware of circumstances typical of young people which are often different from adult offenders. Examples of these include; young people often offend in groups and are more likely to get caught or doxed in; they are not as careful as adult offenders and therefore leave more clues; they offend in their local area leading to easier identification; they also admit offences to the police in an effort to clear up their outstanding offences before they turn 17 years.

In addition we find there are some occasions when young people admit to offences for which they may be innocent, eg. in order to protect others, including adults, to get out of the police station, or because the court process involved in a not guilty plea would be too long. I also believe young people are less aware of their legal rights compared to adults, and are less likely to assert those rights even when they are understood.

It is clear that the majority of young offending is of a minor nature, and the following information indicates that it is also transient. Of all the young people who get caught, the majority are warned or issued with a caution. Police information indicates that of those cautioned, 85% never reappear on their books again (Jefferies, 1990). The Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs was reported as saying that of those who were charged and appear before a court, 75% will never reappear for a second offence (Courier-Mail, 22/6/89). These figures indicate that young people do learn to conform and that the percentage of serious repeat offenders is very minor indeed. It appears the so called 'slap on the wrist' attitude has a >95% success rate. Not bad!

Applying a broader perspective to the rate of offending, we find the number of young people who attended Court in 1990-91 represented less than 1.3% of the youth 10-16 years in Queensland (Australian Institute of Criminology, 1992, pp. 5-6).

It is clear that most young people grow out of offending and, it is something we will never eradicate, nor should we. To do so would deny those of an avenue for testing and developing their social interactions, which may result in a generation of non-creative, acquiescent clones of the previous generation.

At no stage am I suggesting we encourage offending or ignore the issue, but rather to see it in perspective, and acknowledge it as a learning process which needs an appropriate response.

I imagine we would all agree that young people need activities which promote creativity, team work, skill development, physical exercise, hand-eye coordination, friendship and elements of self-esteem. Well, offending has it all! (Graffiti is a good example). Young people don't offend because they are criminals, they do it for a reason. Some of these reasons may include boredom, survival, peer pressure, excitement, friendship, anger and frustration to mention a few. The object here is again not to promote or encourage offending, rather to challenge our concepts of 'criminal activity'.

The way we respond to young people will determine their reaction. Young people generally think and operate within a short time frame and their learning ability is increased with immediate responses. It is important then, for them to see consequences to their actions as a direct link. Other incidents experienced on the way such as mistreatment, physical and verbal abuse, abuse of rights etc, are not seen as related to the offence and only serve to change the focus away from the original offence. Similarly where the court process is long and confusing, the focus moves from their offending weeks ago to frustration of something which is out of their control.

There is an overwhelming attitude in today's society that young people do not require the full legal processes that we have established for everyone else. I have even heard solicitors, who are traditionally advocate for and on behalf of their clients and justice, suggest that young people do not require their full attention. Comments such as "they're only young people" and 'a night in the watchhouse won't hurt them' are clear indications of the inconsistency of philosophy some solicitors employ when dealing with young people.

This attitude is also present in social values where we accept that business people have the right to employ expensive legal support and engage the full legal process to protect their rights, however many adults do not feel young people should be accredited with due process. A simple example is the right to remain silent. We accept, with good reason, that the average Australian can assert their right to ensure a just process is achieved. However, when someone tells a young person they have this right, they may be accused of interfering with the police investigations or encouraging young people to manipulate the law.

The legal processes have been created and tested over time to ensure that no innocent people are convicted. They exist to protect everyone from being mistreated and victimised. To prevent young people from using these established processes is a very serious form of abuse and neglect.

We need to be aware that the young people we are working with are in a period of change and they are learning how to belong to society. We expect them to show a healthy respect for people, our laws and processes. The best way to achieve this is not through fear, but rather through example. Young people need to have a clear understanding of the process they are being subject to in order to gain respect. They also need to see justice in process in order for them to feel confident and respectful of the laws, and those entrusted with the task of enforcing the laws on behalf of all Australians.

Unfortunately, the courts have not always provided an environment or process which young people could readily understand. In their book 'Children in Justice', O'Connor and Sweetapple report on numerous instances which demonstrate that young people are often confused about the court process (O'Connor, Sweetapple, 1988).

If young people do not understand the process, or feel they are being dealt with in a rough manner, then they will build up resentment, anger and frustration directed at those adults taking part in the process. This negative attitude may at times also be directed at those who are supposedly trying to help, such as Child Care workers and solicitors. The real problem here is that young people lose focus of the real issue, their offending behaviour.

Another similar issue is that of the old adage that young people need a good kick up the back side from a police officer. Where this may have worked in the past, I believe it was due to the fact that the police officer was often known by the young person or was highly respected by them. These days the police are not always known and are generally less respected by the adults and young of today. Occasionally I do hear of young people who do respect a particular officer, and I find they are more inclined to listen to them.

As mentioned previously in this paper, the process of dealing with young offenders prior to September 1992 was effective and nearly 95% of young people never reappeared in court a second time. This process could be more effective if young people were encouraged to participate and gain insight into the process.

One of the failings of the previous system was that young people were not sufficiently protected (from their own lack of knowledge as well as from the bureaucratic system) and demonstrated little understanding and ability to assert their rights within the system. While their natural learning process prevents them from returning to this offending behaviour, they often

express their confusion, distrust and anger at those who implement the process.

The Juvenile Justice Act which came into force in September 1993 continues with the cautioning process and similar sentencing options with minimal intervention such as Reprimands. Small improvements include requirements that young people have the court process and sentencing provisions explained to them. Unfortunately, the court process, in particular the options to have the matter dealt with in a District Court or Children's Court are more confusing than before. There has been some doubt expressed that parents or guardians (let alone young people) will be able to comprehend the processes which may occur.

When planning the future responses for our young people, we should include elements of respect, understanding, education, support and inclusion. This is relevant whether we are talking about the court process, police investigations or the general communities reaction to young offending. The New Zealand legislation has provided an environment which is more suitable for young people. Here, the young person has a better chance of understanding both the process and their rights and responsibilities within it. They have a chance to be heard, as do other members of the conference. The consequences are often designed in consultation with the young person and the chance of linking consequences to actions is vastly increased. The young person sits with family members of other relevant support people in a process which includes rather than isolates the young person and offers a more supportive and encouraging environment. I believe these factors can be combined to not only address the issue of offending but more importantly assists in the preventing further offending and contributes to the growth and development of the young person concerned.

We do not need to import whole programs from overseas but our present systems and responses can be adjusted to increase their effectiveness to both young people and the wider community.

As concerned and responsible adults in this society, we need to constantly be thinking of how our actions relate to the future. As with the environmental debate, we spent little time in the past looking at the consequences of our consumption and pollution and now we are required to compensate for damage done. With youth offending, we also need to look ahead to ensure that in the future we have responsible and mature adults who have learnt from their young days and have respect for the people, property and processes of our society.

We need to discount the damaging hype surrounding youth offending, and present an attitude which accepts that this troubled behaviour by young people will always exist, and that the more serious offences are restricted to a very small minority of the youth population. Secondly, that young people in the majority grow out of these behaviours without too much intervention from the justice system.

After considering these two points we then need to work with young people in a way which complements their natural learning processes and encourages them to be included rather than excluded from our communities.

for as long as there are adults, there will be crime. For as long as there are young people, there will be growth.

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## WHY CRIME

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This paper is a supplement to the showing of the "Why Crime" video. A project with young people in Logan City on issues surrounding Juvenile Crime and Crime Prevention. This paper will look at the players involved in the production, as well as the aims, the purpose and the process. Some of this paper has been taken directly from the script of the "Why Crime" video, which was developed by the young people involved.

The Logan City area is a location of high disadvantage, meaning that it is lacking resources, infrastructure and employment opportunities. It is a region where general crime rates are above average, where family breakdown and consequent youth homelessness is high, where there are high levels of school truancy and lower than average school retention rates. Where poor health, drug, alcohol and substance abuse, impact upon the lives of the young people, who make up over 56% of the total population (1986 Census data). Juvenile offending is largely and directly related to the social, economic and educational disadvantage of the young offender and/or their family.

Youth and Family Service was established in 1983, initially responding to juvenile justice needs in Logan City. This organisation has a strong community base and now offers a range of integrates services such as: Legal advice and representation, court support, accommodation for individuals, couples, sole parents and families, health care, family support and counselling, for young people and families in Logan. Youth Link is an activity space for young people in Logan, and is one of the services offered by Youth and Family Service.

Youth Link is a centre for young people who are unemployed and not attending school, offering resources and programs which currently include; art based and cultural activities, Murri-link, numeracy and literacy support, basic living skills, job placement and employment training and community development.

Youth Link, working collaboratively with the Logan Youth Legal Service, Logan Youth Interagency and the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) developed a Crime Prevention Video Project which was jointly funded by the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs and Youth and Family Service (Logan City) Inc. It was the Action Research Component of a study concerning Youth Crime and Youth Crime Prevention.

### AIM

To embark on a process of active consultation with young people in order to understand their issues, thoughts and feelings about youth crime and youth crime prevention. Further to this, the process and the content of the consultation/action research, needed to be documented. The underlying assumptions of this consultation were:

- 1) Young people have the capacity and interest to develop appropriate responses to youth crime and prevention.
- 2) That young people's thoughts, feelings and ideas are valuable.
- 3) By allowing young people to control and own the consultation process they are more likely to maintain interest and involvement, thus developing their understanding and opinions, regarding the issues.

Hence a decision was made to implement this consultation in a way which allowed young people to be in control of this activity. As a result, a video was chosen as the medium for this research.

### PROCESS

The Action Research involved three different groups of people; they were:

#### 1) Centre Education Program in Kingston

The Centre is an alternative education facility which focuses on "at risk" young people. The Centre has a strong emphasis on group and personal decision making, problem solving and self esteem.

#### 2) Youth Link

An activity space for "at risk" young people in Logan.

#### 3) Woodridge State High School

A high school in the Logan City area that has a history of cooperation and integration with its community.

All young people in the three target agencies had clear choices about their participation in this Action Research.

To assist the production of the video, two audiovisual workers from QUT were employed. Their task was to add the necessary arts skills and resources needed to support and facilitate the process.

The project ran for four weeks. Approximately 30 young people participated in ways which allowed them to be in control of the activity. From the Youth Link group, five young people self-selected and made a commitment to be members of the production crew. The young people in the production crew participated in skills based workshops on video craft enabling them to learn the necessary camera, sound and editing skills. This ensured that the actual production, sound and editing of the video was in the control and influence of the young people.

The production crew consisted of three young women and two young men. This group worked with all three groups to gain information, issues solution and video footage to produce the video.

With each group, a word game was used as a structured brainstorm to assist young people to identify and clarify issues. This process enabled equal participation and expression of views, and promoted the sharing of information and discussion, which in turn enhanced understanding and awareness.

The issues which arose from the word game were then categorised, forming the basis for the content of the video. Small groups worked on the selected categories, discussing them in more detail, then developing questions and images to them. Following this stage was the identification of further information required, and the development of interview questions relevant to different people identified as stakeholders in the youth crime prevention arena. Interviews were arranged with these people and then shot by the production crew. This process also enabled the young people to seek further information about youth crime. This aspect of the project is the equivalent in video production terms as the research and script development stage.

It is important to note that the process and structure of the project varied according to the identified needs of the particular group that the production team was working with. It was essential to keep the project flexible thus enabling the team to respond to different group and individual needs. Therefore, complementing the video production was a planned program of activities that the participants could choose from. They included: lamination, screen printing, adventure based activities, swimming, pool hall, BBQs and BMX bike riding. The purpose of these activities were two-fold. Firstly, to break up the day for the participants to increase the "fun" level of the project. Secondly, it assisted in forming the groups and the relationships between young people and workers.

There is a saying that "while your hands are busy, your mind is free". By providing alternative activities for the participants, it allowed a freeing up of their creative thought processes. Many of the activities completed by the participants had a very strong message in relation to youth crime and its prevention. By not limiting the way the young people could participate in and contribute to the project, many more insights into the issues were gained.

Complementing the interviews with various members of the community, other production elements were involved. A dramatisation of a break and enter was planned and performed by two members of the production crew.

Students from Woodridge High School developed and performed short scenarios depicting various aspects of youth crime such as poverty, family issues and peer group pressure.

The group of students from Centre Education decided that a more active approach to the video production was necessary. They chose to work at the Beenleigh BMX track. This was also the location for their chosen interviews.

During the editing process, the production crew realised the need for music in the video. Two members of the crew wrote the lyrics of the song "Why Crime" and a young musician agreed to compose and perform the song.

The crucial editing stage of the production engaged the crew in issues of content and artistic decision making, while they were also responsible for the physical action of editing.

At this stage the workers had to be very clear about their role. It would have been very easy to influence the outcome of the production at this stage. It was essential that the workers were simply there to support and assist in any technical hitches the young people may encounter using the equipment. They were not there to provide their opinions of what footage should go into the video.

In conclusion, this project enabled the young participants access to the means of production for this medium, thus

demonstrating their familiarity and easy self confidence with this medium's craft and language. During the process it became very clear that young people's participation in this consultation process was invaluable. It is not simply good enough to send out questionnaires or to talk at a group of young people for half an hour and call that consultation. To truly be consultative, young people need to exercise control over the consultative process. When time and energy is spent on allowing this to happen, the results speak for themselves.

Young people do understand many of the issues surrounding their lives. As adults it is up to us to create the environment where young people can be consulted in a meaningful and respectful way.

# **YACCA: A NEW COMMUNITY-BASED CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAM IN QUEENSLAND**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The issue of juvenile crime continues to be the subject of extensive public debate and sustained media attention in Queensland, yet informed debate is hindered by "an appalling lack of knowledge about the nature and extent of juvenile crime" (CJC, 1992). Discussion of juvenile crime has been hampered by inaccuracies and misinformation, and has been dominated by a highly negative portrayal of young people.

It is within this context that the Queensland Government has developed its response to juvenile crime: the Youth and Community Combined Action Program (YACCA), which recognises that there is legitimate public concern about juvenile crime and emphasises a vision for a solution rather than the problem.

In Queensland, rapid urban development, high unemployment and high residential mobility contribute to undermining family, school and community cohesiveness, the principle sources of informal support for young people. When these sources of support are weakened, and family, school and community attachments break down, the potential for offending rises. The YACCA Program therefore targets those most marginalised from these social support structures and networks.

The aim of YACCA is to assist these disadvantaged young people to develop new skills, to link them with strengthened support networks and to empower them to make decisions about their own lives.

The Program works on a partnership model, creating active coalitions between all sectors of the community - parents, schools, churches, community organisations, government agencies, businesses, and young people - to identify their needs, to develop their own strategies to meet those needs and to build a spirit of cooperation, collaboration and communication. It is an interactive and developmental process, whereby both young people and the community gain, as individuals and as a group.

This paper will provide an overview of YACCA and its key elements, and a discussion of themes emerging from the planning and early implementation phases of the Program.

## **KEY ELEMENTS**

YACCA aims to prevent young people from becoming involved in offending by building links with young people on four fronts:

- through three types of community-based projects;
- through school-based projects;
- through the involvement of the major statewide voluntary youth organisations; and
- through improved access to government services and programs.

Each of these strategies is being resourced by providing access to training, information and developmental support at the regional level. A data collection system is being developed to assist with monitoring the Program and an evaluation is being undertaken by independent consultants, who will report their findings in December, 1994. The Program will be reviewed in 1995.

### **Community-Based Projects:**

Sixteen Community Activities Projects (CAPs) have been funded in targeted areas across the State to provide attractive and productive alternatives for young people who may be at risk of becoming involved in offending and to strengthen the bonds between these young people and their communities. They encompass such responses as development of employment activities, skills development programs and recreational activities.

Four Neighbourhood Youth Projects (NYPs) have been established in a smaller number of communities where no infrastructure or support for young people exists, to provide activities and a level of direct service - helping young people to

gain access to health, housing and labour market programs as well as income security, legal services, family counselling, education, transport and recreation.

Both types of community-based projects are following a two-phase process involving planning (consulting with young people and a broad constituency of government and non-government agencies (community groups, schools and youth clubs) and implementation of creative and innovative responses to the needs and concerns identified in the community.

It is expected that the projects will target disadvantaged young people, and actively involve the participation of young women, young people with disabilities, young people from non-English speaking backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

At present, projects are at varying points in this process - a number are ready to commence implementation, whilst others are still involved in the planning phase.

Seven community organisations in targeted areas across the state have received non-recurrent Special Grant funding under YACCA to provide intensive support services to young people engaging in opportunistic prostitution, or at risk of entering the formal sex industry. These young people tend to be homeless or itinerant, unemployed and disconnected from family, school and community support. Because these young people are often socially isolated and emotionally fragile, and do not necessarily identify as sex workers, they tend not to access the health, information, advocacy and referral services available to sex industry workers. Special Grants are available to address the needs of these young people by funding the provision of services such as:

- assistance to resume education, training and employment, to obtain legal advice, health services, safe housing and income support;
- information about sexually transmitted diseases, safe sex practices and maintaining sexual health;
- training and assistance to develop appropriate living skills; and
- advocacy and counselling to re-establish family and community support networks.

Special Grants projects are also following a two-phase process of planning and implementation. Targeted communities have been encouraged to adopt a coordinated process, bringing together key youth, health, legal and welfare organisations to inform the planning phase and ensure a comprehensive response.

### **School-Based Projects:**

The second key element of the approach involves the Department of Education which has been funded under YACCA to develop schools-based projects aimed at enhancing the capacity of schools and parents to assist young people experiencing difficulties with mainstream education. These projects will link with and complement the community-based YACCA projects, enhancing their capacity to engage with and respond to young people. 65 submissions have been received from schools throughout Queensland, and grants will shortly be made to 20-22 schools in the target areas.

### **Mainstream Youth Organisations:**

The third key element is the Mainstream Youth Organisations Task Force (MYOTF) which has been established to bring together major voluntary youth organisations such as the Scouts, the Girl Guides, the Sports Federation of Queensland, Youth Unlimited and the Police Citizens Youth Welfare Association. Organisations such as these have a long history of commitment and involvement with young people in their communities. These organisations are being encouraged to pool their resources and to extend their skills, services and facilities to young people in the target areas, thereby providing vital opportunities for these young people to participate in positive alternatives to crime.

The MYOTF has completed a planning phase, and is preparing to commence implementation with the establishment of regional working groups in 7 target areas. These groups will pilot activities and test out how they can support and resource disadvantaged young people. This will be done in partnership with the community-based and school-based projects.

### **Improved Access to Government Services and Programs:**

The fourth vital element involves a whole-of-government approach to building interdepartmental cooperation to improve access for young people to government services and programs in the target areas, and to mobilise ongoing networks at the local level. The integration of YACCA community-based initiatives with government-based commitment to improve access to services is seen as vitally important in addressing the social and economic disadvantages which contribute to offending.

A Joint Officers Group (JOG) has been established to oversee and monitor the YACCA program. The JOG comprises representatives from 8 relevant government agencies:

- Queensland Police Service
- Tourism, Sport and Racing
- Education
- Health
- Employment, Vocational Education, Training and Industrial Relations
- Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs
- Housing, Local Government and Planning
- Office of the Cabinet

The JOG has a key role in ensuring the coordination of the various components of the YACCA Program and the development of an effective partnership between the community and government sectors.

#### **Training:**

The Youth Sector Training Council has been funded to undertake the first phase of the YACCA Training Program, to provide initial core training and to conduct a training needs analysis which will inform the ongoing development of the Training Program.

The Training Program will provide a framework for skills acquisition, throughout the range of organisations involved in YACCA. This will assist projects to meet the needs of the target group, and to be responsive to the characteristics, cultural diversity and conditions of the target locations.

#### **Evaluation:**

Griffith University has been funded to undertake an evaluation of the YACCA Program. This will be crucial in informing the review of the Program to be conducted in 1995. This evaluation will expand existing knowledge about the effectiveness of community-based juvenile crime prevention. In addition, it has been suggested that as this is a relatively uncharted area, an important role of evaluation is to examine whether and why a program is doing any harm (Polk, 1990).

The evaluation consultants will produce a report which evaluates both the process and impact of YACCA at the local and statewide level. It will analyse, evaluate and document the extent to which YACCA has reduced juvenile offending in target areas, implemented activities and projects in which young people have had a key role in planning and organising, and enhanced cooperation and collaboration amongst key stakeholders at a local level.

#### **MAJOR THEMES**

There are a number of key themes integral to YACCA. These provide a framework for discussion of what has happened so far and for the ongoing development of the Program:

##### **Participation by Young People:**

It is a key principle of the YACCA Program that young people have the knowledge, vision and desire to participate as active partners in community life, and have a right to the opportunities to do so. The success of YACCA will depend very much on the continued and significant involvement of young people themselves at every stage of local projects. This includes such things as the planning and organising of their own activities and participating in decisions that affect their lives.

The planning phase is designed to ensure that young people are given the chance to articulate their needs and concerns and their ideas for addressing them. Projects are required to ensure that disadvantaged young people are provided with maximum opportunities to participate in the development of activities supported by the Program. Particular emphasis has been placed on ensuring that there is input from young women, young people with disabilities, young people from non-English speaking backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

Information available to date is encouraging; projects are not only consulting with young people through streetwork, surveys, workshops and youth forums, but also actively and creatively involving young people in workgroups and on management committees, in planning and implementing activities.

However, there is concern that in some areas, specific strategies may be needed to encourage greater participation by target groups of young people, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and young people from non-English speaking backgrounds. Given the level of disadvantage these young people face, and particularly given the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the Juvenile Justice system, maximising involvement of these groups will be a priority in the continuing development of the Program.

### **Broad Community Involvement:**

YACCA emphasises the importance of young people and adults working together, helping each other to address the issues facing their communities. Positive interactions with their communities enable young people to learn what is expected of them and what they can expect from others, and this assists in the development of successful pathways to adulthood. Projects most likely to achieve beneficial outcomes for young people and the wider communities in which they live are those which have broad and consistent community support and a strong sense of community ownership.

The planning phase was designed into the Program to allow extensive consultation with community groups - schools, businesses, community organisations, youth clubs, parents, churches - and for the development of management structures which are broadly representative of the local community. The information available suggests that the consultative process has been wide-ranging, and that community interest and support for the projects are high.

In some areas, there is evidence that, while there have been extensive consultations, active participation by a broad cross-section of the community has been limited. It is recognised that YACCA is a new and innovative approach, and that ongoing work will be needed to build broad-based community participation. Early indications are that the implementation of activities provides more attractive avenues for community participation than the planning and consultation phase.

### **Building Cooperation Between Funded Elements and Government Agencies:**

A coordinated, multi-agency approach to community-based crime prevention is central to the vision of YACCA. This requires the development of ongoing partnerships between the community, government and business sectors if responses implemented under the Program are to be effective in the long term.

It is hoped that the funded elements of YACCA will work together, pooling their knowledge, skills and resources, to develop comprehensive responses to the needs of young people in the target areas. It is further hoped that the community and school-based projects will link with available government services and programs, and that young people's social dislocation and lack of access to housing, education, employment, training and health services will be improved.

The school-based and Mainstream Youth Organisation projects are not yet operating, but there is an expectation that they will cooperate and coordinate with the community-based projects. The development of effective linkages between these elements is a priority for the development of the Program.

### **Keeping the Focus Small, Local and Achievable:**

Projects funded under YACCA have been encouraged to limit their activities to a discreet area, such as a housing estate or shopping centre, rather than to adopt too broad or ambitious an approach. Such a focus facilitates active community involvement, and the setting of realistic and achievable goals helps sustain community energy in the longer term. Unrealistic and unrealisable expectations may be generated by attempting to cover too large an area, and it is likely that local community involvement, ownership and control will be dissipated.

The Hyperferal project in Logan City is an example of the success of this small-scale approach. Feral Arts was funded under YACCA to undertake a community arts project with young people in Logan City. The project was based at Logan Hyperdome, which had been identified as a significant gathering point for marginalised young people, and arts activities were conducted over a 5 week period. The project, which focused on the construction of an interactive billboard, attracted large numbers of young people in the Logan area who were not accessing existing support networks, and fostered cooperation between the centre management, traders, security and young people. The project produced a welded steel sculpture, incorporating a video screen and basketball hoop and mini-court, and achieved considerable success in actively involving young people in the design and production of their own recreational resources.

### **Resourcing Local Projects in regard to Training, Information and Evaluation:**

The YACCA Training Program will assist and support project staff, committee members, young people and members of the community to acquire skills and knowledge in juvenile crime prevention, community consultation and planning, project management and administration, engaging disadvantaged young people, and working cross-culturally with young people. This training will be vital in ensuring the implementation of quality and effective projects at the local level.

A range of promotional materials has been produced to raise the profile of the Program in the community, and Information Kits have been made available to projects with extensive practical information about dealing with the media and attracting further funding, as well as bibliographical and reference material with examples of crime prevention projects undertaken elsewhere. Additional information which will assist projects in encouraging participation by key target groups of young people is about to be finalised and distributed.

The Department is conducting ongoing monitoring of the Program which will inform the formal evaluation and review. The monitoring and evaluation will provide information about what is and isn't working and will not only gauge the impact of YACCA on juvenile crime, but will assess the processes and strategies used, thus assisting in future program development.

## **CONCLUSION**

The YACCA Program seeks to empower young people to address their social dislocation by linking them with strengthened sources of support in their communities, and giving them responsibilities to design, plan and organise their own project activities.

The evaluation of YACCA will provide valuable information about the effectiveness of a community development approach to juvenile crime prevention. Early indications are that the Program is achieving significant progress in key areas, namely; the continued and significant involvement of young people, the establishment of ongoing government-community-business partnerships, and the development of a strong sense of community ownership.

YACCA is a new program, and still in its early days, but the process of allowing time for planning and consultation has been applauded. The emphasis on linking young people with the widest possible range of community support appears to offer the best direction for the future development of the Program.

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# THE OPINIONS OF YOUTH

Karina Sutton, Logan City YACCA

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Ladies & Gentlemen, Fellow Young People

I've come across a lot of various people in my life. Different shapes and sizes, colours and creeds, and all with their own individual hassles, created by travelling along a rocky road in this adventure we call life. But by far the most interesting of all, are the young people. Although every young person is different, they all share a common difficulty which faces them each day - society. The supposedly 'grown-up' population of our community.

Not all of society has a negative attitude towards young people. But those who do, quite often don't bother trying to hide it. "Young people are too lazy to work; they don't deserve unemployment benefits; they're dirty; the young people are the criminals; they don't need to have anywhere to live because they can go home to live with their folks". While occasionally these statements may be appropriate, there are still many young people who do need these supports.

When I first started to write this, I read a lot of various reports on youth crime. But I soon realised that a whole heap of statistics is not the way I want to get my message across. While stats come in handy, they're not the solution to youth crime. I've spent my teenage years in Logan City - and on the streets of Woodridge. Living in Logan as a young person isn't much fun. I can fully understand why young people get bored - especially in Woodridge.

Youth crime in Logan City has a lot of contributing factors. The severe use and abuse of drugs and alcohol, pressure from peers, family breakdown and social unacceptance are just a few. But Logan City is not alone. Young people in Logan usually get stereotyped as low-life scum. Well, we've got news for society. We aren't low-life scum.

In Woodridge about the only thing to do is go to school. But what about those young people who have major difficulties with the education system? What do they do? Where do they go? Nothing, nowhere - and they get bored. Young people everywhere, not just in Woodridge, will always get bored. But how to we re-direct that boredom to something positive and not illegal? That is the question.

I've found young people to be so full of energy. And in Logan, that energy is wasted.

Woodridge is seen by a lot of people to be no-hoper's land. Society has a very negative attitude towards young people from Woodridge. Why?

I can recall once being at a BBQ and somebody asked me where I lived. When I replied Woodridge, the 4 or 5 people I'd been talking to walked away in a real big hurry. And that's the kind of thing I'm talking about. If people know where you're from, it's almost as though you're some form of alien, so that young people are being labelled and alienated because of the geographical location they live in.

There is very little for young people to do in my area. There's a pool hall and that's about it.

Why are our politicians sitting pretty in their big offices when the very few welfare organisations in Logan City are struggling to make ends meet? It's these agencies that really help the young people, so if we want to help young people too, then we must help these organisations.

Why youth crime occurs will always be an issue. When young people are asked why they commit crime, the response is usually the same - "I was bored". Bored? Why are our young people bored? We need to have this question answered. It's not that all young people are criminals - they're just bored. If they're bored, then of course they're going to offend.

Research needs to be done into why young people are bored. We need more interesting activities, more places, financially accessible - for young people to go. Naturally young people aren't going to sit at home in front of the TV everyday. They aren't going to go to the local swimming pool everyday through summer. But they are going to walk the streets and get into trouble with the police.

Find out WHY they're bored - maybe then we can work on doing something to prevent the boredom, which in turn will decrease the crime.

I believe that if our young people had something to do with their time, then youth crime would slowly, but surely, decrease.

I believe that we are all here for a reason. That being to develop a better and safer community to live in, as well as developing a better understanding into youth crime and why it occurs in such a large extent. It doesn't matter what we do,

or what we attempt to do, young people will still offend.

Sure, raving on about stat and data based material's great fun - but that doesn't help the youth of Australia. They couldn't give a damn about all the political jargon that gets thrown around in parliament. Young people don't always want to offend - they just don't have anything better to do with their time.

Why does a young person walking down the street get put into a police vehicle, taken to the station and thrown in the watchhouse, when a person of 30 years of age can walk freely in our community?

I'd thought a lot on what I would talk about today. In this little presentation I was going to include stats, information to show you all that I know what I'm talking about. But that would've been what you all wanted to hear. I'm not here today to tell you what you want to hear - I'm here to tell you what I want you to hear.

It seems to me that the main factor of youth crime is boredom. So what are we going to do about it?

In the high crime rate areas, like Charleville, Mt. Isa, etc., there's nothing for the young people to do. But even though these are far away and isolated areas, there's still nothing for the young people in the city and suburban areas either.

Young offenders need to be fairly dealt with, but what is the best way? So while you all sit there reading your stat sheets thinking that by doing so you'll come up with some sort of solution, the young people are still out there breaking the law.

Young people usually get a certain "high" after committing an offence - until they're caught. And that's where a lot of young people feel like they've actually done something wrong - they've go caught. It doesn't look good to their peers if they stuff up like that, as getting caught is seen as stuffing up.

A number of offences occur under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. And it's not until the young person is in the watchhouse or sitting before a magistrate that the full effects of their actions begin to sink in. If we knew what activities the young people want, and would be interested in, and if we provided those services, then maybe breaking the law would be that little bit less appealing.

For first offenders, going to court is quite often a frightening experience. But if they get let off with a slap on the wrist, either they vow to never offend again, or they see the system as being easy and do offend again. Why? Why does offending appear to be so attractive to our youth?

Youth crime isn't about report papers or stat sheets, it's about real people - real young people.

Youth crime is of course about youth. Society may think of it as being the youth's problem. But it's not, it's our problem - all of us.

We keep going wrong somewhere, so before we do anything, we need to find out where it is we're going wrong. Maybe then we'll be able to start on making this community a better and safer place - for all of us.

It is not just the Youth People's fight - it's the community's battle. And as I always say, equal people are happy people.

## THE OPINIONS OF YOUTH

Sheena Byrne, Redcliffe YACCA

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Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I am honoured to be asked to speak here today and hope that I don't disappoint you.

The theme of this panel today is "Youth Crime - the opinions of Youth". One of the main starting points for Crime Prevention Programs, I believe, is getting the community to 'OWN' the problem of crime. I must emphasise that what I say here today is based on the YACCA Research Report, that was done in Redcliffe early this year, and on my own experiences with Youth in Redcliffe. As Kevin Gill said earlier "Youth hear about a lot more crimes than adults".

I am mainly talking today about the reasons for YOUTH crime in Redcliffe. The main reasons are boredom, dysfunctional families, alcohol and substance abuse, financial situation, peer pressure and some youth feel that they have absolutely no hope for the future. These points will be addressed separately.

A survey of 495 students at a local high school in Redcliffe came up with the information that 49.5% of youth said that boredom was one of the biggest problems of young people.

Alcohol and substance abuse ties in with boredom, as many youths have nothing to do on weekends, so they go out and get plastered, stoned or even go onto the hard drugs. Many problems occur when youth are not in control of themselves. I admit that crimes are committed when people haven't abused drugs or alcohol but if alcohol and substance abuse was decreased there would also be a decrease in crime.

Dysfunctional families are an increasing problem in our society. Just because youths live with their parents, doesn't mean that their family life is happy. If youths are not being provided with material or emotional needs at home they rebel and therefore this can lead to crime.

I am sure that we are all aware of the fact that we are in a recession and financial situations are very closely tied in with crime.

Peer pressure between youths is a major concern. Many people feel insecure and have the need to be accepted and feel as if their family is not offering this. Some youths go to the extent of taking dares or going along with crimes just to be accepted or friends may be getting new clothes all the time and you feel left out but don't have the money to keep up with them. One alternative therefore is crime.

The issue of no hope for a future is a very complex issue. People can feel this way due to family putting them down, teachers telling them there is high unemployment. Youth need encouragement and support to develop as well balanced adults. High unemployment is seen as a very high society concern. Youth that don't do well at school feel that they have no future with the exception of the dole cheque.

Thank you very much for your time and your concentration. In conclusion, crime in Redcliffe may not be as high as crime in other places, but I have written on my experiences.

## **OPINIONS OF YOUTH**

Craig Hadley, Woodridge YACCA

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Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen

Today I have four (4) topics to talk about, and the first one is "What types of crimes are happening in all areas?"

Well, there are many types of crime in all areas and I think, from the information I have received, the most common crime is break and enter for 10-15 year olds. Then it goes from car theft, to assault, to stealing, to robbery (most common armed robbery) and sometimes even murder. A lot of adolescent boys and girls only commit crimes thinking that they will not get caught, or they will make money out of the things they steal, or peer pressure.

The second topic of my speech is "Who are committing the Crimes?"

Well, out of boys and girls, after reading the information I received, I think boys commit more crimes than girls. For example, 3 out of every 5 boys commit all the crimes I have previously named but only 1 to 2 out of every 5 girls commit all the crimes I have named. The age rate really hits the top of the mark at the ages of 19 going to 24, but people my age, 14, commit very little crimes, for example (break and enter) 2,757 boys committed break and enter at the ages between 10 to 15 and only 220 girls committed break and enter between the ages of 10 to 14 but 8,504 committed break and enter at the ages between 19 and 23 and 1,771 girls committed break and enter between the ages of 19 to 24 over the years of 1991 and 1992.

And now to go onto my third topic of my speech "What is the affect that crime has on the community?"

Many people who have been broken into, including my home, have had valuable things stolen like family heirlooms or very high priced things. Some single women even get scared that the robber is going to come back and hurt them. Lately in my area of Woodridge there has been a man going round to people's houses and breaking in when the people are home, and if the owners of the house caught the robber, the robber would threaten them and get away leaving the owner in shock that he or she was in danger and then even some people have to go through counselling to get their lives back together.

Now to go onto my fourth topic "How can crime be prevented?"

Well, I think crime can be prevented by police fixing up some activities for crime abusers. There is one in many states called Legal Street Art and that is when all the street kids and normal kids that know how to do graffiti can use their artistic talents and spare time towards a good cause like graffiting walls that look ugly, but that is not all they could fix up. They could take those people out on trips to the Gold Coast or the Sunshine Coast or for some kids even get them counselling.

## **OPINIONS OF YOUTH**

Sabrina Hayhoe, Cairns YACCA

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Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I am Sabrina Hayhoe from YACCA Cairns. This morning I would like to share some interesting facts in relation to youth crime rates in the Far North. Unfortunately, 1993 figures are not available pending presentations of same to parliament. However, I do have some statistics relating to juvenile break and enters and assaults in the 1991/92 financial year.

Break and enters range from 2,977 reported cases for ages 10 - 14; 2,025 for 15 year olds; 2,786 for 16 years; to a figure of 1,983 for 17 year olds.

Assaults in these same age brackets reflect much less alarming figures - 471 for 10 to 14 year olds; 284 for 15 year olds; 429 for 16 year olds, to a reported figure of 429 for 17 year old age group.

All of these figures are for reported cases not convictions, however when we stop to consider that non-commercial break and enters are estimated to cost the country \$90 million per year, we can start to understand the enormity of this problem.

It is generally perceived that, for various reasons, youth living at home commit these offences. I, however, strongly believe otherwise - that is a great majority of the criminal offences to which we are referring are committed by so called 'street kids'. I would like you to consider the following points as an explanation as to why I feel this way:

1. The mental addiction to the adrenaline rush it gives them.
2. Personal problems stemming from when they lived at home.
3. Peer group pressure.
4. A way to reject authority in any form.
5. Drug abuse.

In relation to the small group of offenders who do live at home the reasons would be generally the same, however, more often than not the main reasons would be:

1. Peer group pressure.
2. Lack of personal recognition from parents.

We will not, in my opinion, solve any of these problems by introducing new legislation as in the case of the new Juvenile Justice Act.

My understanding of the Act, in the main, is that it merely represents a Government attempt at shifting the problems caused by youth instead of addressing and solving them. The "Band Aid" mentality of this legislation will see offences continuing to occur and probably by the same offenders in the same manner as the original crime committed. You will not stop offenders committing crimes by sending them back to their place of birth - you will simply see them commit the same crime there as they have done here.

The legislation lacks direction and understanding of youth crime in this country. I believe that the mentality of treating repeat offenders with "Kid Gloves" - that is, to administer community service and reprimand ahead of detention (which is treated as a last resort) - is futile. On saying that, I must also add that I feel we must look at the effectiveness of the current jail (detention) system. We need to increase the level of discipline inside. We need to remove the "holiday" aspect of the system. We need to make youth feel they have paid for their crime, not treat the system with contempt as they do at the moment. According to several ex-inmates with whom I have spoken, the current detention centres are too lax. They are allowed to play football, do weights, watch television, read, smoke; basically the inmates have a free ride "inside". These detention centres - specifically designed for youth crime - also reflect some of the lower aspects of the adult jail system with problems of drug and alcohol abuse.

I also believe that we are not helping the situation by treating offenders differently according to their racial background, age or maturity - a crime is a crime regardless of who commits it. I hasten to add that I am not by any means advocating racial discrimination, I am simply saying that we must treat all offenders equally to avoid them repeating their crime over and over again.

It is easy, however to highlight the problem of the current system, but I would also like to tell you of what we are trying to do to avoid it in the first place. YACCA, in North Queensland is attempting to help prevent youth crime by presenting "Street Kids" and youth in general with an alternative. This will be orchestrated by a series of activities including camps, discos, social activities and outings - all designed to show these youth that there is another path they can take apart from crime. A close liaison with the Cairns and Mulgrave Police and Citizens Youth Club will also help us in this endeavour.

In conclusion, I believe that YACCA can play a major role in the prevention of youth crime in the Cairns region. We can not change government or public opinion of youth offenders, we can not change the offences that have already occurred, we can not change the current statistics - we can help reduce these statistics and help direct the youth of this country on a better and more rewarding path.

# CRIME PREVENTION AMONG ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Ken McDonald and Paddy Jerome

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Any understanding of present day crime and its prevention among murri communities necessitates an overview, however brief, of traditional Aboriginal history, culture and law. It also requires some analysis of subsequent events since colonisation and the relationships between Aborigines and present day law enforcement agencies.

Apart from artefacts unearthed by archaeologists plus cave and rock paintings, traditional history was oral. Some has been lost with the early and total destruction of numerous tribes by the British colonisers as they spread across the continent. Fortunately, much of the old knowledge has been retained by the efforts of dedicated scholars and by present day Aboriginal elders whose earlier ancestors had enough foresight and wisdom to continue the age-old tradition.

As some rock art has been dated to be 45,000 years old, Aboriginal Australia is the oldest known civilisation and predates Sumer by 35,000 years or more. Traditional lore and customs were based on environmental preservation to ensure the regrowth of flora and the permanent protection of animal species. Created by the Dreamtime elders, such knowledge was passed on from generation to generation and internalised in such a manner that crimes common to Western civilisations were extremely rare. Moreover, commonality of such customs, their unique totemic family structures and religious beliefs on a continental scale, ensured that criminal activity of any kind was kept to a minimum. As examples, child abuse, incest or violence within traditional families were unknown. Murder, rape and theft, all crimes prevalent in both black and white contemporary Australia, were rare. Being comprised of groups of wise elders, tribunals were just and swift. Jails, jailers and police were unnecessary and non-existent.

The scale of disintegration of tribal communities across this continent has not been equalled despite the efforts of colonisers in the Americas and elsewhere. The intense nature of Aboriginal spirituality and their close affinity with the land and all things natural was a basis for their religious beliefs. It was also a springboard for the aforesaid disintegration. The Dreamtime myths and legends helped to create a unique form of social control that has no peer in world history. Aboriginal customary law is defined more accurately as an all embracing pattern of community behaviour, rather than a particular set of rules for individuals to follow.

Not even the Sumerians with their famous legal code of Ur-Nammu and resultant open and tolerant society, could boast such an achievement. The Sumerians themselves are credited with great deeds including the invention of the wheel, abstract symbols for a written language and fine works of art. The two cultures had one common denominator, ie. their deep spiritual beliefs and value systems made law enforcement simple and highly cost effective when compared to the complexity of today's mainly secular societies.

Why did such social control, so successful for millennia, suddenly and completely break down? And why, after more than 200 years since the arrival of the first fleet, have continued attempts by Aboriginal leaders to regain control, been so frustrated? Firstly, the invaders, with their superior technology, (steel axes as against stone, guns against spears or boomerangs) were perceived by youthful Aborigines to be superior, in both a material and spiritual sense, to their own elders. They were easily corrupted and then exploited in every way possible by the Europeans. Secondly, there was a sudden and protracted loss of ancient rituals including songs, dances, myths and legends. These were all part of a fabric interwoven over time and deeply internalised in the hearts and minds of community members. Such rituals were vital to the maintenance of social control in all Aboriginal clans.

A modern day equivalent can be witnessed by visitors to Japan. Virtually all facets of Japanese life, including business meetings and social gatherings, are accentuated by age-old rituals. Like those of the traditional Aborigines, they are based on mutual respect of individuals, one to another. Even high ranking members of the Yakusa (Japanese organised crime syndicates), religiously adhere to these old customs. Whilst corporate crime there may be worse than that of Western societies, street crime (eg. rape) and vandalism in Japan are only a fraction of such crimes in the West, particularly in the US but also in Australia.

The European invaders were from a long standing material culture where crime and violence were inherent. Few of them had any qualms about participation in the shameful episodes that were to follow. Initially trusting and somewhat naive, the natives were mercilessly driven from their hunting and fishing grounds. This was their only means of subsistence. Girls or young women were taken by force and raped, sometimes by groups of unscrupulous men in a society with few females. Children suffered a similar fate at the hands of paedophiles and sadists. Attempts at resistance, organised or otherwise, were met with brutal retaliation or summary execution. One law, that of England, existed for the white settlers. For the natives, there was not protection or human rights. The new rules were incomprehensible to communities where ownership of material objects was unknown. This concept was diametrically opposed to facets of European law.

As an example, killing a bullock or sheep was not a criminal offence in traditional terms. All animals were part of a total environment that could be carefully and sustainably exploited for sustenance. Their own totemic laws protected all species

in different areas of the continent. Retaliatory measures by whites (again mostly killings or massacres) were totally unjustifiable from the Aboriginal perspective. Some form of serious retaliation was inevitable. Though sporadic and intermittent, an undeclared frontier war ensued between the colonists and the natives. This lasted for more than a century. Atrocities on both sides were widespread with the balance being decidedly against the indigenes.

From this time on and persisting through till the present day, Aborigines perceived all authorities, including police and courthouses, to be symbols of oppression. Instead of the provision of justice, they found they were under constant threat of violence to conform to laws they did not comprehend. Prejudiced officials enjoyed wide discretionary powers of arrest and exercised them unjustly which of course, reflected their racist attitudes. Eventually, the Aborigines were forced to accept and internalise this concept as being "normal". Similar brain washing tactics were used on prisoners during the Korean war. Responses from such pressures, mainly of a criminal nature, were thus generated and became synonymous with the Aboriginal social role.

Substances foreign to the surviving natives were introduced, sometimes as payment for labour on farms or stations. Alcohol, opium or opium dross (ashes) were readily supplied and further depressed the psyche. The former nutritious food culture was replaced by subsistence handouts of mainly white flour, sugar, scraps and plug tobacco. Physiologically and psychologically, an entire race was reduced to an alarmingly low level. The natives, it was said, (and hoped in many quarters) were "dying out". Popular misconception that white races were genetically and culturally superior to the black were, and are still, evident in anthropological, historical and school literature. One could not imagine an environment more conducive to generating crime than that created in the history of colonial Australia. All this was achieved under the banners of "progress, development and Christianity".

Ironically, at a stage when labour was short because of such attrition, "blackbirding" or the kidnapping of Pacific Island natives as slaves was introduced. Thousands were brought to help harvest sugar on Australian plantations. They were treated no differently from the locals and added to long term problems brought about by separation from their families and alienation from the rest of society.

Many attempts at ameliorating the plight of Australia's indigenous population since, have been thwarted because of fundamental weaknesses in the philosophical approach of the various government policies. This is exacerbated by general apathy, ignorance or racist attitudes by a majority of the population. Overall failure on the part of administrators to understand or appreciate the positive aspects of traditional culture were, and still remain, central to this issue. Early settlement of mixed tribal groups into native reserves was unsuccessful. Among others, differences in language, tribal laws and kinship affiliations made it almost impossible for such groups to cohabit. Another paternalistic model, that of assimilation, was adopted in the 1950s and persisted until the 1970s. With this policy, the remnants of scattered survivors were supposed to adopt the dominant culture's norms and values and so conform by adoption of a passive role within that society. Otherwise they would just die out.

Most attempts failed mainly because of an approach that demanded a state of "dependence" on the part of the indigenes. With a few exceptions, this applied to white administrators whether they worked in state bureaucracies or any of the various denominational missions. Cut off as they were from their own cultural roots and unable to relate to many aspects of European culture, general apathy spread like a strange psycho-pathological disease among the population. Their former sense of self-esteem and community belonging was destroyed. Moreover, introduced epidemics, to which Aborigines had no immunity, devastated tribes across the continent. Thousands more died, their fate unheralded.

Like their parents, Aboriginal children were forced to embrace totally foreign value systems based on materialism. Up until recently, failure to do so resulted in forced separation from the family and incarceration in an institution or with foster parents whose ethos differed greatly from their own. How such a policy was devised is beyond comprehension. The mental anguish caused to the children involved is incalculable and will remain a blot on our conscience forever.

In total, it is difficult to imagine another set of policies that would create the climate for a breakdown of control within a specific social group. On the one hand, we had a culture whose close knit communities operated at a highly emotional and spiritual level in all areas of personal communication. Such philosophies had worked for millennia in preventing crime. On the other hand, we have a legal culture that is based purely on rationality. In other words, human emotions are not supposed to play any part in formulating ideas or solutions to disputes under existing statutes. Similar sentiments have ruled in Europe since the days of the zenith of the Roman empire. That all Western legal systems since then have shown glaring inadequacies, speaks volumes for the traditional Aboriginal model.

On the Law Report on Radio National on Tuesday 13 April 1993, David Moore outlined a new approach to deal with juvenile offenders. He also emphasised the view that much of our dealings with criminal behaviour is fundamentally flawed. By adopting an initial stance that there is an offender and a victim, we then proceed by so-called rational and highly expensive methods to punish both parties. The punitive model of our prisons serves mainly as a tertiary institution for the refinement of criminal behaviour. The "victim" rarely feels that the system has resolved the matter in his or her favour. In

this equation, the only “winners” are an elite group of members of the legal fraternity (ie. barristers).

This was graphically highlighted in the September 1992 ABC TV series on rape “Without Consent”. The series should be replayed and made available to all persons who have not absorbed these informative and sensitive programs. Offenders and victims alike were allowed to express their feelings and emotions and the impressions were indelibly imprinted in the minds of all viewers. There is little doubt that more was achieved through the programs than in any court or tribunal. In cases involving corporate fraud or rape, our legal system often displays bias in favour of offenders. There are few convictions for the crime of rape and a majority of such crimes go unreported. Most victims must have been appalled by the much publicised judges’ opinions on gender issues.

Such outbursts have initiated moves for the re-education of members of the judiciary. With a majority of charges against Aborigines being petty offences such as drunk and disorderly conduct, distinct prejudice against offenders (including cases of false arrest) is the norm. 96% of all crimes committed by Aborigines are alcohol related.

Another classic example of the inherent weaknesses in our legal system was revealed by Chris Masters on ABC TV’s Four Corners on 29 March 1993. This program was titled, “Las, Drugs and Money”. The duo of Richard Leeth and Paul Donovan were charged with drug related offences and possession of some two million dollars in illegal gains. Although a “guilty” plea was entered soon after arraignment on the charges, some eighteen months elapsed before the case was concluded. There are no prizes for guessing what happened to what should have become public property after. No less than three barristers for the prosecution and seven for the defence ensured that all funds seized in the operation were dissipated. The top echelon of the legal fraternity have highjacked the major proportion of available funds, leaving the poor to their own devices or what is doled out in legal aid.

David Moore explained that people do not always operate at a rationalist level but more often on different emotional levels. The use of existing human resources for problem solving is proving superior to that which had been achieved formerly by bureaucracies. This approach did not exclude the use of such organisations. Of course, we are all aware that vast sums of money poured into state and federal bodies in efforts to “solve the Aboriginal problem” have so far been largely wasted. Bureaucratic failures have persisted also because few “traditionally” oriented Aborigines are staffers or alternatively, are brought into meaningful discussions to deal with the multitude of problems that arise. Much departmental policy is based on ethnocentric attitudes and is not structured for the special needs of Aboriginal communities.

This provides some understanding of other contemporary issues vital to the welfare of Aborigines; family violence, malnutrition, illiteracy, high infant mortality, low life expectancy, no signed treaty or satisfactory land tenure, disproportionate rates of incarceration in prison and deaths in custody. Underlying most problems is the scourge of alcoholism. Plenty has been said and written on the subject, not all of it accurate or relevant. However, it does represent a grave threat to the very existence of town communities (eg. Alice Springs) where anti-social, violent acts are rampant. Such behaviour would not have been tolerated in past eras.

In his essay “Cultural Alcoholism” and other publications, Jerome cogently outlines the underlying causes of alcoholism among today’s Aboriginal communities. They have been reiterated by others though not in so emotional or dramatic terms. Included are: a breakdown of traditional Aboriginal family dynamics and their unique form of communication; children forcibly removed from families; loss of land which was a focal point in their religious beliefs; wanton and sometimes unnecessary desecration of sacred sites; the unauthorised removal of the remains of deceased Aborigines to overseas universities or museums; alienation from the rest of society and humiliating dependence on the dominant culture initially responsible for the destruction of one’s own. Different combinations of these immensely powerful and emotional forces combine to produce an introspective form of self-hatred. In other words, multiple and intensely negative emotions towards outsiders, are projected back onto oneself.

Escape from the associated traumas is the only possible through death or a self induced haze that can be provided by a drug such as alcohol. The traumas, which produce symptoms of serious psychiatric disorders, usually remain unresolved.

Death (sometimes while in custody) is achieved by any means available or a slow and painful one by repeated consumption of substances such as wine or methylated spirits. Physical and psychological dependence leads to one inevitable result. If the unhappy individual continues to fulfil the role he or she genuinely feels is his or her ascribed one in society, he or she is propelled in a self-fulfilling prophecy towards destruction. In the interim, all kinds of violent behaviour, including assaults and even the killing of members of one’s family, become commonplace. Chapter 9 of The Law Reform Commission Report No 31, 1986 reveals a list of glaring statistics which show the extent of violent crime on Aboriginal reserves in Queensland and in other states.

In the face of what appears to be a national disgrace and a dilemma of mammoth proportions, what strategies can be adopted to reduce or prevent crime? One of us, (Jerome) has personally experienced much of the anguish earlier described during his lifetime of merging between the two cultures. He has a thorough understanding of the needs of

Aborigines as he has considerable experience in both welfare and alcoholic services, besides filling vital prison Chaplaincy roles. He has also composed several essays on the subject and is one of few people able to articulate customary Aboriginal laws. Both of us have attended various forums relating to crime and punishment of Aborigines in Australia.

From one Aboriginal perspective outlined here, there seems to be two different and distinct paths to be followed. Moreover, because of the deterioration in the plight of many individuals and of the overall situation of Aborigines generally, there is a sense of urgency in their implementation. In the first place, there are several short term strategies which can be quickly introduced. Some of these have already been recommended in reports by Jim Kennedy, Professor Eileen Byrne, the joint Churches "Prison the last resort" and various other publications. They have also been articulated many times by Aboriginal elders such as Bob Weatherall of the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action and his colleagues. These include:

- a) That government departments recognise that the needs of Aboriginal groups be decided by Aborigines themselves and not by officials with ethnocentric perceptions.
- b) That police be trained to deal with their own racism and the racism of the communities in which they are placed.
- c) That all Magistrates and Judges receive similar training plus a broad outline of customary Aboriginal laws.
- d) That extra native police be trained to administer the appropriate discipline (based on traditional concepts) for crime prevention programs that have been previously successful (eg. in Redfern and Townsville).
- e) That an Aboriginal ombudsman be appointed to monitor the changes on which police detain Aboriginal people and take appropriate action to ensure police use alternative measures with people committing minor offences.
- f) That police be held accountable where responsible for victimisation of Aboriginal people and be expected to use protective custody as a last resort for public drunkenness.
- g) That "detoxification" centres, staffed by Aborigines, be established for minor offenders of civil laws, (eg. drunk and disorderly conduct) as an alternative to gaol. This project could be an adjunct to the programs already in place at QAIAS at 40 Landshaw Street, New Farm.

These short term measures are designed to relieve the constant pressures that are placed on Aboriginal people by police, the courts and prisons. Even more important in the long term however, are other strategies which address the basic causes of the multiple problems outlined. As has been emphasised on many occasions by different scholars, long time divorce from the positive aspects of one's traditional roots can have devastating consequences for racial or ethnic minority groups in any society. More so if these people face a continual barrage of prejudice and ethno-centrism from the majority of the dominant culture. This is precisely what has occurred in Australia over the past 200 years or so.

Many of the issues outlined here have been addressed in the Law Reform Commission Report No 31 on the Recognition of Aboriginal Customary Laws. Their summary of recommendations and implementations (Chapters 18/19, 82/104) are too detailed to cover here. They are considered to be well researched and representative of needs of Aboriginal communities generally, throughout Australia. The adoption of these recommendations is considered as a long term positive strategy that can only be of benefit, despite the inherent difficulties.

Therefore, in the best interests of all Australians and the Aboriginal population in particular, it is imperative that we direct as much of our energy and resources as possible towards rectification of existing anomalies. The establishment of centres throughout Australia focusing on all positive aspects of traditional Aboriginal culture would be an ideal starting point. Some of these facilities have already been established and are showing promising results. The NSW North Coast Institute for Aboriginal Community Education at Lismore College is one example. Subjects under focus include anything from bush tucker and medicines to Aboriginal languages and traditional dances.

Traditional Aboriginal culture is based on the spiritual concept of relationships between all objects in the environment, living and inanimate, and the people themselves. This unique culture is well worth preservation and our Australian nation will not come to true reconciliation until this has been fully and widely recognised.

Primary and secondary schools should be other immediate targets. All students, from whatever ethnic background, should be taught the positive values of traditional Aboriginal culture. The real history following European occupation and subsequent events relating to our indigenous people should then follow. These subjects have been sadly lacking in schools throughout Australia in the past.

Now it is up to the whole community (this includes Aboriginal groups who are ready and willing to take more responsibility)

to recognise the needs and aspirations of our indigenous population and act accordingly. The call for self-determination has been echoed many times and now it is up to governments to recognise their responsibilities and to draft the necessary legislation.

Our group has already had some success with the introduction of a reading program for pre-schoolers and this too needs expansion. Illiteracy can and does impact on many other areas of concern including health, housing and legal responsibilities for Aborigines. The program is that used in the "Teach your baby" series designed by the Institutes for the Achievement of Human Potential in Philadelphia. Other programs are available from the same source. The chief advantage of these programs is that many can be conducted at home by parents as well as in the pre-school situation. As a result of serious culture clashes, primary and secondary school are harrowing experiences for most Aboriginal children. These courses would be helpful, not only with literacy, but also in the development of coping mechanisms by Aboriginal and possible other ethnic students.

Long term strategies of this nature would help create a climate of hope for the future instead of the present sense of helplessness and hopelessness that pervades the minds of a majority of our Aboriginal population. In discussions and consultation with Aborigines, politicians and authorities would be well advised to listen more to traditionally oriented elders than to youthful Aboriginal groups or individuals. Like their counterparts in the early colonial days, many have been corrupted and lost much of their spirituality and true identity. Therefore, their desire to work for the community as a whole (the traditional Aboriginal way of caring and sharing) has been lost.

In Brisbane's Sunday Mail of 9 May, 1993, Arnold Franks, a highly respected elder of Western Australian tribal groups, clearly articulated these points. He stated that the push for more land rights like Mabo was not the real issue at present but rather the unrestricted use of land already held by Aboriginal groups. His main concerns were that Aboriginal children were still disadvantaged, sick, tired, uneducated, under-nourished and dying unnecessarily. He also stated that in many instances, tribal elders were prevented from direct negotiations with mining company directors and other land holders. False claims about "sacred sites" were sometimes used as a political tool to thwart genuine efforts by elders to improve the lot of the disadvantaged majority. Western Australia has a long history of acute disadvantage for our indigenous population and the present administration under Premier Court is unlikely to help their situation.

If individuals and communities are given the opportunity to participate in regular activities which reflect the old traditional ethos of their ancestors, much of the existing tension and mental conflict would be relieved. In his socio-logical treatise "Human Society", Kingsley David emphasised that conflict is at the very core of mental disorder. Few genuine observers would dispute that Aboriginal individuals, families and communities have been subjected to severe pressures for generations. Serious mental conflict and widespread psychiatric disorders are the legacy. There are no short cuts to solving problems of criminal activity in any community, but step by step solutions which address the basic causes are the pathways to follow.

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## LIVING WITH THE PAIN

Ian Davies, Vice President; Victims of Crime Association of Queensland

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When I first heard that this conference was to be held in Brisbane, I suggested to our organisation, The Victims of Crime Association of Queensland, that we as a crime victim support group take the opportunity to offer our support to the Australian Crime Prevention Council and assist in sponsoring an overseas or interstate speaker. I saw it as being an investment into programs that in the future could help to reduce the crime rate, and ease the workload of our staff and volunteers. Unfortunately, some members of our management committee and staff had difficulty in making the connection between crime prevention, victim issues and support. It seems to me that some organisations go to the ultimate limit of protecting their own empire, thus, spending little or no time in sharing or pooling resources. Because of the limited experience that is available, it is those who are in the greatest need that often suffer the most. One of their main concerns was whether there would be any people attending the conference who were qualified to speak on the needs of victims, both in the rehabilitation and in the Criminal Justice system areas. I believe that the calibre of speakers that have registered certainly fulfils that criteria. However, I feel that in all organisations and at all conferences, as with this one, there is a need to have a balance of both professional and tradespersons. By tradespersons in this instance, I mean people who have lived through and understand the pain of being a victim.

For my wife; Gail and I, the pain of fear started in the early hours of the morning when our daughter had failed to arrive home the previous evening. This pain of fear intensified when the police car arrived at our house later that morning, and it was after the constable gave us the news of what had happened, that the really gut-busting, mind-bending pain for us as a family began.

For our daughter Shari the nightmare had begun twelve hours earlier when she was abducted at knife point in daylight hours from an inner city (King George Square) car park. She was forced to drive to bushland west of Darra, an outer western suburb, where the terror and pain for her was to continue through the night, until her attacker, thinking she was dead, finally stole her money, took her car and left. Fortunately, for us, he underestimated the superb fitness of this young woman. Because of that fitness and her ability to remain calm, not panic, take stock of her situation, make her decisions and with a strength which has left some of Queensland's toughest detectives and doctors in awe, stumbled, rolled, fell through a barbed wire fence and dragged herself over five hundred metres to the side of a road where she collapsed. She was found by a couple on their way to work later that morning.

She had been raped, bashed and kicked, stabbed twelve times with such ferocity that the knife on two occasions penetrated her protecting arms before entering her body. Her attacker then cut her throat from the point of her chin to her ear and strangled her until he thought she was dead.

When Gail and I reached Ipswich hospital, where she had been taken, I was introduced to a pain that I had never encountered before, a pain that comes from an all consuming anger. Angry that someone could do something like that to the very gentle woman that she is, and enraged at the fact that when **we** were finally allowed to see her, entered the curtained off area that had been set up for the emergency medical procedures, to find the place full of male police officer, photographers, and forensic experts carrying out their procedures as though she, and indeed us, did not exist. The room appeared to us to be devoid of love, caring, tenderness, and more importantly respect for who or what she was. Here was a young woman lying completely naked on a table with neither covering for her breasts or crutch. The pain of that moment is something that will stay with me for the rest of my life. That was not the only pain that I was to endure over the following days. There was the shock of the sight of the machines that were keeping her alive, there was a shock of the various tubes that were penetrating her body, and there was the shock of hardly recognising the person that all these tubes and machines were supporting. This really drove me to my knees, and while I was there on the floor with my head in my hands, I remember the radio playing in the background. I could hear a new song by John Farnham, and it not only became a big hit for him, but an inspiration for me. When I feel a bit down I think of the song and that moment, and it helps me to do the things that I want to do. That song was "You're the Voice". It was after this that the doctor took us to the central island of the intensive care unit. He didn't ask, but told us to leave the unit, not hang around the door, not hang around the corridor, but get right away downstairs to the red cross room. If he needed us he would call us, but to give him three days and if she was still alive at the end of the three days, then he would give her back to us. We did this, but I saw the clock tick over every second of those three days.

For Shari, the pain was still to come. The pain of when they started the weaning process, firstly from the respirator that was doing her breathing. I remembers screaming in panic at the hospital staff that their bloody machine had broken down. I kept this up until they assured me that this was a normal process. Then there was the terror on her face caused by the nightmares she was having as they weaned her from the morphine that had been pumped into her constantly by a machine attached to a drip. The pain of the physiotherapy as they rebuilt the muscles in her chest so that she could breathe properly. The ongoing pain caused by the scar tissue and adhesions in her intestines from the knife wounds and the scars in her mind that have deprived her of her memories of those good times that we all like to look back on as we get older.

The times when we have finished schooling, past the worries when we have finished our training and the carefree days before we take on the responsibilities of family and adulthood, and the challenge of preparing ourselves for our launch into a new career. This pain is the pain that will never go away. The pain for all of those victims and their families that I have met through our association over the last six years won't go away either.

Because of the media hype and their need to sell their newspapers and advertising time, we are seeing an increasing perception of violence creeping into the once simple crimes of break and enter, bag snatching and common assault. The fear from that perception is invading the community, particularly the invalid and aged, who deserve the right to enjoy their lives and twilight years without the need to be in their barred fortress-like homes by sunset. We as individuals must take the responsibility for stemming the tide of crime and fear. We need to reduce not only the perception of violence, but crime in general, and with the reduction of that crime, the fear that goes with it. The Queensland Victims of Crime Association and other victim welfare agencies cannot keep up with the ever increasing calls for assistance. Crime is costing this country more in time, money and resources for the rehabilitation of both victims and offenders, than we can afford.

More and more victims are taking the law into their own hands while protecting their property and dealing out their own justice when they catch the offenders. This in itself is a dangerous sign, it is a sign that people have not only lost confidence in their police, but they have lost confidence in their justice system. I have repeatedly stated that if the justice system continues to treat victims and witnesses as it has in the past, and still does today, then we are going to see more violent crimes ahead, as victims move from victim behaviour to offender behaviour. We are seeing daily, an increase in the number of people arming themselves, arming with everything from knives, pickhandles, baseball bats to firearms. In the smash repair industry that I have been involved in for the last 30 years, as the cars were towed in, we noticed the trends towards these types of weapons, finding their way under the seats, between the seats, between the door and the seat, but always within easy reach and ready to use. With the new security systems that are now being installed in the vehicles, I feel we are going to see an increase in car-jacking, and with these types of weapons in the cars, it won't be long before someone is maimed or killed.

The obvious answer to me is to arm people with different weapons, that is, the weapons of preventative strategies. Before we can do that, there has to be intensive discussion and consultation as to what those strategies will be.

Neighbourhood Watches, Crime Stoppers and Safety Houses are some good strategies that have been initiated, however, it has become apparent that it is increasingly difficult for these groups to maintain the interest and the active participation of individuals until they themselves become a victim. This brings me to the conclusion that all of our crime prevention strategies have to be administered from a very early age, so that crime awareness becomes a second nature. For my generation, education meant learning the 3Rs, and focusing on academic and trade qualifications, but we were never taught any of the basic life skills, such as the effects of crime on the victims and the community. I have faith in the younger generation of this nation, in their ability to make the changes that are necessary. We have seen them make tremendous changes in environmental issues, and we have seen them compete with distinction in the world of sport. So we know what they can do, when they put their minds to the task. It will take time, effort and patience from us all as individuals. Having been a lobbyist for changes for victims, I have found that it does take considerable time and the saintly quality of lots and lots of patience when dealing with Governments and bureaucrats when you are seeking change. So it will require, in their approach to legislation, that these Governments and bureaucrats adopt a greater awareness of proactive rather than reactive strategies, in the hope that sometime in the future there could be far fewer people like myself and my family living with the pain.

# DOING WHAT THEY ARE TOLD

## VIOLENCE AGAINST LESBIANS AND GAY MEN

Nick Ward, Convenor, Queensland Anti Violence Council; Education Officer, Queensland AIDS Council

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### ABSTRACT

Reports of violence against gay men, lesbians and transgenderists in Queensland indicate strong patterns which support the consideration of such attacks as hate crimes. Perpetrators are generally groups of young men. Homophobia is the motivation. It is concluded that crime prevention must involve initiatives aimed at reducing levels of homophobia in society.

### BACKGROUND

Over the summer of 1991/92 the Legal Research Advisory Trust for the Gay, Lesbian and HIV +ve communities (LRAT) started receiving large numbers of reports from people who were the survivors of anti lesbian and gay violence, or 'gay bashing'. The details of these were recorded, but as almost all of the survivors were unwilling to report the attacks to police, further action could not be taken. It became clear that this issue could not be dealt with to any real extent on a case-by-case basis. What was called for was a multi-faceted campaign aimed at developing trust between police and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgenderist communities, educating these same communities how best they can protect themselves, and tackling the broader causes of this violence in the general community. What resulted was called the Anti Violence Campaign.

Simultaneously, the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland (YANQ) was investigating action in the same area. The Anti Violence Campaign joined with the YANQ to bring three members of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby's Anti Violence Project to Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns to talk about anti lesbian and gay violence and the lessons learned in New South Wales. The resulting conference and public meetings in April 1992 involved police and government bureaucrats, members of interested community groups and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgenderist communities, and the violence problem being faced in Queensland was discussed in detail.

From these meetings grew the Anti Violence Council (AVC), an umbrella body within the broadly defined 'lesbian and gay community' for working groups including Street Watch, the Whistle Project, and Sex and Gender Education (SAGE), as well as a body for centralised collection of reports of anti lesbian and gay violence. Discussions between police and community group representatives at the conference resulted in the formation of the Police Gay Community Consultative Committee (PGCCC), a liaison committee between the Queensland Police Service and the lesbian, gay and transgenderist communities.

In early July 1992, an evening street march proceeded from the site of a fatal gay bashing six months before in New Farm via Brunswick Street and St Paul's Terrace to Albert Park to bring public attention to the violence. Gay and lesbian community groups, the AVC and police addressed the crowd at Albert Park.

Over the following year the AVC and PGCCC developed initiatives to curb the violence, resulting in the launch in June 1993 of a joint Police/AVC violence reporting campaign, 'Report It!', and the establishment of Central Liaison Officers for the Gay and Lesbian Communities in Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Townsville by the Queensland Police Service. The launch was carried out by the Minister for Health, Ken Hayward, with statements by the Minister for Police and the Commissioner of Police, and received widespread media coverage.

The Education Department did not attend.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VIOLENCE

Between March 1991 and July 1993 a total of 57 reports of anti lesbian/gay violence were received. Reports were received in greatest numbers during the two violence reporting campaigns. A total of 30 reports were in the first six months of 1992, around the period of the Anti Violence Campaign, while 6 were over a one month period from late June to late July 1993 during the 'Report It!' Campaign.

Analysis of these reports reveals several trends. While survivors varied in age from 18 to 50 years old, such an even spread was not to be found in the estimated ages of attackers. As Figure 1 shows, in 57% of reports the attackers were estimated to be under 20 years old. Only in 11% of cases were attackers over 25 years old.

Other important information was also obtained about attackers. Figure 2 displays the number of people responsible for the attacks reported. Only 25% of reported incidents involved a solitary attacker, while 45% involved groups of three or more

attackers in 8% of cases the groups had six or more members.

Attackers were predominantly male, as shown in Figure 3. The only women involved were in mixed groups of attackers. These made up a mere 4% of reports, all other 96% involving males only.

The survivors of reported attacks were men in 92% of cases, as is shown in Figure 4. This is likely to show an under-reporting by lesbians, as these campaigns did not directly address issues of violence against women because of their sex as well as their sexuality. These issues prove to be strongly connected for lesbians. Future campaigns are planned to specifically address this.

Figure 5 shows the location of the attacks reported. 63% occurred in inner suburbs of Brisbane. Some 35% were within one kilometre of the Brisbane GPO, mostly around the area of Spring Hill. 26% were reported from the provincial centres of Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Townsville and Cairns.

Figure 6 shows the extent of injuries reported, and the frequency with which these incidents were then reported to police. There was a tendency toward only the worst incidents being reported, even more to the police than to the Anti Violence Council. Of reports to the AVC, 67% involved at least moderate injury, ie. more than just cuts and bruises. 29% needed hospitalisation or other immediate medication. One 19 year old man received permanent brain damage, and one man was killed.

Only 31% of incidents were reported to police.

Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby's StreetWatch Report (Cox 1990)<sup>1</sup> revealed similar patterns in a study involving 67 reports. Some 43% of attackers were between 16 and 20 years of age, while another 40% were between 21 and 25 years of age. Only 18% of attacks involved single assailants, while 67% involved three or more assailants. The largest group of attackers numbered fifteen. In 94% of incidents the assailants were all male.

In 94% of reports the survivor was male. 73% of survivors sustained physical injury, and 34% sought medical attention. In 48% of cases a report was made to police. 39% of attacks occurred in the inner city suburbs of Darlinghurst, Paddington and Newtown alone.

In both the Queensland and New South Wales studies the violence was clearly related to the sexuality of the survivor. In 58% of reports received in Queensland the respondents were asked whether there were any anti-gay/lesbian taunts. 85% replied that there were. The StreetWatch Report recorded that in 81% of the New South Wales incidents the assailants spoke to the survivor. In 74% of these cases the speech involved anti-gay/lesbian taunts. While in the Queensland reports 25% indicated robbery or attempted robbery had taken place (22% in the StreetWatch report), many of these would appear to be incidental as over half of these robberies were accompanied by anti-gay/lesbian taunts.

## SUMMARY

From these reports we can attempt to draw a picture of violence against lesbians and gay men.

The first conclusions regard the nature of the attackers. The typical attack involves a group of three or four young men, often of school age. The reason for the attack is that the victim is, typically, a gay man, and the attackers are motivated by a hatred of this. While there will usually not be a premeditated motivation to kill the victim, there is such a level of intensity and irrationality in the attack that serious injury often results. In the course of the attack, if the opportunity arises, the attackers may steal money or other valuables.

The fact that the attackers are usually in groups signals another issue as well. At some stage one or other member of the group had to make the suggestion to go out and bash pooftahs. That this proposal to commit violent crime is apparently confidently suggested as often as it is indicates that the peer groups involved have a deeply understood homophobia of frightening intensity. The young men in these circles feel it is positively OK to 'bash pooftahs'.

Most attacks occur in 'gay' areas. These are usually in the streets and parks around gay and lesbian bars or nightclubs or at 'beats' where men are known to meet men looking for sex. It would appear in many cases that attackers purposefully go to these areas with the intention of finding gay men, lesbians or transgenderists to 'bash'.

The relationship between frequency of reports and campaigns to encourage this reporting tends to indicate that there is a strong tendency to not report bashings, even to gay/lesbian community agencies. Further anecdotal evidence gained by the author in discussions with others in the lesbian and gay community supports the assessment that it is only a very small fraction of violent attacks which are reported. Further, of the attacks reported to the AVC the incident was not reported to police unless the survivor was highly motivated or the attack was particularly severe.

## **HOMOPHOBIA AND VIOLENCE**

Violence is often the extreme manifestation of deeply rooted social aggression, or hatred. Anti-gay and lesbian violence is such violence.

Our society is homophobic. Presently, children receive little official exposure to homosexuality and gay, lesbian and gender issues at school. What they do receive is often in a religious context and supports intolerance. What they are exposed to is their peers, and the peer norm at school is to consider the terms 'poof', 'dyke' and 'queer' to be horrible insults. Clearly to be one of these things would be a child's worst nightmare. As children then grow they are exposed to the media, and here the topic of homosexuality is now raised more often. Some of this exposure is quite good, but it only takes a few vilifying articles in newspapers or segments of television to reinforce our childhood programming.

Gender conformity is strongly encouraged in Australia. This is particularly the case for males, where the 'macho' ethic is strong. To be gay or lesbian is seen to be exhibiting 'opposite gender behaviour'. To be gay is thus 'unmanly' and to be lesbian is not feminine. When these qualities are taught to be of great importance they require proving, particularly if questions of one's sexuality challenge conformity. For a male the reaction is obvious. 'Macho' is often equated with brutishness and enthusiasm for violence is the best indicator for this. To be happy to 'bash pooftahs' thus rejects homosexuality and reinforces one's gender conformity all at the same time.

It is generally disadvantageous to be known as a homosexual. A person stands to be discriminated against in a whole range of areas. Gay men and lesbians can lose their jobs, even now that there is recourse to anti-discrimination legislation, and they can lose clients if they are in a profession. They can be thrown out of their homes and they can be rejected by their families.

Homosexuality is heavily stigmatised and discriminated against, yet unlike race or sex it is not clear to the outside world whether an individual is homosexual or not. Just as homosexuals may be heterosexual, and often hide as such, heterosexuals may be homosexual for all an outside observer would know. With so much at stake, it is no wonder that many people insecure about public perceptions of their sexuality are prepared to go to great lengths to 'prove' they are straight, and to be naturally straight in our society you must 'hate pooftahs'.

Many young men bash gay men to prove they themselves are not gay, whether they are gay or not.

In summary, we are brought up to hate pooftahs and dykes and to fear homosexuality in ourselves. We are taught men should be men and women should be women, and that sometimes there is such a thing as 'acceptable force', read 'violence', with which to prove our conformity. The result is that men, particularly young men going through the turbulent years of adolescence, turn to 'pooftah bashing' with the support of their peers to teach a hated minority 'a lesson', and to 'prove' their own heterosexuality and masculinity.

## **ANTI LESBIAN AND GAY VIOLENCE AND CRIME PREVENTION**

The relationship between the lesbian and gay community and police in Queensland has improved dramatically over the last two years. This has been shown in the level of support and cooperation from police during events such as Brisbane's Lesbian and Gay Pride Festival, and in the increasing percentage of reports to the Anti Violence Council which are also reported to police. Liaison officers have now been established in Brisbane, Townsville and on the Gold Coast to continue to improve the partnership in particular with a view to solving violent crimes.

However, whilst law enforcement is undeniably important, and the idea that 'violence against any group will not be tolerated' as police sometimes fall into the trap of saying is laudable, this is simply not good enough. These are not isolated crimes, nor are they without reason. Solving individual crimes may provide some deterrent, however the task of preventing crime requires much wider action.

Some elements of this have begun in the lesbian and gay communities themselves. Education in the community is well under way on making people 'streetwise'. Whistles have become a widespread fashion accessory, ready to be blown if people find themselves in a dangerous situation. Material educating on "do's" and "don'ts" when walking home or to the car have been produced and distributed. 'StreetWatch', a non-interventionist street patrol for lesbian and gay areas, has been operating since late 1992. The underlying causes of the violence, however, must eventually rely on initiatives in the wider community.

The basis of crime prevention lies in tackling homophobia in society. This starts at school.

The Education Department and boards of some private schools have steadfastly refused to date to include positive

representations of gay and lesbian issues, and indeed people, in school syllabus's. Even given cuts to sex education in general since the Queensland Government reduced education funding, education programs need to say that homosexuality is not 'wrong', that gay men and lesbians are simply other equally valid members of our community, and they need to say that it is OK if you happen to be one. Parents and citizens groups have already come out in support of such programs. Human relations teachers have already supported such programs, and indeed on an individual basis some already teach such classes. There is no across-the-board response here because to mention homosexuality and children in one sentence is in the minds of many politicians to open oneself to accusations of corruption of youth, 'promotion' of homosexuality and, in the extreme, creating opportunities for child molestation. While there are some elements in society who would like to take such opportunities to re-assert the mythical link between homosexuality and the sexual exploitation of children, these are in a minority in an age where the health of our next generation, with respect to HIV as well as overall mental well-being, is more widely recognised as our number one priority. Strong leadership from Education Ministers and department bureaucrats is necessary here. The responsibility can not be avoided.

Vilification of homosexuals, particularly in the media and particularly by 'respected' public figures, must be outlawed. Freedom of speech is an important issue in a democratic society, but as with all freedoms in any group they are tempered when they damage the health and well-being of individuals within that group. Vilification directly reinforces homophobia, and homophobia directly leads to violent assaults of gay men, lesbians and transgenderists. Due to political pressure from the fundamentalist Christian upper house member Fred Nile, the New South Wales government dropped homosexual anti-vilification legislation in September 1993. Such political pressure must be resisted and, again, strong leadership shown in passing such legislation, and similar legislation must be passed in other states. The issue is a public health one, and need not be a political nightmare is presented clearly and confidently as such to the public.

Finally, there are broader responsibilities on us all here. While most people do not condone homophobia and violence against gay men, lesbians and transgenderists explicitly, we do just this implicitly by our silence on these issues. The police commissioner and minister who are too busy to organise a press conference to personally condemn anti lesbian and gay violence. The newspaper and television stations which largely ignore lesbian and gay issues and events which have a positive nature. The script writers who avoid gay/lesbian characters unless they are 'sensational'. The premier who is yet to publicly and positively acknowledge that there are gay men and lesbians in his state. Homosexuality will continue to be feared and loathed until it is taken off the 'untouchable' list and discussed as it is, simply another variable in our colourful and diverse world.

## **CONCLUSION**

Crime prevention in the area of anti lesbian and gay violence involves fighting homophobia in society. Education Ministers must take the lead and make compulsory positive lesbian and gay content in Human Relations courses in secondary schools. Homosexual Anti-Vilification Legislation should be introduced into state parliaments. Editorial policies discouraging positive gay and lesbian coverage in the media should be changed, and organisation which have positive policies should be congratulated and encouraged. Finally, public figures, and in particular relevant state and federal ministers and leaders should make positive public statements in the area of homosexuality.

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# A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Rita Parker, Director, National Child Protection Council Secretariat

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## INTRODUCTION

Child Abuse and neglect has increasingly been the focus of media and community attention. We are all aware of the incidents reported only last month of extreme cases of child abuse and neglect. I have no intention of focusing on these cases but use them as evidence of the growing concern and attention within the community about child abuse. It would be inappropriate for me to dwell unnecessarily on these cases, but I note that they are not sensationalised stories, fabricated or embellished - the deaths of those children are fact. I also note that state borders provide no immunity against the knowledge of child abuse.

## STATISTICS

These reports, however, do not provide us with the wider context. Abuse is a serious problem in the Australian community. It occurs at all levels. Over the past decade there has been a steady increase in the reported number of cases.

In 1990-91, almost 49,721 cases of child abuse were notified to the State/Territory welfare authorities. Investigation of 46,769 cases were completed within the year and, of these, 52% were substantiated (Angus and Wilkinson, 1993, p. 8).

The most recent statistics from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reveal that in 1991-92 there were 54,146 reports of child abuse.

From the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data the increase across two years 1988-89 to 1990-91 in reported cases is 17% and in the same period there was an 11.5% increase in substantiated and at risk cases of child abuse. The figures are equally stark when looked at over a three year period. From 1988-89 to 1991-92 the increase in the number of reported cases of child abuse was 27.5% and the increase in the percentage of substantiated and at risk cases of child abuse was 20%.

There seems to be informal acknowledgment that these statistics are almost certainly an underestimate.

The other revealing facts that have startled many people relate to who are the perpetrators of the abuse. Most abusers are known to the child. In fact, 78% of abusers are known to the child as either parent, family member, relative, friend or neighbour. Parents were identified as responsible for abuse and neglect in the majority of substantiated cases - 66% (Angus and Wilkinson, 1993). Clearly then, the stranger is not the danger.

I am not suggesting that the recent publicised cases reflect a sudden surge in the incidence of child abuse. Statistics from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, in fact, suggest that the rates are fairly steady (Angus and Wilkinson, 1993, p. 8). It will be a while before we can make an informed assessment about the cases recently reported in the media against existing data.

Nonetheless, it is interesting to do a comparison. The results of the 1992 Annual Fifty State Survey prepared by the National Centre on Child Abuse Prevention Research in the United States show that in the period 1985-92 the rate of children reported for child abuse or neglect increased by 52% from 30 per 1,000 children in 1985 to 45 per 1,000 in 1992. In 1992, an estimated 2,936,000 children were reported to Child Protective Services agencies in the US as alleged victims of child maltreatment. This figure is based on information collected from 40 States. Overall, child abuse reports have maintained a steady growth between 1985 and 1992 with an average increase of about 6% (National Centre on Child Abuse Prevention Research, April 1993).

While I am prepared to use these statistics I am aware that there are problems and risks associated with the reliability and interpretation of statistical data.

## PREVENTION

The focus of child abuse has historically been on post-abuse services. This is an important and, indeed, critical area. It is important to continue to treat children who have been abused.

All State and Territory governments provide services in response to the immediate needs of children who have been abused. This is costly to the community and with the expected increasing trend, we can expect increased corresponding

costs to our community.

Estimates used by the National Child Protection Council, based on South Australian costs, put the total expenditure by departments of community services in 1991-92 at approximately \$90 million. This, however, does not include the costs of the services provided by health workers, police and community organisations. Indeed, if it did, the costs would be much higher.

Up until now, relatively little focus has been given to the prevention of child abuse. I am sure we would all agree that measures to stop the abuse occurring in the first place are also important.

## **NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION COUNCIL**

I am pleased to be here today on behalf of the National Child Protection Council and to inform you about the work of the National Council which is taking an unprecedented lead in the area of prevention.

One way to protect children from abuse is to stop it occurring in the first place. The National Child Protection Council and its coordinated national approach is one such vehicle which can contribute to a reduction in the incidence of child abuse.

It is the National Council's belief that it is the collective responsibility of the community, particularly adults, to prevent child abuse.

We are told that our children are our most valuable resource. We must protect our children and show them respect.

One way to protect children from child abuse and neglect is to prevent it happening in the first place. But this is a deceptively simple statement. The issues are complex, the resources limited and it is an emotionally charged area - a challenge.

But members of the National Child Protection Council (NCPC) believe we can meet the challenge. They are optimistic - the NCPC believes that we can prevent child abuse by governments and the community cooperating and by overcoming traditional barriers particularly those relating to attitudes and responsibilities.

The NCPC was established in 1991 by the Commonwealth Government to focus the attention of all levels of Government and the community on the need to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect. State Premiers and Territory Chief Minister were invited to appoint a representative to the National Council which is chaired by the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth Government also appointed five community members. The National Council reports to the Commonwealth Minister for Family Services, Senator the Hon. Rosemary Crowley.

The NCPC was established as part of the Commonwealth Government's response to the National Committee on Violence report. That report recommended that there be a national campaign for the prevention of child abuse and that a national research centre also be established.

Through the terms of reference for the NCPC these recommendations are addressed:

The Council's terms of reference state that it is:

- to promote and commission research on prevention of child abuse and neglect including on community attitudes and effectiveness of community education programs; and
- to report on the potential for a national focus for prevention of child abuse and neglect.

In doing so the Council has been asked to take into account the special child protection needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from non-English speaking backgrounds, and children with physical disability or developmentally delayed children.

The work of the NCPC is not about the provision of post-abuse services. It is about prevention measures. It is about encouraging attitudes and activities which will lead to a reduction in child abuse and neglect. It is about promoting non-violent and non-abusing child rearing practices and ideas in the home and community. It is about promoting and commissioning research on preventing child abuse, and collecting and disseminating information in this area. The NCPC also identifies and pursues other strategies appropriate for the prevention of child abuse - such as by providing a national coordination mechanism for prevention activities.

Since its inception, the NCPC has been mapping new directions - I would like to demonstrate this with some of the features

of its work program.

There have been many calls for access to basic Australian research. Information is frequently sought about existing and past prevention research, programs, evaluations and activities.

The NCPC has responded by establishing the National Clearing House for information and research on the prevention of child abuse and neglect. This is a remarkable achievement because it was accomplished within 18 months of Council's establishment.

The National Clearing House is located in the Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra. The National Clearing House is already providing a major resource to organisations. It is currently conducting an audit of all prevention programs and research activities. I would like to urge you to take advantage of the services of the National Clearing House. For example, it will hold copies of papers from this Conference. So, instead of writing to the United States or Britain or elsewhere, contact our own Australian National Clearing House.

A key feature of NCPC's work is its research program. This has national significance because it will provide valuable baseline data. The Council's research program is increasingly being recognised by organisations interested in stopping child abuse.

I will give just a few examples of the work the Council is doing with different community groups.

The Council's current research program gives priority to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from non-English speaking backgrounds, and children with physical disability and developmentally delayed children.

### **Research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities**

The Council consulted representatives of a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and asked them to come together to discuss the need for, and appropriateness of, action for the prevention of child abuse and neglect in Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Communities.

The National Council is funding an Aboriginal organisation on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to prepare a discussion paper which forms the first stage of a draft plan of action for the prevention of child abuse and neglect in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.

### **Research with Non-English Speaking Background Communities**

The Council is also working with communities with non-English speaking backgrounds to develop a similar plan. In doing so, the Council has consulted the Federation of Ethnic Councils in Australia, the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the non-English speaking background women in Australia.

A coordinating team has been engaged to develop a discussion paper which will identify issues, determine strategies and priorities.

### **Research Related to Children with Disabilities**

The Council has approached the issue of children with disabilities in a different way. In March this year, it conducted a small National Workshop to help identify the issues surrounding the abuse of children with a physical disability or developmentally delayed children. The findings from this Workshop are being used to identify strategies for preventing the abuse of children who have disabilities which interfere with their ability to disclose abuse and to take protective action.

## **NATIONAL PREVENTION STRATEGY**

The NCPC has taken seriously its second term of reference - to develop a national approach to the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

The Council say it as an important challenge to get prevention of child abuse onto the National Agenda - both in the minds of the community and in the intention of Governments and Non-Government organisations. Last year the Council conducted qualitative research on community attitudes and to guide strategies in the development of a National Framework.

The broad aims of the research were:

- to identify awareness, knowledge and attitudes about child protection issues, and attitudes about child

protection issues among various segments of the population;

- to determine specific child protection issues and areas of concern within different groups of the population; and
- to assess the potential viability of a federally coordinated national approach for the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

If the research showed that such a national approach was viable then the NCPC was to translate the qualitative findings into a detailed national strategy.

the research found that parents, and most children, overwhelmingly supported a national approach to reducing the incidence of child abuse.

Subsequently, the NCPC developed a national approach for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. This is a significant development at the national level. Through the NCPC all State and Territory governments, the Commonwealth and many non-Government organisations contributed and cooperated in the development of the National Prevention Strategy for child abuse and neglect.

The Council believes that the benefits of a national approach are considerable. A national approach can offer a wide range of coordinated, integrated and complementary initiatives. A broad approach allows States and Territories to combine with the Commonwealth to share knowledge and resources and to share costs, materials and effort. This pooling of resources will reduce waste and avoid duplication of effort.

A national approach will encourage a feeling of broad community participation in tackling this major social issue and, hopefully, it will encourage people to respond in a practical way.

As I commented earlier, the main focus of State and Territory Governments is on tertiary, post-abuse services and on the cost of providing those services. The issue of direct and indirect costs to the community is one that must be acknowledged. It is anticipated that, a successful National Prevention Strategy will, in time, reduce the demand for tertiary services and a corresponding reduction in costs.

Preventing child abuse makes financial sense. Prevention is cost effective. A nationally integrated approach will multiply the overall impact and effectiveness and makes better use of valuable dollars.

The US Government Accounting Office identified three studies which suggested that prevention, although costly, pays for itself (US Government Accounting Office, 1992, p. 23).

The findings of one of these studies referred to by the US Government - Accounting office estimated that the cost of future lost productivity of severely abused children in the US was between \$658 million and \$1.3 billion annually (Daro cited in US Government Accounting Office, 1992).

The prevention of child abuse and neglect is an issue that is of deep concern. Violence against children is a matter of national importance. It is an issue that affects us all. It is not, however, an issue that rests solely with Government - State or Commonwealth. No one group, no one government can, but itself prevent all forms of child abuse. Prevention requires long term interaction between all levels of government, government and community organisations and every member of the community. It must be stressed that preventing child abuse is a responsibility shared by every member of the community whether parent or caregiver, neighbour, friend, teacher or acquaintance.

It must also be emphasised that children are never responsible for preventing child abuse. Put simply, adults are responsible for preventing child abuse.

To coincide with National Child Protection Week, the Commonwealth Minister for Family Services, Senator Rosemary Crowley, released the National Prevention Strategy for child abuse and neglect. As the Minister noted at the time "Our children are the future of Australia and their capacity to contribute is influenced by their own backgrounds, especially their childhood experiences". the Minister went on to say "We must provide all the support we can to families and parents to help them prepare for what is probably the most important task they will ever take on".

The approach to prevention outlined in the National Prevention Strategy mainly involves changing the attitudes, beliefs, behaviours and circumstances which lead to child abuse so that the abuse does not occur. Attitudes and behaviours around how children are treated can be changed in much the same way as similar attitudes are changing towards women through the National Domestic Violence Education Program.

In developing its case the National Council felt it necessary to state, what to many, will be the obvious statements. The Council believes that as children are important members of the community they have the right to be cared for and kept safe from abuse. By preventing abuse children will be spared harmful and sometimes life threatening experiences.

In my opening remarks I drew attention to the recent media coverage and community concern about the severe cases of child abuse that have been reported. Nonetheless it is important not to lose sight of the fact that child abuse covers a range of behaviours, some less serious, some extremely serious resulting in the death of a child. The more serious end of the spectrum, as we have noted, tends to attract most of the attention.

While this raises the issue of the horrors of child abuse in people's minds, it also provides the opportunity for people to distance themselves from the issue, seeing child abuse as remote from their own experience and consequently something they cannot be expected to be aware of or do anything to prevent.

With this in mind the National Council through the proposed National Prevention strategy intends to focus prevention activities on the less serious end of the spectrum of behaviour where people are likely to be more open to the influence of public awareness, information, education and early intervention activities.

Children learn by example. It is important that adults give children the example of care, concern and affection, so that they can pass these responses on to their own children.

The goals of the Strategy are to prevent child abuse and to create an environment which supports families and communities and helps them to meet their responsibilities to care for and protect children.

This National Prevention Strategy will complement existing social welfare, health and education programs at both the Commonwealth and State level. It is designed to also complement the work that is being done in related areas such as, youth homelessness, drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence. The National Council is aware of research which indicates strong links between child abuse and later social problems. Youth homelessness, childhood prostitution, juvenile offending, mental health problems and drug and alcohol abuse are some of these problems faced in later life which have been linked with child abuse.

The overall objectives of the National Prevention Strategy are to identify and exchange attitudes and behaviours which are harmful to children and to promote attitudes and behaviours which nurture and support children;

- to identify and change factors which contribute to harmful parenting practices and creates a community environment which better supports and assists adults in parenting children; and
- to teach children how to form non-exploitative relationships and to develop children's emotional care and personal safety skills.

The National Prevention Strategy has four key components which provide an overarching framework. This framework recognises and takes up existing prevention activities and works with State and Territory efforts - it does not replace them. It also acknowledges the significant contribution currently being made by the non-government sector.

## **GUIDELINES**

To assist community organisations in the non-government, and to foster support for child abuse and neglect prevention activities, the National Child Protection Council developed guidelines for cooperation with non-government organisations.

Guidelines were developed in response to a growing interest by community groups, services organisations and the corporate sector on how to be actively involved in the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The aim of the Guidelines is to provide a national context for the development of Government and non-Government child abuse prevention activities in Australia.

The Guidelines explain the different kinds of prevention and identify ways that child abuse and neglect may be prevented. The Guidelines also set out principles to guide the development of prevention programs.

It is important that the role of community groups in the non-government sector is recognised if the National Prevention Strategy is to be as successful as envisaged.

I must stress that the success of the National Prevention Strategy is dependent on communities and governments working together. And just in case you thought this was starting to sound like a fairy story come true, it is appropriate that at this

point I tell you that the Strategy is currently the subject of negotiations between the Commonwealth and each of the States and Territories for joint cost-sharing arrangements to implement the Strategy. The Government representatives on the National Child Protection Council are playing a key role in those negotiations.

Consequently I shall talk about the proposed elements of the National Prevention Strategy.

The first component focuses on information and public awareness with the intention of providing information which raises public awareness of the nature and extent of child abuse; gains public support for the prevention strategy; and encourages adults to relate to children in a positive way.

It is the National Council's view that only when people appreciate the seriousness and extent of child abuse will they be prepared to act.

The aim is to create a climate in which the community recognises the needs of children, and acknowledges the difficulties inherent in parenting. Such a climate will then make it easier to develop prevention initiatives at the local level and establish local support services. It is proposed that this would include development of statewide networks on child abuse prevention to assist members of their communities to develop local prevention plans. It would also include development of an information package as well as a media campaign which would focus on attitudes and behaviours which are harmful to children and enhancement of National Child Protection Week.

National Child Protection Week has been a significant initiative. NAPCAN, the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, under whose auspices the National Child Protection Week is conducted. NAPCAN is to be commended for its inspiration and commitment in establishing National Child Protection Week as a significant contribution to raising the awareness of child abuse prevention.

National Child Protection Week is increasingly being recognised and a growing number of groups are participating in the Week's activities. The Week focuses the nation's attention on the issue of child abuse and encourages local groups to participate in prevention activities. It also offers the opportunity for ethnic groups to develop and participate in prevention activities relevant to their particular cultural backgrounds and traditions.

The second component is related to education, skill development and research. The National Council believes that the better the body of information and research which underpins prevention strategies, the more effective they will be in achieving their desired outcomes.

It is proposed that this component include development of reliable knowledge on which to base child abuse prevention activities. It is also intended to provide children, adults and workers with child abuse prevention skills. This element of the Strategy aims to develop a community in which children and parents are non violent and in which attitudes to sexuality are not abusive.

The third area impacts on existing policy areas. The aim of this component is to develop the links between programs such as child abuse and drug abuse. Domestic Violence is another existing program where we know there is a very strong link with child abuse. Often in domestic violence situations children see their mother being assaulted or they become the target of the violence themselves. The National Council also recognises that this is a potentially sensitive area. It is not the Council's intention to reduce the impact or focus of these programs. It does, however, intend that such programs recognise and take account of children without affecting the integrity of such programs.

The fourth component has two elements to it. In the first it is proposed that accessible and appropriate child abuse prevention services are available at the local level through the development of locally based initiatives. Local initiatives are an important part of the process of changing attitudes and behaviours. Being able to say "I need help" will not carry a stigma.

The second element related to what has been referred to as parent enhancement services. We are aware of research that shows that these sort of early intervention services are offering families with very young children the opportunity to get a good start in life.

The National Council is aware of a number of such programs overseas and intends to assess them for applicability to the Australian cultural and social environment.

## **CONCLUSION**

A national focus on child abuse prevention in Australia is possible. The success of the National Child Protection Council, drawing together governments and the community, is a successful demonstration of cooperation.

The next challenge for the National Council is to work out the implementation arrangements for the National Prevention Strategy. It has in-principle support from Social Welfare Ministers and the Commonwealth Government has endorsed the Prevention Strategy.

The proposed National Prevention Strategy enables all Australians to demonstrate their commitment to protecting Australian children. It also allows Australians to enter the next century with an effective framework for preventing child abuse and neglect.

# PREVENTING ABUSE AND VIOLENCE IN RELATIONSHIPS : A CHALLENGE FOR OUR YOUTH

Karen Struthers, Domestic Violence Resource Centre, Brisbane

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## 1. BACKGROUND

During this presentation you will be encouraged to assume the identify of two adolescents - Lisa and Geoff - in an attempt to put yourself 'in the shoes' of these young people.

In looking into the lives of Lisa and Geoff, the attitudes, values and violence amongst young people - particularly coercive sexual practices - will be highlighted to show that the key to understanding and dealing effectively with crimes of violence against women/girls is to understand and deal with the way masculinity is constructed and expressed in our community.

Why is it, for instance that like men, women and girls are exposed to violence in the media; that women and girls can suffer as a result of unemployment, substance abuse and poverty, but unlike men it is not women and girls who are committing the overwhelming majority of violence in our community and unlike men it is primarily women and girls who live with valid concerns about being sexually harassed, assaulted or raped, and who are told daily to take precautions against these impending violations?

This paper is based on the premise (a somewhat optimistic premise) that we have the capacity to significantly reduce acts of violence, such as the violence perpetrated against women and children that are the focus of this paper, but we must implement a firm commitment to condemning values, attitudes and practices that render women inferior to men and construct masculinity on the basis o non-dominant, non-violent, non-sexist values and behaviours.

As the challenge to effect a great deal of this change, through the 21st Century rests with young people, strategies for preventing abuse and violence in relationships within schools will be discussed in this presentation.

## 2. INTRODUCING YOU TO LISA AND GEOFF

Lisa went to a movie with her boyfriend, Geoff. They had been going together for a while and it was a pretty serious relationship. After the movie they wanted to be alone - to talk a while and...

Well, they were getting pretty intimate. Lisa told me she felt really close to Geoff and at first she was having a great time kissing and necking. Then he started to unzip her jeans.

Lisa liked kissing but didn't want to go any further. She said, "No". But Geoff just kept going. He told her he couldn't stop and, besides, he knew she really wanted to do it.

Lisa was afraid and tried to make him stop, but he wouldn't. Geoff penetrated Lisa.

After Geoff took her home, Lisa was afraid to tell anyone.

Lisa was afraid no one would believe her. She felt that since she knew Geoff, had dated him, adults would think it was her fault. She was afraid they would say she "asked for it". (Extract from PAIR Program, DVRC, 1992).

- How would you describe what happened to Lisa?
- How do you think Geoff would describe it?
- Do you think this kind of behaviour is commonplace?

Ponder on these issues as we further explore the lives of Lisa and Geoff and the society in which we all live.

## 3. TAKING A LOOK AT GEOFF

Geoff is a popular guy at school. He is intelligent, a good sportsman and according to his peers, Geoff is a "good bloke".

He doesn't talk to anyone about his date with Lisa. He hasn't really thought much about it, except that he wondered why she became so emotional and resistant and why she was withdrawn when he dropped her home.

Geoff has been sexually active for a year or so and he's keen to keep going out with Lisa.

- Do you think many adolescent boys would react like Geoff?
- Would many adolescent boys think that sexual behaviour of this kind is acceptable?

#### 4. WHAT DO ADOLESCENTS THINK ABOUT FORCED SEXUAL INTERCOURSE?

There is a growing body of evidence in Queensland and elsewhere that is showing very disturbing attitudes, particularly among adolescent boys, about forced sex on girls. A 1992 study by O'Connor of the Domestic Violence Resource Centre (Table 1) examined 14 year old boys' responses to the following questionnaire:

**Table 1**

(Adapted from a study conducted at UCLA by R. Giarruso, J. Goodchilds, P. Johnson and G. Zellman)

IS IT OKAY FOR A BOY TO HOLD A GIRL DOWN AND FORCE HER TO HAVE SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IF:			
DVRC SURVEY RESULTS BY PERCENTAGES			
	No	Yes	Unsure
He spends a lot of money on her?	92.5	3.2	4.3
He is so turned on he can't stop?	85	5.3	9.6
She has had intercourse with other boys?	87.7	5.3	7
She is stoned or drunk?	85.5	4.3	9.6
She lets him touch her above the waist?	75	11.8	12.8
She says she's going to have sex with him, then changes her mind?	75	8.6	16
They have dated a long time?	69.5	15	15
She's led him on?	48.7	32.6	18.7
She gets him sexually excited?	55	27.3	17.6
N = 187			

These results are frightening. Consider for example,

- Where a couple had dated for a long time, 15% of boys believed it was acceptable to force a girl to have sex and a further 15% were unsure.
- Only 55% of boys believed it was unacceptable to force a girl to have sex if she gets him sexually excited. Of the remaining 45% of boys, 27% thought it was OK and 18% were unsure.
- "If she's led him on", 33% of boys considered it acceptable to force a girl down to have sexual intercourse.

In a study conducted in conjunction with the Domestic Violence Resource Centre, Fowler (1993) recorded a similar pattern of disturbing attitudes. Appendix 1 contains the results of her study.

As noted by Fowler, forced sexual intercourse seems to be considered least acceptable by boys if "he spends a lot of money on her" with 89% responding never, and most acceptable if "she's led him on" with 64% of boys responding never.

There are far too many "Geoffs" and potential "Geoffs" in our community.

Forced sex constitutes rape. It is appalling that so many boys are demonstrating their tacit acceptance of acts of rape. As

shown by Fowler's study, however, the views of girls are very different.

The greatest difference arose in the circumstance "if she lets him touch her above the waist" where 40% of boys considered forced sex under this condition never acceptable - the remaining 60% showing some level of acceptance, but no girl accepted forced sex in the circumstance.

In "Listening to Girls" (Milligan, 1992) school girls commonly identified harassment and violence at the hands of boys, including sexual violence as a major problem for them - practices such as boys 'dakking' girls were cited as examples of this abusive behaviour.

These behaviours cannot be dismissed as trivial. They constitute part of the continuum of violence against women - a continuum which can include behaviours such as sexually degrading comments, sexual harassment, flashing, unwanted touching, through to rape, and death. 'Dakking', harassment and sexually degrading comments by boys are often seen as 'normal' - as boys simply being boys. These behaviours are not normal and not acceptable. If abusive boys retain, in to adult life, the values and attitudes that lead them to be disrespectful, abusive and violent it appears highly likely that many of them will be candidates for the abuse of women as adults - or at a minimum accept its occurrence. There is evidence to show that children who are inclined to bully others at school continue to be interpersonally aggressive later in life (Olweus, 1991 and Farrington, 1993).

An important and unique aspect of Fowler's research is the relationship she examines between adolescents' attitudes to forced sex and their attitudes towards women. Appendix 2 provides the results of adolescents attitudes towards women.

Again, considerable differences arose in the way boys and girls responded on this attitudes scale.

The following examples highlight this difference:

- 46% of boys either strongly agreed or agreed that "boys are better leaders than girls" whereas only 2% of girls agreed with this statement.
- 40% of boys either strongly agreed or agreed that the father in a family should have greater authority in decision-making, only 2% of girls agreed with this statement.

In assessing whether adolescents' beliefs about forced sexual intercourse could be predicted by their attitudes toward women, Fowler found support for her hypothesis that boys and girls with more traditional attitudes toward women were more accepting of forced sexual intercourse than were boys and girls with less traditional attitudes.

Other researchers have supported this link in studies of adult men. Muehlenhard and Linton (1987), for example, found that men with traditional and non-traditional sex role attitudes were equally inclined to interpret women's behaviour as "suggestive" of sex, but traditional men were more likely to believe that this form of behaviour justifies force. Similarly, Krurlewitz and Payne (1978) found that women with traditional sex-role attitudes may only be convinced that an incident is rape if a considerable amount of physical force is used by the assailant.

In regard to domestic violence, this link has also been revealed. Researchers such as Dobash and Dobash (1990) have found that it is common for most men who are violent in their relationships to adhere to strict stereotypes of masculinity and the role of men and women.

## **5. WHAT'S HAPPENING FOR LISA**

Lisa has been extremely troubled. She is feeling ashamed, dirty, responsible and very anxious.

She's worried about what Geoff will say to her peers; whether she'll get pregnant; will she get AIDS? and what will happen if her parents find out?

Lisa is not sure where she can go for help and she is reluctant to go back to school.

Lisa eventually confides in a friend's mother. This woman appears understanding and gives Lisa emotional support and some suggestions. Eventually Lisa is encouraged to talk with her parents. Lisa's parents want to take legal action. Reluctantly, Lisa pursues a rape charge against Geoff.

- What do you think Lisa will experience as she moves through the criminal justice system?

## **6. "NO OFTEN SUBSEQUENTLY MEANS YES"**

“...and often despite criticism that has been directed at judges lately about violence and women, (and) men acting violently to women during sexual intercourse, it does happen, in the common experience of those who have been in the law as long as I have, anyway, that no often subsequently means yes.”

Justice John Bland, ‘Victorian County Court, Victoria, 1993.  
(Quoted, The Courier-Mail, Brisbane, Friday May 21, 1993)

Justice Bland’s statement is one of the many anti-woman comments made by senior members of the Judiciary in the past year in Australia. His comments reflect a prevalent myth in our community. Eastaer, (1992) in a survey on beliefs about rape found that 16 in every 100 male respondents either believed that even when a woman says no she doesn’t really mean it or they were undecided. Although most women did not support this, five in every 100 also supported that when a woman says “no” she doesn’t really mean it.

Lisa’s concern that people would believe she ‘asked for it’ when she was violated by Geoff is a valid concern. Research and experience demonstrates that pervasive victim-blaming attitudes and practices exist in cases of rape and sexual assault (Scutt, 1992, Real Rape Law Coalition, 1992), with many current commentators noting that the victims/survivors of rape are treated like the criminals - that their sexual history and behaviours are being judged and the extent to which they ‘fought off’ their assailant is being judged.

Justice John Sinclair of the District Court of New South Wales who claimed that a woman raped by a stranger could not have suffered “substantial psychological effects” because she continued to live and have sex with her boyfriend for two years after the attack (The Courier-Mail, Brisbane, May 21, 1993), would have us believe that a young ‘chaste’ woman like Lisa might suffer psychological damage but not other sexually experienced women. In fact it is clear that the trauma of the rape and the legal process are psychologically damaging.

In the Real Rape Law Coalition sexual assault phone-in in 1991, 38% of victims/survivors whose cases went to Court would not report an assault or go to Court again if given the choice. They would also advise other victims not to go through the legal process. The consequences of this lack of faith in and or response from the criminal justice system are very damaging. Some of these consequences include:

- they have the effect of setting a community standard that rape is not criminal behaviour unless the woman is ‘chaste’
- many offenders are not adequately reprimanded for their behaviour
- many women and girls who are raped do not report the violation they have been subjected to.

Lisa had a taste of victim-blaming attitudes early on in pursuing a criminal charge against Geoff. This, combined with the humiliation and embarrassment she was receiving at school, led her to drop the charges against Geoff.

Geoff was not formally reprimanded for his actions.

## **7. THE WAY FORWARD**

An initial step forward is that coercive sexual practices such as Geoff’s behaviour have to be condemned, rather than being dismissed as normal or trivial. What has to be dismissed, however, are myths about rape such as the infamous “no subsequently means yes” or women “ask for it” beliefs.

Secondly, the way in which masculinity is constructed, and in numerous ways negatively expressed in the form of domination of women and girls and violence against women and girls, has to be significantly altered in order to alleviate violence. All of the female-biased values and attitudes that shape our social, legal, political and other institutions, and that influence the behaviour of individuals must be reconstructed in a manner that will give rise to gender equality.

In recent times the need to remove gender-bias in the law has been receiving public attention. Writers and commentators such as Graycar and Morgan (1990), Scutt (1992) and Rathus (1993) have provided comprehensive analyses of bias against women in our legal system and strategies to remove this bias. The Australian Law Reform Commission Inquiry into Gender Bias in the Law; the current Senate Inquiry and an Inquiry being conducted by the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration are steps that are likely to lead to positive changes. These changes will compliment the many that are being taken in Australia to improve the social, and economic position of women.

As the focus of this paper is on young people, strategies for use in schools and youth organisations are to be highlighted.

In many parts of Australia, policies and practices aimed at achieving gender equity and non-violent attitudes and behaviours are being incorporated into schools. The Queensland Department of Education has, for example, through its Gender Equity Unit developed a planning framework for its Gender Equity Implementation Plan. The two aims of this plan which focus directly on the issue of violence against women are:

- To enable all students to realise their capacities and interests, unconstrained by inappropriate social expectations regarding masculinity and femininity; and
- To develop in educators, students and parents an understanding of the constraining influences of social expectations regarding masculinity and femininity.

### **Objectives**

- To enable students to develop a critical approach to construction of gender;
- To develop an understanding of the role of schools in addressing issues of violence which arise from the construction of gender;
- To provide a supportive schools environment free from sexual harassment;
- To increase the number of educators, students and parents with an understanding of sexual harassment; and
- To reduce the incidence of sexual harassment in schools.

The Education Department has also endorsed the National Policy for the Education of Girls which specifically calls for action on girls whose education is at risk due to violence, sexual abuse, pregnancy or homelessness (Status Report on the Department of Education Response to the Queensland Government Statement of Policy Stop Violence Against Women, May 1993). These kinds of policy frameworks are vital in providing the leadership through which schools throughout Queensland can be encouraged to implement gender equity programs.

Currently the Gender Equity Unit in the Queensland Education Department is under threat with the State Government's recent announcement that many teachers working in Central Office of this Department will be returned to schools. According to the Association of Women Educators in a statement issued on July 19, 1993:

"...there is a great deal of developmental work to be done in the area of construction of gender and its relation to violence in the community...with incredibly reduced staff at central and regional levels this unfortunately will not happen".

For schools to successfully develop and implement structures and curricula that reduce violence they must have 'central office' support and they must as Jenkin (1992) has noted, contain five key components. When applied to gender-equity and non-violence these five components would include the following kinds of strategies:

#### **A. Philosophical Base**

Schools need to create and promote a clear mission statement about non-violence. This could also highlight and promote statements about gender equity.

#### **B. Personnel, Student and Community Considerations**

This element includes activities such as:

- recruitment of staff who adhere to the non-violence/gender equity mission statement and prompt removal of staff who engage in behaviours that are contrary to this;
- induction, and inservice training for staff on gender equity and non-violence issues;
- student and parent involvement in policy development.

#### **C. Programs, Strategies and Skills**

This element would require the inclusion of non-violence and gender equity:

- curricula, literature and teaching materials
- preventative measures (including anti-corporal punishment policy and practices)
- response strategies to deal with violence, sexual harassment and related occurrences
- administrative procedures and practices to support and evaluate these programs.

#### **D. A Process of Implementation**

This would clearly outline the roles of staff, parents, students and others required to successfully implement programs.

#### **E. Resources**

While many activities and written policies would be relatively 'resource-free', priority must be given to an adequate allocation of financial and personnel resources.

In incorporating these five key components, schools would then be acknowledging that curricula, or a Human Relationships Education program alone is not enough. The whole school context and its values and practices must reflect a commitment to non-violence and gender equity. This holistic approach is incorporated into the current policy framework of the Gender Equity Unit of the Queensland Education Department and similar policy frameworks that exist in other States.

It is also a framework that could be adapted for use in all relevant youth organisations and youth networks, such as the Scout Association and youth services sector. It is vital, for example, that young people who do not adapt well within school environments; those who have unstable home environments and young people using youth shelters and support services also have exposure to values, practices and structures that promote non-violence and gender equity.

A range of support materials and literature now exist to assist schools and youth organisations in their efforts to foster non-violence and gender equity. One example of such a program is the Preventing Abuse in Relationships (PAIR) Program, developed by the Domestic Violence Resource Centre.

The program encourages educators and students to be aware of:

- their own beliefs and values about domestic and dating violence;
- sex-roles and the influence of bias against women and girls;
- the experiences of victims and perpetrators of violence; and
- skills required to develop non-violent and equitable relationships.

The PAIR Program includes a video and a series of 40 minute lesson plans with activities. It has been highly commended on its content and educational quality. Professor Roger Scott, Director-General of Education in Queensland, stated that:

"The Domestic Violence Resource Centre is to be commended on the educational quality of this production. Schools and other organisations concerned with the welfare of young people will find in PAIR a valuable resource for the development of their own programs" (Letter to the Domestic Violence Resource Centre, sent September 1992).

Staff of the Domestic Violence Crisis Service in Canberra who conducted a pilot program on PAIR in eleven Canberra high schools and colleges recommended that:

"...the ACT Department of Education and Training implement the PAIR Program in all ACT high schools and colleges".

As a Domestic Violence Resource Centre staff member, I have not included this favourable feedback to "blow the Centre's trumpet", rather to highlight the value of the PAIR Program and encourage its use.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

Through optimistic eyes, a vision of the 21st Century would be one where:

- bias against women in the social, legal and educational and economic structures in our community is approaching elimination; and
- where violence against women and girls (in fact all forms of violence) have been significantly curtailed.

To achieve this, the negative values, attitudes and practices that result in bias and violence against women and girls must be overturned by our current generation of youth.

The challenge exists for young people to embrace non-violence and gender equity values and programs to create a better quality of life and better relationships for women, men and youth of the future.

...finally I bet you're wondering what Lisa and Geoff are doing in the 21st century.

Lisa is now in her early forties. She is a successful professional woman, married with three children, who 'on the surface' would have us believe (as Justice John Sinclair has encouraged us to believe) that she would not have suffered "substantial psychological effects", because she married and continued to have sex with her partner.

Having put yourself in Lisa's shoes you may well appreciate her lingering sense of humiliation, fear and anger - feelings that are compounded each time her daughter goes out with friends.

...and looking to the future, we hear rumblings in the District Court of Queensland. A man has been found guilty of rape where the judge in his summing up states that:

"...when a woman says no to sexual advances, she most definitely means no".

Yes, these are the words of Justice Geoff Newman.

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**APPENDIX 1**

**Boys and Girls Responses to Items on the Forcible Date Rape (FDR) Scale  
(Fowler, J. 1993)**

<b>QUESTION:</b>	<b>Boys</b>				<b>Girls</b>				<b>Total</b>			
	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>N</b>
He spends a lot of money on her?	2	4	16	78	0	0	0	100	1	2	8	89
He is so turned on he can't stop?	0	12	26	62	0	0	2	98	0	6	14	80
She has had intercourse with other boys?	2	10	24	64	0	0	4	96	1	5	14	80
She is stoned or drunk?	12	16	20	52	0	0	0	100	6	8	10	76
She lets him touch her above the waist?	12	14	34	40	0	0	0	100	6	7	17	70
She says she's going to have sex with him, then changes her mind?	4	30	22	44	0	6	6	88	2	18	14	66
They have dated a long time?	6	24	28	42	0	0	4	96	3	12	16	69
She's let him on?	18	20	26	36	2	2	4	92	10	11	15	64
She gets him sexually excited?	12	22	26	40	2	0	6	92	7	11	16	66

**NB.**    **A = Always**  
          **S = Sometimes**  
          **R = Rarely**  
          **N = Never**

N = 100

**APPENDIX 2**

**Boys and Girls Responses to Items on the Attitudes Toward Women Scale for Adolescents (AWSA)  
(Fowler, J. 1993)**

STATEMENT:	Boys				Girls				Total			
	SA	A	D	SD	SA	A	D	SD	SA	A	D	SD
Swearing is worse for a girl than for a boy	14	44	28	14	0	16	52	32	7	30	40	23
On a date, the boy should be expected to pay all expenses	14	26	42	18	0	4	72	24	7	15	57	21
* On the average, girls are as smart as boys	10	68	16	6	54	42	2	2	32	55	9	4
More encouragement in a family should be given to sons than daughters to go to college or university	6	10	46	38	0	2	24	74	3	6	35	56
* It is all right for a girl to want to play rough sports like football	18	40	20	14	56	42	2	0	37	45	11	7
In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in making family decisions	4	36	40	20	0	2	36	62	2	19	38	41
* It is all right for a girl to ask a boy out on a date	56	36	8	0	56	40	4	0	56	38	6	0
It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school	4	20	48	28	2	0	22	76	3	10	35	52
* If both husband and wife have jobs, the husband should do a share of the housework such as washing dishes and doing the laundry	14	70	10	6	56	42	2	0	35	56	6	3
Boys are better leaders than girls	10	36	46	8	0	2	26	72	5	19	36	40
Girls should be more concerned with becoming good wives and mothers than desiring a professional or business career	10	14	48	28	0	0	10	90	5	7	29	59
* Girls should have the same freedoms as boys	52	32	12	4	62	14	2	2	67	23	7	3

**NB. SA = Strongly Agree**

**A = Agree**

**D = Disagree**

**SD = Strongly Disagree**

N=100

\* Items were reverse scored.

## **DRUG LAW REFORM: REASON TO REPLACE CHAOS?**

Bill Saunders, Associate Professor & Head of Addiction Studies Unit, School of Psychology,  
Curtin University of Technology

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### **Writing in 1971, Edwards<sup>1</sup> noted the following:**

If you were to fly low over any part of the earth's land surface, you would have a fair chance of, before long, seeing below you some process of drug cultivation. You would see vineyards, coffee plantations, wide areas where the tobacco crop shaped the economy, fields of opium poppy, patches of land Indian hemp flowering even on vacant city lots. The cocoa plant grows on the slopes of the Andes, so that six million peasants shall obtain their cocaine. Even the desert has the peyote cactus. As you looked down on the great industrial countries it would be the factories, however, rather than the fields which would properly catch your attention: modern technology spills out its tranquilisers, stimulants, analgesics and antidepressants by the billions, and the chemist much improves on their cactus and the mushroom. You would know that everywhere below, a variety of actors were in the arena, and with extraordinary changeability of roles. Sometimes the state would sell the drug and take the profit, sometimes the profit would go to the legally operating entrepreneur, sometimes that role would be played by the man with the mule train who makes his way over the mountain paths. The money at stake is immense and countries might finance their treasuries to a large extent from drug revenues. Conflicts of opinion are violent, the state's response to unpermitted use draconian. The situation on which you looked down would, however, seem to be characterised by an unusual degree of confusion: a drug which was permissible yesterday might tomorrow be prohibited, a drug which for one society was of importance in religious sacrament might in another place be preached against. You could conclude that one of the main businesses of the world was to cultivate, manufacture, advertise, legislate on, tax, consume, adulterate and decry mind-acting substances. The complexity of the matter is overwhelming, its ramifications endless.

As Edwards illustrates, the use of mood altering substances is universal but the response to drug use is considerable idiosyncratic. Whilst it is impossible to find any society that does not have embedded into the fabric of its everyday existence the use of at least one mood altering substance, the response of governments to drug use is highly variable.

The purpose of this paper is to propose that, as part of a rational response to drug use in the 21st century, we need to consider the principles on which our drug laws may best be based, and then, if necessary, implement drug law reforms. However, so entrenched are many of our attitudes to the use of psychoactive drugs that it is perhaps necessary to reflect on the curious state of our present drug laws by citing Lewis Carroll, or more particularly the Queen's advice to Alice, about impossible things<sup>2</sup>:

"I can't believe that" said Alice.

"Can't you?" the Queen said in a pitying tone. "Try again: Draw a long breath and shut your eyes".

Alice laughed. "There's no use in trying" she said: "One can't believe impossible things".

"I dare say you haven't had much practice" said the Queen. "When I was your age, I always did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast".

It is my intent to invite you to consider six impossible things but, fortunately, on this occasion only before dinner, not breakfast.

### **Impossible To Believe Thing Number One : Everyone Does Drugs**

The first proposed principle is that psychoactive drug use is a universal human behaviour. Almost everyone does drugs. This is often very difficult for many people to accept but when the full smorgasbord of drugs are considered (eg. cannabis, cocaine, magic mushrooms, morphine, alcohol, amphetamines, librium, largactyl, nicotine, nembutal, LSD, ecstasy, cocoa and caffeine) very few of us are non-users. In presentations such as this some people take offence at caffeine being considered a psychoactive drug. Yet caffeine is clearly a stimulant and the habit of the nation is to kick-start itself each morning with liberal doses of this drug. So accepted is this form of drug taking that it is enshrined in to the coffee break, or afternoon tea, the prohibition of which would no doubt result in industrial disorder and chaos at conferences. Caffeine is a low risk psychoactive drug but harmless it is not. Caffeine produces a demonstrable and well documented withdrawal syndrome and for those given to six or more cups of instant coffee a day, insomnia, anxiety, dizziness, irritability, headache, gastric upsets and diarrhoea may be experienced if a regular supply is not maintained. Long term users can also suffer from caffeine induced tinnitus, raised blood pressure, raised blood sugar levels, kidney damage and cognitive impairment. The point here, however, is not to create a drug scare about caffeine, but to emphasise the normality and universality of drug use. Almost all of us are psychoactive drug users.

### **Impossible To Believe Thing Number Two : Psychoactive Drug Use Is A Basic Human Appetite**

Rather than being an activity of the deranged and irrational, a number of commentators in the past decade or so have argued that psychoactive drug use is a normal, everyday, human drive. For example, Weil and Rosen<sup>3</sup> wrote the following:

Drugs are fascinating because they change our awareness. The basic reason people take drugs is to vary their conscious experience. Of course there are many ways to alter consciousness, such as listening to music, dancing, fasting, chanting, exercising, surfing, meditating, falling in love, hiking in the wilderness (if you live in the city), visiting the city (if you live in the wilderness), having sex, daydreaming, watching fireworks, going to a movie or play, jumping into cold water after taking a hot sauna, participating in religious rituals. The list is probably endless, and includes nearly all the activities that people put most of their energy and hard earned money into. This suggests that changing consciousness is something people like to do.

Essentially what Weil and Rosen are arguing is that drug use is but one form of the basic human need for alternation in states of consciousness. We abhor being at one level of arousal for very long. Most leisure activity is devoted to altering one's normal level of consciousness. Thus, the term recreational drug use has become popular to denote those people who, as part of their leisure time, use psychoactive drugs to enhance their feelings of wellbeing or remove, for a while, feelings of pain or distress. It is important to note that recreational does not mean harm or risk free. Most recreational pursuits involve risks of various sorts. Swimming, surfing, sailing and sex all have inherent dangers. They are, however, also fun and it has to be said that the utmost unspeakable truth of the addictions field is that drug use is fun. The mere mention that doing alcohol, amphetamines, ecstasy or LSD, might actually be enjoyable and functional, rather than mindless and reckless, immediately incurs the wrath of some authorities. Apparently, people, especially young people, must not be told what they greatly suspect, but eventually discover by trial and error, that drug induced consciousness alteration can be an extremely enjoyable experience. An enjoyment no better described than by Stewart<sup>4</sup> who, in her erudite autobiography of heroin use, wrote this about her first use of heroin:

I murmured a worthless response as the smack came on. The rush is so hard to describe - it's like waiting for a distant thunderstorm to move overhead. A strange foreboding. A bizarre awesome calm. It is's in your blood, moving towards your brain, relentlessly, unstoppable, inevitable. A feeling starts to grow like a rumble from the horizon. The feeling swells, surging, soaring, crashing, screaming to a devastating crescendo. The gear smashed against the top of your skull with the power of an uncapped oil well. You would not be able to bear the intense ecstasy. It is all too much. Your body may fall apart. The rock that is in your head shatters harmlessly into a million sparkling, tinkling smithereens. They tumble at a thousand miles an hour straight back down over your body, warming, insulating, tingling, denying all pain, fear and sadness. You are stone, you are high. You are above and below reality and law.

"Are you OK?" he asked.

My chin was on my chest, my eyes closed, I suppose. "I'm just great" I murmured. "I'm fine". It is's fantastic. It is's wonderful. I want to do this forever.

There is a further issue here. In Australia, smoking and drinking are conventional forms of drug use, whilst the use of heroin or amphetamines is deemed 'deviant'. However, American psychiatrist Andrew Weil<sup>5</sup> in his thought-provoking book *The Natural Mind* wrote the following:

To come up with a valid explanation to explain the universality of drug use by human beings, we simply must suspend our value judgements about kinds of drugs and admit - however painful it might be - that the glass of beer on a hot afternoon and the bottle of wine with a fine meal are no different in kind from the joint of marijuana or the snort of cocaine; nor is the evening devoted to cocktails essentially different from the day devoted to mescaline. All are essentially the same phenomenon: the use of chemical agents to induce alteration in consciousness.

This is a provocative challenge. What Weil is suggesting is that your pre-conference dinner drink, or post-meal cigarette or liqueur, is in essence the same as a toke of cannabis, a hit of heroin or a snort of cocaine. Undoubtedly cheaper, but not essentially different.

But Ha! you cry. Those things are illegal. Which is an adroit introduction to the next 'impossible thing'.

### **Impossible To Believe Thing Number Three : Drugs Are Not Illegal Because They Are Bad**

It is often assumed that those drugs which are legal are 'safe' and those that are illegal are dangerous, or are certainly, more dangerous. Psychoactive drug use can certainly be dangerous. Last year in Australia over 25,000 people dies from drug-related causes. This constitutes a significant health and social problem in that this mortality represents nearly one in five of all deaths. Repeat: one in five of all deaths in Australia is linked to drug use. Clearly, in our community we have a drug problem of significant and serious proportions. The Federal Department of Health, Housing and Community Services

in their excellent *Drug Abuse Statistical Series*<sup>6</sup> makes the magnitude of the problem plain. Of those 25,000 deaths 18,110 were linked to tobacco use, 6,000 to drinking and 525 to the use of illegal substances.

The important issue here is that all drug use carries some risk. There is no such thing as a 'safe' psychoactive drug. It is an issue of relative risk. Risk from drug use comes in various guises. For example, from a drug's long term toxicity, its potential for 'addiction' and from the probability of problems when using (problems of intoxication).

Different drugs have different problem configurations and overall different levels of nastiness.

This is illustrated below in a league table of harm. Basically the more \* the higher the problem potential. The \* have been awarded on the basis of current morbidity and mortality figures, plus clinical experience.

#### A LEAGUE TABLE OF DRUG-RELATED RISK

Drug	Long Term Toxicity	Addiction Potential	Problems of Intoxication	Overall Risk
Alcohol	****	**	*****	****
Nicotine	*****	*****	*	****
Minor Tranquillisers	***	****	**	***
Amphetamine	***	****	**	***
Heroin	*	****	**	**
Cannabis	*	*	*	*
Caffeine	*	*		*

Interestingly, and albeit somewhat speculatively, out of over 250,000 drug-related deaths in Australia in the past decade, over 200,000 were due to tobacco use and less than 250 to the use of cannabis (primarily road traffic accidents). In any calculation of the relative risk of drug use the number of users matters. Regular smokers outnumber regular cannabis users by a factor of approximately three. This still results in cannabis use being, in terms of mortality at least, 267 times 'safer' than tobacco use. But as many young people know only too well, the possession of cannabis is a criminal offence, while recruitment to tobacco use is a contribution to the economic wellbeing of the country. Nicotine, which can be purchased by any consenting adult over the age of 16, is very toxic. One in three users die from the use of this drug. It is also very addictive with 97% of users consuming more than 15 cigarettes a day and over 80% of users wanting to quit but finding themselves unable to do so. Some commentators have actually suggested that nicotine is the 'hardest' drug of all to give up. Ironically, the known toxicity of the drug has resulted in those people who wish to quit by the use of nicotine substitution methods - gum or nicotine patches - need to have a prescription to do so. Thus, if you want to remain 'addicted' you can buy your supply unfettered and openly, but if you want to quit you must have a prescription.

The above figures also need to be considered against what we know about heroin. The use of heroin, often considered the most dangerous drug in the world, is relatively rare in Australia. The best guesses are that in any given year some 150,000 to 200,000 people use heroin. Some 450 perish; an at-risk ratio of something like 1:390. As against the figures for nicotine (some 3.5 million users and 18,000 deaths) an at-risk ratio of 1:194. In essence, if you are a tobacco user you run double the risk of dying in the next year from your drug use than if you are a heroin user, yet nicotine is legal.

It is also important to record that heroin is not toxic to the human body. Heroin-related deaths are invariably due to accidental overdoses which are due more to the illegal status of heroin, and uncertainty about the strength or purity of what one has injected, rather than any inherent characteristic of the drug itself. As Ellard<sup>7</sup> has succinctly written: "The principal complication of pure heroin in any reasonable dose is constipation". Unlike tobacco or alcohol, heroin use will not cause cancer, heart or liver disease, nor will it shrink one's brain, or erode the peripheral vascular or nervous systems of its users. Thirty years of pharmaceutical grade heroin use, if administered under sterile procedures, will leave one no more aged or decrepit than the mere passing of the years. Yet regular alcohol use ages prematurely and, for many users, regular nicotine use results in an early and uncomfortable death.

This all of course begs the question that if the drugs that are banned in Australia are not prohibited because they are more dangerous than their legal counterparts, why then are they banned? One answer is that alcohol, nicotine, coffee, tea and tranquillisers are drugs whose trafficking is controlled by first world companies and countries. The drugs of the third world,

cocoa, cannabis and opium, are all illegal in first world countries. Prohibition is not based on concerns about risk, but about profit. As Manderson<sup>8</sup> has argued, economics and racism were the motives for our current policies, and the strongest proponent of prohibition - the USA - is a country that just happens to be the world's largest exporter of nicotine and pharmaceutical products.

#### **Impossible To Believe Thing Number Four : Drugs Are Bad Because They Are Illegal**

The imposition of prohibition has one immediate impact. It opens up a black market. Given that drug use is a natural human desire there will always be a demand for mood-altering substances. Legal sanction does not negate human need, it just makes it more expensive. In the UK where certain doctors still have the legal entitlement to prescribe heroin, the user pays the pharmacist approximately \$2.50 a hit. In Western Australia, at the current time, a gram of street heroin is approximately \$500. As will be readily apparent the trade in drugs is immensely profitable. A \$10,000 deal in Thailand is worth at least \$1 million once the kilo or so of heroin is in Australia. And that is at the wholesale end of things. By the time the drug has trickled down to the average street purchaser the price per gram has risen four or five fold. The purity and strength of the drug has decreased similarly. Thus the average user is confronted with purchasing a known amount of drug which is of unknown purity, mixed with unknown adulterants and the strength of which can only be determined by using.

Prohibition is a harm-maximisation policy. As Ellard<sup>7</sup> has written about heroin:

It is clear that the infections and overdoses with which it is associated are not due to the drug itself, but to the nature of the supply available to the illegal user. The damage is not drug-caused but caused by our prohibition policies. Our policies kill people.

Ironically, all states in Australia are committed (under the National Campaign against Drug Abuse) to undertake strategies that reduce the harm associated with drug use. Only one state, the ACT, has acted in accord with the harm-reduction principle. In that state the possession of small amounts of cannabis is not criminal activity and consideration is also being given to an experiment in which heroin will be made available to heroin addicts. Although the proposal is immensely cautious, perhaps so cautious as to be hardly worth trying, for many it is a fundamentally dangerous and wrong proposal. Yet there is sufficient evidence that it is prohibition which is the wrong idea.

#### **Impossible To Believe Thing Number Five : Prohibition Causes More Problems Than It Solves**

For the past two decades, America has had a rigorous 'zero tolerance' policy on illicit drug use. In 1989 the then head of the federal Drug Enforcement Agency, William Bennett, denounced 'intellectuals' for suggesting that the war against drugs was not working and that legalisation was an option. Interestingly, with the advent of the Clinton government there has been a small but perceptible thaw in the war on drugs. Economist Milton Friedman, writer William Buckley, the Mayor of Baltimore, Kurt Schmoke and even former Secretary of State George Schultz have all at least queried the effectiveness of prohibition<sup>9</sup>. The overseas propaganda arm of America, The United States Information Service, has even taken the interesting position of mailing out unsolicited articles on the pros and cons of legalisation. In one such piece, Doug Bandow<sup>9</sup> ( a former domestic policy adviser to President Regan and Senior Research Fellow at the Washington Cato Institute) has written the following:

Criminal sanctions against drug use are bad policy for five reasons:

- Sanctions against drug use improperly limit the freedom of adults to use substances no more dangerous than other now available legally, and imprison people for actions that, in contrast to most crimes, do not directly harm others.
- Criminalising drug use fails to reduce it significantly. A large percentage of the population has experimented with them. Most others have access to drugs if they want.
- Sanctions increase the danger of drug use by forcing users into an illicit market.
- Criminalising drugs entices children to sue and sell them by creating a criminal underground, offering kids economic opportunities unavailable elsewhere.
- Drug prohibition causes the bulk of the murders and property crime by creating a black market characterised by warring suppliers, who charge inflated prices to users, who in turn steal to pay for their habits.

All of Bandow's points are relevant to the Australian situation. In 1859 John Stuart Mill<sup>10</sup> declaimed that:

The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not sufficient warrant.

Most illicit drug use is exactly that - it is use, not 'misuse' or 'abuse'. It is recreational, harm-free, mood-alteration. If the potential for self-harm (not even actual self-harm) was a matter that required legal sanction then almost all Australian recreational activities would become illegal overnight. Australian rules football, rugby, running, motorcar racing, rallying, roller skating, roistering, rodeos, rock climbing, whitewater rafting, riding, revelling and romance would all become illegal. And that's just the 'R's. The decision to ban certain forms of drug use is philosophically unwarranted and logically inept.

Bandow's second point is that making things illegal does not reduce use. As numerous Australian surveys have shown the use of cannabis is widespread<sup>6</sup>. The majority of males aged 18 to 29 have used cannabis and in any twelve month period, over 20% of young people do so. It has been estimated that in any year over 750,000 Australians use cannabis<sup>11</sup> yet 'only' 20,000 incur convictions for its use. Those that are convicted are primarily unemployed, young males, a disproportionate number of whom are Aboriginal. One cannot but be concerned at the worth of any law which is disregarded by so many and enforced in such a discriminatory manner.

Data from Western Australia is also of interest. Between 1980 and 1990 the Western Australian police increased the number of people arrested for cannabis possession five fold from 108 to 545 per 100,000 people<sup>6</sup>. The evidence is that use rates have remained unchanged or have increased slightly. At the same time South Australia introduced more liberal policies and the police focused some of their attention elsewhere. Convictions fell by 50% yet cannabis use rates appear unchanged<sup>12</sup>. Given that cannabis is a drug of low toxicity and low addiction potential, for many people obtaining a criminal conviction is more damaging to their futures than the use of the drug itself. Thus, 'decriminalisation' of cannabis is an effective harm-reduction approach.

Data from the Netherlands is also of interest. As is well known, Holland operates a containment policy on cannabis in that cannabis can be purchased in some youth centres and 'cafes' but possession is technically an offence. However, the 'ever used' cannabis rate for the general population is 6%<sup>13</sup>; the figure for Australia, total prohibition and all, is 32%<sup>6</sup>. The reason for the success of the Dutch experience is believed to be due to the lack of a significant black market (black markets cannot compete with the prices offered under quasi-legal supply) and also the loss of the glamour of deviance. If cannabis is something that anyone can do, its use does not confer status or an aura of rebellion.

Additionally, prohibition, rather than cutting off supply, ensures that all who want can get. Prohibition causes pyramid selling. Everyone sells on to everyone else. It is Amway International gone berserk. Your fourteen year old will be introduced to drugs, not by some sleazy pusher at the school yard gate, but by a best friend. Rather than eliminating supply, prohibition causes all types of drugs to be diffused through our communities. Anyone who wants them can buy them. Even factory-to-door sales are part of the urban scene. The ecstasy man makes more deliveries than Mr Pizza.

Which raises Bandow's issue that if drugs of different dangerousness are all illicit then needing to gain access to the black market to obtain supplies of low-risk drugs, like cannabis, brings the casual, as well as the dedicated, user into contact with supply lines of other more problematic drugs like amphetamines. Indeed, it has been suggested that the success some police forces have had in interrupting the supply of cannabis is a direct cause of the burgeoning of amphetamines. Cannabis fields are relatively easy to see; backroom, amateur, amphetamine laboratories almost impossible to detect.

Unfortunately, it also has to be stated that prohibition rules corruption. The illicit drug trade in Australia has been variously estimated to be worth between \$2,500 to \$5,000 million per annum. Whatever the true amount, the profits are immense and the capacity to suborn unwanted interference is considerable. All police drug squads are inevitably exposed to corrupt offers. The magnitude of the money is immense. Police officer succumb. This is not to say that all drug squad officers are corrupt, they are not - all drug squads are.

As was reported in the Cleeland Commission<sup>14</sup>:

The enormous profits to be made from the drug trade also promote corruption within law enforcement agencies. The officers are human and the temptation to take very large sums of money for turning a blind eye or to participate actively in the trade making use of all the specialised skills and knowledge available to law enforcement officers must at times be overwhelming. As one witness told the Committee: our wonder in this society is not that we have got bent coppers, it is that we have got straight ones.

Only minor exposure to persons arrested for illicit drug possession reveals that legitimate arrests for possession and intent to supply (that is, being in possession of more than two grams of say heroin) are on appearance at court, to the delight and quiescence of the dealer, "merely" possession charges. Any money, and the extra drugs, are conveniently missing. From the charge sheet and the police evidence locker. No one complains, Illicit drugs are

the modern day pollutant of our police forces that prostitution and gambling were in previous decades.

Prohibition also causes other crime. The current adage is that in order to support any significant drug habit the user has to 'hook, cook, steal or deal'. All of which are illegal. Prostitution, preparing 'homebake' heroin, breaking and entering, and dealing in drugs are the only enterprises of sufficient monetary worth to finance a habit.

Ellard<sup>7</sup> has noted:

I have spoken to gentlemen who claim to have spent more than \$1,000 a day in that way. Needless to say, they armed themselves appropriately and then took themselves to banks, TAB agencies and the like for that is where money is to be found. In 1989 the NSW police estimated that 80 to 85% of armed robberies in that state were committed by heroin users and that 70% of all crime was drug-related. Studies in the US have suggested that the average user commits a crime every second day to sustain his or her habit, not including the crime of buying and selling.

Dobinson and Poletti<sup>15</sup> in a study of the weekly incomes of some 130 Sydney regular heroin users found that their average weekly income was (in 1987 prices) \$5,148, or \$267,696 per annum, tax free. This was predominantly made up of drug dealing, property crime, prostitution, shoplifting, fraud and armed robbery. Your vandalised home and stolen video is a direct social cost of American prohibition policies. Is it really all worth it?

On top of all that, prohibition is an extremely expensive social policy. Irrespective of the crime it generates it costs the Australian taxpayer something like a million dollars a day to enforce the drug laws<sup>11</sup>, all to protect people from themselves and to serve a symbolic moral crusade. Is it possible that there are better solutions?

### **Impossible To Believe Thing Number Six : A Psychoactive Drug Is A Psychoactive Drug**

Let us, just as an act of imagination, apply reason to the current chaos of our drug laws. Let us assume that all psychoactive drugs, even the 'hard' ones like alcohol and nicotine, should be treated in a logical, rational and consistent way. That is, the principle that applies to one mood-altering substance is applied to all psychoactive drugs. What principle should be applied? Ban the lot? Decriminalise the lot? Legalise the lot?

As you may have realised, I am not persuaded the first is do-able or desirable. I like drinking Chardonnay and believe my next door neighbour should have the freedom to smoke tobacco products even though they are killing him. As far as cannabis, ecstasy, LSD, amphetamines and the opiates are concerned, I have little wish to indulge, but given my predilection for white wine I feel that those persuaded of the benefits of use should have the same personal freedom as me. Which, of course, makes me a crazed, dangerous, maverick, radical. Why are we so scared of other people's drug use?

At this stage of the debate the opponents to some form of a shift away from prohibition usually demand to know how this new world will work. Not for them a debate on principles, which if agreed is followed by a debate on the pragmatics of implementation. This is best illustrated by reference to James Jacobs<sup>16</sup>, Professor of Law at New York University, who has written: "The lack of a fleshed out legalisation proposal makes it extremely difficult to assess or to criticise the legalisation position".

However we started with Lewis Carroll so it is appropriate to end in similar vein and make that point that some questions necessarily priced others.

"How are I to get in?" asked Alice again in a louder tone.

"Are you to get in at all?" said the footman. "That's the first question you know".

It is was, no doubt, only Alice did not like to be told so. "It is's really dreadful" she muttered to herself, "the way all the creatures argue. It is's enough to drive one crazy".

The issue is that the prohibitions on drug use do not serve our community well. Let us agree that. Then we can debate how a new and better response could be framed.

However, as a prompt, a last word from Ellard<sup>7</sup>:

My personal view is that all recreational drugs should be made available on the same basis, even though some of them, such as tobacco and alcohol are highly addictive and very dangerous and others, such as heroin, are less addictive and less dangerous. ...In short I propose that while commercial production of all recreational drugs should be permitted, advertising should be banned. All drugs should be available in bottle shops, with the same restrictions as to age as exist now. Those restrictions will work no better than they do now, but there is a need to do our best to keep young people drug free until they know what they are doing.

Every recreational drug should be available, prepackaged. The price should provide a modest profit for all those concerned in manufacture and marketing but no more. Special attention should be given to drugs supplied in injectable form so that it would be absolutely impossible to use a syringe a second time.

Ellard also wrote:

Let me make it clear that no matter what is done, there will still be people who behave irrationally and harm themselves, just as there will always be people who will climb mountains in blizzards, fly ultralight aircraft and go to work in Beirut. The aim of the exercise is not to purge the world of folly, but to arrange things so that the smallest possible number of people sustain the least possible harm.

Sounds reasonable to me, but why are such proposals so universally condemned? Perhaps humans prefer chaos to reason.

### **Acknowledgment**

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# ELDER ABUSE: A COMMUNITY ISSUE FOR THE 1990s AND BEYOND\*

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## Abstract

Elder abuse has been a hidden problem in Australia until research in recent years identified its existence in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. It is a form of violence and intimidation which differs from child abuse and spouse abuse. Victims of elder abuse are more hidden from the community and suffer greater isolation than victims of other forms of family abuse. The majority of studies have been carried out on cases known to service providers. It seems that community nurses and social/welfare workers are the professional groups most likely to be in contact with victims of elder abuse. Strategies being developed by the Commonwealth, New South Wales and South Australian Governments aims to support and augment the capacity of individuals and agencies which are already dealing with cases of elder abuse.

## INTRODUCTION

### Example 1

"I didn't expect to live so long when I let the family have my property and money" - comments of a 90 year old woman, a Brisbane victim of psychological and verbal abuse, and active neglect, who was distressed by the dispassionate and demanding attitude of her son and daughter-in-law.

### Example 2

A paid carer talks of losing her temper. She tells how she throws the older woman (a dementia sufferer) on her bed - bumping her head, hurting her ear. The older woman is locked in her room, allowed out for meals, and returned. The older woman is allowed to the toilet only every 2 hours - becomes distressed, then incontinent, and is then verbally abused by the carer. Two of her adult children have Power of Attorney. Only one of her four children is concerned that his mother is being assaulted and treated harshly.

### Example 3

A migrant, a man in his 80s, asks the service provider "Is God punishing me for something I have done?" He is well educated, a man once in a high position, but now in the care of family, he and his wife feel unwanted, have no access to their money and have little say over their lives.

These words and scenes were some of the situations of elder abuse and neglect encountered during a 1992 study into situations of elder abuse in the Brisbane area (Roberts, 1993).

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I am honoured to participate in this Forum, "*Chaos or Reason: Community Safety in the Twenty-First Century*", and am particularly delighted that the Australian Crime Prevention Council is taking a serious look at this little known problem of elder abuse. Caregiving for elderly relatives, for short or long periods, has been part of the past for most families, and is even more likely to be part of family life in the future (Braithwaite, 1990; Kendig & McCallum, 1986). Most older people (95%) live in the community, rather than in nursing homes or hostels. Recognising the rights of older people to dignity and security challenges us all to examine, not only the behaviours of others, but our own behaviours. The population projections for Australia demand that we place increasing importance on the way we care for our frail and disabled older people for the remainder of this decade and beyond.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ELDER ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Elder abuse is not a new issue, but rather a hidden and disguised phenomenon. Examining cross-cultural literature shows that elder abuse has occurred in earlier periods in the history of most cultures, including that of the Western world -

"Beneath historical changes in roles and status of the aged is an underlying and apparently universal ambiguity in people's attitude towards ageing... there is both fear and distaste for the decline of the 'self' with time" (Achenbaum, 1978, p.ix).

Literature and song of earlier centuries show that the elderly were upheld as figures of ridicule, greed, lust and sadness (Stearns, 1982, p. 29). On the other hand, all of us would be aware of the celebration of the intellect and longevity of some distinctive men, namely the great Greek writers and philosophers who apparently outshone the golden ideals of the youth of

the day (Stearns, 1982, p. 22). However, for most older people “in neither literature nor life was there ever a golden age... in the pre-industrial Western World” (Stearns, 1982, p. 19).

Abuse certainly predates modernisation in Western culture. The female elderly person, particularly, has been additionally affected throughout history by culturally constructed myth and inequality. There has been a pervasive belief (which still exists) of the non-usefulness and danger posed by post-menopausal women. They are stereotyped to represent barriers to accessing property, and are seen as a burden on family resources. These perceptions of danger, barriers and burdens have at certain times in world history been constellated into family and community tensions that played a significant role in the witchcraft craze which existed in parts of Western Europe several centuries ago (Stearns, 1982, p. 7).

## **CURRENT RESEARCH AND PERSPECTIVES**

If elder abuse has always been with us, why are we only now bringing it into the open? Answers to previous lack of awareness about elder abuse can be found in several areas (Kurrle, 1992, pp. 17-42); in a lack of professional and public awareness, in the social isolation of victims, and in negative ageist attitudes held by society generally.

Firstly, while some service providers and older people in different parts of the world, including Brisbane, recognised the problem (Eastman, 1984; Selby, 1983), there has been a general lack of professional and public recognition of older people as victims of abuse. Secondly, victims of abuse are usually isolated, hidden in the privacy of their home, thus making reporting difficult. Thirdly, victims of domestic abuse are vulnerable people, and often unwilling to report their situation. Older people are ashamed to admit that a trusted family relative is abusing them. Fearing retaliation from the abuser, and potential removal from their home to residential care, the older abused person rarely speaks publicly of their victimisation (Homer & Gilleard, 1990).

Two trends influential in bringing elder abuse to the attention of Australian policy makers and service providers are evident in the literature. Firstly, a “package” of research (McCallum, 1992, pp. 23-39), mostly from the US, began to reach our shores in the early 1980s. It gave Australian researchers, service providers and policy makers a framework for an existing social problem. However, it was not until almost a decade later that research into Australian communities began to appear.

Secondly, an examination on the rights of elderly people residing in Australian nursing homes was commissioned (Ronalds, 1989) and made widely available. Many barriers affecting residents’ choice, access to information, independence, and maintenance of dignity were identified. It was found that residents were not free of victimisation. Additionally, routinised living was identified as an issue impinging on residents’ rights. This report possible gave impetus to investigation of suspected abuse outside the walls of institution-based care of older people.

Britain is progressing at a similar pace to Australia. Concern about “granny battering” first appeared in Britain in 1975 (Burston, 1975, p. 592) and research appeared in the 1990s. The first US public forum on elder abuse occurred in the late 1970s after a Senate Committee examining domestic violence, noted that a large amount of violence was directed against the elderly (Council of Scientific Affairs, 1987). Elder abuse is now considered a major problem in America and every State has legislation relating specifically to elder abuse. Mandatory reporting of elder abuse situations exists in 43 States.

Australian Commonwealth and State Governments are beginning to develop strategies for dealing with elder abuse. The Commonwealth Government earlier this year established a Working Party on Protection of Frail Older People in the Community. At the State level, NSW and South Australia have completed projects incorporating comment from service providers and the community and are embarking on the implementation of strategies. Victorian policy makers are awaiting Government response on their recommendations. The Queensland Government recently suggested “Protecting Older People from Abuse” as a potential future policy issue for appropriate prevention and intervention (Office of Ageing, July 1993, pp. 18-21).

At the moment, local Australian community attitudes to the existence of elder abuse may comprise contradictory perceptions - some people may say “I’ve never seen elder abuse - I don’t know what you are talking about”. Alternatively, others may question general societal attitudes to older people in all walks of life, and may see elder abuse everywhere (Barron et al 1990). Perhaps the truth lies somewhere in between, and examining our own attitudes and behaviour regarding relationships with elderly people can be a useful place to start.

## **FACTORS CREATING URGENCY REGARDING ELDER ABUSE**

Certain trends are creating urgency regarding a response to concerns about incidence of elder abuse. These are related to demography and to current aged care policies. The numbers of older people have been increasing steadily as a result of earlier patterns of fertility and migration, and recent extensions to life expectancy. In 1900, life expectancy at birth was 55 years for women, and 51 years for men. It is now 81 for women and 74 for men. Presently, one in seven Queenslanders is over the age of 60 years. By the year 2031, more than one in four will be over the age of 60 years. (The increase in

proportion of older people in the population is also due to decrease in birth rates). Women make up the greater proportion of older people. This is of particular concern because older women are more likely to be financially disadvantaged and to live alone.

However, we may have traded our previous shorter life span for a few more years of disability (McCallum, 1992) with women especially being affected by a widening gap between probable age at death and age at onset of disability. The need for daily assistance increases with age: 44% of people over 60, and 62% of people over 85 report a need for help on a daily basis (Office of Ageing, 1993, p. 6).

Government policies in the care of older people have moved away from institutional care since the mid 1980s (DCS&H, 1986) and finances and services have been channelled into promoting and providing community care for disabled and frail older people (HACC Review Working Group, 1989). It is important to keep in mind that "community care" is not necessarily collective in nature, that it is not shared by a pool of ever-ready caring people who can lighten the load for the carers. Community care is individualistic (Dalley, 1988), with responsibility frequently falling on one person and this person is most often a woman. Feminism points to the exploitation of women in their role of carers.

## **IDENTIFYING ELDER ABUSE**

Community nurses and social/welfare workers in contact with older people seem to be the most likely people to encounter elder abuse. They report incidents at a rate higher than other service providers (Sadler & Kurrle, 1993) and higher than the population at large (Ogg & Bennett, 1992). Research knowledge about elder abuse has been largely based on agency samples, each distinct from the other, with definitions developed to suit local cultures and conditions. It is only recently that larger population-based studies have been achieved and that some national and international consensus regarding definitions has emerged.

The term elder abuse is a folk term for a very complex and sensitive phenomenon. It can include a whole continuum of behaviours from seemingly understandable outbursts of frustration to gross abuse, or neglect, affecting an older person. It can be used to describe a carer's action if they strike out in frustration at a confused older person. It can also be used to describe a confused older person attacking their elderly carer. This is called "carer abuse" or "reverse abuse". Financial exploitation of an older person is also included. Hence elder abuse is an emotive term, an umbrella concept, which we in Australia have acquired from America and which is now in our common usage.

Great care needs to be taken, however, in how the term "elder abuse" is applied. The vast majority of frail and disabled older people are cared for lovingly and adequately at home. To label a carer an "abuser" requires comprehensive assessment, and perhaps an understanding of the history and interactions of any given situation. We must beware of needlessly attacking "the autonomy and privacy of older adults and their carers" (McCallum, 1993, p. 34).

Health and social workers and welfare workers in aged care are confronted first hand with what it is like to be elderly in our society. They see the potential and the challenge of this stage of life, share the painful problems it can entail, and are confronted with their own professional and human limitations in the face of them: "problems of aloneness... financial difficulties, physical and/or mental incapacity, the threat of a nursing home..." (Fox, 1987, p. 14). When an elder abuse case is encountered, strong reactions can be engendered in the worker and effective coping mechanisms are required over prolonged periods (Quinn & Tomita, 1986, p. 6). Commitment can be frequently tested and, in order to protect themselves, service providers may need to rely on more powerful others to determine if the proof of abuse or neglect in a situation warrants action (Phillips & Rempusheski, 1986).

## **DEFINING ELDER ABUSE**

There is a great deal of debate and disagreement about the nature and extent of elder abuse. Unlike an illness such as diabetes or asthma which can be identified from an observable, consistent and agreed picture of the disease process, the labelling of behaviours as "abusive" is bound up in values and belief systems in different parts of society. It is affected by different cultural norms and traditions, it may change over time, and it may even be perceived differently by different groups at different times. "It is clearest in the cases of serious criminal acts and most ambiguous in less severe cases involving social interactions between family members" (McCallum, 1993, p. 26).

The following definition of elder abuse was used in one of the first Australian studies (McCallum et al 1990, pp. 11-13) and in a later Brisbane study, with the addition of the abuse of carers (Roberts, 1993):

### **Table 1 Brisbane Study: Definitions of Elder Abuse**

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Elder abuse is any pattern of behaviour by a person or persons that results in physical or psychological harm to an older person

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TYPE OF ABUSE	DEFINITION
Physical	Non-accidental use of physical force or coercion to inflict bodily harm; sexual abuse
Financial	Illegal or improper use of an older person's money, property or other assets by someone other than the owner
Psychological	Denied caring, withholding affection, treating older person as child
Verbal	Being Caused distress by threats, words of abuse, humiliation, scolding
Neglect	Essential and basic needs unmet, either deliberately or unwillingly - may be active or passive
Carer Abuse	Carers of elderly people who are distressed by abuse behaviours of the caree

A similar, but more comprehensive, definition was used at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Geriatric and Rehabilitation Service, Sydney (Kurrle et al 1992, pp. 673-676). This latter study was aimed specifically at people 65 years old and over for the purpose of establishing the rate of occurrence and patterns of elder abuse in an Australian population group attending a Geriatric Service.

This Hornsby Ku-ring-gai study established that 4.6% of older people attending the Geriatric and Rehabilitation Service were victims of abuse. These persons had been referred by General Practitioners to the Service for specialist assessment. Of 1,156 referrals during a twelve month period of people living in the community, a total of 54 cases were identified.

#### **ATTEMPTING TO IDENTIFY OLDER PEOPLE AT RISK**

The victim of elder abuse must be the ultimate person of concern. Elder abuse has been researched within a public health framework and this has led to researchers attempting to identify risk factors so that individuals older people, or their situation, can be isolated for assessment and prevention. Attention has also been focused on perpetrators.

The literature on elder abuse consistently indicates that when the perpetrator and the victim live together one (or both) of them are physically, mentally or economically dependent on the other. Research from the USA shows that abuse is likely to come from a close family member (80%-90%), and these same findings have been verified in Australian studies (Roberts, 1993). The abuser can be a spouse, an adult child, a grandchild, or other close relative. Generally speaking, spouses tend to be involved more in physical abuse and children in financial abuse. It is also known, however, that victims of elder abuse may live alone, that older people may be victims of multiple abusers, and that non-relatives may also perpetrate abuse (Roberts, 1993).

Like other forms of violence and intimidation, elder abuse can be found in all socio-economic and ethnic groups. It is found in rural areas and in the city, and in all religious groups. The majority of victims in Australian elder abuse studies have been women (possibly because there are fewer older men than there are women) and their ages range from 40 years to 96 years (Roberts, 1993). In the Hornsby study, which focussed on people 65 years of age and over, the mean age of victims was 79.3 years. When examining the available information on abusers in Australian elder abuse studies, ages range from 30 - 91 years of age and both male and female adults have been found to abuse (Roberts, 1993).

One of the main difficulties in dealing with elder abuse is the difficulty in identifying it. Health, community workers and general practitioners need to have a high index of suspicion because signs and symptoms are not necessarily obvious on first contact. Because the older person may be frail, signs and symptoms can be attributed to the ageing process. In addition, the older person will usually be reluctant to admit there is a problem.

#### **THE EXPERIENCE OF ELDER ABUSE**

Abusive treatment of disabled and frail older people can take many forms. However, they are usually classified in terms of physical (which can include sexual), psychological, verbal, financial abuse and active or passive neglect. In the Brisbane study, using the above definition, a phone call survey was made of direct service agencies which provide casework and professional services to disabled older people living in the community. While 44 agencies were contacted, only 22 (50% of the sample) reported situations of elder abuse. These 22 situations involved 61 victims of abuse. Thirteen of these were carers of all ages, 47 were older people, and one was less than 50 years of age. As this is not a population based study, findings cannot be generalised.

Using the above definition, information on 61 victims was classified. Identifying abuse having the major impact on an older person can only be subjective, as types of abuse coexist with at least one or more other forms of mistreatment. For instance, verbal abuse usually causes psychological abuse, and financial or physical abuse would be associated with other forms. Table 2 sets out the distribution of major types of abuse affecting the 61 victims.

**Table 2 Brisbane Study: Types of Abuse Identified**

TYPES OF ABUSE	NUMBER OF VICTIMS
Verbal	7
Psychological	8
Financial	10
Physical	11
Neglect (active and passive)	12
Carer (or Reverse Abuse)	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61</b>

To provide an overview and comparison of findings in the Brisbane study with other Australian case studies to date, the findings on verbal and psychological were combined so that a general impression of Australian findings can be gained (Roberts, 1993). Comparisons between studies, however, can only be superficially informative as no control groups were utilised and methodologies differed.

Table 1 in Appendix 1 describes caregivers' abusive behaviours identified by service providers in the Brisbane study. Table 1 shows that the seven victims of verbal abuse, were also subjected to psychological and financial abuse. Six of the seven were subjected to intimidating, dominating, or controlling behaviour by their carers. Four victims were deprived by the carers of the proceeds from the sale of their home.

Amongst the 8 victims classified as suffering psychological abuse, 5 were isolated out and overlooked by their carer or family. 3 were also victims of verbal abuse and 3 experienced financial abuse which entailed being deprived of their home and/or money.

Similarly, the 10 victims of financial abuse included 6 who were intimidated by caregiver behaviours and other events in the family. 5 of them had pensions or savings taken over, 4 were coerced into making a will in favour of the carer or strangers and 3 had the proceeds of their home taken over.

The 11 victims of physical abuse included 4 who were caned, punched or beaten. Other aspects of the group of physically abused older adults included the fact that 9 were also specifically either psychologically or verbally abused.

Table 1 in Appendix 1 shows that 12 victims in the Brisbane study were victims of active or passive neglect. Neglect can either be an act of commission or omission. 9 of these older people received inadequate levels of care which affected their nutrition needs and their health status. 5 victims were denied needed community services by their carer. Sub-standard housing was part of the experience of 2 of the 7 older people who were isolated from personal contact by their carers. 7 of these victims of neglect were also affected by financial abuse.

Conversely, Table 2 in Appendix 1 shows the abusive behaviours identified as inflicted on 13 carers who were victims in the Brisbane study. The most frequent types of abuse of these carers were verbal and psychological abuse. Complaining, nagging, blaming, accusing were verbally abusive behaviours targeted at 4 carers and intimidation and emotional blackmail were described in 4 other situations. Psychological abuse of carers occurred in 6 instances when it was associated with unreasonable or extremely demanding behaviours.

The above analysis of the 61 victims of abuse in the Brisbane elder abuse study shows that while carers can be abused and overly burdened by the demands and behaviours of a care-receiver, disabled and frail older people are abused in many more ways than their caregivers. They are abused with greater degrees of frequency and with devastating personal impact. Despite the distress these abused older people and their carers experienced, when extra services, assistance, or other options may have been available they often chose to maintain their situation as it was.

With regard to carer abuse, service providers will sometimes raise the point that they may be subject to a form of “systemic” abuse (Office of the Commissioner for the Ageing, Vol. 1, 1992, p. 64) which includes lack of resources to assist them, lack of realistic financial remuneration and the impact on the lives of carers due to the dedication their intensive role requires.

## **ABUSE OF OLDER PEOPLE DIFFERS FROM OTHER FORMS OF FAMILY ABUSE**

The dynamics of the ageing family and that of the aged individual are not necessarily the same as those which apply to children and parents. To begin with (Gelles, R.J. & Cornell, C.P., 1990, pp. 100-101) disabled and frail older people are not attached to many social networks, such as schooling or employment. In addition, they are more isolated from the mainstream of society than younger adults; they are frequently confined to their homes, thus allowing abuse to continue uninterrupted. Older people are usually unwilling to report incidents of maltreatment. If friends, relatives or neighbours are aware of what is occurring, they may not want to “interfere” and are frightened or unsure of what to do. Even when an incident of abuse is identified by health or community workers or police, many abuse victims are unwilling to admit abuse is occurring.

Older people are hesitant to admit abuse for a number of reasons (Gelles, R.J. & Cornell, C.P., 1990, pp. 100-101). Societal norms dictate that parents be “good parents”. They may be embarrassed that their child is capable of abusive behaviour and they often blame themselves for this behaviour being inflicted on them.

Their love for the abuser may be stronger than the desire to expose him or her to accusations, or to leave the situation. Older people are more concerned for the welfare of the abuser than their own safety and wellbeing. This causes them to be unwilling to take any legal action which might result in punishment for the abuser and, subsequently, increase their own isolation. Additionally, the fear of isolation may be associated with their living in the same house as their abuser. Alternatives available to disabled or frail older people are often considered worse than leaving an abusive situation, since older people often view institutional care to be a more unhappy option than to be abused at home.

A final factor hindering identification of victims of abuse has been the low level of awareness amongst professionals regarding issues surrounding elder abuse (Gelles, R.J. & Cornell, C.P., 1990, p. 101). This level of awareness has no doubt also been influenced by the above seemingly condoning attitudes of older people to their situation of abuse. For many reasons, agencies have been reluctant to become involved. They are concerned about violations of confidentiality. Agencies also lack personnel and resources to effectively handle reported cases.

## **POSSIBLE CAUSES OF ELDER ABUSE**

Just as complexity and debate surrounds definitions of elder abuse, so does a certain amount of disagreement surround the causes of abuse. Without a standard definition of elder abuse a causal theory is difficult to achieve.

Most experienced professional workers attribute abuse and neglect to bad situations not to bad people. It is impractical to expect all families to have the necessary financial, emotional and social resources to manage the additional burden of elder care.

However, causes of elder abuse may be examined according to commonalities found among all forms of family abuse. One of these is to be found in the power dynamics of situations. Family abuse occurs when power is abused, “when a more powerful person takes advantage of a less powerful one” (Finkelhor, 1983, p. 18). Yet, the full story may be more than this - it may include the pattern of the most powerful abusing the least powerful. Another commonality amongst different kinds of family abuse is the possibility that abusive “acts are carried out by people trying to compensate for their perceived lack of or loss of power” (Finkelhor, 1983, p. 19). If a dependent older person is severely disabled, physically and cognitively (particularly cognitively), then the able bodied abuser would have a wealth of resources with which to force compliance from the older person.

However, a loss of power may not necessarily be caused by experience within the family but by factors impinging on the individual from social conditions external to the family. The perpetrator may be responding to stressful life events in areas unrelated to their relationship with the victim (Pillemer, 1985, p. 156).

Common experience in family violence and elder abuse situations result from the dynamic interaction between personal, family, social and cultural values, priorities and goals. Factors such as these, although not causing abuse, contribute to its likelihood - poverty and unemployment, lack of community resources, intrafamily cycles of abuse and personal hedonism (Kosberg, 1988, p. 45).

Debate regarding causes of elder abuse has mostly focussed on the interaction between the caregiver and the care-receiver. On the one hand it is argued that abuse is due to the dependency and care needs of the older person and on the other hand, abuse is seen to be caused by the personal problems of the caregiver. One landmark US study (Pillemer &

Finkelhor, 1989) found that abusers were heavily dependant individuals and included spouses and children who were disabled, cognitively impaired and mentally ill. This group of perpetrators were dependant on their elderly relative for financial assistance, housing, social support and other help. It is known, however, that many instances of abuse of older people have long histories, and usually incorporate a complexity of different types of abuse. In the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai study mentioned earlier (Kurrle et al, 1992, p. 673) the following causes of abuse were identified and related to: physical and/or mental dependency of the older person 42%, psychopathology of the abuser 37%, family violence (intergenerational and marital) 24%, and stress of the carer 5%.

Negative attitudes to the ages have also been identified as a cause of elder abuse (Barron et al, 1990; Kurrle, 1992, p. 1742). Ageism as a barrier to community participation by older people has been studied and shown to exist in Australia (Dempsey, 1990, pp. 12-19; Job, 1985). Ageism is a notion that the old are inferior to the young and that their inferiority is biologically determined. Like other prejudices, eg. sexism, racism, it creates its own self-fulfilling prophecies and promotes lifestyle attitudes that damage individual potential. Since very little is known about the "old-old" (people over 75 years of age), there has been assumptions that disabilities naturally increase in this group, and others may relate to them in a patronising manner. Professional people in all areas are not immune from this attitude.

In a strategy to encourage non-ageist professional and community attitudes, the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments have endorsed the United Nations Principles for Older People - Independence, Participation, Care, Self-fulfilment, Dignity.

## **WHAT IS BEING DONE ABOUT THE PROBLEM**

As the numbers of dependent older people increase, so there can be an expected increase in the number of people at risk for abuse. However, the research at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai shows that some service providers are unaware they are seeing victims of abuse (Sadler & Kurrle, 1993). Additionally, it is evident that knowledge regarding options to assist the victims of abuse or their families can be limited. Police were noted to make very few referrals to appropriate health and community services. Conversely, health and welfare workers make few referrals to the police or other legal bodies, in spite of the fact that much of the behaviour they were observing constituted a crime, such as assault or fraud (Sadler & Kurrle, 1993).

The focus in New South Wales and, most probably, from the Commonwealth Working Party, will be on strengthening and equipping the agencies who are already in contact with older people in the community. The Hornsby Ku-ring-gai research highlighted that there was great room for improvement in developing cooperative strategies between agencies (Sadler & Kurrle, 1993). So one of the first tasks in NSW will be the establishment of service-based and interagency protocols for response to cases of abuse.

Another focus for early attention in NSW will be education for service providers about how to deal with cases of abuse once they have been identified. This emphasis on service provider education is also a strategy considered by the Commonwealth Government Working Party. The service providers for Commonwealth Government focus will be the Aged Care Assessment Teams. These Teams are attached to public hospitals throughout Australia and cover the majority of all states. The Aged Care Assessment Teams will eventually be especially equipped to assess and advise on suspected abuse situations amongst the population of frail and disabled people.

Mandatory reporting of elder abuse situations has not been generally supported by researchers, policy makers, service providers of older people in Australia. The experience of mandatory reporting in USA has shown that it does not always achieve what it sets out to achieve (Salena et al, 1984).

Strategies for dealing with elder abuse in South Australia are taking a different approach to those of NSW (Office of the Commissioner for the Ageing, Vol. 1, 1992). A research project has recommended the appointment of regional elder protection workers who will act as referral points, coordinators, consultants and, where no existing agency can respond to a particular situation, case workers. The proposal is that only one person per region will be appointed, and that they will not take over the work of existing agencies but be an additional resource.

The involvement of older people themselves in examining and talking about exploitation and abuse, demonstrates that there is a strong intent to tease out the complexity of elder abuse and to grapple with finding answers for the future.

The development of consistent policies and procedures for identifying and intervening in elder abuse situations is a crucial first step. This is being achieved in NSW and South Australia and it is hoped that other State Governments will develop similar projects so that, no matter where disabled and frail older people live in Australia, their rights to dignity and security can be secured.

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**APPENDIX 1**

**BRISBANE STUDY INTO ELDER ABUSE**

Please note that the number of victims in each type of abuse do not equate with the numbers of victims of each grouping of abusive behaviours because older people were mostly victims of more than one form of abuse.

**Table 1 Brisbane Study: Abusive Behaviours by Caregivers**

<b>TYPE OF ABUSE</b>	<b>NUMBER OF VICTIMS</b>	
VICTIMS OF VERBAL ABUSE	TOTAL :	7
Psychological Abuse:		
- Threatening with violence	1	
- Intimidating/dominating/controlling behaviour	6	
- Isolated personally, physically	2	
Verbal Abuse:		
- Scolding, insulting, swearing	3	
- Accusing, blaming	3	
Financial Abuse:		
- Pension is taken over, controlled	2	
- Proceeds of sale of home taken over	4	
VICTIMS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE	TOTAL :	8
Physical Abuse:		
- Suspected poisoning	1	
- Pulled, pushed	1	
Psychological Abuse:		
- Aggressive/controlling behaviour	4	
- Isolating/overlooked by carer or family	5	
- Threatened with eviction	1	
Verbal Abuse:		
- Abusive, demanding	3	
Neglect:		
- Services refused, food unprepared	2	
- Unhygienic surroundings	2	
Financial Abuse:		
- Deprivation of home/money	3	
VICTIMS OF FINANCIAL ABUSE	TOTAL :	10
Psychological Abuse:		
- Isolating/overlooked by family	1	
- Intimidating behaviours/events	6	
Verbal Abuse:		
- Blaming/accusing	3	
Neglect:		
- Personal needs unidentified/unmet	3	
Financial Abuse:		
- Proceeds of house taken over	3	
- Pension/savings taken over	5	
- Will made in favour of stranger/carers	4	
- Urged to pay additional board	1	
- Life tenancy revoked	1	
- Price below market offered for home	1	
- Money missing	1	

continued...

**Table 1 continued...**

VICTIMS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE	TOTAL :	11
Physical Abuse:		
- Bruising, severe bruising	3	
- Hitting, prodding	2	
- Caned, punched, beaten	4	
- Pushed, thrown	2	
- Routinely splashed with cold water	1	
- Tied to bed	1	
Psychological Abuse:		
- Isolated physically	3	
- Intimidated/controlled by carer	4	
- Traumatized	1	
Verbal Abuse:		
- Abusive shouting	1	
Neglect:		
- Strict diet, starvation	1	
VICTIMS OF ACTIVE AND PASSIVE NEGLECT	TOTAL :	12
Omissions or commissions causing neglect:		
- Low level/no care, nutrition needs/medical care unmet	9	
- Services refused, withheld	5	
- Sub-standard housing	2	
Psychological Abuse:		
- Intimidating/dominating carer	2	
- Isolated personally, physically	7	
Financial Abuse:		
- Pension taken over, personal needs unmet	6	
- Personal items missing	1	
Physical Abuse:		
- Bruises	2	
- Cigarette burns	1	
- Cuts	1	

**Table 2 Brisbane Study: Abusive Behaviours by Care-receivers**

TYPE OF ABUSE	NUMBER OF VICTIMS	
CARERS AS VICTIMS ("REVERSE" ABUSE)	TOTAL :	13
Physical Abuse:		
- Pinched, hit	2	
Psychological Abuse:		
- Uncooperative, difficult behaviour	3	
- Unreasonable demands/extremely demanding	6	
- Care-receiver refusing services	2	
Verbal Abuse:		
- Complaining, nagging, blaming, accusing	4	
- Insulting, abusive	2	
- Screaming, shouting	1	
- Intimidating, emotional blackmail	4	

# TODAY, CHILDREN - TOMORROW, CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM CANNON FODDER

Keith Hamburger, Director-General, Queensland Corrective Services Commission

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The title of this paper "Today, Children - Tomorrow, Criminal Justice System Cannon Fodder" reflects the view that Corrective Services is at the end of the conveyor belt, not only of the criminal justice system, but also of society. Corrective Services is an organisation which receives the final product of the functioning of an imperfect world, the human failures of society, and tragically more and more of these failures are young people.

Correctional organisations have no option but to accept these human failures. Some people believe they should accept who they are given without comment. In Queensland, the Corrective Services Commission (QCSC) does not subscribe to that point of view. The Commission believes its role includes a requirement to initiate change which can assist society in overcoming some of its problems.

The statistics speak for themselves. Last year in Queensland some 5,500 people went to prison and around 20,000 people were sentenced to community supervision. Because a significant proportion of prison sentences are for periods of less than twelve months, the number of people in prison on any one day in Queensland is around 2,000 and approximately a further 350 are in community custody in community corrections centres, hostels and the work outreach camps.

In addition, on any one day some 16,500 are under parole, probation and community service order supervision. In total this means that on any one day the QCSC is supervising and controlling some 19,000 offenders.

In relation to the type of people in prison today, the following facts are of interest:

- Driving and traffic offences account for one in every three admissions and discharges;
- Non-violent offences account for 85% of all admissions and discharges;
- 43% of all admissions are under the age of 25 years;
- 80% of all admissions are for sentences of under one year;
- 46% of all admissions had no prior imprisonment;
- 59% of homicide offenders had no prior imprisonment;
- 26% of all admissions are fine defaulters;
- Of the 2,000 people in prison today - only 80 are women;
- Some 40% are functionally illiterate;
- Somewhere between 11-15% are intellectually impaired or borderline intellectually impaired;
- Some 75% are substance abusers;
- They come largely from dysfunctional families.

20% of the prison population, some 400 inmates, are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, even though they are represented in the general community to the extent of only 2.6%. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners occupy the equivalent of two prisons; a prison costs around \$50 million to build and \$10 million per year to operate. Therefore, if the Aboriginal and Islander prisoner population remains constant, it will cost the Queensland taxpayer around \$300 million over the next ten years alone. The percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in prison is a reflection of very serious underlying social problems affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This issue will be discussed in more depth later in this paper.

It cost approximately \$63,000 per prisoner per annum to keep somebody in a high security institution, approximately \$15,000 per annum to keep an inmate in an open institution or in a community correctional centre, and only \$1,000 per annum to supervise offenders in the community. So, in terms of cost alone, community supervision makes a lot of sense; \$1,000 per annum versus \$15,000 to \$63,000 per annum.

As stated earlier, 85% of admissions to prisons over the course of a full year are people who have committed non-violent offences. Because the great majority of their sentences are for periods of less than one year, approximately 50% of the prisoners in jail on any one day are there for non-violent offences. The QCSC has been working actively to get these people out of prison into community-based supervision options where the three Rs of corrections can be applied; that is:

- Rigorous supervision of the offender in the community;
- Restitution or Reparation by the offender for the damage or loss he or she may have caused; and
- Rehabilitation, by exposing the offenders to appropriate programs aimed at addressing the underlying causes of their offending behaviour.

Three years ago, Queensland had the third highest imprisonment rate in Australia, at 140 per 100,000 of population, behind only the Northern Territory and Western Australia. As a result of the emphasis being placed by the Commission on the use of community-based supervision options, Queensland now has the second lowest imprisonment rate in Australia. The only states with lower imprisonment rates are Victoria and Tasmania.

Some people, and unfortunately some politicians, and indeed some media commentators argue that a lower imprisonment rate leads to more crime. The facts in Queensland prove this theory to be utter nonsense. Queensland, along with reducing its imprisonment rate, has now achieved the lowest return to prison rate in Australia. That is, as far as adult corrections is concerned, Queensland has less people going back to jail than any other state. The current return to prison rate is running at 47% while most other states run at between 60 and 70%.

Having looked at the statistics and data, the question facing correctional administrators today is: can they continue to passively administer sanctions imposed by Australia's criminal justice system when all the evidence shows that the system is not working? Not because it is intrinsically flawed but because it tends to operate in a stand-alone manner somewhat isolated from the rest of the social system. The system as it currently operates is unfair. It discriminates against victims; it is playing a large part in the destruction of the Aboriginal and Islander people; it is not restorative, largely fails to rehabilitate and it does not deter crime. On top of all this is the enormous cost to the taxpayer.

One only has to look at the percentage of offenders in prison today who have been in prison at least once before, to see that prison as a deterrent is a fatally flawed hypothesis. Most importantly, the criminal justice system, as it operates today, allows governments and the community not to face up to the real underlying social issues causing crime. This is the main focus of this paper.

People who work for Corrective Services, because of their position, see daily the very worst that society produces and fear for the future of society unless positive action is taken. Many people who work for Corrective Services don't like many aspects of what they do. But as the criminal justice system functions at the moment, it is a job that must be done and they and their colleagues right around this country do it to the very best of their ability.

The great tragedy in Australia today is that in many areas there are negative scenarios being promoted which unfortunately are becoming self-fulfilling prophecies. This is no more so that in the area of criminal justice.

Prophets of doom aided by sensational media reporting of crime and social breakdown have created a mind set in the population at large that the social system is in rapid decline and that the major contributing factor is the failure of the criminal justice system to adequately punish offenders, punishment which exacts vengeance and punishment which deters others.

The notion that it is possible for society to punish crime and social breakdown away is of course absurd and illogical. In Australia and in many other countries, particularly the US, where the negative self-fulfilling scenario of inevitable social breakdown has taken hold, what is seen to be emerging are the intellectually negative law and order proponents who persuasively pedal the simplistic and flawed notion that more police, harsher sentences, even capital punishment, provide the answers to our social problems.

These people denigrate the judiciary and correctional authorities as being soft and weak and through their media support, frighten politicians into adopting law and order stances which have resulted in the criminal justice system becoming increasingly armed and aggressive and consequently adding to the problem of crime and social breakdown rather than reducing it. The law and order proponents, base their thesis of "punishment - the answer to social breakdown" on the assertions "that a good kick in the backside at the right time did me a lot of good" - "a bit of good old army discipline sorts young blokes out" and they extrapolate these notions to a panacea for the whole of society. If only they had the capacity to stop and think, if only they could see the human flotsam and jetsam that the people who work in corrective services right

around Australia see on a daily basis, they would rethink their position.

Most people in Australia grew up in loving, supportive families where discipline was imposed in the context of an overall supportive environment. It was usually explained and understood by children to be generally appropriate. Over the course of their childhood most people would have received more positive encouragement than discipline and grew and flourished in a loving, supportive environment. Ninety-nine out of one hundred children who grow to adulthood in this type of family situation do not come into the clutches of the criminal justice system and ultimately do not go to prison.

The children who largely grow up and go to prison are those who come from dysfunctional families, who from the earliest age have suffered the horrendous trauma of sexual abuse, neglect, lack of food and shelter, coping with abusive, drunken parents, children whose whole living existence has been one of "punishment" - no love and support, no toys at Christmas, birthdays forgotten, growing up in an environment where abuse is common place and where disputes are settled by screaming and by violence.

The year before last in Queensland, there were 4,000 cases of substantiated child abuse - sexual, physical and emotional abuse, dealt with by the Department of Family Services. On this basis, over the next five years 20,000 Queensland children will be emotionally damaged through sexual and physical abuse. It is not difficult to understand why there has been an upsurge in juvenile crime.

Over a one year period 25 March 1991 to 13 March 1992, Kids Helpline, a telephone counselling service, took 36,900 calls from Queensland children. Of these 77%, that is almost 29,000 were problem calls relating to some form of abuse or relationship difficulties. This is a shocking indictment of the way a section of society lives and also of the rest of society who are largely prepared to sit by while children are abused and prisons overflow.

Members of the Queensland Community Corrections Board consider parole applications for offenders serving sentences of more than five years. Around 80% of these offenders come from the dysfunctional family situations described above. These circumstances are not presented to excuse their behaviour, but to perhaps explain it. However, more importantly they are presented to show how illogical, cruel and unthinking is the thesis that a society can punish social breakdown and crime away.

It is difficult to imagine anyone who has stood face-to-face with the clients of corrections or with future clients, the products of horrific sexual, physical and emotional abuse, the products of utter neglect, who could think of any further punishment corrective services could inflict that would improve their social functioning? There's nothing worse that can be done to them.

What the tunnelled visioned law and order proponents must understand is that most people who have had the great good fortune to be reared in loving, supportive, family environments, which fortunately applies to the majority of society but perhaps a decreasing majority, do not need the threat of punishment to stop us murdering, raping or stealing. Most people don't wake up each morning and immediately think "I must not commit a crime today because if I do I might go to jail." Punishment by the criminal justice system is not a conscious deterrent to prevent the vast majority of people committing a crime because most people have been appropriately socialised to go about their daily lives naturally doing the "right thing" living by the accepted norms of society.

Similarly, for those who come before the criminal justice system, prison as punishment is not a conscious deterrent for them, indeed for many it is a family tradition to be involved with the criminal justice system. It is a part of life and prison offers a temporary refuge to meet peers and to reinforce a rebel identity. It is not possible to punish social breakdown and crime away and governments who allow themselves to be coerced by the vocal unthinking law and order lobby into punitive, aggressive and violent sanctions are doing the nation a grave disservice and the next generation will pay the price.

The criminal justice system exists as a consequence of system and personal failure in the wider community and is grossly misused as a system of social control. It is easier for the community to salve its conscience, to take quick revenge by putting somebody in jail than to do the hard work and undertake the self analysis involved in addressing the underlying social issues which result in a democratic and free society imprisoning large numbers of its citizens.

The philosophy for corrections in Australia must be viewed in the context of an understanding that we are but one part of the wider social system and that reform in corrections in isolation from wider community reform can at best be only cosmetic. The community and governments must be alerted to the fact that the debate in Australia today should not be about a negative scenario based on crime and punishment but must be about a positive self-fulfilling philosophy of developing a caring, more supportive society, about creating a system of justice which "keeps peace in society", is restorative and facilitates conflict resolution and victim compensation.

To achieve a more caring, supportive, safer and just society there needs to be consensus about the real underlying

problems in Australian society which lead to social breakdown and crime. There must be agreement on the need for cooperative team work between significant community agencies, governments and government bureaucracies to address the problems.

The criminal justice system must move from the reactive after the event approach, building more prisons, hiring more police, to a proactive preventative model which focuses upon the real underlying front end issues such as child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, substance abuse, the relevance of the current education system to at risk children, and the policies affecting Aboriginal and Islander people.

If real progress could be made in these areas there would be a massive reduction in crime and deviance and a quantum shift towards a safer, more caring society. A system which allows the welfare authorities, Aboriginal and Islander affairs department, the education system, the courts, the police and corrections authorities to operate in isolation one from each other and at times in conflict with each other cannot be allowed to continue.

Society cannot allow these government bureaucracies to continue to operate in isolation from, or at times in unhealthy competition with community based agencies who in many cases are better placed to deal with some of the fundamental social problems. There needs to be a whole of government approach to social breakdown on a state by state basis. This perhaps could be coordinated by Cabinet sub-committees assisted by Chief Executives of the relevant government agencies and very importantly, leaders from significant community groups.

Alternatively, or perhaps complementary to the Cabinet sub-committee approach, in Queensland the Criminal Justice Commission is ideally placed to play an oversighting and driving role in coordination and planning. Structurally, one of the major shortcomings in public administration in Australia and particularly in the criminal justice system is the exclusion of real and meaningful community input including input from academia. The Queensland Corrective Services Commission model of a statutory authority controlled by a Board of part-time Commissioners has much to commend it in relation to real community input. The concept could be used to direct other criminal justice agencies as well as Education, Health, Welfare and Aboriginal Affairs Departments.

In so far as criminal justice and social agencies are concerned, the people end of government business, the community should be very wary of the super ministry models controlled by bureaucrats where process becomes more important than output. What is more preferable are smaller units, with clearly identified client groups, under strong community control or guidance with heavy emphasis upon managing and coordinating the interface between agencies. Human beings do not have the capacity to manage large organisations effectively and humanely. It is difficult if not impossible for individuals to gain the same sense of ownership or esprit de corps in large organisations as they do in small organisations.

There should be national conferences of the relevant State Ministers involved to share experiences and to encourage national debate on the topic of achieving a more caring, safer, crime free society. In this time of great economic difficulty such an initiative is extremely important, as a reduction in social breakdown will bring immense savings to the taxpayer. The cost of crime to the Australian taxpayer is in the order of many billions of dollars each year compounded by the immense misery and tragedy caused to citizens.

It could be predicted that when people of good intellect and good intent come together across the political spectrum and across the wider community to search for positive solutions to social breakdown, within a short space of time many magnificent programs and initiatives will start to take effect across the nation.

Perhaps what would be seen would be a rapid escalation of the move towards Aboriginal and Islander people being responsible for their own system of justice and sanctions which would be interwoven once again, as it was for thousands of years, with their spiritual beliefs and their system for socialisation of their young. Perhaps something would be done to free the Aboriginal and Islander people from the shackles of a pensioner mentality.

What is needed within the education system is an approved compulsory process for identification of children "at risk". That is, children whose personal and or family circumstances are such that they lack the basic stability to develop their learning potential or to cope with the school environment. Having identified these children the education authorities in consultation with appropriate community agencies, should establish a system of community based intermediaries to work with the school and the family, drawing on the resources of specialist agencies, to resolve problems in the home which impact on the ability of the child to participate in the education process.

In addition, what is needed is an alternative system of education established complementary to the main stream, for certain categories of "at risk" children where the emphasis is upon nurturing, self-esteem, values and practical skills aimed at engendering personal self confidence. The overall aim, to encourage these children back into the appropriate level of mainstream education once their basic personal needs for nurturing and self-esteem have been met. It must be clearly recognised that children cannot be expected to concentrate on the "3Rs" if they are worried about being sexually abused at

home, are not being fed and are suffering in many other ways.

Sometime ago the media reported statements made by police on the North side of Brisbane that juvenile crime was at a point where authorities should consider jailing children involved in a wide range of anti-social activity. Anyone who knows anything about prison knows the counter-productive aspects of this approach. All the evidence clearly shows that once young people are institutionalised they tend to become locked into the criminal justice system. Some media reports touched on the problem of street kids and in doing so used the term "feral children" which was coined by the Director-General of the Queensland Corrective Services Commission (QCSC) and which accurately reflects their status in that they roam uncontrolled through urban environments, living in a feral manner, completely unsocialised and at grave risk to themselves, as well as putting the rest of the community at risk.

The QCSC operates Work Outreach Camps in South West Queensland. These camps were established after the Charleville floods and are spread throughout South West Queensland. Camps consisting of 10 and 20 prisoners are engaged in community work such as kerbing and channelling, building sports fields, painting public buildings, looking after pensioners, etc. In these camps there are many young men who were street kids or feral children. When they first went to camp they couldn't use a knife and fork, they couldn't do their daily ablutions in a hygienic manner. They were totally unsocialised.

After a few months in the camp situation they become socialised, they learn to eat in a civilised manner, they keep themselves clean, they learn work skills, how to mix cement, how to paint, how to repair a lawn mower etc., they learn how to enjoy themselves through structured recreation, and then tragically they say to those in charge of them when they are due for parole, "we don't want parole, we want to stay with you, we enjoy it here, we are learning, we have good food, a decent place to sleep; if we leave you, we have nowhere to go". What a shocking indictment on society that for many young people the best experience they have in life is when they go to jail.

It is difficult for most people to come to terms with the fact that society allows children to live on the streets. One of the solutions that could be considered is that these children be collected from the streets, taken to an appropriate facility where they could be assessed and if they were found to have no adequate family support then they could be integrated into a system which involved something similar to the Work Outreach Camps where, for a period of some months, they can be socialised, fed and nurtured, their self-esteem worked on through various challenging recreational activities as well as some work and then reintegrated back into society through agencies such as the Shaftesbury Campus, Link-up, Boystown, etc.

The problem of feral children is a critical one for society and if society doesn't address it and if it doesn't address the underlying problems which are causing a rapid increase in dysfunctional families, then society is doomed to move blindly down the path to social decay which will inevitably lead to the situation which now exists in the US where, by the year 2000, some 1.5 million American citizens will be in prison. If Australian society continues to decay, the spectre of Los Angeles riots will loom in the not too distant future.

In examining other possible initiatives, someone may convince the Canberra bureaucrats that a national service scheme along the lines of the "serving Australia" concept put forward by his Grace Archbishop Peter Hollingworth, may have something to offer to a significant proportion of young people.

It is possible that governments may see the need for an integrated national strategy against child abuse and domestic violence with strong funding for appropriate community based support agencies. They may even extend this to look at the whole question of effective parenting. Funds may be found for more intensive education and other preventative programs against substance abuse. Perhaps national agreement could be reached on the need to limit the use of prisons to house violent offenders and others who pose a substantial risk to the community and deal with all other offenders by community based sanctions, thus saving millions of dollars of taxpayers' funds annually.

Perhaps at budget time when the police unions, the law and order proponents and the prison officers' unions lobby governments for funds for more police and more prisons, governments right around Australia, strongly supported by their bureaucrats and their community advisers, will call a moratorium on funding for police and prisons and divert funds to the front end to allow some of the initiatives discussed in this paper to proceed.

Perhaps the criminal justice system could be overhauled, with its clearly stated goal as being "to keep peace in society" and for it to be based on a restorative justice model with emphasis on restitution, out of court settlements, with victims and their agents playing a significant role in a more personalised system of justice. Millions of dollars of community work could be performed each year as restitution by offenders as part of a package involving access to rehabilitation and family reintegration programs.

The argument that this paper puts forward is that there is no one single answer to the problem of crime. Crime largely has its genesis in social breakdown and no community or government agency working alone can solve the problem or even

stem the tide. The issues can not be segmented and neatly confined within the boundaries of the various individual government agencies. There must be team work, firstly to agree on the problems and issues and secondly to work towards solutions. Governments should be encouraged to generate support for a whole of government and community approach to social breakdown. There must be a balance in the media of the outpourings of the simplistic law and order proponents and it should never be forgotten that the goal of the criminal justice system should be “to keep peace in society”.

If this approach is taken there can be positive self-fulfilling prophecy for the social development of Australia and when, in the years ahead, parents talk to their children’s children they will be able to say with pride that they left their country in better shape than they found it.

# **SOCIALISATION - AN ALTERNATIVE TO INSTITUTIONALISATION FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

All human behaviour is learned through the complex processes of socialisation. It is also acknowledged that socialisation influences tend to be strongest at particular life cycle stages, with the very young seen to be most susceptible to the experiences of social learning. These introductory observations have particular relevance in terms of the context which they provide for this paper. Within this framework it can be hypothesised that:

- Criminal and anti-social behaviours are just as readily learned as the more socially acceptable forms of behaviour through which the individual seeks conformity to society's norms and expectations.
- Young people are as susceptible to the learning of criminal behaviours in the critical stages of socialisation as they are to the acquisition of socially approved behaviours.
- Significant others, who may be peers and other associates of young people contribute to their socialisation experiences. That is, we become socialised by those with whom we interact, and more especially if those individuals display behaviour which we regard as desirable and worthy of emulation.
- Present methods of dealing with young offenders may contribute further to socialisation processes which result in further offence, rather than the realisation of socially desirable goals associated with the rehabilitation of youthful offenders and their transition to social roles and behaviours reflective of society's norms and expectations. Both in the nature of current approaches to youthful offenders, and in the networks of interaction which these foster, such individuals are likely to have undesirable behaviours reinforced.

In essence, what is argued here is that youthful offenders have become the victims of what we define as 'negative' socialisation influences. That is, we maintain that youthful offenders are not born, but made. Further, we would argue that current approaches to dealing with young offenders make direct contributions to the fully-fledged adult criminal. Against these propositions it is, therefore our view that youthful offenders need to experience processes of re-socialisation which will off-set, or compensate for, those negative influences which have resulted in their offending.

The further dimensions of this view are that:

- Re-socialisation approaches to the rehabilitation of youthful offenders are likely to be more cost-effective at a time when the resources available for crime prevention and rehabilitation of offenders are increasingly scarce.
- Re-socialisation approaches provide viable alternatives to current practices which are perhaps better known by their failure rate than by their successes.
- Re-socialisation approaches provide an opportunity for maintaining the youthful offender within a known social milieu at the level of the local community, rather than to expose the individual to the "hardening" influences and further negative socialisation experienced within the correctional system.
- Re-socialisation approaches address the problem of youthful offence at its root cause and as such offer a means of early intervention, rather than waiting for the inevitable appearance of further re-offence and the cycle of recidivism, and movement into the world of adult crime which seems a not unusual "career path" in the life of many young offenders.

## **IS THERE CAUSE FOR CONCERN?**

Statistically, there is every reason to believe that the present system has failed to meet the needs of the youthful offender. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (1989) reported the annual release of more than 3,000 juveniles from Australia's juvenile detention facilities, and the Commission's further claim that "...the State authorities charged with their protection and support have seriously failed in their duties" (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1989, p. 112). Further, the cost of juvenile crime in Australia was estimated at \$1.5 billion in 1990 (Impact, 1990). The cost of

operating the Juvenile Justice Services in Queensland in the 1991-1992 financial year was \$45.1 million (Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs Annual Report, 1992). The Australian Institute of Criminology (1991) reported an incarceration rate for juveniles in June 1991 at 66.6 per 100,000 of the juvenile population. Such statistics tend to suggest a system in chaos, offering few answers to what has rapidly become a significant social problem in Australia and elsewhere. Arguable, youthful offence is a significant social problem both in terms of the statistical magnitude of the offending population, and in recognition of the problem by significant individuals in society - perhaps a primary reason for conferences such as this.

## **CAUSAL AGENTS AND CAUSATIVE FACTORS**

We would do well to remind ourselves that the current patterns of youthful offence are not susceptible to simple explanation and we are unlikely to be able to establish simplistic cause and effect relationships. However, some appealing correlations can be discerned within the broader fabric of a society undergoing rapid structural change. For example:

- It is well established that among those most effected by current economic conditions and the diminished demand for labour resources are young people in the age range from 15 to 24 years. In these terms it can be argued that the lack of employment opportunities impedes a successful transition to adult roles and status', and a resultant loss of self-esteem in a society which continues to place great stock on work roles (Killion, 1992).
- The successful passage to adult roles is made the more difficult for those who lack employable skills as a result of early cessation of schooling. This point seems further exacerbated by a system of schooling which may have already contributed to the individual's low levels of self-esteem, a possible major reason for early school departure (Western, 1983).
- Within the framework of youth unemployment it is also apparent that apart from the impediments to the transition to adult roles and status', young people are confronted with lifestyle expectations which are characterised by a high standard of material well-being. Unable to acquire the material trappings of the conspicuous consumer because of a lack of income, the choice is then to simply 'take' whatever is required.
- A further variable within this complex causative framework relates to the current levels of youth homelessness. In part of reflection of the pressures experienced by the family in Australia, and in part reflective of fundamental changes in the nature of the structure of the contemporary family unit through present patterns of divorce, re-marriage, and single parenthood, for young people there may be little choice other than to seek alternative, but often inadequate, living arrangements at a stage when their personal resources for doing so are non-existent.
- There would seem to be a relationship (although by no means an exclusive one) between youthful offence and the additional burdens which some young people carry as a result of racial and ethnic differences. The implications of this relationship run much deeper in a society which is yet to fully discover the meaning of the term 'multiculturalism', but for now it is apparent that many youthful offenders are as visible by virtue of their racial identities as they are by virtue of the offences which may be committed. Such visibility is heightened in those communities where perceptions of a stereotype result in a ready propensity to identify likely suspects.

These, and other social factors underscore a host of variables which contribute to negative socialisation influences. The inability to achieve employment as a hallmark of success in the adult world; the inability to muster the financial and other resources required to attain a lifestyle constantly thrown up by media and other images; and, the inability to find a measure of security in a parental home with an appropriate level of nurture and positive re-enforcement of socially acceptable behaviours.

## **IS INSTITUTIONALISATION THE ANSWER?**

Society's responses to youthful, and for that matter adult, offenders have changed over time as we have become better informed about the effectiveness of various forms of intervention, and as society's perceptions of the seriousness or otherwise of the particular offence have changed. In simplistic terms this is a situation constantly in flux (and chaos) as society continually redefines its norms and morals, and with those its definitions of acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours. For this reason, of course, we should approach any analysis of hardcore statistics with a degree of caution. That is, has the incidence of offence increased, decreased, or simply mirrored society's changing moral standards?

In this context responses to youthful offence can be seen to centre of three sets of approaches which, in themselves, speak

openly of the ideological stance adopted by relevant authorities with the criminal justice systems:

- Retribution
- Deterrence
- Rehabilitation

Most contemporary responses to youthful offence appear to represent varying mixes of the latter two when sentencing. Given the apparent failure of current practices we are forced to consider the effectiveness of such approaches, particularly when these involve the removal of the young offender from the wider community, possibly to be socialised into an institutional subculture which might be seen to reinforce the further acquisition of maladaptive behaviours. As Reiner (1990, p. 10) observes, such systems give "the least amount of attention to the youngest who have committed the least serious offences...The system currently operates like a hospital that concentrates on terminal patients - for whom there is virtually no hope - at the expense of those who could be saved through early treatment".

In short, we share Reiner's view that institutionalisation, while certainly contributing to perceived community safety, has generally failed to ensure the successful transition of the young offender back to the mainstream community (see, for example, the work of Walker and Biles, 1985). We would claim that for many young people such experiences simply serve as the bases of further negative socialisation.

### **THE EMERGENCE OF FRESH APPROACHES IN THE 1990s**

Gathering attention since the 1980s, and modelled after earlier American experiments (see, for example, Fischer, Teichman and Geiger, 1984), Greenwood and Zimring (1985) and Feldman, Caplinger and Wodarski (1983), new approaches to programs for young offenders, both in custody and in the community, have been implemented in various States and Territories in Australia. Included in these are the Northern Territory's Wilderness Work Camp initiated in 1986 (Davidson, 1992) and the West Australian Station Alternative Custody Program commenced in 1989 (Hepburn, 1992). Along with these responses to the needs of young offenders in custody, other approaches are following a non-institutional approach. Tansky (1990) reports on several such ventures in Queensland often based on the perceived benefits of utilising recreation opportunities as a vehicle for the development of intervention strategies. In similar terms Saunders (1990) reports on the 1990 High Plains Trek in Victoria and we can also note the Outdoor Experience Program operated by the Brosnan Centre Youth Service in that State (Brosnan Centre Youth Service Annual Report, 1990). Hill's yet to be published work details the development of the Petford Training Farm in North Queensland.

Typically, such services and programs have become the responsibility of non-government agencies. Through various funding and subsidy arrangements these agencies can be seen to fill gaps which government is either unwilling or unprepared to fill. In this respect, programs for young offenders are not vastly different from the approaches taken to the way in which Australian governments have chosen to deliver a broad set of welfare services and programs. Such an approach carries with it a considerable question of continuity when government budgetary constraints result in reduced funding of such initiatives. There is a clear need within the present system for government to provide some assurance that funding will be continued at least to the point where meaningful evaluations of effectiveness can be undertaken. The relative recency of such approaches and responses to the youthful offender makes folly of any 'instantaneous assessments'. However, the work of Davidson and Robinson (1975) in examining American programs suggests significant increases in school attendance (up by 59%), employment rates (up by 27%) and reductions in recidivism by as much as 38%.

Despite such apparent success rates, it is also important to note that not all have favoured such programs in America, and Asher (1986) for one suggests that institutional experience may indeed have beneficial consequences.

### **USING THE COMMUNITY AS A VEHICLE FOR RE-SOCIALISATION**

The emerging approaches we have briefly outlined are based both ideologically and practically on the principle of positive re-socialisation. Regardless of the nature of the activities undertaken within the context of these programs, they express a clear intention to turn previously negative socialisation experiences around. Such settings provide a meaningful milieu within which the youthful offender can be re-socialised along behavioural pathways found more acceptable in the mainstream of society.

Nonetheless, the present rates of youth offence suggest that not all young offenders will have the opportunity to become participants in such programs. For this reason it is our view that much can be achieved in the way of re-socialisation at the level of the local community, a concept discussed by Harlow, Weber and Wilkins (1971).

In these terms we propose the development of what we have termed the COUNTERACT MODEL with the aim of achieving positive re-socialisation of youthful offenders through the propensity of interactive community support networks to achieve

change in desirable directions. The model is founded directly on the premise that youthful offence is a community problem, requiring maximum community response and involvement in order to counteract its least desirable social and individual outcomes through earlier, rather than later, interventions. The model is thus based on traditional views of community which see it as the significant point of contact which individuals have with their society; and that communities continue to exhibit mutual care of their members, and shared responsibility.

The Counteract Model as shown in Diagram 1 is purposefully client (young offender) centred. In our view past practice has frequently failed for the simple reason that administration of programs and services has often caused a loss of focus on the needs of client groups.

The community network is seen to extend to a number of key stakeholders in the successful re-socialisation of youthful offenders. While such stakeholders may vary from one community to another, we recognise the following as critical roles:

- It is essential that members of the parental or surrogate family unit be provided with the skills necessary to enable them to facilitate changes in behaviour and attitude. That is, these people must be shown ways of 'rewarding' displays of acceptable behaviour in order that it might be reinforced (Berkowitz and Graziano, 1972; O'Dell, 1974).
- Past negative socialisation experiences often reflect the young persons interactions with less desirable peers who have played the role of 'significant others' (Matthews, 1992). Our model proposes an active role for young people who have succeeded in achieving positive re-socialisation and who are thus prepared to act as viable role models. While such arrangements would require assessment of suitability, we consider that such an approach empowers the young and raises levels of self-esteem.

## **THE COMMUNITY AS A VEHICLE FOR RE-SOCIALISATION**

The model assumes on-going roles for existing community agencies of various kinds including some about which the youthful offender has almost certainly developed negative attitudes. Such agencies, much like the family members noted earlier, must come to a different understanding of their roles and how they might contribute to positive re-socialisation. Dependent primarily on the needs of the individual young offender, such agencies may be found within the context of:

- Education authorities where additional schooling is regarded as a means of overcoming those disadvantages which have resulted from premature completion of secondary schooling.
- Employer groups for which changed attitudes also form an important basis to the removal of the stigma which young offenders experience. While it would be asking perhaps too much of local community employers to provide preference to young offenders in staff selection processes at a time when labour resources are abundant and job opportunities few (Killion, 1992), it is desirable within the framework of the Counteract Model that major employer groups in the community are helped to achieve a heightened awareness of the important contribution they can make to the re-socialisation process.
- If the lack of employment opportunities is seen as on-going (and unfortunately there is every reason to suspect that it is) then a considerable onus is placed on recreation agencies to provide viable non-work opportunities as elements in the re-socialisation of young offenders. If the young person is unable to develop a sense of self-worth through work roles, recreation roles requiring co-operation with others, and assumption, perhaps, of leadership positions eventually, can provide significant compensations. This is an important key to the Counteract Model and positive re-socialisation. This is most likely to occur when the individual is assisted toward achieved status positions in a society in which achieved status' have long been important.
- The model assigns key roles to crime prevention and law enforcement agents as represented in the local community. While past practices are sometimes deeply entrenched throughout these systems, recent innovations will result in a better educated membership of such agencies. Regardless of the changes in educational opportunities for police and other officials, important gains can be made when law enforcement agents are drawn from members of minority groups for the expressed purpose of presenting alternate role models and control strategies. For example, the employment of Aboriginal liaison officers in the Rockhampton community is regarded as having had a rapid impact on the incidence of juvenile crime and offence.
- The model anticipates on-going roles for community based welfare agencies. Such agencies will continue to fill the gap in such areas as accommodation where this is required by homeless youth, and to provide health care and counselling services when such supports are required.

In examining the Counteract Model, much of what we are proposing is, in its various elements, already in progress to a greater or lesser extent in the emerging programs for youth offenders throughout Australia. However, our focus is different in expressing a direct concern with the community as a setting for positive re-socialisation. For as long as juvenile crime remains a visible concern in Australian communities, each community has the potential to commence the operation of its own approach. The Counteract Model is a 'grassroots' approach to what is, after all a 'grassroots' problem in terms of its impacts and consequences.

## **IMPLEMENTING THE COUNTERACT MODEL**

The successful re-socialisation of young offenders through networks of community interaction is unlikely to occur spontaneously. The Counteract Model requires community sponsorship if it is itself to be a catalyst of change. In these terms we strongly criticise the current divisions and disaggregations of responsibility for all policies concerned with young people. If there is indeed chaos in the system, when it comes to youthful offenders the chaos is a creature of bureaucratic megalomania. Perhaps the greatest obstacle to change in the ways in which we cope with the problems of young offenders is found in the fact that government agencies and departments are themselves following unco-ordinated, often conflicting approaches.

We suggest that the time has come to seriously review the totality of youth policy, including matters related to youthful offenders, and to provide a clear delineation of responsibility. In this respect there is now considerable potential within the system to address the needs of young people following the National Youth Summit of May 1992. A significant outcome of that Summit was the formation of the Youth Ministers Council with representation from each State and Territory and the Commonwealth and the formulation of the Australian Youth Policy (1992). While having considerable emphasis on questions related to youth unemployment this policy states the intention to establish "a national agreed framework for Youth Ministers against which youth policy development, program and service delivery can be better co-ordinated across various agencies to comprehensively meet the needs of all young Australians".

Moreover, the Australian Youth Policy recommends that "Youth Ministers recognise a holistic approach is essential in working with young people to address their needs and also recognise the current challenges facing young people...".

Finally, the Australian Youth Policy, much like the proposed Counteract Model, recognises the role and responsibilities of each level of government (local, state and federal) to provide assistance and opportunities for young people.

Such policy mechanisms as are now in place also carry with them funding support amounting to some \$770 million over three years. While it is true that much of this has been, or will be, directed as providing training opportunities, support for the community based Counteract Model which we are proposing may be seen in related aspects of these provisions. For example, the Youth Policy (1992) makes provision for increased funding for youth counselling services; work opportunities exist within the new landcare and environment action program; and the employment and accommodation needs of homeless and 'at risk' young people are specifically related to community based initiatives.

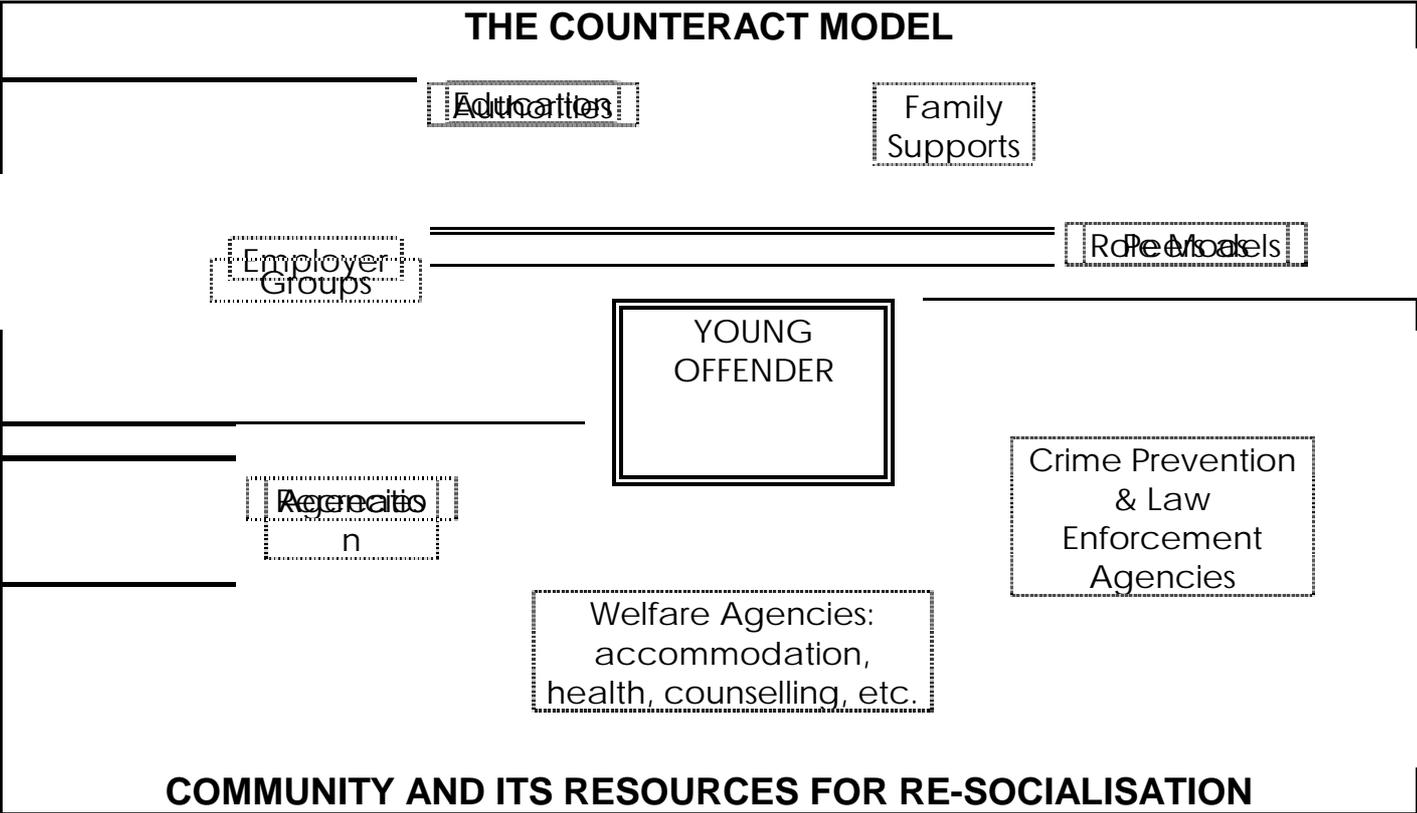
In short, the policy mechanisms for the implementation of a community based re-socialisation strategy through the Counteract Model are now in place and it is recommended that these have an important role in networking the various elements of the Counteract Model at the level of local and regional communities. However, a final cautionary note - such a role should not be allowed to substitute for the momentum which we believe can be generated though community's addressing their own issues in their own ways. To simply replace one web of red-tape with another would, in our view, only serve to replicate past failures which have too often overlooked the fact that the youthful offender is the focus of concern.

## **CONCLUSION**

Humans have an enormous propensity to learn. Indeed our social learning experiences are what make us unique among life forms. Further, such experiences are life-long. What we have suggested here is that with support from Australia's emerging youth policy provisions the forces of socialisation can be harnessed such as to promote socially desirable outcomes for young offenders, earlier rather than later, and utilising the dynamics of community support networks to form what really amount to important primary group relationships in achieving change. In real ways, the opportunities and resources are there to provide youthful offenders with a 'second chance'. We now require expressions of willingness on the part of community groups either to accept the challenge and take action, or sit passively by while issues of juvenile offence remain unresolved.

## **DIAGRAM 1**





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# OFFENDING PATTERNS OF WOMEN IN PRISON

Marg D'Arcy, Victorian Community Council Against Violence

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is an initial analysis of interviews carried out with twenty five women prisoners during April - August 1993. It should be noted that this is work in progress towards a masters degree at La Trobe University.

It should also be noted that the views expressed in this document are my own and do not necessarily represent those of the Correctional Services Division, Department of Justice in Victoria, where I was working as the Women's Project Coordinator while conducting the research. I would like to record my appreciation of the department for allowing me to conduct the interviews, the staff at the three prisons where I interviewed the women (Barwon, Fairlea and Tarrengower), and of course, the twenty five women who agreed to be interviewed and who gave their time and thoughts so freely.

### Methodology

A qualitative approach has been adopted with the information presented largely being gained from interviews with women in prison who are serving sentences of twelve months or less. The women interviewed were, at the time of interview located in three prison locations - Fairlea, Barwon and Tarrengower.

This approach was chosen because, in looking at crime prevention, those best positioned to comment on what works and what does not work as a deterrent are not bureaucrats or academics but the offenders themselves. If we do not listen to the voices of those in our prisons we cannot accurately identify motivations for committing crimes or strategies for crime prevention.

The process used to select prisoners for interview was that every third prisoner in the prison on the day of the interviews was selected and of those, those serving sentences of twelve months or less were asked if they would be willing to be interviewed. If they were willing, a time would be arranged and the interview conducted. A loose interview schedule was developed and followed for the interviews and all but one of the interviews were taped, with the women's permission (see Attachment A). It was explained to women before the interviews that the information they provided would be confidential and that real names would not be used. Twenty nine requests for interviews were made, with three women refusing and one woman proving impossible to arrange a time for, because she was always so busy working.

A number of questions were used to identify economic status. They were:

- source of income;
- marital status;
- period in paid work in last five years;
- longest time in one job; and
- stability of housing over last five years.

In addition to economic status, research has suggested that other factors common to women in prison include family background and substance abuse, thus questions about these were included.

It should be noted that, in the quotes from the women interviewed, the names used are not the real names.

## 2. BACKGROUND

Statistics on women's imprisonment were gained from the National Prison Census 1983-1991, produced by the Australian Institute of Criminology. These statistics provide a snapshot of the prison population on the 30 June in any one year.

### 2.1 Imprisonment of Women

The rate of imprisonment on a national level indicates that in imprisonment rates for women there has been a general increase in both numbers and as a percentage of prisoners overall. This increase has not been uniform or consistent. The numbers of women in prison reached a peak in Victoria in 1988 with only slight fluctuations since then in all states except New South Wales which showed a dramatic increase in women's imprisonment in the years 1990-1991 (see Table 1). This is reflected in the national statistics for imprisonment during the periods 1982-1991. In 1982 the percentage of women in the total prison population was 3.4% increasing to a high of 5.3% in 1988 and reducing to 4.8% in 1991 (Australian Institute of Criminology, 1992).

## 2.2 Offences for which Women are Imprisoned

While there has been some rise in Australia of imprisonment of women for crimes of violence, the largest increase has been in crimes against property, where convictions of women have increased by around 200% since 1983. Interestingly, despite the high incidence of illegal drug use amongst women prisoners, the number convicted of drug offences in 1991 was around the same as those in 1983. Offences against good order which would include prostitution and soliciting have fluctuated constantly, reaching a national high in 1989 and decreasing again by 1991. Consistently in the last decade very few women in prison have been convicted for traffic offences.

As Klein and Kress noted in 1981, women's role in crime continues to reflect their role in society:

“Women are traditionally just as timid and just as limited by male constrictions on their roles and male leadership within the area of crime as they are ‘above ground’. They are no more big time drug dealers than they are finance capitalists. They are however, first, petty offenders in the are of ‘consumerism’ which reflects their position as houseworkers in ‘straight society’” (Klein & Kress, 1981, p. 166).

## 3. ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

The key issues which were identified prior to the interviews and which information was gained about from the interviews were:

- Offences: Current offence and length of sentence, history of prior offences, prior imprisonment and experience of Community Orders.
- Children: Numbers of children who they cared for prior to the mother coming to prison, who they are cared for by during imprisonment and any concerns that the mother identifies.
- Economic Status: Factors considered are the incidence of violence or abuse as a child or an adult, the stability of the childhood and experience of foster care or institutional care.
- Drugs: The use of legal or illegal drugs, the age first used and links to offences.
- Impact of imprisonment on the woman herself, her family and future options.
- Ideas for alternatives to imprisonment.

### 3.1 Offences

The most common, most serious offence amongst the women interviewed was related to theft. 6 women were imprisoned for theft with one being imprisoned for receiving stolen goods. The next most common was Fraud or deception with 8 women in prison on those offences, two of those being social security fraud. 5 women had committed offences that were directly drug related, ie. trafficking, cultivation, use or possession, and 5 were in for offences against the person. Offences against the person range from intentionally causing serious injury to common assault.

Sentence lengths range from 21 days to twelve months and a number of women had suspended sentences, fines or community based orders in addition to their prison sentence.

Of the women interviewed, only 4 had no prior offence history. 3 of those women were convicted of fraud or deception including 1 social security fraud and 1 for trafficking in amphetamines and, with the exception of one, had education levels in the higher range; Year 11, Year 12 and a B Ed. 2 of them were over 40 and saw their offences as very much an aberration. As Alice noted:

“I can't believe I did it. I didn't need the money...now when I think about it, it was such a stupid thing to do...it was just three months when I wasn't thinking”.

Eight women had prior convictions but had not been to prison before, with five of those women having been placed on a community based order for pervious offences. Thirteen women had been to prison before, with seven women having been placed on a community based order for prior offences. One woman had come to prison as a result of breaching an

Intensive Corrections Order. Of the 12 women who had been on community based orders, mixed experience of the orders was reported. Reasons given for not completing included:

“I didn’t like the supervisor at...she didn’t like me because I was on methadone. I was breached for not turning up when I was sick even though I had a medical certificate”.

“my son died of SIDS and I was doing my supervision and for the work they wanted me to go and work in a childcare centre...they did offer me another place, but I just didn't want to do nothing”.

Women interviewed also indicated positive experiences of community based orders:

“I completed the order with no problems and enjoyed the community work with blind people”.

“I was on a community based order and I liked it - I made soft toys for the Harley Davidson toy appeal”.

Almost half (11) of the women received a prison sentence without having previously had the experience of a community based alternative. This could indicate in some circumstances the severity with which the court viewed their offences, however it may also indicate that courts are not considering the alternatives of community based dispositions prior to looking at imprisonment.

### **3.2 Children**

Eighteen of the 25 women had children, with 37 children in total. 14 women had at least one child in their care prior to their imprisonment. Five of the mothers had children in a range of other care arrangements including with their grandmother or other relatives, foster care and in one case the father had previously had custody. Arrangements for children while the mother was in prison included living with the grandmother or other relatives (7), living with the father (7 with all but one not having lived with the father prior to the mother coming to prison) and one woman who had two of her three children residing with her at Tarrengower.

Eleven of the mothers had their first child when they were under twenty with four having their first child by the time they were sixteen. All the women 16 or under at the birth of their first child had at least one child in someone else’s care prior to coming to prison and in 2 cases lost custody as a result of their imprisonment.

Helen, for instance, was 21 and had four children aged from 2 to 7. Her older two are in permanent foster care, the younger two had been living with her, however after she was charged their father applied for and gained custody and she does not believe she will regain custody after release from prison.

Robin had a child taken out of her care because of her drug use three years prior to coming to prison. She had been trying to have her child returned by attending rehabilitation and giving urine samples but since this prison sentence an application has been made to put the child into permanent foster care. Many of the women expressed concern about the arrangements for their children while they were in prison:

Helen: “I don’t feel good about the kids being with their father because he’s an asshole...he doesn’t bring them in to see me, you just lose touch and he’s had them too long now.”

Irene: “her father has not seen her on a regular basis since she was born but he took her from my sister while I was in the court cells and she is now with his sister...I’ve heard that she hasn’t been eating properly, my sister says she is fretting for me.”

Some women did note that they were happy with the care of their children while they were in prison.

### **3.3 Economic Status**

Economic status was measured by looking at: marital status, education, source of income, employment and housing stability.

Three of the women described their marital status as being in a lesbian relationship, ten described it as de facto, seven as single, two as divorced, two as separated, one as engaged and one as widowed.

Only four of the women had finished year twelve or had some post secondary qualifications. Two had completed Year 11 and undertaken in one case an apprenticeship as a chef which she had not completed, and in the other an accountancy course at TAFE. Seventeen had only reached Year 9 or under at secondary level and two had completed Year 10. This is

also reflected in statistics taken on women's reception into prison which shows a similar pattern in level of education.

In 1991-92, 86% of women received into prison in Victoria were identified as being unemployed on reception (Office of Corrections, Victoria, 1992, p. 81). This was also reflected in this group of women with twenty three women indicating that they were not employed on reception into prison, six of these had lost their jobs because of being charged. One woman was employed up until her imprisonment and expected she would have her job back on release and one was self employed.

In addition to their employment status on reception into prison women were asked about their employment career. Two women had never been in paid employment and a further six had not had paid work in the last five years. Six had been in paid work only one year or less (in one case two weeks) in the last five years and five had been in paid work for between three and one year, two for four years and only three had been employed continuously in that five year period, with a further one being self employed.

Types of employment included: cleaning, printing, computer operator, shop assistant, secretarial, kitchen hand, chef's apprenticeship, packing, process work, clerical, massage parlour, waitressing, accountant, catering. One woman gave her occupation as crime.

The women generally had insecure accommodation with only two women living in one place for the last five years, five in two places, three in three places, three in four place, four in five and seven in more than five. Of that seven who had lived in more than five places, one woman said she had lived in 60-70 places in that time and four others in more than fifteen.

"I've lost count of the number of places I've lived in, it would be at least 15, mainly rooming houses".

Despite the insecure economic situation which the interviews indicated, only seven of the women attributed their offences to economic need alone, although as is noted in the discussion on drugs a large number of women linked their offences to the need for money to buy drugs.

The two women in prison for social security fraud attributed their offence to a need for money:

Barbara: "I did it because I needed the money, I had two kids of my own, my sister had died and I had her son as well, I couldn't get a Housing Commission place so I had to rent private, you just can't do it - I'd like to see some of these people go out and do it".

Barbara was charged for an offence committed eight years previously, since that time she had been supporting herself and her children by working and paying back the money she owed to social security.

Louise: "I was living in a de facto relationship and he was working and I was getting a pension for seven years. I wasn't getting enough money off my de facto. I needed money for food in the house and clothes for the kids.

Other women spoke of the ease of offending when they needed money.

Dale: "If I had bills outstanding I'd do it...you can't pay \$105 rent and gas and food and tickets to go and see the doctor out of a dole cheque.

Interestingly, two women who were in prison for fraud and deception made the point that the actual need for money was not important.

### **3.4 Family Background**

During the interviews I asked a number of questions to identify how stable the woman's childhood had been and whether the woman had experienced any form of abuse as a child or as an adult which may have an impact on her life choices. The prevalence of the experience of violence in the background of women in prison has been raised previously (Rann, 1993; Denton, 1993; Easteal, 1992), so it is important to explore. This is not done as way of providing an excuse for women or as a way of portraying them as victims. Many women have experienced violence either as children or as adults and this has not caused them to turn to crime. Understanding the extent of such violence, however, in the background of women in prison may create a better understanding of their offending behaviour.

Only four of the women interviewed had experienced what they described as a stable childhood and no violence either as a child or an adult.

Fifteen of the twenty five women had experienced some form of abuse as a child including violence directed at them or witnessing the father's violence towards the mother.

Julie: "I was born in prison, my mother was not allowed to spend any time with me... (my grandfather) was an alcoholic and he was very violent and he used to sexually abuse me between the ages of four and ten. I didn't tell anyone...when I was 14 I went for a walk in the morning and these guys came up and took my handbag and came back and raped me. In this lifestyle there is a lot of physical and sexual violence.

Two women had been raped as adults, one while she was working as a prostitute. Two women who did not indicate they had been abused as children had been in foster care or institutions for a large part of their childhood.

Many of the women who had experienced violence or disruption in their childhood continued to experience it in adult life.

Robin: "my husband bashed me, I had internal injuries so bad that the doctor said it looked as if I had been run over by a car, I'm unable to have children again. That went on for eight years".

A factor which I found most unsettling in the interviews was women who described their childhood as "normal and then went on to reveal a most disturbed childhood.

Kerry for instance, described her childhood as normal but was first put in Winlaton at ten years old for moral danger and remained there on and off until she was 18.

Olive said her childhood had been normal but had experienced sexual abuse from her grandfather at the age of 8 to 11 when he died, had her first baby at 16 and was then prescribed Serepax, which she became addicted to, and first used illegal drugs at the age of 14.

A number of women believed that their experience of abuse had contributed to their offences.

Violet had been sexually abused as a child and blocked it out, an incident at a family dinner led to her remembering the abuse and she described the reason for offending as:

"I wanted to be prosecuted because I wanted to go to jail, I thought that if I went to jail my family could not come near me - I wanted time out. I thought the abuse from 6-16 was my fault and nobody punished me so I wanted to be punished. (Fraud) was the only crime that I knew how to do and it was dead easy, it was something I knew I could do".

Mandy: "I did have a choice, I chose to commit the offences but if my family had have been different I might not have".

### **3.5 Drugs**

Only four women indicated that they had never used illegal drugs and did not drink more than socially. These four were all in prison for fraud related offences (including the two for social security fraud) and for each of them it was their first time in prison.

Over 80% of the women interviewed, indicated that they had used illegal drugs at some stage. This differs from recent research (Denton, 1993) which found that 67% of women had a substance abuse problem. The approach taken in this project is to identify the use of drugs not whether the woman had an addiction. Because of the sensitive nature of drug use which in prison I only asked about substance use outside of prison. Two women however, did comment on the use of drugs within prison, indicating that drugs were easily available within the prison system if you wanted them and that at time, there was pressure from other women to use while in prison.

Thirteen of the twenty women who said they used illegal drugs were 16 or under when they first used. Some women indicated that they had first started using drugs because of the relationship they were in.

The most commonly used drug was marijuana (17) with women indicating that they smoked dope to relax and feel normal. All of the women who used drugs had used more than one type of drug. Seventeen of the women indicated that their use of drugs was a major contributor to their offence. The reasons fell into two categories: to get money to buy drugs or because the use of drugs meant they were less aware of the consequences.

Most of the women who used drugs indicated that they had been able to stop using at different periods of their life. One woman had not used drugs for eighteen months prior to coming to prison and was taken to court on an offence committed some years ago.

### 3.6 Effect of Imprisonment

The majority of the women were very cynical about the possibilities for rehabilitation in prison.

Julie, who had been to prison seven times previously and who was interviewed in what was the management unit for women:

“When I first went to jail I just thought it was a joke. I’ve become very institutionalised, I don’t have much of a sense of responsibility, it’s broken bonds with my son...it’s also along the way given me a bit of an education in crime; it’s been a good teacher.”

Not surprisingly, those serving their first prison sentence were the most likely to say that it had an effect, although one woman said the shock of being charged had as much impact as coming to prison.

Cath: “The hardest thing was waiting for court. I was on bail for twelve months not knowing what would happen. It was in the paper on the weekend and it was very hard to walk into work after that.”

Some women did identify positive impacts of imprisonment:

Bell: “It gave me a chance to breathe, I did really well (the first time in prison), did some study and NA and things like that. Prison did change my behaviour, learned a lot of other ways to cope in here...it was a whole attitude change really, I have never done things to the degree I used to since then.”

For most women though, the impacts were less to do with rehabilitation than with the fear of returning if they committed another offence. Women were also concerned about the effect that being in jail has had or may have on their life on the outside, identifying fears about future employability because of their prison sentence and the way they would be judged by ‘straight’ people.

### 3.7 Alternatives to Imprisonment

Four women identified the need for some type of psychological support suggesting that appropriate support the first time they were charged may have stopped them re-offending.

Anne: “I could have stopped if I had been able to see a psychologist...you need to know the real reason why you are doing things.”

Other women suggested that what was needed was a combination of community work, supervision and counselling. Two women thought that there was not alternative, that they should have been sent to prison:

Penny: “the judge had no choice, he had to send me here. I’ve got a lot of priors and all the trouble I’ve been in he had to send me to jail.”

## 4. SUMMARY

Despite the small numbers of the sample it is possible to identify some patterns. There appears to be some link between an unstable childhood and/or experience of abuse and multiple convictions. Nine of the women had first been charged when they were under 18, with all but one of those being 15 or under at the time of their first charge. Of that group of women, all but two had prior prison sentences, all used illegal drugs and all had some sort of instability or abuse as children. That group also tended to have little experience of the workforce with two women who had never been in paid work and three having not worked in the previous five years, one having worked only two weeks, one for one year, one for two years and only one having worked for three years.

The four who indicated that their childhood was relatively stable and said that they had not experienced any form of abuse were in prison for the first time, with two having no previous convictions. This included one of the two women who were in prison for social security fraud and one of the women convicted of white collar crime.

The four women who indicated that they had continuous employment over the previous five years, were all in prison for the first time, only one woman had a previous conviction which had been ten years ago and had resulted in a good behaviour bond and three did not use drugs.

Another factor which appeared significant for some women was that for an original offence which they committed when relatively young they were given long parole periods which they had been unable to successfully complete.

## CONCLUSION

It would appear from the interviews that there are some links between economic status, childhood experiences, use of drugs and offending patterns. Poverty, insecure housing and abuse were common experiences of those interviewed.

The interviews confirm that the majority of women in prison will have been victims of abuse either as adults or children, have been outside of the paid workforce for considerable periods of time, have low incomes, insecure housing and history of using both legal and illegal drugs.

Earlier intervention, or intervention which recognised their previous lifestyles may have more impact than imposing a prison term.

Certainly those that were most cynical about the rehabilitation effects of imprisonment were those women who had been in prison or had multiple prior convictions. The women who indicated that the threat of going to prison would act as a deterrent in the future tended to be first time offenders who had been sufficiently intimidated by the process of being charged and going to court.

Alternatives suggested by women themselves included mixtures of community work, supervision and home detention, with many women indicating that some form of counselling or psychological support may have helped them to break their pattern. Seven of the women did indicate that their offences were directly related to their perceived need for money, to pay rent and buy clothes or food for their family, although this was also related to boredom - if you have no money it is difficult to pursue recreation activities.

One of the factors that had the most impact on me as an interviewer was the extent of victimisation that the women had suffered, either as children or as adults and the resounding sense of powerlessness and control over their own lives and those of their children. Perhaps it is that, in the end, that should provide the clue to crime prevention.

It could almost be said that attempting rehabilitation in prison, is closing the door after the horse has bolted. While an experience of abuse as a child will not necessarily lead to offending it is obviously a factor which has had an impact on the lives of the women interviewed. The incidence of abuse, combined with their exclusion from the workplace, the lack of secure housing and histories of substance abuse, places women in prison amongst the most marginalised groups in society.

“Abuse is the key to understanding the resulting dependency and criminality of a female offender. A woman offender perceived herself as a victim first, and although she needs to be held accountable for her illegal actions, her victimisation and resultant self-destructiveness needs to be addressed in any work with her as a primary consideration” (Kinsey, 1993).

One of the strategies of prevention would be to recognise situations where children are abused and intervene appropriately before the sense of despair and hopelessness creeps in.

The challenge is to develop a correctional system which allows women to develop a sense of control over their lives so that they have a real alternative, rather than placing them in a prison system which simply reinforces their powerlessness. This may mean that rehabilitation efforts within prisons are doomed to fail, because in the end, the less for women in prison is that they have no control.

As Heidensohn says:

“Empowering women to fight their fears and insecurity through better economic welfare, networks, support groups etc., could reduce both female crime and women as victims” (Heidensohn, 1991).

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## NEGLECTED DIMENSIONS IN CRIME RESEARCH

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In this paper it is my intention to be somewhat provocative. It is therefore necessary to emphasise at the outset that I am speaking in an individual capacity and not as an official representative of the Criminal Justice Commission or its Research Division.

The connection between crime and criminal justice research and community safety would seem to be self evident. I don't think anyone here would argue that we can never know too much about the causes of crime, the costs of crime and the best responses to crime. And although there is a lot of doubt about how effectively the fruits of research get to the policy makers and the law enforcers, no-one seriously questions the value of the research.

What I am going to argue here today is that there are some deficiencies in much of our research in two areas - firstly a lot of categories aren't particularly logical or helpful, secondly we miss out on or neglect the economic perspective in crime and thirdly that while we look very intently at who commits crime and why they commit crime and where they commit crime, we often don't pay much attention to how the crime is committed.

Now I didn't start out a fair dinkum researcher - basically I am a jumped up journalist - but I have found myself working on these sorts of questions because there was very little to refer to and few others looking at them. Having been doing this for a few years now it seems to me that the accurate description of crime, and the understanding of how crime works in an economic sense and how it is conducted in a specific sense has the potential to be very useful information as far as lessening the impact on crime goes. Lets look at some specifics.

How do we describe crime? Well, you could be forgiven for thinking that there are basically two varieties of crime - organised and the rest which is presumably unorganised. And then, without any clear relationship to either, there is something we call white collar crime. Or you can start cutting up crime into fine categories, theft, and auto theft and bicycle theft and skateboard theft. This has problems as well - some theft is obviously combined with insurance fraud which raises questions like is it basically theft or is it basically fraud and how do we count it or describe it.

In academic terms, a lot of our definitions and categorisations of crime are quite foggy; in operational terms and in popular understanding, most of our definitions and categories are totally foggy. As an example, there is a great divide between organised crime as the best researchers understand it and organised crime as it is understood by those institutions charged with combating it. The organised crime definitions that matter, those that legislators and police are actually working to, come in basically three varieties (see for example NCA Act):

- Organised crime is crime that is organised;
- Organised crime is crime committed by organisations;
- Organised crime is whatever we define it to be;

and I shouldn't need to say that these peculiarly circular definitions are no help whatsoever to understanding. Operationally, most agencies seemingly work most of the time to an informal definition that equates drug crime and organised crime; it is worth noting that some of those who have studied the drug trade from the academic perspective come away with the impression that much of it is essentially disorganised.

Further, once a crime has been defined as organised that usually seems to be the end of the matter - not much work is usually done into how it is organised or why it might be so organised. Take prostitution for instance; potentially, prostitution can be a highly organised affair and usually that is how it is regarded. However, prostitution is also a business which can be engaged in by enthusiastic amateurs with nothing in the way of capital investment. Economically, the amount of prostitution seems to be determined by the amount of demand for sexual services; however the forms of prostitution in any jurisdiction appear to relate to legislation and enforcement and regulatory practice. Looked at analytically, these perspectives can be very revealing.

For instance in Queensland in the late 1980's prostitution was basically regulated through franchising arrangements administered by the regulators. This was eventually detected through the Fitzgerald Inquiry confessional box; however, it could also have been detected through some reasonably basic economic analysis which is the point I am making here.

If we look at crime economically I would think we can distinguish two basic varieties of crime. First there is illegal commerce, which is the trade in illegal goods and services like illicit drugs, rare parrots, sexual or gambling services or for that matter the offer to illegally dump toxic wastes at a discount. Then there are what I have called criminal depredations

where crime is basically parasitical upon the body economic; by this I mean such activities such as fraud, theft, extortion and the like. In this areas, there is a potentially very useful term racketeering, which the Americans use indiscriminately and interchangeably with the term organised crime. However we could use the term if we chose to describe a common sort of criminal activity which is economically very damaging but which we often don't recognise because we don't have a word for it - that is the taking, through some more or less imaginative rorting, of a percentage in what is otherwise quite legal commerce. One example is a security service I once investigated which went to potential customers with the proposition that you take our quite expensive security or we will guarantee that you will lose business and need to spend lots on repairs.

The significant point, I think, is that utilising an economic viewpoint we can get new insights into crime; what it really costs, how it works in a macro or even micro sense and, just possibly, what we can effectively do about some of it.

Secondly, we need to get away from this dichotomy of crime being either organised or, presumably, unorganised. It really isn't helpful, partly because the meaning of organised crime has been debased to where it really doesn't say anything other than that we are talking about some big, bad thing.

It probably would be more helpful to use specific categories to describe how crime is organised and the scheme I have used is this:

- Individual - which is obviously an individual involved in criminal activity entirely alone;
- Familial - which is where the members of a family engage in crime together;
- Partnerships - where persons who are not related engage in short or long term criminal activities;
- Enterprises - which are criminal endeavours where there are persons in an "employee" role;
- Corporate enterprises - which occur where some of the "employees" fulfil management functions;
- Networks - or definable groups of people involved in serial criminal activity; and
- Fraternities - where a critical factor in criminal activity is membership of some self-defined group.

These patterns of organisation are not mutually exclusive. An individual can conceivably engage in criminal activity on their own account or in company with relatives or associates, and simultaneously fulfil obligations to some criminal fraternity. The individual can be placed at several points on a continuum of criminal activity. However the organisational requirements vary considerably - a fraternity is likely to develop some internal rituals and obligations to fulfil or reinforce its separate identity, while the essence of a corporate structure is the assignment to individuals of specific roles in a wider organisation.

In general, what is proposed is the replacement of the not very useful blanket term "organised crime" with specific analysis and description of the pattern of criminal organisation apparent in a specific criminal endeavour or activity. It can be seen that most of what we traditionally call organised crime is really a fraternal or corporate pattern of organisation or some combination of the two.

It is my contention that using these sorts of perspectives - the economic and the organisational - we can examine crime in context in society and perhaps begin to grope at other ways of dealing with it than simplistic arrest and seize responses.

Lets take the sort of economic crimes that most bother the citizenry, the business of housebreaking and the invasions of privacy that this entails. I have looked at a few operations in this area and one way of looking at which is going on might be through postulating the existence of what I have called a general petty criminal network. This is a loosely defined group of people, usually largely in a single locality, who commonly or habitually raise a portion of their income through criminal activities such as minor fraud, housebreaking, shopstealing and street level drug dealing.

It is a network because these people are in fairly constant association, although it includes all sorts of forming and dissolving partnerships and family groups and to a minor degree, some criminal enterprises. These people are most probably the source of the main workforce for more organised criminal activity and as well, one of the principal markets for its goods and services.

Traditional law enforcement looks at a lot of individuals committing offences. From a network point of view however, not all members are equally significant participants in crime and the crucial people for these networks seem to be the reliable receivers of stolen property and the reliable suppliers of illicit drugs, who, as it turns out, are often the same people. If these people were to be targeted and to use a law enforcement term, taken out, then potentially you have, for a period at least, disrupted the operations of the network in a locality. This could, potentially again, reduce the amount of crime that the

network facilitates, at least until it re-establishes itself.

In my mind we could, or should, do some research into such an hypothesis and its possibilities. I have done a little bit, enough to make me excited about the possibilities and I will share this snippet<sup>1</sup>. On the most recent figures I have analysed, theft accounted for about 73% of all crimes reported to police in Queensland<sup>1</sup>. Of about 170,000<sup>2</sup> instances of theft a year, about 35,000 or 20% are “cleared” by police<sup>3</sup>. Currently, police prefer about 2,500 charges a year of receiving or otherwise dealing in stolen property, of which a large proportion are not so much criminal offences but relate rather to the sloppy bookkeeping of second hand dealers<sup>4</sup>. There are other ways of approaching this problem as well - to illustrate one I could add that on a tentative calculation, a relatively small number of frequent, regular heroin users in this State need to raise about \$40 million a year from property crime to contribute to their annual cash requirement of about \$120 million a year. At the very least, there is an obvious need for research to illuminate that great “black hole” into which a vast amount of stolen property is disappearing.

With any of this sort of research you find yourself wading into the same sorts of definitional and categorical swamps that we have already talked about with organised crime. And I think, once again, the key lies in being as specific as possible. Sticking with stolen property, there are obviously a range of ways of dealing in it. With stolen property I ended up mapping out all the influences that bear on theft which once again involved using economic and market insights to explain patterns of theft. And similarly, we identified eight distinct options for the disposal of stolen property - once again, there is a lot more potential for beginning to come to grips with this variety of crime that to treat it all as “receiving”. I might not have explained it all that well but I hope I have been able to give you some idea of what research into the “how” of crime would entail.

One place to start this sort of research would be with a group of research subjects who know more than anyone else about criminal technique and practice than anyone else but who are almost never consulted by researchers. I am talking of course about the petty criminals themselves and at any one time there is always a statistically significant captive group, so to speak, of research subjects available for interview in various of Her Majesties institutions.

I’m continually amazed that we, as a group of researchers, almost never go near them. That is not to say they are never approached but usually they are being asked about their early childhood experiences or facing demands to give up their associates and confess to other crimes or other people’s crimes. And most of the time, they are not very cooperative and when they are they are often not very helpful and cause some considerable anxiety to the judiciary.

On the other hand, when they are not being judged and are being treated with some respect as experts in the human endeavour of crime they can be a mine of useful information and this has been my experience both as a journalist and a researcher. I don’t believe they have always told me the truth; in fact I know that they have not, but when carefully evaluated and considered together with all the other available related information, this testimony is invaluable. As an example I could give the model of the Queensland market of cannabis in the CJs recent discussion paper which was prepared in just this manner.

To wrap up, what I am saying is that we need to do more specific research into crime and how it is conducted as a powerful means of doing something about it. We need to bring in fresh insights and be a bit dubious about some of our cherished beliefs and categories. And lastly, we need to consult the experts, the people involved in crime as their particular solution to life.

Thank you and I hope I have given you some food for thought.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Source: Queensland Police Service, Statistical Review, 1991-92, Goprint, Brisbane, 1992: Theft offences 73.3% reported offences 1991-92, 73% 1990-91.

<sup>2</sup> Id. pp.18-19; Figure includes break and enter offences, stealing, motor vehicle theft and robbery.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 170, 658 (reported theft) x 32,497 (cleared theft) = 19% of reported theft is cleared.

<sup>4</sup> Id, p.20; 2,578 cases of handling stolen goods were reported to the police in 1991-92.

## CHAOS OR REASON - THE MABO ALTERNATIVE

Bob Weatherall, Executive Director, FAIRA, Queensland

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Australian society as a whole has not been noted for the justice or reason with which it has dealt with Aboriginal people since 1788. During recent years we have had some hope that circumstances might improve as Australia has taken its place in the world scene but for every one step forward there seem to be two steps backward.

With the coming of the Goss State Government, our hopes were high that at last justice would prevail, but with the secretive and dishonest way in which they prepared and presented the Queensland Land Act in 1991 we began to realise that although the Government might look changed, attitudes have not. We are still in a disadvantaged position, without enough muscle or voting power to correct that legally. We have not got the power of mining companies, pastoralists, developers and business interests, we don't even seem to have the same political power as the ordinary person in the street despite what the "knockers" in society say. There are frenzied accusations that we get favoured treatment if any slight advantage comes to us, forgetting the two hundred odd years, not only of neglect but persecution.

Recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody are still not implemented by this Government, while its arrogant leaders still put us down in the media if we express our point of view. The fact that we still have our culture says a lot for our persistence and determination not to lose what we have in exchange for something that you have, that we don't think is as good as ours.

Then an event occurred in June 1992 that made us think that perhaps federally there might be some hope for our rights to land. The Murray Island case established that Terra Nullius was a legal myth and that Native Title was a valid form of title. For those of you who haven't been reading the papers lately or watching television, let me remind you. The case has become known as the Mabo Case in which 5 Murray Island people at last got a High Court judgement that established Native Title as a legal fact. It took them ten years but it was handed down in June 1992 and we hoped that at last the law might recognise that we were an established nation in this country before the settlers and convicts arrived, or as we consider, invaded.

We expected that as this was a High Court decision it would be accepted by Mr and Mrs Australia so that we could claim back lands that should never have been lost to us for so long. We were prepared to negotiate and accept that Crown Land could be claimed for us and we hoped it would not stir up too much trouble from non-Aboriginal Australians. It didn't seem too much to ask for, after all you took it all and we haven't even had compensation for it. A question to ask yourselves is; how long would ordinary suburbanites allow that situation to last if their homes had been stolen by strangers. So, we thought that this Murray Island decision would be a way in which you could set right many injustices and we could work together to give Australia better racial harmony than it has had for the past two hundred years.

We were prepared to give you a chance, but you (and by you I mean the people with power, money and vested interests) were not prepared to give us a chance and trust us.

As soon as the Mabo case hit the headlines, powerful interests swung into action and started a vicious campaign against any possibility of us claiming land under Native Title. There was big money pitted against us, money which we could not hope to match in an effort to counter the extravagant and ridiculous claims that the mining companies were putting forward.

No, we did not want your backyards, no, we were not necessarily refusing to allow mining or development. All we wanted was to be the ones negotiating with these interests, for ourselves, not have governments do it for us. We are quite capable of negotiating for ourselves and of listening to offers from the big boys and we are not the unreasonable people that they depict us. We would just like to protect our sacred sites, protect places that are important to us and make sure that some of these mining towns that have sprung up near our communities are a safe distance from our young men and women; that these strangers in our land keep their temptation and bad habits away from our communities and that they provide proper employment and training for our young people, not just cleaning the toilets and sweeping up - we are sick of that.

We would like some compensation for those of us who cannot claim land, for the way in which our lives have been disrupted and we have had second or third rate education and training facilities. We are sick of our children dying at a faster rate than some in the Third World countries and our elders dying at a much younger age than non-Aboriginal Australians. We would use that compensation to make our lives a bit easier and help us get out from that big hole into which the coming of the white man has put us.

Instead we are finding that the average Australian is being bombarded with slurs against us and racial hatred is alive and well. We find that stones are being thrown through our windows and we are being accused of the thing that we think is normally associated with white Australians - greed. I listened to a talk-back radio show recently and felt that most of the callers were cautiously pleased for us, they thought it was fine for us to have Native Title recognised but were still scared

that we might get something that we hadn't worked for. The theme running through the calls was that the average person had to work for their home and why should we get anything for nothing? There was no understanding of how we live in third world conditions on communities, that our health rate is one of the worst in the world and our infant mortality is still disgraceful. How can Aboriginal people get to live in your society when unemployment figures mean that we are on the bottom rung of the employment ladder, and that in turn means we can't buy houses or afford proper health care.

Since the Mabo case some of our young people are scared to walk in the streets alone, they walk in pairs because of the racial tension that is evident since the High Court case. A terrible division is occurring in society and we seem to be on the receiving end of small and large acts of violence.

Has the High Court decision given those who were happy to accept us while we were in a dependency position no way of coping with us from a position of possible equality? Does it make your life easier for your conscience if you can give us handouts and talk about "our Aborigines" and how "you have friends who are Aborigines, but"? There's always a "but"... we must not get too much - we must not get equal status and power and come and live alongside you.

If I'm being too outspoken about all this, all I can say is that since the Mabo decision we have seen an outbreak of racial hatred that we haven't seen since the Burke Government in Western Australia, tried to introduce Land Rights Legislation - the mining companies conducted an effective campaign then and blocked that legislation. The racism we have put up with for so long is not getting any better, it includes mental and physical violence and we are scared for our children.

We ask you not to be fooled by these vested interests and to trust us to be reasonable with you. It is about time that Australia set the record straight and recognised the Mabo High Court decision as the way in which to come to terms with the past and do something about it.

Don't oppose the recognition of Native Title, help us to force State Governments to recognise it too and not continue to treat us as second class citizens in our own land.

# COMMUNITY SAFETY IN WOLLONGONG

Councillor Jo Flynn, Wollongong City Council, New South Wales

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This is a paper about the setting up of SCAT - Wollongong's Safe Community Action Team.

## INTRODUCTION

Video - "The Illawarriors" - courtesy of Wave FM.

Overhead - Map of Illawarra and statistics.

Area: 713.93 km<sup>2</sup>

Population: 174,600

A city since 1947, 80 kms south from Sydney, Australia's 7th largest city. This is a success story.

We chose this video because it embodies the spirit of people in Wollongong and was kindly loaned to us by Wave FM, one of the 2 local radio stations.

Despite an unemployment rate of more than 11% and huge structural change in Wollongong's steel and manufacturing industries, Wollongong's people have rallied:

- to diversify economically, eg. tourism is now the third largest industry; and
- to support its fast growing university which has earned a world-wide reputation as a centre of excellence as well as supporting traditional industries. We have a rich and diverse cultural heritage with 65 nationalities represented within our boundaries.

Our sense of community is enhanced by an extensive network of media outlets - we are a one paper town "The Mercury", we have three radio stations and two local television stations.

Wollongong City Council plays a pivotal role in many aspects of community life. It has a budget of about \$112 million. Its role includes regulating infrastructure, responding to the needs of the local community, city workers and tourists, as well as business, commercial and industrial interests.

## OVERHEAD - WARDS

In the city there are five Wards, with three Councillors to each Ward - a total of fifteen Councillors, including the Lord Mayor. About 1,000 people work for Council.

## CRIME IN WOLLONGONG

Crime in Wollongong differs little from other major cities - there are crimes against persons and property, some reported, some not.

Of concern to a lot of people is street crime in terms of fear of crime in that that makes them feel unsafe.

## OVERHEAD - SCAT LETTERHEAD

It is in this context that the Safe Community Action Team was formed.

A week after the last Australian Crime Prevention Conference held in Wollongong in September 1991, I was elected as a Councillor and will hold office until 1995. I saw an opportunity to raise the notion of Crime Prevention in a community setting.

That conference raised issues about crime that few of us had been exposed to.

The notion that the community led by the City Council could have a role in crime prevention was anathema to some - after all isn't that what the police are for - and what about issues of civil liberties?

A small group of interested people got together and thrashed out a sales pitch that we hoped would allay the fears of all non-believers.

Professor Don Robertson, a local resident; Frank Hayes, a PhD student at Wollongong University; Superintendent Bev Lawson, our local Patrol Commander; Father Allan Hornery, local priest and media identity; various senior staff from the NRMA and myself were the core group.

We met regularly for about 12 months - gathering relevant documents from Australia and overseas; briefing all other 14 Aldermen; writing letters overseas to ask guidance - mainly of Nigel Whisken of Crime Concern in England; talking to community and business groups; convincing the media that crime prevention was a good news, printable property; drafting a constitution; and generally convincing ourselves that we could achieve our objectives.

To cut a long story short, at the end of 1992 our 530A Committee of Council called the Safe Community Action Team, with full Council delegation and with the Lord Mayor as Chairperson, was passed unanimously by Full Council.

**NB.** The Lord Mayor is the official Chairperson of all Committees of Council.

#### OVERHEAD - MISSION STATEMENT

Then the hard work began. 16 members form the main team. Our aim is to make Wollongong a safer community in which to live.

#### OVERHEAD - OBJECTIVES

Our objectives are:

1. To develop and implement both short term and long term plans so that people will feel safer in Wollongong.
2. To identify and analyse the extent of crime and community concern about safety in Wollongong.
3. To reduce generally the community's fear of becoming a victim of crime.
4. To encourage the development of policies by Local Government and other appropriate Authorities which complement anti-crime strategies.
5. To empower community groups to initiate and participate in making Wollongong a safer place.
6. To make recommendations and representations to Local, State and Federal Governments on issues of community safety.

So where are we now?

Who is on the team?:

- Three (3) representatives of Council (Lord Mayor and two (2) Aldermen). (1 chair all team meetings).
- One (1) representative of service Organisations.
- One (1) representative of the Churches.
- One (1) representative of the Insurance Industry.
- Three (3) Community representatives covering youth, senior citizens and the general public.
- Two (2) representatives of the Police Service.
- One (1) representative of Business.
- One (1) representative of Education (School).
- One (1) representative of Professional Advisory bodies.
- One (1) representative of Council Management.

- One (1) representative from the Australian Hotels Association.
- One (1) representative from the Illawarra Legal Centre.

The team meets monthly and has the full support of Council:

- A minute secretary.
- Full secretarial services.
- Meeting times published in Corporate Diary.
- Minutes distributed to all senior staff and Councillors.
- One Manager on Committee plus access to all other 11 Managers as needed.
- Printing letterhead.
- Cataloguing crime prevention material in the Reference Section of Library.

By mid 1993 and after only 5 meetings we were well on the way to addressing our objectives.

It must be said that although it is 2 years since this idea was formed, it has passed very quickly and whilst we have approached SCAT with a degree of care, a quite feverish level of activity and commitment has been required to get us this far.

It appears to us that the all-encompassing nature of our objectives make our task very complicated in that many projects are in progress at any one time.

From my point of view, I have appreciated the very down to earth approach of the team members. At times I found it difficult to get my head around what seemed to be ethereal notions. However, our objectives have kept us on track.

I must acknowledge the support of the local media at this point. All 3 media have acknowledged major events such as the launch of the idea of SCAT using the impetus of the NRMA burglary figures.

The free paper "The Advertiser" which is published by "The Illawarra Mercury" and is distributed to every household in the City runs a story on some aspect of SCAT about every 6 weeks.

This is of course achieving one of the most important parts of SCAT - telling people what we are about. Added to media coverage, our aim is to publish a seasonal newsletter - winter is out at the moment - spring is almost ready to be printed. The newsletter is distributed widely throughout the community - by hand where possible to save postage.

## **PROJECTS SO FAR**

### **1. COMPUTER MAPPING SYSTEM**

A computer mapping system has been donated by the NRMA and installed in Wollongong Police Station. This system is called Map Info and can register right down to particular streets in the city the incidence of various crimes.

This was the first task of the team because we wanted to know the types and levels of crime at the beginning of this crime prevention strategy so that we would know if there was any improvement over time. We decided to map the following crimes:

#### **OVERHEAD**

1. Break Enter and Steal incident type.
  - 1.1 Dwellings
  - 1.2 Other premises - commercial, schools, TAFE colleges, University, Council property.
2. Motor Vehicle Theft incident type.
  - 2.1 Stealing of vehicle.
  - 2.2 Stealing from vehicle.
3. Assault - Serious - including sexual assault and domestic violence.
4. Malicious damage (ie. damage to property).

5. Street Offence incident.
  - 5.1 Offensive Behaviour/Language.
  - 5.2 Alcohol breaches.

Members of the community may access information from the system with the approval of the Patrol Commander.

## 2. FEAR OF CRIME

For this concern, we have focussed first on the ageing. Consultation with the members of the 13 Senior Citizens Centres in the city is taking place.

This project has been planned by Frank Hayes and here I will borrow some of his words of wisdom on the rationale behind the project.

**The central word is fear** - ageing persons have earned the right to live in dignity and without fear. The community as a whole should contribute to a process which means that fear can be reduced and that crime against the elderly can be reduced, irrespective of whatever the recorded rate may be.

Consider, therefore, three of the six objectives of the Wollongong Safe Community Action Team:

1. To develop and implement both short term and long term plans so that people will feel safer in Wollongong.
2. To identify and analyse the extent of crime and community concern about safety in Wollongong.
3. To reduce generally, the community's fear of becoming a victim of crime.

### RELATE TO AGEING PERSONS

**Overall** - assistance to ageing persons to maintain their independence, self-esteem and knowledge of community services in an effort to reduce the likelihood of becoming victims of crime.

**Specific** - increased community awareness of the problems facing ageing persons which would lead to more effective crime prevention.

### Provided:

- a) Ageing persons are seen as individuals and not part of an homogenous group (Directions on Ageing - Crime and Safety, NSW Premiers Department, 1990).
- b) That the advice of ageing persons themselves is sought and acted on and it is not kept to interested and well intentioned observers from the professions, the bureaucracies and interest groups who strive to come up with the answer of what is best for ageing persons, without assigning 'due weight to the perceptions and experience of elderly persons themselves' (C Russell).
- c) Where possible, promote a sense of personal responsibility for safety among ageing persons themselves.
- d) That problems associated with gender, ethnicity and disadvantage be taken into account.

### Linked to These Four Points...

What are the views of ageing persons in Wollongong on:

1. Social isolation and matters concerning personal anxiety and vulnerability.
2. Personal safety and security at home and on the street including reasonable measures to ensure home security.
3. Steps necessary to reduce personal isolation in the case of crime, sickness or accident.
4. Community programs which would involve support particularly from young people, including restitution measures in certain aspects of crime.
5. Availability and use of community support and assistance such as Meals on Wheels, Home and

Community Care and other services which may go beyond the frail aged.

6. Perceptions of fear - what are the fears held by ageing persons in Wollongong? What are the implications of these fears? Are there any particular patterns of fear which emerge amongst ageing persons in the Wollongong district?
7. Where are the gaps in services to the aged? What can be done to make the district safer for ageing persons as far as Wollongong is concerned?

### **3. CRIME PREVENTION AND PLANNING ISSUES**

A sub-committee has been set up to formulate a Development Control Plan so that anti-crime strategies in the planning arena can be developed and implemented as a matter of course.

I acknowledge Waverley Council in NSW here - they kindly let us have a copy of their Development Control Plan. This plan should be ready in early 1994.

### **4. CONSULTATION WITH YOUTH**

The Youth and the Law Project which is funded by the NSW Law Foundation has assisted with a youth consultation in the City with the aim of identifying the concerns of youth in regard to crime and to develop diversionary programs. (More on this on the day)

### **5. INFORMATION CENTRE**

We saw the setting up of the Western Australian Information Centre as being worthy of copying. We are endeavouring to set up a Centre in Central Wollongong. The sorts of things we would like in the information centre include:

- Information on Council planning policies which enhance anti-crime strategies.
- Displays by security firms including alarm systems.
- Displays by building firms of window and door locks.
- Referral information for anyone who needs help, eg. referral to crisis centres, counselling, legal centre, etc.
- Crime prevention information of a general nature which may help school children with projects.

### **WHAT HAPPENS NOW?**

We hope that the gradual process of informing the community of ways they can help prevent crime will achieve that empowerment we spoke about in our objectives.

This year has seen the establishment of 10 Neighbourhood Committees in the city. We keep them informed of what we are doing. Some suggestions have already come from these Committees, eg. lighting in parks.

We are very conscious that we should not re-invent the wheel. I am in the process of publishing a document which details groups which already engage in crime prevention activities, eg. Neighbourhood Watch, Safety Houses, etc.

We are considering the notion that some of these groups could come under the auspices of the Neighbourhood Committees - this would save multiple meetings for those members of the community who usually carry the load of these Committees. However, this is a long term goal which will need lots of consultation.

### **SUMMING UP**

(As SCAT is such a dynamic Committee, the situation is constantly changing. Here I will leave a few minutes to sum up and to bring the Conference Delegates up to date with progress.

# WAVERLEY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION INITIATIVES

Sue Taylor, Community Programs Coordinator, Waverley Municipal Council, New South Wales

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Waverley Municipal Council is located in the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney. It is the most densely populated government area in NSW, with an average of 66.6 persons per hectare. Crime in Waverley has no particularly unusual characteristics. The level of reported offences is roughly equivalent to the broader Sydney Metropolitan rate of offences in all categories of crime. There is however a perception among some sections of the community that crime is a problem in the Eastern Suburbs generally and who register any crime in the Eastern Suburbs as a local crime and as a threat. Perceptions such as these can have a restricting effect on behaviour and on the well-being of the local community. Added to this is the growing community awareness of the failure of our law enforcement systems to stem the long term increase in crime rates, despite significant increase in expenditure on law and order in Australia in the past two decades (Mukhurjee and Dagger, 1990, p. 7, 45, 55, 1034), Local Government is well placed to receive this information from the community, and to explore strategies to address the rate of crime and community perception of crime.

## 2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION

The impetus for community crime prevention initiatives must come from the community itself.

As a locally based authority, Councils have day to day contact with most, if not all, of the major players/participants in a local community. These include residents, business people, sporting and community service organisations, developers, Government Departments and authorities, the local media, local politicians and the Police. Local Government is perhaps the only authority which is able, on a local level, to bring together these diverse groups of people and organisations.

Importantly, Local Government already has existing responsibilities which can have a significant impact on crime prevention, eg. Statutory Development Control Responsibilities, design and control of open space areas and public parks, social planning and involvement in community service areas.

Local Government can choose to use these networks and areas of responsibility to take the initiative in crime prevention. Those with a more traditional view of the roles of local government may argue that Local Government should not step outside its accepted roles in "roads, rates and rubbish". This is a very limited view. Both the community and the other levels of Government are looking towards Local Government to be more innovative and efficient in its use of resources and in its service to the community.

Communities have changed and community needs have changed, particularly in the past 15-20 years. It is not very long since town planning was a new function to Local Government, yet it is now an essential part of our operations, particularly in urban areas. Similarly, as women's participation in the workforce has grown, so has the need for child care. Local Government has developed a key role, in partnership with the Federal Government, in meeting this need. Australian men and women now live longer, so there is more need than ever before for services for the frail, elderly members of our community. In Local Government's traditional waste management role, the emphasis has had to shift in recent times from disposal to recycling as society grapples with the finiteness of the world's resources. These are the realities of our society in the 1990s and Local Government cannot afford to ignore them.

Local Government does have many powers and programs which impact on the safety of its community, and many opportunities to try new and improved approaches to traditional ways of doing things. It is important that Local Government does not get left behind complaining that "it's not our role...". Local Government involvement in crime prevention should ideally occur in partnership with the State and Federal Governments but the major point to be stressed here is that many characteristics of Local Government make it ideally placed to take a significant role.

## 3. THE BACKGROUND TO WAVERLEY COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION PROJECT

Council became formally involved in a community crime prevention project in 1990. However, prior to our formal resolution to take on such a project, Waverley had a philosophy and an approach to a number of related issues which helped to make us a suitable local government area for such a pilot project.

Council was very actively involved in the local Police Community Consultative Committee, and enjoyed a cooperative working relationship with the Police. Regular meetings of the Police Community Consultative Committee raised for discussion the incidence of crime in the Municipality, and gave Council access to community perceptions of crime, through

the discussion which regularly takes place at these meetings. The committee is well-informed by the Bondi patrol of the resources being committed by the patrol to the detection of offenders and to the creation of constructive links between the Police and at risk groups in the community. At the time of involvement in our Community Crime Prevention Project, Council was contributing support in the form of staff time to the local Blue Light Disco. The Discos were attracting hundreds of young people, and obviously providing not only a place to go for young people but an opportunity to talk to Police in a non-confronting environment.

Just before taking on the Crime Prevention Project, Council had funded a graffiti arts program at the local Youth Centre. The municipality had been experiencing a wave of graffiti which, on the estimation of the Youth Centre, could be minimised by the provision of graffiti sites and training in techniques by an artist. The approach was effective in reducing the incidence of damaging or nuisance graffiti across the municipality.

#### **4. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Waverley Council is committed to resident involvement in Council activities, and in 1988 became the second Council in New South Wales to set up Precinct Committee as a formal structure to ensure residents contributed to Council's decision making. The Precinct Committees meet monthly and have referred to them Development Application and any other Council business about which community opinion is considered to be of use. Precinct Committees also raise their own business for referral to Council officers or alderman.

#### **5. THE INSTIGATION OF THE COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION PROJECT**

The concept of piloting a Local Government Community Crime Prevention project was developed by Michael Hogan from the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) and Russell Hogg from Macquarie University. They approached Waverley and Fairfield Councils to discuss their ideas.

The aim of the Project was to investigate and pilot a role in Community based Crime Prevention for Local Government.

Waverley Council was enthusiastic about being involved and the long process to secure funding soon commenced. Both Councils eventually received funding from the Criminology Research Council, the Office of Local Government and the NSW Law Foundation. These funds were predominantly used to employ a full-time Project Worker in each Council for twelve months and to undertake and analyse research including community surveys.

#### **6. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WAVERLEY PROJECT - ONE MODEL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION**

In Waverley, a Project Advisory Committee was appointed at the commencement of the Project to oversee its direction. It was chaired by an Alderman and its members included local residents who were active in Council's Precinct Committees, Police representatives, representatives from the local Legal Aid Office, the Youth Centre, the Local Neighbourhood Centre and the community.

The Project commenced with an extensive literature review of locally based crime prevention programs in Australia, Western Europe and North America. This review served as a starting point to generate ideas for the Project.

An extensive data collection and analysis of local crime statistics was then completed. This also included a survey on the perceptions of the local community about crime. This stage took much longer than originally anticipated mainly due to difficulties encountered in the collection of police statistics. The problem was not that the Police, either at a local or Central level, were uncooperative. However, their data collection system did not provide easy access to local statistics. The final report on the Waverley Project contains several recommendations regarding increasing the accessibility of Police statistics on a local area/or patrol area.

From the initial surveys of community perceptions of crime and the local data analysis, two areas of particular community concern were identified:

- i) The impact of crime and the fear of crime on older people.
- ii) The incidence of alcohol related violence and anti-social behaviour in and around licensed premises.

These concerns and others which arose during the Project determined the direction of Waverley's Crime Prevention Project and the activities on which Council embarked. I will briefly outline these major activities.

##### **a) Older Persons' Project**

This project had two distinct parts.

**i) Older Women's Self Protection Seminar**

This arose in the context of the so-called North Shore "Granny Killings". These serious crimes, in which a number of elderly women were found battered to death, received a great deal of media coverage. Considerable community fear was created, especially in the Eastern and Northern Suburbs of Sydney. In response to this community concern, many self protection courses were being conducted by both private individuals and community service organisations. The courses frequently targeted older women. Council's Crime Prevention Project Worker attended some of these seminars and was concerned that they were actually increasing fears among older women. For example, one group leader related words to the effect that, "some young kids would as soon as kill you as take your bag". When later another participant was told that they would probably never be victims, the Project Worker felt that it was extremely unlikely that this message was correct or appropriate. The seminars also frequently offered instruction in self defence techniques, which were beyond the physical capabilities of older people.

As a result, the Project Worker, together with one of Council's community workers and a worker at the local Neighbourhood Centre, decided to design and pilot a Kit for an Older Women's Self Protection seminar. The Kit emphasised the importance of good sense, good health and self confidence. The feedback from the women attending the first two groups who participated in the pilot was very positive. The women reported that the seminar did not frighten them and had increased their confidence about dealing with crime related problems. These seminars will be held regularly in Waverley by the Council in association with local community organisations.

**ii) Older Persons' Survey**

The second aspect of the Older Persons' Project involved a detailed community survey of 45 older people. The survey sought to examine the attitudes of older people to crime and whether their fear of crime, if any, had an impact on their health, mobility and sense of personal security. The findings of the survey were far from conclusive. This was partly due to the fact that the majority of residents interviewed did not regard crime as a major local problem (indeed a larger percentage identified local traffic problems as a bigger issue than crime!).

One of the theories about this result linked the apparent lack of fear of crime with the fact that survey participants were not socially isolated, having frequent contact with neighbours, family members and community organisations. It is often theorised that the most socially active elderly people will have less fear of crime. Due to an unintended bias in our sample selection process, our survey appeared to support this conclusion.

**b) Responsible Serving of Alcohol Project**

From interviews with residents and local Police during the research stage of the crime prevention project, it became clear that alcohol related violence and anti-social behaviour was a major concern in the Bondi Beach area. A significant amount of Police resources were being used to deal with incidents in and around licensed premises. A large number of the offenders and the victims in cases of assaults were intoxicated at the time of the offence, and were young males. Residents complained about damage to property, offensive behaviour, and noise as people left the licensed premises in an intoxicated state.

Local Precinct Committees and the Bondi Police Community Consultative Committee had not been able to identify any ways of improving the situation.

Consultations were held with the NSW Department of Health Drug and Alcohol Directorate and with representatives of the Alcohol Industry, and after a visit to a Queensland project called "Patron Care", the idea of a Responsible Serving of Alcohol Project was endorsed by Council. The Responsible Serving concept seeks to promote more acceptable models of behaviour in and around licensed premises by the use of three approaches:

- (i) Working with managers of licensed premises to prepare 'house policies' which detail responsible serving practices and ensure management support for those practices.

- (ii) Training for staff on responsible serving practices.
- (iii) Consultancy to promote alternative products and services such as food and low alcohol drinks.

A proposal was prepared by a local Advisory Committee which included representatives from the Police, the NSW Drug and Alcohol Directorate, the Centre for Education in Drugs and Alcohol, the liquor industry, local community representatives and Council. The proposal was for a pilot project to be carried out in several local licensed premises, the argument being that, if effective, the results of the pilot could then be referred to the NSW government with recommendations on policies and procedures which would make staff and management training available state-wide to all licensed premises. The long term goals of the project are:

- To reduce the risk of violence caused by excessive consumption of alcohol on licensed premises.
- To minimise the likelihood of individuals becoming intoxicated in licensed premises and so reduce the risk of these individuals causing harm to themselves or others.
- To reduce the incidence of under age drinking in licensed premises.
- To reduce the incidence of drink driving resulting from excessive consumption of alcohol on licensed premises.
- To promote more acceptable models of drinking and behaving on licensed premises.
- To create community interest and support for training in the responsible serving of alcohol.

Short term goals are:

- Changes in the knowledge and attitudes of servers.
- Changes in serving practices.
- Changes in behaviour of patrons.
- Changes in incidence of alcohol-related offences in the Waverley Municipality.
- Changes in management policies in the service of alcohol.

Funds were obtained from the Criminology Research Council and the Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW. The NSW Drug and Alcohol Directorate gave an undertaking to make research facilities available to the project.

The Advisory Committee which prepared the proposal was reformed as an ongoing Project Advisory Committee in early 1992. At this stage we encountered strong resistance to the project from the Australian Hotels Association's NSW Branch. The pilot project was criticised by the AHA as being too small scale and locally based, and as being too focussed on hotels rather than other types of licensed premises. Despite the fact that we broadened our target group to include licensed clubs and night clubs, the AHA continued to decline to participate on the Project Advisory Committee. The input of the hotel industry to the implementation of the project would have been very valuable, particularly in relation to the training component of the project. It is regrettable therefore that no compromise could be reached with the AHA on their involvement in the project. However, dialogue on the project has been maintained with the AHA during the course of the project.

The recruitment of licensed premises into the project was not difficult. Most of the hotel managers or licensees approached were comfortable with the notion of responsible serving practices, and Council was able to welcome 6 hotels into the project. Licensed clubs were a little more cautious about the project, but 2 clubs agreed to be involved. This was all the licensed clubs we needed. Nightclubs have proven difficult to include. Their commitment has never been firm, and they have been involved in the project in name only.

A training package was designed by the project coordinator and the Centre for Education in Drugs and Alcohol (CEIDA). The package was based on the National Alcohol Beverage Industries Council (NABIC) guidelines. The package covered:

- Identification of responsible serving practices.
- Alcohol service and the law.
- Facts about alcohol - the standard drink, the effects of alcohol, recommended levels of consumption, etc.
- Strategies for responsible serving.

Training was provided free of charge to half of the licensed premises; those who did not receive training at that stage were being used as the control group of premises for research purposes and would be offered

training at a later stage. Wherever possible, management was included in staff training sessions so that any suggestions for improved serving practices or environmental changes would receive managerial acknowledgment and support. The training sessions provided the project coordinator, who co-presented the training, with insight into the current practices of licensed premises.

Some of the issues raised by staff included:

- They were not aware of the content of the Liquor Act.
- They require the support of the legislation, in the form of an official notice (similar to that displayed in all hotels about moderate drinking), to deny service to intoxicated people.
- The availability of food in licensed premises is often unsatisfactory - only available for a short period of time, poor quality, too expensive.
- Free drinks or cheap drinks, such as Happy Hours etc., should be replaced with food.
- Management of intoxicated patrons should be a joint responsibility of staff and not only the person serving at the time.
- Promotion of the lite beers could be improved.

Prior to the provision of training, exit surveys were conducted on patrons of the licensed premises, and observational work was carried out in the form of an "environmental audit". The observation study was designed to gauge changes in serving practices and changes to management approaches to responsible serving. The exit survey questioned patrons on the length of time they had been drinking, how much they had drunk, what the serving practices had been in the hotel or club, etc. Patrons were given the opportunity to be breathalysed, which most accepted.

Following the training, another round of exit surveys was carried out, to measure the impact of the training on serving practices and therefore patron behaviour and levels of intoxication. These results are currently being analysed. A further round of training is being offered to all licensed premises in the project, to reinforce the information gained by staff in the initial training. Training is also being offered to other licensed premises in the Municipality.

It was intended that the opinion of the local community would be sought, through a community survey, about the serving practices and patron behaviour at their nearest hotel or club. A survey was prepared and partially distributed, but because of the immediate reaction of some residents, it was decided not to proceed. The survey elicited, to our surprise, a defensive response which was quite protective of local hotels and clubs. Council was accused by some of targeting their local licensee in an attempt to obtain negative information. This was despite the fact that the licensees were aware of the survey.

The next and final stage of the project will involve an increase in the intensity of policing of the hotels and clubs. It is intended that a further round of exit surveys is carried out to measure changes brought about by the policing. We may then be able to draw some conclusions about the effectiveness of training in responsible serving practices, and the comparative impact of policing on serving practices in the same hotels and clubs.

During the 12 month's duration of this project there has been a significant level of change in policy on alcohol-related violence in the NSW Police Department. The liquor Administration Board has also become interested in the provision of training in responsible serving practices. Moreover, the NSW Liquor Industry Council has adopted a Strategic Plan on Alcohol and Anti-Social Behaviour. The plan aims to reduce the level of assaults at or near licensed premises. Therefore, whilst our pilot project is taking place in a changing environment, we believe the outcome will provide an impetus for more change. Council's involvement in this project is widely known and may well have contributed in a small way to the current changes.

### **c) Council Policies and Functions**

As well as seeking out issues in the local community, the Community Crime Prevention Project examined ways in which Council policies and functions could play a crime prevention role. The concept of "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design", is one of a number of situational crime prevention strategies whereby developers, planners and residents seek to design out opportunities for crime from their physical surroundings. Council endorsed this approach, which was also recommended in the National Committee on Violence Report, 1990. Council has implemented this approach predominantly through:

#### **(i) Seminar on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design**

To introduce the concept of "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design" (CPTED) to Council officers and the local community, a one day seminar was held. Council was fortunate to have a highly respected criminologist, with particular expertise in CPTED, visiting Australia. Ronald Clark agreed to address the seminar. He presented a number of techniques or approaches which could be used to reduce the opportunities for crime. He then participated in several workshop groups which applied these approaches to three scenarios. The seminar was attended by Council officers, local police, Precinct and Neighbourhood Watch representatives, local residents and community workers. A second seminar was held in June, 1993 and was targeted to developers, architects and relevant Council officers. Seminar papers are available.

**(ii) Preparation of a Development Control Plan on Community Crime Prevention**

Following the first seminar, Council's Town Planning Department sought and received permission to prepare a Development Control Plan (DCP) on Community Crime Prevention. A DCP is a Council policy, which is used by Council in assessing Development Applications. It is prepared under the provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulations, 1980, and is an instrument recognised in the Land and Environment Court.

The Plan has been prepared in three parts:

1. Council initiatives to address crime prevention in the maintenance of its public buildings, parks and gardens.

This section deals with a range of issues from graffiti on public buildings, to the appropriate selection of street trees and landscaping of parks and gardens to maximise opportunities for public surveillance.

2. Guidelines to developers for the appropriate design of buildings and their surroundings.

This section concentrates largely on residential flat developments, pointing out to developers opportunities to incorporate crime prevention techniques such as informal surveillance in the design and layout of residential flat buildings, including their entrances, landscaped areas, and basement parking areas. By addressing these issues at the early design stages of the proposal, cost savings can be recognised over the need for later corrective alterations to the development.

This section also deals with commercial buildings, and in particular addresses the negative effects of using roller shutters on retail shop fronts.

3. Advice to residents on how to maintain their physical environment to discourage criminal activities.

This section addresses the need to strike a balance between excessive 'target hardening' such as bars on all doors and windows, and the opportunity to look instead on behavioural modification involving a greater presence of people on the street (or at least residential observance of street activity) as a means of discouraging non legitimate activity in the area.

The Plan was exhibited for 60 days and all resident precinct groups, Neighbourhood Watch groups and the Minister for Local Government and Co-operatives were notified.

No submissions were received in response to exhibition of the Draft Plan. However, Council's initiatives in addressing crime prevention were receiving significant media response during the exhibition period. The Plan was adopted by Council on 28 April 1992. Since then there has been considerable interest in the Plan by the Planning Department of other Councils and from suburban police patrols.

**(iii) State Community Safety Plan - Pilot Project**

In early 1993 Waverley Council was approached by the NSW Police Department to be involved in a pilot project working towards a State Community Safety Plan. The pilot will combine two approaches to community crime prevention: crime prevention through environmental design and

social development. The pilot is based on a multi-agency approach to community crime prevention, with local government playing a coordination role. Through its statutory planning role, local government will incorporate into the Development application approval process a referral of any relevant applications to a Community Safety Evaluation. It is proposed that the evaluation is carried out by Police Officers specially selected and skilled in CPTED, social and environmental criminology, planning, information/intelligence analysis and operational tactics. The evaluation will be advisory only, and will not delay the D.A. process. The pilot also involves the use of a crime prevention committee to address community safety problems from a community development perspective, involving representatives of State Government agencies and the community.

Waverley is currently considering how it can participate in the pilot in a way that best meets the needs and history of the local community.

**d) Precinct Committees**

Waverley Council established Precinct Committees across the Municipality to encourage residents' participation in Council's decision making processes. Precinct Committees are made up of interested residents, who are invited to comment on proposed new developments in their precinct area and also on other local issues.

To capitalise on the interest shown by Precinct Committees in the Community Crime Prevention Project, a Kit for use by Precinct Committees has been developed. The Kit assists committees to plan an environmental safety audit of their neighbourhood.

**e) Domestic Violence Support Group**

The community and statistical surveys of local crime problems identified domestic violence as a common crime in the local area. A local family support service also reported a sharp increase in the number of its domestic violence referrals following the establishment of a new 24-hour domestic violence crisis service. The Bondi police identified domestic violence calls as a frequent occurrence and were the major organisation making referrals to the 24-hour crisis service.

The Cottage found that its crisis service was only able to offer general counselling and support, and identified a need for more specialised support and therapy for women experiencing domestic violence.

As part of the Community Crime Prevention Project, Council provided funding to the Cottage to develop and pilot a therapy and support group. The aim of the group was to empower women to break out of the cycle of violence by increasing their knowledge, skills and self-esteem. The group ran successfully for ten weeks and was then evaluated by the Cottage. On the basis of the evaluation, they have continued to run such groups throughout 1991.

## **7. SOME FEATURES OF WAVERLEY COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION PROJECT**

Prior to discussing some of the features which characterise Waverley's Community Crime Prevention Project, it is important to sound a warning note. A Community Crime Prevention Project in the Waverley Municipality may look very different from one in a country shire in NSW, or from one undertaken in the capital city of another State. While the features detailed below are considered to have contributed to the success of Waverley's Project, the temptation to be rigid about a Local Government approach to crime prevention should be resisted. It is vital to keep the boundaries of a Local Government crime prevention role as broad and as flexible as possible, in order not to restrict the types of projects or areas of concern which could be addressed.

Thus, the features which are listed, worked in Waverley and may assist in developing projects in other localities. This should not be viewed as an exhaustive or complete list, but as a starting point from which to consider and develop other local projects.

**i) Community Involvement**

Perhaps the overriding feature characterising the Waverley Project was that it was community based.

The Projects' Advisory Committee had broad community representation, as did the Steering Committee of the Responsible Hospitality Project. The involvement of local residents through Council's Precinct system was particularly encouraged. Relevant community organisation were consulted and involved in the

development and implementation of the individual projects.

This community development approach, in which the knowledge and resources of the local community are marshalled, is considered to be one of the major advantages or strengths of a local approach to crime prevention. It has the potential to tap into the issues which are of particular concern to a local area, but which may not be evident from court statistics or police records. It can also marshal local groups and involve them in developing and implementing projects in a way which would be impossible for a state or regionally based project. Thus extra resources are available for crime prevention and projects can be developed within the same community in which they will be implemented.

## **ii) Short Term versus Long Term Outcomes**

When projects are locally based, they are often modest and small projects. They may not have easily measured outcomes, such as a significant decline in local crime rates. Their effects may be apparent in the medium or long term rather than the short term.

Projects which seek to reduce the fear of crime, such as the Older Women's Self Protection Seminars, may not show up in local crime or other statistics. These may also only involve a relatively small number of people.

A project such as the Responsible Hospitality Project will promote what may be considered an impossible task in Australia - a shift towards more acceptable models of alcohol consumption. This is not a Project which is likely to have immediate or necessarily easily measurable outcomes. However, proper evaluation of this Project will be essential for Council to be confident that the approach is working. It will also be important to be able to demonstrate the success of the approach to State authorities and other Councils. Evaluation, however, takes time and commitment. The 'quick fix' approach will not work.

It has certainly been our experience in Waverley that Community Crime Prevention approaches will not be seen to be successful if Local Government and community expectations are for quick and high profile outcomes. Such expectations lead to disillusionment and perhaps pressure to only tackle the easier problems. It has been important to the success of our Council's work that the long term view be taken.

## **iii) Strong, Cooperative Relationship with Local Police**

Another major feature which contributed to the effectiveness and supports the long term development of the Project, was the interest and active involvement of the local police. The Chief Inspector of the Bondi Patrol was a member of the Project's Advisory Committee and also of the Advisory Committee of the Responsible Serving of Alcohol Project. He provided easy access for the Project Worker to interview and informally discuss issues with local Police officers. The Chief Inspector of the Waverley Patrol has been similarly helpful.

Considerable effort was also made to involve the Police in the earliest stages of planning the Project. Prior to seeking funding for the Project, the general approach was presented to local Police and to the Police Community Consultative Committee. They endorsed it and were interested to approach the Project as a cooperative venture.

It is acknowledged that this level of cooperation may not always be so achieved. Much work had already been undertaken in Waverley, by the local Police and by Council and community groups, to establish a good mutual working relationship.

## **iv) Relationship with Media**

The final characteristic, which has not yet been identified in the discussion of Waverley's Project, is the need to work closely with the media.

The media, particularly local newspapers, have the potential to make or break local Crime Prevention Projects.

In Waverley, both the local and metropolitan newspapers showed a particular interest in the Project. It was, however, not an easy task to explain what the project was about in the few short sentences which may be all that was allocated to a story about the Project.

Towards the end of the Project, the Eastern Herald, a local weekly newspaper produced by the Sydney Morning Herald, ran a lead article on the project. The text of the story was good, and relied heavily on Council's written material. The quarter page cartoon accompanying the story, however, was a drawing of a local park with an electric chair installed beside a park bench. There had been no mention of electric chairs, or capital punishment in any of our discussions or written material, but someone on the newspaper had decided that the cartoon made a contribution to the story!

## **8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION - THE FUTURE POTENTIAL**

As previously stated, Waverley's Project is simply an example of one Local Government taking a role in crime prevention. Overseas experience, particularly if it can demonstrate the potential of a Community Crime Prevention Strategy, to local government can act as a catalyst and an initiator of Community Crime Prevention.

In the long run, Local Government's role needs to be in partnership with the State and Federal Governments, and of course the community. The full potential of Community Crime Prevention will only be realised when the powers and responsibilities of all three tiers of Government are cooperatively involved in this type of approach.

Overseas experience demonstrates the absolute importance of having local involvement in the development and implementation of strategies.

In terms of the Waverley Project, Council's work during the pilot Project and its general approach to its responsibilities demonstrate potential roles for Local Government in both situational as well as social Crime Prevention Strategies. The former activities do sit well with Council's power to control its physical environment, whilst social crime prevention strategies clearly link into Local Government's role in social planning and community service provision.

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# COMMUNITY BASED CRIME PREVENTION - FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

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## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Crime is an inevitable fact of life. Society, in an attempt to deal with the unacceptable and deviant crime, creates laws specific to individual cultures and countries. Crime rates can increase or decrease without any change in official statistics (for example rates of illegal drug use, family violence and sexual abuse) because of the variation in people's willingness to report certain types of crime, or changes to the official definition of crime. Crime is multifaceted, difficult to define and even harder to measure. This makes the definition of crime prevention equally hard, and emphasises the need to recognise the subjectivity of the topic and narrow the range of issues one wishes to deal with in any crime prevention program.

Many definitions of crime prevention incorporate ideas of lessening actual levels of crime prohibiting further increases in crime, but few deal with the problem of fear of crime, and perceived crime and victimisation (Lab, 1992). A more encompassing definition, and one which is closer to the philosophy of South Australia's Crime Prevention Strategy, is as follows:

“Crime Prevention entails any action designed to reduce the actual level of crime and/or the perceived fear of crime” (Lab, 1992, p.10).

The theoretical rationale underlying current crime prevention models recognises that the traditional criminal justice responses to crime have failed to stem increasing crime rates, and that we cannot continue to solely rely on them.

Crime Prevention approaches are frequently divided into three areas; primary, secondary and tertiary. This model is based on the public health model of prevention, each area representing a stage of development at which the crime problem can be attached (Graham, 1990; Lab, 1992).

Primary crime prevention includes strategies which are aimed at modifying the physical and social environment responsible for the conditions which are precursors to criminal behaviour. This includes attempts to influence public policy which controls or determines these conditions in areas such as education, housing, employment, leisure and recreation.

Secondary prevention strategies are generally targeted at early intervention for youth at risk of offending. Much of the work in this area is aimed at the diversion of youth from the criminal justice system. Police and educators may play an important role here in the early identification of criminogenic conditions and influences. Strategies of urban planning and building design for crime prevention also fall within the category of secondary prevention.

Tertiary prevention strategies target almost exclusively those who have already offended, and are concerned with the prevention of recidivism. This includes activities of arrest and sentencing as well as rehabilitation programs, and is usually the province of traditional criminal justice agencies.

In practice, this model needs to take into account these categories are not mutually exclusive. For example, situational measures to reduce opportunistic crime may be equally effective at the prevention of re-offending as at preventing first time offending. Community based crime prevention strategies are usually concerned with primary and secondary areas of intervention, and include a mix of both social and situational measures to reduce crime. Crime prevention using a community development approach can work to strengthen existing networks and increase the capacity of a community to exert informal social controls. Similarly, identifying conflicts within a community, such as racism or police-youth relations, can help to target appropriate “grass roots” strategies aimed at building a sense of trust and cooperation between residents of the community.

## THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN STRATEGY

The “Together Against Crime Strategy” was launched in South Australia in 1989 by the Attorney-General's department, and \$10 million was allocated for its implementation over five years. The strategy is based on proven crime prevention strategies which have been implemented overseas. It supports moves towards a coordinated preventative approach to address the underlying causes of crime which are predominantly for a social, situational or economic nature.

The South Australian Crime Prevention Strategy has four key initiatives:

- The local Crime Prevention Committee Program
- Aboriginal Program
- Exemplary Projects

- Coalition Against Crime

The establishment of local Crime Prevention committees is based loosely on the French Bonnemaison concept of involving municipalities and local agencies in crime prevention (King, 1988), and the British Safe Cities Program.

The Port Adelaide Crime Prevention Project is one of 22 community based projects operating in the country and metropolitan areas of South Australia. In each region, Crime Prevention committees are responsible for the following:

- analysing problems and issues affecting their area
- reviewing the programs and resources available
- developing a coordinated Crime Prevention Plan to deal with the problems and issues, and submitting a plan to gain funding for implementation
- implementing and evaluating the program

In this way, each local Crime Prevention Plan is unique, and reflects issues of concern to that specific local community.

### **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

In December 1990, the Port Adelaide "Together Against Crime" Steering Committee was formed with the aim of developing a Crime Prevention Strategy Plan for the Local Government Area of Port Adelaide. A project officer was appointed in April 1991 to assist with this task.

The first stage of the planning project involved consulting with agencies, organisations and community groups in the Port Adelaide area to identify perceived crime problems and potential crime prevention strategies. A statistical crime profile was prepared to aid in the identification and prioritisation of crime issues.

The next stage included an assessment of resources currently available to deal with crime prevention, and identification of areas of need in relation to services and programs.

The final planning stage looked at the development of a range of community-based strategies with which to target those crime prevention issues identified as priorities for Port Adelaide. A total of twelve individual issues were included in the Strategic Plan. These covered a range of concerns from high youth unemployment rates, to child abuse and domestic violence. The Strategic Plan was then used as the basis of a contract agreement for funding from the Attorney-General's Crime Prevention Unit.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

In April 1992, the Together Against Crime Steering group became the Port Adelaide Crime Prevention Project Advisory Committee. Port Adelaide City Council took on the role of auspicing body for the project funding. A project coordinator was then employed to manage and implement the Crime Prevention Strategy under the direction of the Advisory Committee. Funding was allocated by the Attorney-General's department on the basis of a two year Strategy Plan.

The Crime Prevention Advisory Committee is comprised of representatives from the following areas:

- Local Government (Port Adelaide Council)
- Police
- Family and Community Services
- Aboriginal Community
- Youth Services
- Drug and Alcohol Services
- Port Adelaide Central Mission
- Correctional Services
- Women's Health
- Business Community (Retail Traders)

Committee construction is vital in developing a successful model of crime prevention. The participation of diverse community groups and agencies is essential. The formation of partnerships between these groups needs to take into account the knowledge, skills and value systems each group possesses. Community based projects must recognise under the "community" umbrella - which assumes commonly shared perceptions and concerns - conflicts and tensions exist which are often overlooked. This is particularly important to consider when dealing with issues such as racial intolerance, youth alienation and poverty.

The success of community programs also depends on “ownership” of the program by a community. Responsibility for implementing strategies must be accepted by members of that community and a commitment to involvement in crime prevention at a local level developed.

Objectives of the Port Adelaide Crime Prevention Project are as follows:

- To coordinate implementation of the Crime Prevention Strategy Plan
- To maintain ongoing consultation with various sectors of the community
- To develop linkages between sponsoring agencies implementing individual strategies
- To provide ongoing development of prevention strategies with community support
- To monitor and evaluate the overall project

## **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

During the first twelve month period of implementation of the Strategy Plan, several major projects were undertaken. Priority was placed on problems associated with youth, including boredom, unemployment and substance abuse. Other areas which were targets of intervention included domestic violence, education and Aboriginal community issues.

A key feature of these programs was the coordination and cooperation between government agencies, business and community in planning, developing and resourcing them. Another common feature of several programs was that while targeting disadvantaged groups such as juvenile offenders, minority ethnic groups and Aboriginal youth, there were no restrictions to prevent other young people from participating. In this way, young people “at risk” of entering the criminal justice system and those already involved in offending behaviour, are not further stigmatised by attending programs labelled as “youth at risk” or “young offender” oriented.

The following is a brief description of several of those projects, with an indication of the level of inter-agency cooperation needed to initiate them.

### **Youth Theatre “Spares”**

“Spares” was an original musical performed by young people including young offenders, adolescents-at-risk, unemployed and disadvantaged youth in Adelaide’s western suburbs. Participants were involved in all aspects of the production including music, dance, drama, set and costume design. Objectives for the project were as follows:

- To involve young offenders, adolescents-at-risk and other disadvantaged young people in a community based youth arts project
- To increase participants employability by increasing self-esteem, confidence, conflict resolution and communication skills
- To raise community awareness of the fine talents and positive contribution young people can make to their community

In addition to achieving these objectives, the project management was exemplary in that an inter-agency management team used the support and resources of local government, community volunteers, agencies and business to ensure a successful production. By involving the wider community in this way, the project hoped to break down barriers between youth and community, and change the stereotyped image which the general public has of young offenders.

The employment of professional artists to direct the artistic process enabled the young people to experience a range of skills and employment opportunities which utilised their creative talents. This was an important contribution to the building of self-esteem and self-confidence in participants - the knowledge that they each had something positive and valuable to contribute.

### **“Panic Stations”**

The second youth arts supported by the Port Adelaide Crime Prevention Project was directed at improving the relationships between police and young people, with particular regard to Aboriginal youth. “Panic Stations” was a Youth Theatre production involving police officers, young people and artists (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) in the production, writing and performance of an original script based on the life experiences of participants. As a crime prevention project, the two main areas of focus were:

- the overrepresentation of Aboriginal young people in the juvenile justice system; and
- police-youth relations, particularly the stereotyping of each group by the other, and the resulting conflict

that occurs.

The program was a collaborative between Port Youth Theatre Workshop and Magpie Theatre company.

During a unique workshop process, police and young people had to look critically at the attitudes and perceptions each group had towards the other, and the challenge these preconceived notions in order to work together as a team. It was obvious from the harmonious ways in which the program proceeded, that the usually strained relationship between police and young people had changed to one of cooperation and mutual respect. This project broke new ground in addressing the issues of racial conflict and police-youth tensions.

The resulting theatre event was a successful and critically acclaimed performance, with a sold-out season of eight shows.

### **Aboriginal Programs**

Recognising the economic disadvantages experienced by members of the Aboriginal community, and the attendant feelings of racism and intolerance expressed towards them which often exacerbates this disadvantage, crime prevention issues for Aboriginal community have been firmly on the agenda in Port Adelaide.

### **Kura Yerlo Holiday Program**

A very successful school holiday activities program was supported as a crime prevention initiative for Aboriginal young people. This was based on the same rationale underlying the "Ete-Jeune" program in France. There, a series of summer camps and youth activities were organised as a response to inner city disorder and youth violence in the summer of 1981 (Kine, 1988).

The Kura Yerlo holiday program was a joint initiative involving five Youth/Aboriginal service agencies, and catering for 85 young people over a two week holiday period. Supervision for the program was provided by staff from the agencies and community volunteers, while provisions and other resources were either donated by local business or funded through the Port Adelaide Crime Prevention Project.

It is hard to measure the direct impact on crime statistics of such a program. However, feedback from the large number of participants indicated that they were certainly relieved of the holiday boredom which is so often a precursor to opportunistic crime. The program was also structured to include cultural activities aimed at enhancing young Aboriginal people's sense of identity, and increasing self-esteem and self-confidence.

### **Aboriginal Learning Centre**

Early intervention strategies play an important role in crime prevention. With this in mind, funding was provided to resource the establishment of a Learning Centre to provide culturally relevant intensive learning programs for primary age non-attending or disruptive Aboriginal students and their parents. The Centre aims to promote Aboriginal pride and excellence within an educational framework that will enable a successful return to mainstream schooling. This project is strongly supported by the South Australian Education Department who are allocating staff for the 12 month pilot period, as well as premises in an "out of school" location. Evaluation of this project will not only be in terms of educational outcomes, but will also encompass the degree of future involvement (if any) of the participants in the juvenile justice system.

### **Practical Lessons**

In reflecting on 12 months of implementing community-based crime prevention there are some lessons for others who might be considering taking a similar path.

Firstly, one needs to decide on a strategic planning model appropriate to the situation. In the case of Port Adelaide, a 6 month planning phase resulted in a Strategic Plan which was then presented to the funding body for approval prior to implementation. Time delays around this negotiating period can mean that situational factors have changed in the community by the time implementation is ready to start. This can include different crime problems surfacing, priorities changing, strategic partners moving out of the community (particularly with agency workers). All of which may mean a reworking of the Strategic Plan before any strategies can be implemented.

A second imperative for community-based programs is to establish a common understanding of crime prevention, its expectations, and its limitations. This is particularly important of those members of the community who will take responsibility for overseeing individual strategies.

Creating this common understanding can be achieved through a variety of ways including:

- public information sessions at services clubs, business groups, neighbourhood watch meetings, with personnel from police, corrections, service organisations and youth networks.
- workshop training sessions for interested community members and workers.
- team training and information sessions for committee members.
- media publicity newsletters.

Following on from this common understanding there must be limitations set on the extent and nature of crime which can be dealt with locally. For example, murder and armed robbery are not appropriate issues for a local crime prevention project to deal with, whereas issues of vandalism, property theft and illegal drug use may be of particular relevance.

Last but not least, Crime Prevention Projects must continue to consult with the community in order to respond to changing areas of concern and needs. This is essential for the continued development of the program, and so that community members can easily access support for their individual efforts to reduce crime.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

The Port Adelaide Crime Prevention Project has taken a more pro-active approach to implementing crime prevention strategies in the second phase of the program.

Four focus groups have been formed to address key issues in the areas of Youth, Family, Community and Drug and Alcohol problems. Each focus group will be able to co-opt further members of the community to extend the range of skills and experience available to develop and implement crime prevention strategies.

This pro-active approach will enable service providers and community to work together to address the social inequality which exists between sectors of society. This is best achieved at the grass roots level, where those who live and work in the community can build partnerships and develop common goals to reduce crime by addressing the causes.

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## CONFERENCE SUMMARY

Dr Ezzat Fattah

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Dear Friends,

On this beautiful day, on this historic day for Australia, I am very pleased to be given this opportunity to share with you the personal impressions of an overseas criminologist about this conference.

But first let me express my deep and sincere gratitude for being invited, for being given a unique opportunity to learn more about Australia, its people, its justice system, its crime situation, its crime prevention efforts.

I can say without any exaggeration that this is one of the best conferences I have ever attended.

The setting is magnificent;  
The organisation is impeccable;  
The quality of the papers is excellent;  
The food is superb;  
The company is congenial...  
and I can go on and on...

This is also the only conference I have attended, and believe me I have attended many, where the proceedings were published and distributed prior to the departure of the participants.

I think this alone speaks a great deal of the efficiency and dedication of Clive Begg and his team.

This is also one of very few conferences I have attended where those in attendance were given an opportunity to benefit from the insights of the targeted group. Crime prevention, we all know, targets mainly young people and it was an excellent idea to let a group of these young people share with us their feelings, their ideas, their views, their experiences...and I must say they did so candidly, with great sincerity and without hesitation or pretences.

While this group of young people earned a lot of praise for their valuable contribution, another group, namely those in the media, come in for a great deal of flack. But the criticism, I can personally attest, was not undeserved.

I have had many negative experiences with the media myself...and although I am used to being misquoted in the Canadian media and to having my views distorted, sometimes deliberately, other times unintentionally, although I am used to having my statements reported out of context...it was still a shock to me to see on the first day of the Conference how my 50 page paper and the lengthy interview based on it reduced to a headline that reads "Crime hysteria - profit driven". The unsuspecting readers will never know of course that I have neither used the word hysteria in my paper, nor in my oral presentation, nor for that matter in my interview with the journalist; an interview done in the presence of Clive Begg and Kevin Gill.

Media distortions, notwithstanding, it was a pleasant surprise to discover that crime prevention efforts in Australia are as close to reason and as far from chaos as crime prevention efforts anywhere could be. And I leave Australia very confident that those efforts, which seem to be on the right track, will yield tangible results in the near future...and quite possibly before the 21st century draws upon us.

I am sure you all share these positive impressions that I have...but I want to tell you that, for me personally, this Conference has been an extremely rewarding and enriching experience intellectually, professionally and on an interpersonal level.

It was a unique learning experience. There is absolutely no way I could have learnt what I did in the past few days listening to the presentations, the discussions, the private conversations; from reading books, articles or other literature. And believe me, nothing broadens one's horizons more than being exposed to new and different ideas and experiences in other countries, in this instance, another continent.

It was rewarding and enriching on a professional level because many of the papers dealt with practical, applied, and down to earth issues and programs. For an academic like myself, it is always an eye opener to be removed, even temporarily, from the ivory tower setting and to be brought closer to the realities of everyday life.

These applied presentations dealing with concrete programs and projects were also very important in another respect...because they confirmed what we heard repeatedly during the Conference; namely the need that action be taken at a local community level.

For me, the Conference was also rewarding and enriching on an interpersonal level...because it gave me the opportunity meet old friends and to make new ones...and I am very happy to leave here assured of the friendship of many in different parts of Australia and I do hope that the contacts I have established here will be maintained for a long time to come.

There is yet another reason why I enormously benefited from this Conference. It has provided me with fresh and firsthand evidence for a theory of crime I have been working on for the past year or so. The theory is about the link between victimisation and offending, the causal role victimisation plays in the genesis of many types of crime. In many of the presentations I heard, there was this overwhelming evidence of how victimisation of varying forms, particularly early victimisation such as child abuse, is a major contributory factor to later delinquency and criminality. I do not have the time to expand on this theory right now but reference to it is made at the end of my paper when I explain how one of the most effective means of preventing crime is to change the rod mentality and to stop the practice of beating children to correct their misbehaviour.

To those who are interested in learning more about this theory, I can provide a copy of a paper I published recently under the title "Doing unto others", or a copy of a lecture I gave in Helsinki, Finland, two weeks ago. It is called "Victimisation as an antecedent to offending - the interchangeable and revolving roles of victim and victimiser".

It was also very satisfying, reassuring and gratifying to find that I was on the same wave length with other participants and other presenters. I found that many of the ideas, views, criticisms they expressed were very similar or identical to the ones I offered in my keynote address.

For example, it was gratifying to find that there is a growing realisation that crime prevention is not a criminal justice function, that traditional criminal justice responses, particularly punishment, have not been successful or effective in curbing the incidence of crime or preventing delinquency.

It was gratifying to hear the repeated statements that crime prevention is a community responsibility, that there is a need for a combined action, for a holistic approach, that there is a need for new approaches, for innovative and imaginative crime prevention strategies.

It was also gratifying to see that there is a consensus that changing attitudes, particularly sexist, racist, homophobic attitudes, to mention but a few, is essential to effective crime prevention. It was also satisfying and reassuring to learn about the wide array of initiatives in crime prevention taking place in Australia.

At that same time I was disheartened to realise that in Australia, as in Canada, crime prevention is not being taken very seriously by some politicians and by many members of the public; that it is not a very high, or that it is not the highest priority, as it should be. This means that a strong educational effort is needed to convince those who still need to be convinced of the returns of a good crime prevention policy.

There is a final point that I would like to make. I always get worried when I see or hear that social development and community development programs and projects, programs dealing with education, housing, employment, recreation, equity, etc., are being promoted and evaluated as crime prevention programs. As I mentioned in my presentation, we have to realise that these programs are necessary and desirable because they meet specific needs in the community. They have an intrinsic value. Evaluating them in terms of their crime preventing or crime reducing outcomes fails to capture their intangible positive benefits. And the greatest danger is that if the evaluation does not show a substantial reduction in crime, the funding might discontinue or the program might be pronounced a failure.

I just thought I will draw your attention to this danger so that you might give it some consideration.

Thank you again very much.

# CONFERENCE SUMMARY

Kevin Gill

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The Conference has been vigorous and refreshing (apart from yesterday's rain).

- It focussed on the right things:
  - broader approach to Criminal Justice;
  - consumer participation, especially young people;
  - Key Role of Local Government;
  - Strategic Planning at National Level and coordinated activities at Local Level.
- There was a pleasing breadth of contributors:
  - not just Criminal Justice people;
  - also health care/family services/youth issues/local councillors/young people themselves.

**It is for Criminal Justice to build a wider constituency.**

- BUT the breadth of program not mandated by breadth of participants at the Conference in particular were:
  - Education?
  - Business?
  - Police?
- In terms of Youth Crime Prevention I think the YACCA program is superb - state sponsorship of social action and empowerment by young people. And the young people here are a testament to its success - we prophets can present our successes til we're blue in the face - but young people will convince the public and the politicians.

## WHERE NOW?

It is vital not to lose the impetus:

1. Yes, you need national representative structures and national strategies, but you also need CATALYSTS.
2. Yes, you need more Conferences and Seminars - but NOT more of the same. Target them at the missing constituents, and TAILOR them to their concerns.
3. The need for an INDEPENDENT DEVELOPMENT organisation RESOURCE CENTRE to spread the message and make it happen. State on National Level? (**eg. ACRO**)
4. Getting the right people with breadth of vision is vital. These don't grow on trees. You must address EDUCATION and TRAINING for Criminal Justice in your higher education establishments.

Good Luck

# CONFERENCE SUMMARY

Pamela Beynon

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Good Morning Ladies & Gentlemen

My name is Pamela Beynon from the YACCA Management Group in Cairns. I would like to say a few words relating to the direction of this conference and my opinions.

Firstly, as a youth I found the conference stimulating in some areas and boring in others. No offence to anyone but I was enlightened last night that the average attention span of adults is 35 minutes. So you can imagine the length of time a youth will be stimulated for.

I would like to thank all of the speakers for the interesting information conveyed, in particular Mr Bill Saunders and Dr Charles Edwards.

Crime in Cairns is not as bad as Brisbane, however it is well advertised. As many speakers have pointed out, the COMMUNITY is where prevention is possible. However, as representatives of Cairns Communities we can tell you that we are the prevention. For that we would like to thank you for pointing out this important and vital issue to those present at this conference.

I would also say that it gave me, as a Youth, more incentive to work harder for a safer, happier and a more integrated community than exists today; to know that the generation above us is also behind us.

I myself have been lucky enough to have made it to Year 12 and with my wits about me. However, I do have a dysfunctional family. Between domestic violence, alcoholism, separations, divorce and 14 separate schools between Cooktown and Brisbane, I as an individual feel that youth do have control over what they do, but the reason behind this is more complex. Therefore, I would like to say that although you know what causes crimes in youth and what the penalties are, why don't one of you stand up here and tell us - the community - how the information here can be integrated and pushed to Parliament to receive Federal and National recognition to help us - the community - help prevent Chaos.

Sabrina and I have devised a question for you all.

If youth had activities to do, they wouldn't be so bored and I believe crime would be decreased.

Thank you.

## CONFERENCE SUMMARY

Katrina Sutton

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Overall I think the conference has gone OK, a good learning experience. But I feel there should've been more of a youth emphasis.

The various speakers have talked a lot about crime - but not so much on prevention.

You've got our suggestions, so now the question is, where to go from here? What do we do now?

I know I spoke on boredom, but I think young people still need more supports, like accommodation, housing, etc.

I found it interesting to hear Nick Ward's talk on Gay & Lesbian violence and homophobia which exists in our society.

But it's not just the gay community. It's any group which stands out, any group that isn't society's norm.

I was also interested to hear what Karen Struthers & Marg D'Arcy had to say about the way women are treated by men. We are not seen as equal to men.

Now, Keith Hamburger was an interesting one. What he was saying about offenders as society's failures - NOBODY is a human failure. We learn from our experiences. Society's failure to understand the factors that have created the situation which causes that person to offend is it. Mr Hamburger mentioned about how last year he made a statement on 'Feral Street Kids' and that various welfare agencies didn't agree with him. Well during morning tea I approached Mr Hamburger and told him that I was the one who got in touch with the Courier Mail about his comment. I then asked him for a further explanation and he said "Yes, I thought you would". But he ran away and said we'd get together to discuss it. I had to giggle.

I wonder if you all can see yourselves in our shoes. I wonder how many of you could go out there, on the streets to live - and survive. I just wonder how you'd go. You sit and use all your jargon, but we'll stand here and talk really simple. I wonder if you can see where we're coming from.

All speakers spoke of very interesting topics, but I wonder just how much of it was focussed on youth.

As for education on crime, I believe a good place to start is in the schools.

You've come here, and you have listened to us. So now we need to do something. Something needs to be done.

Thank you.