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**Mario M. Cuomo
Governor**

**John J. Poklemba
Director of Criminal Justice**

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**Richard J. Dehais, Bureau Chief
Bureau of Program & Policy Analysis**

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COMMUNITY POLICING: AN OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Donna L. Hall, Ph.D.

Introduction

Community policing is becoming an increasingly popular medium for dealing with the crime and order maintenance problems of neighborhoods. It represents an effort to change policing from a largely reactive, incident-driven service to a more proactive, problem-solving practice. This paper serves to review the development of community policing and to discuss the following questions associated with that movement.

1. What is community policing and what forms does it take?
2. What are the general goals of this policing method?
3. Why has community policing become popular, and how has it been catalyzed by current theory on urban degeneration?
4. How effective have community policing programs been in fulfilling their objectives?
5. How has the policing technique been used to address drug problems in communities?
6. What issues are yet unresolved with regard to community policing?

This report on community policing marks the first in a series of papers on criminal justice program and policy issues of relevance to New York State. We anticipate that the reader will find the report both informative and provocative.

Community policing is more than a mere reawakening of past law enforcement practices. It represents a means of getting communities involved in defining and addressing their social-order problems. Police are encouraged to look beyond the particular criminal incident to discern patterns and causes of social disorder and criminality.

The challenges inherent in community policing are significant. It often places the police officer in the demanding role of liaison between the community and other governmental services and risks the frustrations which frequently accompany change, particularly when many of the problems to be addressed are woven into the very fabric of our society. Yet, community policing provides a light of hope that we can improve our communities and safeguard them from the many forces which have led to their degeneration. It is certainly one of the most promising innovations in criminal justice today.

**John J. Poklemba
Director of Criminal Justice**

What is Community Policing?

Many and varied programs have fallen under the rubric of "community policing." Although they sometimes differ in structure and substance, community policing programs share a philosophical orientation in which the police strive to: (1) take seriously the citizenry's definition of the crime problem; (2) make efforts to solve the identified problems; and (3) involve citizens in the solutions (Wyckoff, 1988). The use of citizens as a source of information and aid has led to the focus on neighborhoods as a point of intervention. Some programs have defined neighborhoods according to naturally occurring physical boundaries, while others have relied on social groupings as the basis for definition.

Community policing programs often share common objectives, including the following:

1. reduction of the fear of crime within the community;
2. reduction of the amount of crime and disorder within the community;
3. increased citizen satisfaction with police services; and
4. increased job satisfaction among the police.

Community policing is often viewed as synonymous with foot patrol policing. Foot patrol policing programs began, in their current form, in the late 1970s. Unlike prior foot patrol programs, the current trend is to place them in residential rather than merely business areas. Although foot-patrol programs are frequently instrumental in carrying out the goals of community policing, other methods have been employed. Perhaps more of a benchmark for current community policing efforts is the use of problem-solving methods.

Problem-solving policing, first identified by Goldstein (1979), represents a process of policing which seeks to identify a problem salient to a community, collect all relevant information, and develop intermediate and long-term solutions to that problem. The problem may not be criminal in nature, but rather represents a factor within a community which is believed to contribute to the physical and social deterioration of that area. A key element in the problem-solving process is the use of non-police resources throughout the stages of problem identification, data collection and solution

development and implementation. Police endeavor to act as a liaison between the community and other governmental and non-governmental organizations. They are, in many ways, the community's advocate in government -- the community's access to resources needed to solve its often difficult and complex problems.

Foot patrol, then, can be viewed as a common structure of community policing, while problem-solving policing is an increasingly employed technique. They may be used in combination or alone, with the technique at least equally as important as the structure. In either case, emerging policing models share the philosophy and objectives of community policing programs. This orientation contrasts sharply with incident-driven policing in which crime problems are defined without meaningful citizen involvement and law enforcement agents react to discrete events rather than view them as part of a larger community problem.

What Catalyzed the Development of Community Policing?

Community policing developed largely due to a growing recognition that:

1. communities had unique crime problems and trends;
2. the fear of crime was as important as crime itself and may contribute to the crime problem; and
3. other methods of policing could be reduced without sacrificing police effectiveness.

The belief that community deterioration is linked to both fear of crime and the actual amount of crime has sparked an interest in developing ways to stem such decline. Community foot patrol policing is viewed as playing a particularly vital role in abridging the decay of communities.

The linkages between community deterioration, fear of crime and crime rates are complex. Some evidence indicates that physical degeneration and social incivilities (e.g., aggressive youths) within neighborhoods catalyze a self-perpetuating decline process in which stable residents of the community leave or become secluded in their own homes. The loss of stable residents perpetuates the decline until little is left of the original neighborhood. Community policing, particularly foot patrol

policing, has been advocated to stem the cycle of decline.

The erosion of communities has been shown to occur with rapidity, taking less than a decade to convert from a low-crime area to a high-crime neighborhood (Schuerman and Korbin, 1986). Deterioration is believed to begin with changes in land use such as a shift from owner to renter-occupied homes and single to multi-dwelling units. It is later propelled by a reduction of semi-skilled and unskilled occupations and the growth of single-headed households with large juvenile populations (Schuerman and Korbin, 1986).

Community foot patrol policing is one suggested method of interdicting the degeneration of low or moderate-crime neighborhoods (Wilson and Kelling, 1982; Schuerman and Korbin, 1986). Thus, it is often recommended as a means to stop urban decay rather than to save those neighborhoods which are already highly degenerated.¹

As with many innovations, the development of police foot patrols has required a shift in resources. Concurrent with increased attention on patterns of neighborhood degeneration and the causes and effects of the fear of crime, were a number of studies challenging the effectiveness of past patterns of police deployment (Eck and Spelman, 1987). The Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment questioned the usefulness of random patrol cars as a method of reducing crime (Kelling, et al, 1974).² Other research challenged the need for speedy police response to non-emergency calls (Spelman and Brown, 1984), the ability of detectives to investigate crimes successfully (Greenwood, Petersilia and Chaiken 1977; Eck, 1982) and the need for detectives to follow up on all unsolved crimes (Greenberg, Yu and Lang, 1973; Eck, 1979).

How Effective is Community Policing?

Given the multiple objectives of community policing programs, there are numerous potential indicators of effectiveness. They include community satisfaction, reduction in fear of crime, effective problem-solving through use of police as community liaisons, reduction in crime rates and increased job satisfaction among police. Although many evaluations have measured multiple objectives, this review first examines the evidence with regard to fear of crime and crime rates. It then explores findings regarding use of non-police resources, as well as citizen and police satisfaction.

Evidence of community and police satisfaction is quite positive, while that of reduction in crime and the fear of crime is equivocal and that of use of non-police resources is less positive. Unfortunately, most of the evaluations occurred soon after introduction of the programs. Thus, some positive findings may be due to the newness of the programs and the perceptions of communities that someone cares about their crime problems (Manning, 1988). Such effects may wane after the novelty of the programs dissipates.

Effects of Community Policing on Crime and the Fear of Crime

Both crime and the fear of crime are believed, by many, to influence community degeneration. But many factors other than the level of crime contribute to the degree of fear within a community. Because fear of crime is often far out of proportion to actual risk of victimization (Williams and Pate, 1987) and contributes to community decay, police have sought to manage the level of fear even if the actual crime rate remains unchanged. It is assumed that, over time, the resiliency of the community will build, leading to reductions in actual rates of crime.³

The earliest research on the effectiveness of community policing occurred in Newark, New Jersey and Flint, Michigan. Both programs employed foot patrols. Unlike prior foot patrol programs, these community-oriented programs were placed in residential areas and designed to serve as linkages between the neighborhoods and other governmental agencies. The officers in Flint, for example, were directed to assume a problem-solving approach and to serve as community diagnosticians, change catalysts, government liaisons and specialists in crime prevention. They became involved in various community activities such as community meetings, home and business security checks and youth support programs (Trojanowicz, n.d.).

The Flint research spanned a period of three years. A small group of residents were interviewed each year, with larger groups selected for briefer surveying. The residents perceived a reduction in actual crime during the first two years, with a perceived increase during the third year. Fear of crime was also apparently reduced; yet, the Flint evidence is inconclusive. Although the majority reported reduced levels of fear, this response could reflect the citizens' desire to support the program or respond in a manner in which they felt the researcher desired, regardless of the program's actual effect on their level of fear. It is interesting

to note that the reduced level of fear did not translate to changes in patterns of movement, with the program having little effect on the degree of mobility among the residents surveyed.

Two foot patrol experiments were undertaken in Newark between the years of 1978 and 1979 and 1983 and 1984. The first Newark Foot Patrol Experiment was loosely structured, with officers provided little direction with regard to community problem-solving approaches. Yet, it reportedly resulted in reduced levels of fear, with corresponding changes in the crime-avoidance behaviors of residents (Police Foundation, 1981). Experimental manipulations of patrol intensity indicated that residents were sensitive to decreases and increases in foot patrol coverage (Police Foundation, 1981). Business persons, in contrast, perceived crime as increasing in the foot patrol areas. The actual amounts of reported crime and victimization were unaffected by the level of foot patrol in the areas (Police Foundation, 1981).

The second Newark experiment employed more of a problem-solving orientation, with officers instructed to deal with the order-maintenance problems in the neighborhoods. Other governmental resources were also marshalled to correct the physical decay of properties within the communities (Pate, et al, 1986; Williams and Pate, 1987). The second experiment resulted in improved perceptions of social order and less concern about property crime. The police were also viewed more positively by the residents. General fear of crime, however, was unaffected.

Reductions in levels of fear of crime were also achieved in community policing programs in Houston (Brown and Wycoff, 1987) and Baltimore County (Cordner, 1985). The former was designed similar to the second Newark experiment, while the latter did not rely on traditional foot patrols but rather employed a problem-solving unit to work with selected communities. The Citizen Oriented Police Enforcement (COPE) unit undertook door-to-door surveys to introduce its services and determine the community's perception of social-order problems. With considerable fortitude and persistence, COPE officers were able to transcend the suspicions of the residents and procure their input and cooperation. As discussed below, the program involves unit-based problem-solving efforts designed according to the needs of the individual communities.

Although the research findings on community policing programs have been fairly positive with

regard to fear reduction, the results are still tentative. The research suffers from numerous technical problems including the loss of panel respondents over time (the Flint study lost half of its subjects), the possibility of a "halo" effect due to the novelty of the programs (less serious in the Flint research), and the frequent absence of control groups and statistical tests of the significance of the change. Furthermore, the finding of reduced fear was often sample-specific. The second Newark experiment resulted in a reduction in fear in the panel sample, but not in the cross-sectional sample (Greene and Taylor, 1988), suggesting the possibility that interviewing the panel prior to treatment influenced the results. Interestingly, the Houston research showed the opposite pattern, with a reduction in fear occurring in the cross-sectional analysis, but not the panel sample (Greene and Taylor, 1988).

Although the findings with regard to the fear of crime are fairly positive, there is little evidence that community policing programs have reduced property or personal crime within the targeted areas. In Flint, the researchers report a reduction of nine percent in crime during the research time period (Trojanowicz, n.d.). The programs in Oakland (Reiss, 1985) and Baltimore (Cordner, 1985) also reported decreases in crime. But none of these studies provide statistical evidence to discern whether the reduction in the crime rate was other than that which could be expected by chance alone. Furthermore, even if crime in the targeted area was reduced more (or increased less) than in non-targeted areas, the difference may be attributable to normal shifting of the targeted area's high crime rate toward the city's average crime rate. Arguing from the other perspective, it may be premature to expect an improvement in the crime rate during the first few years of a policing program, as the targeted community may not have fully developed its resistance to criminal intrusion.

The Police as Community Liaisons

One common cornerstone of community policing is the use of non-police resources in resolving problems of targeted communities. Physical decay of community property, for example, may require the involvement of a governmental housing authority. Cooperation from school systems may be needed to address the problem of unsupervised youths within a community. Thus, one of the primary goals of the Flint program was developing the police role as a liaison between the community and government. Yet, to a large extent, that role never materialized in Michigan. The Flint

researchers reported little use, by police, of non-police resources (Trojanowicz, n.d.). The Flint officers, however, were involved in a number of community-based activities, including the development of programs for juveniles and safety instruction programs for the community at large.

Recent evaluation of the community policing effort in New York City (CPOP) also indicates little usage of non-police resources (McElroy, Cosgrove & Sadd, 1989). As in the Flint program, the CPOP officers relied on traditional police responses such as increased patrols and arrest summonses. The actual impact of their efforts was not studied. The researchers attribute some of the negative results regarding the employment of non-police resources to the absence of training in that area.

Thus, the research on community policing in New York State and elsewhere suggests that, perhaps due to the often unfulfilled need for specialized training, community foot patrol officers have not made full use of non-criminal justice resources when addressing communities' problems. Performance of their function as linchpins between the community and other governmental services has been weak. Therefore, the ability of these programs to fully address the more complex and enduring problems of communities has been limited. Eck and Spelman (1987), criticizing community foot patrol policing programs for fostering too superficial responses to identified problems, advocate the use of police problem-solving teams. The COPE project in Baltimore County and the citywide problem-solving approach of Newport News, Virginia represent team models.

As briefly mentioned above, the COPE model does not rely on foot patrols. Rather, it employs a 45-officer unit in Baltimore County established to address problems identified by communities, through the use of various governmental resources. A community's problems are identified through interviews with residents.

The program in Newport News, Virginia was developed through a 12-person task force comprised of police officers of all ranks. Individual officers are appointed to take the lead in addressing a particular problem, while others assist in doing so. The officers are required to make use of non-police resources when exploring and addressing the problems. Both the Baltimore County and Newport News programs report significant success in addressing acute problems within the targeted communities (Eck and Spelman, 1987).

There are many impediments to the development of the liaison role among police. In order to be effective liaisons, police must establish strong working relationships with both communities and other service providers. Some suggest that community involvement in crime control is difficult to sustain, while officers' resistance to such involvement also impedes their performance (Krajik, 1978). Community organizations which focus solely on crime problems may have too narrow goals. Research indicates that healthy community organizations hold multiple goals; a singular focus such as crime control may not sustain community organizations over time (Taub, Taylor and Dunham, 1984).

The liaison role played by community police agencies may meet resistance from other service providers due to differences in perspectives regarding both the needs of communities and the appropriate role of the police vis-a-vis other service providers. Considerable attention must be given to the development of inter-organizational coordination at both administrative and staff levels. Effective coordination requires the following: (1) joint definition of areas of mutual interest and potential cooperation; (2) agreement on professional boundaries; (3) acknowledgement and dispensation of professional stereotypes; (4) development of an action agenda for coordination, communication and performance; and (5) construction of a means for conflict resolution (Friedmann, 1987).

Clearly, the experiences of past programs indicate that if community policing programs are to maximize their effectiveness, they need to involve community organizers or to develop an internal capacity for those services. They also need to work with other service providers to define and implement the liaison role and to train officers to assume that role as a matter of routine.

Citizen and Police Satisfaction with Community Policing

One of the assumptions of community policing, particularly that of foot patrol policing, is that communities want more direct contact with police. Some have questioned the validity of that assumption (Manning, 1984; Kinsey, Lea and Young, 1986). But community policing programs have been viewed positively by the residents of the targeted areas, at least during the limited time frames of the research. In Flint, Michigan, the residents even supported increased taxation to further develop their foot patrol program (Trojanowicz and Belknap, 1986).

Community policing helps to provide citizens with a sense of control over their police services and often fosters positive police-community contact. The concept of police becomes associated with community helpers rather than agents of social control. In many troubled communities, citizens have come to expect government to be unresponsive to their needs. Community policing programs have begun to change those expectations.

Access to police, however, will not guarantee public satisfaction with those services. It is the nature of the police-community contact, more than the amount, which influences public opinion. Police use of aggressive order maintenance within community policing programs, for example, has led to a reduction in public satisfaction (Mastrofski, 1988).

When assessing public satisfaction, one must be cognizant of all the public, not merely that portion of it which is most vocal or most numerous within the community. The potential for inequitable effects was realized, for example, in the Houston program where blacks and renters were significantly less likely to be affected by the fear reduction program than were whites and home owners (Wycoff and Skogan, 1985). Unfortunately, the research on satisfaction with community policing, although quite positive, often fails to examine levels of satisfaction among discrete groups within a community.

In a study of differences in activities of foot patrol and motor patrol officers, Payne and Trojanowicz (1985) report that only foot patrols were involved in a number of community services, such as public speaking and juvenile activities.⁴ They also determined that contacts between the public and foot patrols were 91 percent non-adversarial, while those between motor patrols and the public were 91 percent adversarial.

Community policing projects which do not employ foot patrols have also been popular with the public. The COPE project in Baltimore County, for example, was able to generate community support through large scale surveying of community needs and employment of a problem-solving approach in responding to those needs. Thus, concentrated efforts to establish trusting relationships between communities and police programs can succeed even in the absence of a foot patrol linkage between the community and the larger police force.

Not surprisingly, community policing programs have reported high levels of patrol officer job

satisfaction. Properly designed, the jobs offer significant autonomy, variety, challenge, feedback and meaning. Officers' role perceptions have been shown to broaden during the program to include the role of community problem solver (Cordner, 1985; Police Foundation, 1981; Trojanowicz, 1983). It should be noted, however, that community policing projects are still small and able to recruit those officers most amenable to role modification. Large-scale programs which recruit less interested officers may result in some degree of job dissatisfaction if the officers are unable or unwilling to modify their traditional roles as law enforcement agents.

Community Policing and Drug Law Enforcement

The problems stemming from drug abuse within a community are complex and require the unified problem-solving efforts of many governmental services. When community policing programs succeed in establishing their liaison role, they can be very effective in the effort to reduce the sale and use of illicit drugs. Weisel (forthcoming) provides multiple descriptions of the roles that problem-solving policing programs have played in drug law enforcement, both with and without the use of foot patrols.

Through a review of policing in San Diego, Atlanta, Tulsa, Tampa and Philadelphia, Weisel provides case-study descriptions of police problem-solving efforts to interdict drug sales and the accompanying disorder. Among the most notable findings is the use by police of an inventory for problem definition in which data sources from health, social service and law enforcement systems are integrated to provide a well-rounded view of the drug problem within the targeted area. This, in theory, would allow solutions to be tailored to the needs of the community. It also points to the need for neighborhood-level data from all public services.

All of the sites reviewed by Weisel employed a management committee to organize the problem-solving efforts. As expected, the approaches varied depending on the needs of the targeted area. The Atlanta police, for example, addressed the problems of two public housing complexes through improvement of the grounds and development of a police-public housing mini-station at the complexes. Foot patrol officers in Tulsa, working in concert with other public and private agencies, focused on insulating public housing complexes from non-residents and developing employment, social and recreational opportunities for residents. In Tampa,

poor lighting in a public housing complex was identified by residents as contributing to community fear and the frequency of drug transactions.

In summary, the problems addressed by these programs ranged from the relatively concrete and easily identified physical problems to the more complex and difficult social problems faced by residents of drug-trafficking neighborhoods.

Community Policing: Possible Problems

Community policing faces a number of questions and challenges, many of which are not easily resolved. They include the following:

1. How well supported is the theory of community degeneration?
2. How is the will of the community to be defined?
3. How can the police guard against representing only a portion of the community?
4. What role is the community to play in defining and resolving its crime and order-maintenance problems?
5. How can police marshal resources outside of their immediate domain?
6. How can police organizations supervise officers in their newly defined roles?

Support for the Theory of Community Deterioration

Increasingly, critics question the accuracy of the community-degeneration scenario. Much of the focus on order-maintenance problems has stemmed from an assumption that the level of social order determines the level of informal social control and fear within a community. Yet, critics note that no clear link has been established between physical and social annoyances identified by residents and decreases in the level of social control or increases in the level of fear within a community.

Upon reviewing the three large-scale, neighborhood-based studies which measure these relationships, Greene and Taylor (1988) report that socio-demographic factors often explain away any relationship between physical and social annoyances within a community and the corresponding degree

of informal social control and fear. Thus, even within communities with low levels of physical and social annoyances, the presence of, for example, heterogeneous populations may result in lower levels of informal social control and higher levels of fear. Conversely, higher levels of physical and social annoyances within homogeneous communities may not result in decreased informal social control or increased fear within those communities. Thus, the resolution of order-maintenance problems, which are often the focus of foot patrol policing programs, may have only a limited effect on the level of fear and informal social control within a targeted area.

Much of the focus on community fear also stems from an assumed relationship between fear and migration out of the central cities. Although the flight to the suburbs of stable working- and middle-class families is often attributed to the fear of crime, research indicates that such movement is more attributable to other factors such as a desire for open spaces and more scenic surroundings. Skogan and Maxfield (1981), for example, found that pull factors were significantly more influential than push factors in affecting the decision to move. Thus, even successful efforts to reduce fear may not reduce the migration of upwardly mobile persons from the central cities to less populated areas.

To the extent that community policing and other efforts to reduce the adverse impact of push factors can effectively slow or prevent community change - thus maintaining the lower density of poor within the targeted neighborhoods -- there are implications for the housing market of poorer citizens. Maintenance of home ownership and stable working-class neighborhoods, without concurrent efforts to develop alternative housing sources, may mean reduced availability of housing for the poor or almost poor who are already experiencing an increasingly tight housing market.

In summary, the theory of community degeneration has not been wholly supported by recent research. Fear and low informal social control are, in part, the by-product of cultural integration. Furthermore, even if the fear of crime and its degenerating effects can be reduced in low- and moderate-crime neighborhoods by alleviating physical and social nuisances, the success of community policing in high-crime areas will require more. Thus, the use of problem-solving policing methods in those neighborhoods may hold greater significance than does the structure of the delivery of services.

Defining "Community"

Many argue that there has been too little thought given in the community policing movement to defining the construct of community. As noted by Greene and Taylor (1988), there is extensive sociological and psychological literature on delineating neighborhoods and communities which has been largely ignored by the community policing movement. Thus, police beats may be including multiple communities or dividing individual communities. Indeed, the focus on the community, per se, assumes that it represents a group with shared norms and values. Yet, research indicates that in low-income, heterogeneous neighborhoods, there is an absence of consensus regarding problem behaviors (Greenberg and Rohe, 1986). This absence of consensus may place police at risk of becoming co-opted by the dominant group, to the disadvantage of the minority.

Protecting Minorities in the Community Policing Process

There are, of course, measures that police can undertake to minimize co-option by the dominant group. Use of community surveys for problem definition may provide a more balanced picture of the area's problems than opinions of local leaders (Rich, 1986). Although community associations are vital to order-maintenance efforts, they tend to be overrepresentative of those with higher socioeconomic status and home owners with children (Rosenbaum, 1987). Not surprisingly, one community policing project which targeted a largely minority community found little representation of minorities in community organizations (Fowler and Mangione, 1982). Thus, household interviews or some form of community survey is the optimal method for defining the most salient problems facing a community.

Determining the Community's Role in the Policing Process

There are many levels of involvement of communities in the provision of public services. On one level, citizens request assistance from public agencies; on a reciprocal plane, citizens provide assistance to public agents; and on its most complex level, citizens interact with agents to establish a common understanding of the problems and approach to the solutions (Whitaker, 1980). Although community policing programs often espouse the latter method, they frequently fall short of that goal. Certainly the difficulty of developing consensus within a community contributes to the

tendency to establish objectives with minimal community input.

Goldstein (1979) suggests that community participation be limited to the extent it threatens to abridge individual liberties. The abridgement of liberties, however, is often difficult to define and document when the problems are largely order-maintenance and the police responses are often other than that of arrest. Involvement in this grey area of law enforcement may become problematic, especially when the problems arise from cultural differences within a community. Nonetheless, problem-solving policing is an ideal medium for the identification of community disputes and establishment of mechanisms for dispute mediation.

Marshalling Resources on the Behalf of Communities

One of the shortcomings of community policing projects, to date, has been the weak liaison role played by the police. Foot patrol models are especially vulnerable to this problem, as individual officers may easily become overwhelmed by the complexity of a community's problems. The policing models which do not rely exclusively on foot patrols, such as those of Baltimore County and Newport News, have the advantage of involving more officers in the problem-solving process. This joint involvement may reduce the natural tendency of individual officers to address problems through traditional means within their direct control and increase their ability to gain support from their leadership.

Community foot patrol models may, however, with more thorough training, produce similar results. They may also serve as a valuable information source for the criminal justice system. The closeness of foot patrols to the community provides a unique opportunity for problem identification. Better training and formalized relationships with other service providers are needed. In addition, a method of coordinating the actions of all foot patrols working toward resolution of particularly complex problems which transcend neighborhoods may result in development of the optimal problem-solving model.

The role of police as ombudsmen in communities may be viewed with skepticism. As Goldstein, developer of the problem-oriented model, notes:

Officers-as-advocates is a posture so fraught with potential problems that one's immediate

reaction is to preclude it from any community-policing scheme. But there is something fundamentally wrong with a government system in which the agency most acquainted with the bigotry, injustice, exploitation, and deprivation of the human condition is precluded from speaking out about these problems. Sensitive police officers have lived for many years with people's sufferings, and yet conclude that they must "swallow hard" and accept them as part of their job. Ironically, when public interest eventually focuses on these problems . . . past handling by the police is frequently among the targets of criticism. (Goldstein, 1987: 20)

Bayley (1988), viewing the issue from another perspective, suggests that:

Community policing legitimates the penetration of communities by forceful enforcement agents of government . . . Overcoming distrust of the police may improve public safety but at what cost? Perhaps suspicion of the police is essential to our freedom? (Bayley, 1988: 230, 231)

One of the problems likely to arise from the new role assumed by community police officers is conflict with other service providers. To that end, Tregor (1981) provides helpful guidelines for interagency coordination, and Friedmann (1986) describes a contract-developing model to aid in coordination among police and social service agencies.

Because many of the problems confronted by community patrol officers may be complex and transcend the neighborhood level, a strong centralized support staff in large urban areas could serve a vital function. This would aid officers in locating and using non-police services and developing a community base from which to work. It could also serve to draw information from all the community patrols to work toward citywide solutions to the complex and difficult problems which are endemic to many urban neighborhoods.

Managing Officers in Community Policing Programs

One managerial problem faced by police organizations seeking to employ community policing methods, particularly that of foot patrol policing, is the possibility of police corruption. Community policing carries with it increased discretion at the

patrol officer level and reduced opportunity to supervise through traditional means. There becomes an increased need for on-scene monitoring of officer behavior and use of community accountability as a check on police activities (Wycoff, 1988). To this end, various methods have been developed to obtain citizen feedback on officer behavior. (See, e.g., Geller, 1983; Barker and Carter, 1986; Sherman, 1974.) Some community-oriented policing programs have also improved direct supervision through radio contact with supervisors and detailed recording of patrol officer activity in daily memo books (Weisburd, McElroy and Hardyman, 1988).

Although police corruption has not been shown to be problematic in current research, many of the programs have carefully screened officers. The test-case nature of the programs has also made officers aware of the need to avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Whether such favorable results will occur with large-scale programs is yet to be determined. Indeed, even those who have led the development of community policing concede that it may only be feasible in organizations which have been able to control corruption in traditional police services (Goldstein, 1986).

Summary

Community policing developed largely as an effort to stem community deterioration in urban areas. Although tentative at this point, the research does suggest that it can reduce public fear, while increasing both citizen and police satisfaction. Key to improvements in troubled neighborhoods are approaches in which the police marshal resources from diverse organizations for the purpose of problem resolution. Although foot patrol programs have been weak in this liaison role, additional training and greater backup services may alleviate that problem. Clearly, the importance of the information linkage provided by on-going foot patrols calls for its further development.

Not surprisingly, community policing programs are continually evolving to become more responsive to public needs. The innovation is still in its infancy, with room to grow and significant promise for the future.

ENDNOTES

¹ This reasoning flows from an assumption that certain neighborhoods lack social cohesiveness and the capacity to respond to police outreach. It also implies that the success of community policing lies in its ability to stabilize communities with groups who have shown little criminal behavior. Thus, the goal becomes one of maintaining the low density of poor and unsupervised youths within a neighborhood by ensuring that stable residents do not flee that area.

² It has been noted, however, that a statistically significant effect in the Kansas City research may have been found with larger samples and higher overall levels of crime (Sherman, 1986). Recent research in Minneapolis indicates that targeted car patrolling of particular "hot spots" has some deterrent effect on crime (Pace Publications, 1990). Targeted patrolling, however, is qualitatively different from random patrolling and may result in crime displacement rather than deterrence.

³ Support for fear-reduction efforts, however, is not universal. Some argue that some level of fear is functional as it may protect citizens from actual risks (Mastrofski, 1988).

⁴ These community-based activities, however, are not inherent in the foot-patrol role nor are they antithetical to the motor-patrol role. Such activity could be integrated into any type of police service.

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