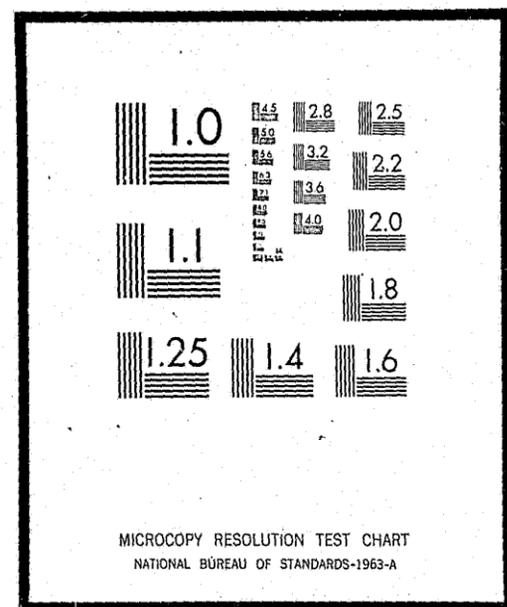


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A STUDY OF
POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS
PROGRAMS IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

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and Criminal Justice
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INTRODUCTION

Whenever police, safe streets, law and order, or crime in the community are discussed, one related topic becomes the major area of interest -- police-community relations. There has been a great deal of study in the controversial area of police work within communities.

In Washington, D.C., there has always been poor police-community relations. The purpose of the field work was to see if various police-community relations programs have been effective in reducing the tension and problems that exist between citizens and the police department in D.C. I attempted to evaluate the successes and limitations these programs have had, both from within the program and in its ability to reach the community and/or police.

I have stretched the purpose so that the paper will also include opinions from police and citizens on police-community relations in D.C., why there is a police-community relations problem and what can be done to change negative attitudes between the police and community.

By observing the operations of programs and interviewing police and citizens who work with programs, I have tried to: 1) show the police-community relations program, 2) evaluate programs in progress which are aimed at improving the relations and 3) recommend solutions that will, perhaps, improve programs' implementation, organization and effectiveness.

Before D.C. police-community relations programs can be discussed, there should be a definition, clear and concise, of what police-community relations is. There is no one definition for police-community relations as scholars, the police and citizens have interpreted the topic in many different ways.

To some, police-community relations means public relations [that is, letting the public know what the police are doing]; to others, it is a special race relations program [that is, it only involves the Black community and the police department]; still others see it as a philosophy or an art in getting the police and community to work together in harmony and cooperation. Taken alone, all three of these popular definitions are very vague; not one of the definitions should be accepted as totally explaining police-community relations.

Public relations, while it can be a part of police-community relations, is a function of the police department where the idea is

to project a "good image" to the public. It makes the public aware of the good things the police are doing. However, public relations will not solve any of the pressing police-community problems.

The police-community relations definition that stresses a special race relations program merely says that the police only have to worry about one segment of the population because they are the only ones "giving the police problems." The police-community programs have, for the most part, concentrated on the black ghetto community. The police, however, represent all citizens: youth, all minorities, the poor, the rural white population, etc., are all affected by the police and vice versa. There has to be a better understanding between the police and all citizens, whether they are war protesters, hippies, minority militants, middle class, etc. Better "all-round" police-community relations may bring the different races, classes and ideologies together towards a better understanding and cooperation.

The third definition usually given is the philosophy that police-community relations is the bringing together of the police and community in harmony and cooperation. While it may sound good, this definition can be interpreted as meaning that the community should become aware of the police and police problems and cooperate with the police in whatever way will help the police do their work. This is a one-sided view of the problem -- taking only the police side of the question.

Louis Radelet, a noted student of police-community relations, defines it as the: ". . .sum total of the many and varied ways in which it may be emphasized that the police are part of, and not apart from the communities they serve."¹

A.C. Germann, a professor of criminology, explains, ". . .The police are the community, the community is the police; the community and police must be considered as an organic unity, a mutually supportive partnership. Any community relations program that involves the police as part of the community, not apart from the community, is on solid ground."²

Dr. Lee P. Brown in his Police-Community Relations Evaluation Project views police-community relations as meaning: "the process

¹Louis Radelet, "Police Community Programs, Nature and Purpose," Police and the Changing Community, ed. Nelson Watson (Washington, D.C.: International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) 1965 p.122

²A.C. Germann, "Community Policing: An Assessment", The Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science, LX, No. 1 (March 1960), p. 93.

by which police work in conjunction with the community to identify the problems that cause friction between the two groups and then the working together to solve these problems."³

Taking the definitions given by Radelet, Germann, and Brown, we may have a workable explanation of what police-community relations should mean -- the police and the community working together to solve those problems that cause friction or misunderstandings between the two with the realization that the two are really one.

The history of police-community relations divisions and programs stem from the chain of large city riots in the 1960's. From those riots came reports which showed brutality, prejudice, hatred, bigotry, under-enforcement, and antagonism against the urban community by the police. The reports showed hostility, hatred, fear, contempt and prejudice against the police by the urban community. From this developed a melting pot of ideas to quiet or calm down the situation. In Washington, D. C., various programs began to flow out of the Police-Community Relations Division in headquarters. Proposals, suggestions, and ideas went to OEO, UPO, etc., to fund programs which would decrease hostility and increase cooperation between police and the community.

There are three types of police-community programs: a) police-based programs, b) community-based programs, and c) police and community-based programs.

In D. C., the majority of police-community relation programs are organized and implemented by the police. These programs are devised by the Police-Community Relations Division staff at headquarters and at the different Districts. Several types of police-based programs are aimed at improving the police image. Examples are Officer Friendly and the Ride-Along projects. Other types of police programs are organized to enlighten the general public to health hazards (drugs, etc.), street protection, burglary protection, etc. These programs are usually implemented through schools, businesses, civic association meetings, etc. Only a few involve the "citizen" on an individual basis.

Community-based programs are mostly funded through government agencies. Most operate as referral or service centers and as liaisons between the community and the police. Meetings with representatives from the police and community are organized by these programs. Most of these programs are closed down after a short existence due to lack of funds or lack of response from the police and/or community.

³Lee P. Brown, Police-Community Relations Evaluation Project (NI-075)

The third type of program is the most honest effort to bring the police and community together. It is the actual working together of the police and community to organize and implement a program that will have equal input from both sides. Both views can be heard, explained and understood. Out of all the police-community relation programs in D.C., there is only one of this type, the Pilot District Project.

Police-Community Relations Programs Sponsored by Metropolitan Police Department:

According to a memorandum released by Police Chief Jerry V. Wilson (dated August 27, 1971) the mission of the Community Relations Division is as follows:

The mission of the Community Relations Division is to plan, develop, administer and promote programs to improve police relations with the community and news media, and to maintain a liaison with other public and private agencies to insure that cooperation is achieved between the Department and these groups to the fullest extent possible consistent with our objective.

The Metropolitan Police Department administers almost ten programs aimed at 1) informing the public of crime prevention and health hazards, and 2) working with youth through the Board of Education. These programs are funded by the police department. The Community Relations Division has its own staff and budget. The Community Relations Division is organized into three branches: 1) the Program Development Branch which develops the police-community programs, 2) the Community Liaison Branch which is responsible for organizing the programs within schools, civic organizations and other associations, and 3) the Public Information Branch which has the primary task of organizing public information centers for disseminating to the public all information on the operations, goals, and services of the Police Department.

Below are brief police-published summaries of police-community relation programs administered by the Metropolitan Police Department:

1. District Citizens' Advisory Councils - enables the community to assist in the task of reducing crime and promoting the safety of the public.

2. Man-to-Man Project - an effort to reach young boys who have had little or no experience with a man in the home, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss their problems with an officer.

3. Crime Prevention Education Programs - designed to show the public steps in crime prevention. Subjects include "Burglary Prevention" and "How to Prevent Hold-Ups". The slides and literature are presented at college classes, civic groups, business and professional associations and government agencies.

4. Tension Patrols - maintain a "tension" area patrol. Officers are assigned from the Community Liaison Branch in an attempt to develop communication with residents in order to identify any disruptive situations.

5. Side-by-Side - is a musical presentation to elementary and secondary school systems in D.C. by members of the Metropolitan Police Band. "The police and students sit "side-by-side" as instrumentalists."

6. Court Tours - participation with the Young Lawyers Association and the Office of U.S. Marshal in a program designed to explain the Criminal Justice System to students. A division member lectures to high school government classes during their visit to the U.S. Courthouse.

7. Spanish Speaking Programs - officers receive certificates for successful completion of a six week Intensive Spanish Speaking Training Program. This course will enable officers to give lectures and crime prevention programs in Spanish, and help in establishing a better rapport with Spanish-Speaking citizens.

8. Sporting Events - participation of officers as chaperones for youth at baseball, basketball games and other sport events.

9. Officer Friendly - receives the most money and has the largest police staff (8 officers) participating in one project. It was designed to establish an early understanding and appreciation for the positive role of the law enforcement officer plays in protecting and aiding the child, his family and the community. The program is set up in three phases: the orientation period, a classroom demonstration and a follow-up period. The orientation period is a getting acquainted session where the officer introduces himself to the students and teacher; the classroom period is where the pupil learns about the policeman, his functions and his duties, his equipment and cooperates

in a teaching-learning session. At the end of the program, each child receives a Junior Citizen Award, an Officer Friendly Identification Card, and an Officer Friendly Coloring Book. The program is operated in public, parochial, and pre-school classes ranging from kindergarten to fifth grades.

In addition to programs that are conducted all over the city, each of the seven Police Districts has its own Community Relations Division and staff. Projects done through the Districts are organized to fill the particular needs of the community the District serves.

Most of the same programs are implemented in each police District. I chose to visit the Third and Sixth Districts to observe and participate in some of the police-community relations programs and to interview police officers stationed at the two Districts.

The Third District - located at 16th and V Streets, N.W. Below are some of the programs implemented:

Youth-oriented programs such as the Junior Police Cadet Corps, Christmas treats and baseball games have been programs implemented at the Third District.

Another program, in which I participated, is the Citizen Riders Program or the Ride-Along program. In this project, citizens of the Third District are invited for a four hour ride in a police car. The riders have to fill out two forms which release the police department of all responsibility and an information sheet about the rider. It takes about two weeks for a passenger to be cleared except for those receiving special consideration. The Pilot District Project is trying to end the two week waiting period for Third District Citizens. [Riders can be cleared by Community Relations Division Commanders but the usual procedure is for Chief Wilson or an officer of his staff to clear a citizen for the ride]. This project is done in all the other police districts too. The citizens who ride in the Third District have been, for the most part, lawyers and council men and women. The purpose of this project is to enable the citizen to become acquainted with the police, familiar with his work, and to view police functions from the police side.

The Scout Car Program is a rather new attempt by the Relations Division to take the police to the community. Squad cars go into the community to hold "meetings" with citizens.

The Sixth District - 42nd and Benning Road, N.E. The Community Relations Unit of the Sixth District has geared its programs, primarily, towards the youth of the district.

There is a Youth-Police Council which is made up of police volunteers and youth who try to breach the gap by understanding each other and working together to solve community problems.

The Ride-Along program is implemented the same way as in the Third District with special preference given to school children as passengers. In fact, the Commander can approve a school child as a rider without much formality while others must be cleared "down-town" at the Municipal Center.

The Citizen-Cop-Out program brings resources in the way of lectures into the community to enlighten citizens in the area of drugs, Sickle Cell Anemia, etc. This was done because the Unit realized that it was a necessity to inform the district of topics that police officers weren't able to discuss due to lack of knowledge.

A Summer Seminar is held in Harpers Ferry, Virginia, between ten police officers and thirty kids. The retreat is a "rap" session where the two groups tell their grievances and points of view about law, police work, juvenile problems, etc.

The Relations Unit also has initiated a program whereby police officers go into the high school and present a series of classroom discussions (a "sophisticated" Officer Friendly program). According to one officer, this project has resulted in a lessening of tension and greater understanding between police officers and students in that area.

Beside their own programs, the Unit also works with an anti-delinquency program, the Welfare Department, Police Boys Club, and the Businessmen's Association of the Far Northeast.

Successes and Failures of and Recommendations for Police Implemented Police-Community Programs.

The major programs implemented by the police department are not "bad" or harmful programs, but they do not change or influence major attitudes of the public towards police. Except for a few, the police-community relation programs are for youth.

Schools are the main targets for the programs. It is the general feeling among the department that it is most important to reach the ghetto youth and to focus on young people when presenting a positive police image.

There are only a small number of policemen who participate in the Officer Friendly, Court Tours, and other programs, and the majority of them are Black officers. Officer Friendly, the "biggest" police program is "nice" for young kids but such programs have no weight beyond the fifth grade.

When I spoke with a mother and her six year old daughter about Officer Friendly, the little girl regarded the police as a friend or a nice guy. The mother recalled, however, that one officer her daughter addressed as Officer Friendly refused to acknowledge the little girl. This sort of incident not only can ruin the program but can also damage a child's positive feelings towards the police at an early stage. A child does not understand that all policemen are not like the "nice" Officer friendly who talked to her class about the police and what a job they try to do helping everyone.

When I asked some teens and adults what they thought of the Officer Friendly, Court Tours, and other programs, the responses were negative. In essence the majority felt that the programs are just "shams" and proof that the police really don't want to deal with the real police-community problem. While they agreed that the programs were "nice" for children, they saw them as not really an honest and positive move toward police-community relations. One young man with two children said that he thought that those programs enable the police to "sell" themselves to children because they aren't able to sell themselves to adults and to the community. Another person said that she believed that the programs are police propaganda and are brainwashing young black children against the community.

The Third District Relations Division admits that they are not reaching enough citizens in the district. Working with the Pilot District Project has not been all that was hoped.

I participated in the Citizen Riders Program for seven hours (6 p.m. to 1 a.m.); I rode in a scout car with two veteran officers. Riding in the back seat I began to feel very paranoid as we circled the same blocks several times waiting for a call. I felt that the people were staring at me as if they were saying, "I wonder what she did?" My "paranoia" was confirmed when a couple of kids did ask the officers why I had been arrested. As we stopped for the officers to make routine checks, people came up to the car to ask why was I riding around. I was mistaken for a "prisoner," a "criminal", a member of "mod squad," and a "policewoman", but never for just a citizen.

riding with the police. I think that is important to note. When I finally did tell a teenager that I was just a citizen riding around with the police to see them work, he responded earnestly, "Oh, the police don't let somebody just ride around in their car." All of this shows that the average citizen can feel paranoid or stigmatized riding in a police car, and that a citizen just observing police work is considered something that could never happen. [It is also worth noting that I received sympathy from those who mistook me for a prisoner, while a little less than sneers from those who thought I might be a mod squader or "cop" who was riding around "putting the finger" on people.]

The Ride Along program should be expanded and modified and of course publicized throughout the District. In the seven hours that I rode, I did not really learn anymore about police functions. I don't think a four hour to seven hour ride will really enlighten a citizen to police work. It also doesn't make sense to wait for a two-week clearance for a four-hour ride.

I also attended a Scout Car meeting held at the Cambridge apartment building. There were four officers present and a plain-clothes officer of the police-community relations division. Citizens present included four elderly women and four middle-aged persons (all residents of the apartment building). I was the only citizen present under 30. Fliers had been distributed throughout the area notifying residents of the meeting. The "meeting" consisted of two films, both wholly outdated, on prohibition and pot, and speed. Even the policemen laughed at the films. The movies were an insult to anyone's intelligence as they depicted persons who drink and use pot as being schizophrenics; while the movie on prohibition showed speakeasys and temperance movements of the 1920's.

Between the films, questions were asked by the citizens to the policemen. When one resident accused the police department of having a lousy public relations division, one patrolman spoke out and said, "we sent out fliers; we are here, where are the citizens? People don't come out to the Scout Car meetings but we are forced to come -- we have to come. Yet we are lousy!"

To an extent, the patrolman speaks the truth. Out of all the programs implemented by the police department, the Scout Car program has experienced the most failures in getting people to respond. One lady who has attended numerous police meetings said she has never been to one of the police Scout Car Programs where more than ten people were in attendance.

The Community Relations officer, when interviewed, explained, "If we initiate a program like this, we get very poor responses from the neighborhoods. All over the city this program is being done and all over the city it is the same old thing. But, when an association or a church group invites several officers to speak at one of their meetings, the people show a positive interest in our work." The officer said the apathy towards this program is not only found in neighborhoods. "Police officers hate to come out to meetings like this. My own wife (who is a policewoman) won't even come with me to a Scout Car program being held in her own area."

In the one hour that I was there I was completely bored with the films and found the entire meeting, more or less, a waste of time. The questions asked by the citizens included: 1) "why can't we park our cars in front of the apartment building?" and 2) "why don't inspectors or councilmen come out to speak to citizens?" Although one question was raised about the police shooting of Gregory Coleman while stealing a bicycle (the question was totally ignored as the police-community relations officer quickly changed the topic), there were no important questions asked or important topics raised during the entire meeting.

I would suggest that the Scout Car Program, as it is now, cease as an "independent" community-relations project and become a program that is implemented only at the request of a civic, church or school group that has already planned a community meeting. The project is a waste of money (which is used to purchase bad films and print fliers that are thrown in trashcans) and a waste of police officers time (the officers are on regular duty during these meetings). The program, as the community-relations officer explained, is well received by citizens when another organization invites several officers to speak and answer questions at their (i.e., the association's) meeting.

Again, the Sixth District Relations Unit has not had the community feedback it would like. The Unit concentrates more on the black ghetto community in their district. The police don't think there is a need for programs and police service centers in middle class sections of the District.

The programs implemented in this district by the police are aimed at youth because the Sixth District police feel that the hostility towards them comes from young people.

The Ride-Along is "somewhat successful" at the District. The problem is that except for school children, there hasn't been much response to the project.

Problems that have stalked both Districts' police-community relation programs are: 1) small staff, 2) voluntary (not mandatory) cooperation within the District headquarters, 3) skepticism of Division by both the citizens and other policemen, and 4) inability to reach mass of citizens.

The general feeling of some of the officers who are members of the two Divisions feel that "the programs are nice but they won't change community attitude of police." There are also problems with the administration accepting the validity of police-community relations division. One officer explained, "A lot of them don't see a police-community problem unless there are riots."

It is no secret that Police-Community Relations Divisions have become scapegoats and a handful of men are expected to work miracles. It has also become the occupation of black policemen to keep "things quiet" between the police and the community." "The people aren't dumb. They can tell a phony, whether he is a white or black cop", one policeman expounded. "They (the police department) think because we are Black we are able to get across to the Black community anything and everything."

"The police have to change their image; not the community," says one police officer. "The problem isn't really racial. It is harder for a white cop in a black neighborhood because he has already been stereotyped." "But a Black cop walks the line too, because the people can read him a lot better than a white cop; the people expect more of us (i.e., black cops) too."

"The problem in D.C. is that there aren't enough home boys on the force. There are a lot of guys who aren't even from big cities. They really find it difficult because they've only known one culture -- their own." "What we need is more white cops in police-community relations division. We (i.e., black cops) already know the problems within ghetto communities," argued another officer.

"What burns me up is that if there are no riots or no cops getting shot at, then the feeling is that everything is fine. There is a need for the entire department to realize there is a police-community problem here in D.C. and that an all out effort of the police department has to be made to improve the relationship. One small unit can not do it alone," says one citizen who works for the Metropolitan Police Department.

COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS

There are police-community programs that are not funded by the police department. Nor are many of these programs organized, implemented or staffed by any members of the police department.

Community-based programs that work to bring the police and neighborhoods together are located within the community and are often staffed by persons who have lived and/or worked within that community. These citizens know that there is a serious communication gap between the police force and citizens in D.C. They have taken a leadership role in trying to bring the two forces together. These programs located in neighborhoods are working towards the goal of reducing the police and community tensions and problems.

The two that the paper will focus on are the Peoples' Improvement Corporation and the Pilot District Project both located in the Third District, with the latter being the only attempt for a police and community joint effort towards bringing citizens and police together.

Peoples' Improvement Corporation:

The Peoples' Involvement Corps. (P.I.C.) located on Georgia Avenue, N.W., operates as a: 1) Referral Center, 2) a Community Center and 3) a Citizen Action Group.

As a Referral Center, P.I.C. offers help to citizens who come in with housing, financial, etc. problems. Clients are referred to various agencies that will be able to aid the clients. As a Community Center, P.I.C. offers classes in safety, health hazards, etc. to adults and children, handles complaints concerning garbage and trash, car removal, etc. As a Citizen Action Group, P.I.C. works to bring the police and community together, holding meetings, and working as a mediator for the Ride-Along Program.

The project began with three citizens led by Mrs. Louis Jackson who first met on the footsteps of her home. "I saw the need for bringing the police and community together. There is a definite problem here between the police and the community," she explained.

She attended a police-community workshop in Michigan and returned with ideas of her own for D.C. She wrote a proposal for P.I.C. and submitted it to a government agency who turned it down at first and then decided to fund it when "they needed more programs of this type."

Every Wednesday, police-citizen meetings are held to try to alleviate misunderstandings and hostility towards the two groups. P.I.C. acts also as a liaison between MPD and the community. News releases concerning police and community are circulated by P.I.C.

Pilot District Project:

A unique project began in 1968 - a first of its kind. The plan to make a "citizen precinct" was organized and became the Pilot Police Project. It was the first and only D.C. attempt to have a police and community-based program for improving police-community relations.

The goal, as stated in the 1968 plan, was to increase police efficacy in ghetto areas by:

- (a) bettering relationships between police and ghetto residents;
- (b) increasing community support for police activities;
- (c) lessening tensions between police and ghetto residents and;
- (d) improving police intelligence sources.

The program, under the directorship of Dr. Robert Shellow, was under attack from the very beginning -- even before it was funded in 1968. The main forces against the project, in the beginning, came from both the police and the citizens.

Policemen were fearful of the "community control" concept, even in a limited form; local citizenry suspected that the demonstration project would only mean more law and order of the "stop-and-frisk" abusive kind with little regard for their perception of law and justice.⁴

While Shellow and other representatives of the Establishment sought to maintain the chief original objective of improving the efficacy of the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department,

⁴Dr. Rita Kelly, The Pilot Police Project: A Description and Assessment of a Police-Community Relations Experiment in Washington, D.C. 1971, p.3

a contingent of local Black leaders fought for the opportunity of forcing change in the other two critical power dimensions: representativeness and responsiveness.⁵

The program, even before operations began, sparked off immediate responses after critically decreasing citizen participation:

Thomas Payne, then Executive Secretary of Metropolitan Citizens' Advisory Council: "This proposal will create, in Washington, a neighborhood-based spy network. Citizens will be hired to inform the police about what's going on in their neighborhood."⁶

UPO Reverses Decision to Fund Police Precinct Program: "The reversal stemmed mainly from a change in the program which it was felt would lessen citizen participation in planning activities of the neighborhood centers which the proposal would establish to improve community-police relations."⁷

Wiley Branton, then Executive Director of UPO: ". . .the specific design of the program would be worked out jointly by citizens and the police. . .citizen participation in the design and implementation of programs is fundamental. . .and is especially necessary in the case of a program that seeks the support and involvement of citizens in poverty neighborhoods. All too often the mistake has been made of planning for the poor instead of with the poor."⁸

The controversy continued for a long time. "The program gives the impression of trying to buy citizen informants in exchange for welfare services," said columnist William Raspberry.⁹

The main segment of the program that caused conflict was the Citizens' Advisory Board. There were different opinions over what functions, power and control the Board would have in the program.

But not all the opposition came from Blacks or the ghetto residents. Many Whites refused to acknowledge the program, mostly because they feared "ghetto control."

John Zolyak of the Federation of Citizens' Associations of the District refused to vote in favor of the project because ". . .the

⁵Ibid., p.3

⁶Washington Post, June 29, 1968, Sec. B-1.

⁷The Evening Star, July 10, 1968, Sec. C-1.

⁸Ibid., July 19, 1968, Sec. A-10.

⁹The Washington Post, July 28, 1968, Sec. B-1.

experiment would deprive police of centralized control and would amount to a financial plum for one area of the city."¹⁰

Under pressure from OEO to move ahead or forget it, the Board chose the 13th precinct (now the Third District) to be the locale of the Pilot Precinct.

But that did not stop the bickering and dissatisfaction against the project. Under pressure from organizations such as NAACP, National Conference of Christians and Jews, and community groups, Shellow resigned as director of the project. It was generally felt that Shellow (who was white) could not relate to the community and was unresponsive to community wishes.

For three years the program went under new administrations, new goals, etc. In January 1972, Mr. Robert Craig became the project's third or fourth director. Under his leadership, the administration of the program has developed and expanded. There are now three community centers, two are opened twenty-four hours a day. One center is located in Spanish-speaking community on 18th Street, N.W. It is the only Spanish-speaking center for the citizens in that area. The centers provide shelter, food, and small financial help to clients, as well as operating as referral centers for citizens.

The centers are operated solely by community residents. I visited all three centers and saw how the project was positive in this capacity. The workers attend training classes that are taught, usually, by more experienced community workers who are on the staff of other community programs.

I attended one of the training classes for community workers. The theme was "Eyesight and Vision." The discussion leader was able to illustrate to the workers the difference between just seeing and understanding what is seen. The point being made was the ability for the workers to be able to do a good job and understanding the importance of the job being done.

The Pilot District Project (as it is now called) is also organizing the Citizens Ride-Along program, sponsored in conjunction with the Third District, so that Third District residents do not have to wait two weeks before they can ride.

The program also provides a newsletter with police and community input, sponsors training programs for police as well as for citizens,

¹⁰The Evening Star, January 23, 1969, Sec. B-1.

and "An Officer is Honored" - an annual banquet honoring an outstanding officer for dedication in improving police-community relations in the Third District.

The Pilot District Project has changed considerably since its controversial days in 1968 and 1969. Under Craig's leadership, the project is much quieter, settled and much more organized than it has ever been since its funding.

The composition of the Citizen's Board has changed substantially. For the first time, the Board includes two members of the Spanish community (it is now a requirement to have at least two) and two policemen from the Third District.

Marion Barry, who was a leading figure of PDP during the Shellow controversy, has, more or less, withdrawn from the program.

Supervisors (of the three centers) say police bring in up to half of the centers' case workload. Police interviewed agree that the centers are convenient for them to refer persons with social problems so the police can return to their primary anti-crime duties.¹¹

Of course, the project is still criticized by members of the police force and community. Community criticisms stem from the charges that PDP has become a "smooth bureaucracy; a peace-keeping operation that has surrendered to the police department."¹² Police admit while they find the centers helpful, most rarely use them.¹³ "All the police in the (Third) district know about it," said one officer, "but it's only the men who came out of neighborhoods like this that are really concerned and use things like these emergency centers."¹⁴

Success and Failures of and Recommendations for Community Implemented Police-Community Programs.

Unlike police-based programs, projects from within the community are not self-supportive. Grants are administered, mostly, by government agencies to citizens to carry out the goals proposed. There are two major problems with this sort of operation; a) while evaluations and audits are necessary, community workers have the constant fear of being closed down whenever they are being evaluated

¹¹The Washington Post, August 6, 1972, Sec. D-3.

¹²The Washington Post, August 6, 1972, Sec. D-3.

¹³Ibid., Sec. D-3.

¹⁴Ibid.

by the funding agency; thus, many community workers become disheartened and develop an "I don't care" attitude when they know that at any time they may be unemployed and all the work they have tried to do is shot down, and b) because they are funded by outside organizations, community workers are not able to change and re-develop their goals the way they would like. Proposals submitted two or three years before have no real value to a program that has gone through major administrative changes. People change too, so ideas must reflect the needs of the time. It does not mean that a project becomes totally obsolete in time, but it does mean it must grow with time, so its goals, method of implementation, etc. must be updated.

The OEO evaluation of PDP is a perfect example of this. Although the evaluation was done to cover 1968-1971, it has affected the operations, opinions and criticisms of how the program is being implemented now.

Another setback is that very few "grass root" citizens are able to write down a formal proposal that could be accepted by a funding agency. In addition, economics and other subjects have to be mastered in order to write an acceptable community program proposal. This is why so many programs are directed by middle class blacks and whites who have difficulty reaching the "grass roots." What is needed is a program to teach "Proposal Writing" because many community residents are sincere about improving police-community relations and have very good ideas but they are not able to write a proposal up to the standards required.

Community-based police-community relations programs have little difficulty reaching the community but have more problems really reaching the police, while it is just the opposite with police-based programs. The feeling of several community workers is that the police "will only support and work with a program if it is a police-originated program." One policeman admitted that he felt that "the community doesn't have the resources to initiate police-community relations programs." More or less, both ideas are right. That is why if you are going to have police-community relations programs, they must be police and community-based. The programs must have equal input from the police and community, if they are to be meaningful and successful.

Suggestions for Improving Police and Community Relations Through Effective Programs.

There is a desperate need to improve police-community relations in D.C. There is a lack of communication between the two -- some

wounds so deep that a workable relationship on both sides is impossible.

The move towards police-community relations programs should be initiated by the police. But, it is impossible to even start a workable program that will be meaningful and successful if the community is not involved in the planning.

The advantage of involving the community in the planning stages of such projects is because they are in the best position to identify their problems. They (the residents) are more ready to cooperate and show interest in the program if they feel it is their program and they have assisted in its development.

It is for this reason that I think any Community Relations Division of a police department should be directed by both an officer and a civilian. This will be a positive step towards equal input in the program. The civilian should be elected by the residents in the District that he serves.

In discussing the goals and functions of the police department, it is important to discuss "why" a police-community relations division and program should not be developed. It should not be established because it is the thing to do, or as tokenism, window dressing, or as a gimmick to sell the police to the community; it should not become an investigative division, and should not be organized without sincere support of the police administration.

There is the threat that police-community relations programs' administrators will become scapegoats. That is, as it is now, people from within and without the police department and the community expect police-community programs to alleviate all problems. An effective police-community relations program can only give society time to correct the deplorable conditions that exist. Police did not invent ghettos, poverty, discrimination, poor housing, etc. They should not be expected to alleviate these conditions; and no program can alleviate them either. However, any successful police-community relations program must place its greatest efforts on community service and community participation.

The next big move for any Police and Community Relations Division is to involve as many members of the police department (even to the point of making services mandatory) and community as possible. A handful of officers and a handful of citizens can only do a handful of work.

The Police and Community Relations Division should not be designed to operate solely in improving Black citizens — police relations. While the problems between police and citizens in one neighborhood may cause more concentration of police service than in another neighborhood, the Police and Community Relations Division can help to combat ignorance of different cultures, prejudice, and racism by working and sharing various ideas with all communities.

The biggest decision that the Police and Community Relations Division has to really make is how sincere and honest an effort is going to be made in deciding on the various programs to be implemented. Is the division going to deal with the "nitty gritty" problems that exist between police and the citizens, or is it going to just implement a multitude of "Mickey Mouse" programs? There is nothing wrong with a few youth-oriented programs, but the major concentration of police-community relations programs should be focused at an adult mentality. There is no point having the type of programs that are for the most part, considered ridiculous, a sham, irrelevant, and a waste of time.

The final suggestion is that the police and community, realizing they are one, will form a police department without just one Police and Community Relations Division but an entire force built on a police-community foundation.

END