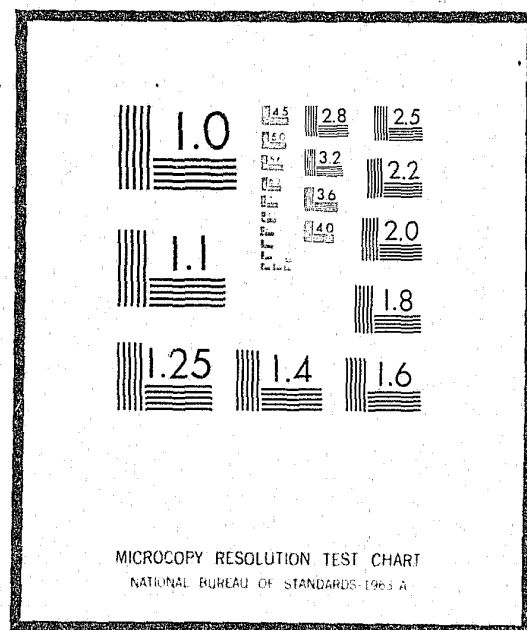


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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFERENCE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20531

5/31/77

Date filmed

INDIVIDUAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT

In Response to a Request for Technical Assistance

by the

Maryland Governor's Commission on
Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice

August 8, 1973

Prepared by:

Public Administration Service
1313 East 60th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637

(Per Contract J-LEAA-015-72)

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I. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

A. **Consultant Assigned:**

Sergeant Edgar Davis
Police Department
Chicago, Illinois

B. **Date Assignment Received:**

July 11, 1973

C. **Date of Contact with LEAA Regional Coordinator:**

July 11, 1973

D. **Dates of On-Site Consultation:**

July 18-22, 1973

E. **Individuals Contacted:**

Mr. Jeffery Simmons
Police Programs Manager
Maryland Governor's Commission on Law Enforcement
and the Administration of Justice

Mr. Robert J. Crawley
Community Developer
Human Relations Commission LEAA Program
Prince George's County

Sergeant G. E. Morrissey
Prince George's County Police Community Relations Division

Jesse M. Rodriguez
Human Relations Unit
Suitland, Maryland

PFC K. W. Savoidsig
Prince George's County Police Department

Mr. Orlando Spuggs
Community Development Assistant
Police Community Relations Unit
Prince George's County

Mr. Michael Dorsey
Community Development Assistant
Police Community Relations Unit
Prince George's County

Mrs. Audery Penny
Community Development Assistant
Police Community Relations Unit
Prince George's County

Thomas Claggett
Human Relations Liaison
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

Dr. Michael McMainis
Chairman, Human Relations Unit
Berwyn Heights, Maryland

Jene Williams
Prince George's County Model Cities Program

Joseph Parker
Chairman, Human Relations Commission
North Englewood, Maryland

Janet James
Prince George's County Committee on Mental Health

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A. Problem as per Request for Technical Assistance:

Overall evaluation of the Community Relations Unit of Prince George's County.

B. Problem Actually Observed:

As stated.

III. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

See attached Consultant's Report.

IV. DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION

See attached Consultant's Report.

V. RECOMMENDED COURSES OF ACTION

See attached Consultant's Report.

CONSULTANT'S REPORT

This is a final report on a study of the Police Community Relations Unit of the Department of Human Resources and Development in Prince George's County, Maryland. In order to place the following information in proper perspective, one should have an understanding of the organizational and political structure of Prince George's County.

Prince George's County consists of 28 municipalities, ranging from 300 to 33,000 in population. Some of these municipalities have their own police departments; others depend entirely on the County Police Department for community protection. A few have contracted for police officers from the Prince George's County Police Department. The head of the present governmental structure of Prince George's County, an elected official, is the County Executive. The Board of Commissioners is also elected. The County has been given the right to pass ordinances that affect the several hundred thousand citizens of Prince George's County. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), an appointed professional administrator, reports directly to the County Executive Officer. The departments reporting to the CAO are the Prince George's Police Department and the Department of Human Resources and Community Development. Other departments reporting to the CAO have been purposely omitted as they do not relate to this study.

The Human Relations Commission, which also reports to the CAO, was brought into existence only recently because of the problems that had developed between the police units and the citizens of Prince George's County. The Commission has since instituted the Police Community Relations Unit of the Department of Human Resources and Community Development.

Five people comprise the total staff of the Police Community Relations Unit, and the Unit has a current budget of \$102,688. The Director, who reports to the Head of the Department of Human Resources and Community Development, indicates most of his time is spent in administering the program. The clerk-steno has duties and responsibilities that are self-explanatory, leaving only three people to be used as field workers. These field workers cover an area that is extremely large geographically (over 400 square miles) and has approximately 700,000 people within the boundaries of Prince George's County. The area is densely populated along the capitol-belt and thinly populated elsewhere. The three field workers operate on the assumption that they have been assigned the task of covering the entire County, which has been divided into three equal geographic parts. The three field workers serve as advisers to "satellite" human relations units. These satellite units are located in various municipalities and manned by volunteers from the community. The community volunteers are charged with bringing together representatives of the Police Department, the County, or the municipality; civic figures; citizens; and complainants for the purpose of developing a dialog to solve problems between the community and the Police Department. Each satellite human relations unit consists of:

1. A police officer, county or municipal.
2. Volunteer municipal citizen(s).
3. An adviser from the Police Community Relations Unit of the Department of Human Resources and Community Development.

Of the 10 satellite units, some use police officers from municipal police departments; others use police officers from the Prince George's Police Department as board representatives.

The Prince George's County Police Department is a 700-man unit headed by a Chief of Police who is appointed by and accountable to the CAO. Within the Department is a Police Community Relations Division, not related to the Police Community Relations Unit. The former is headed by a Captain of Police and staffed by a sergeant and 8 men (soon to be 12 under present expansion plans).

As far as police/community relations are concerned, the Prince George's County Police Department appears to have a very negative profile in the area identified locally as the capitol-belt. (See Appendix A.) This is the territory nearest Washington, D.C. This area is the home of the majority of the minority population of Blacks and Latins. The satellite human relations units, created by the organization under audit, do not appear to be very effective in the pursuit of developing better police/community rapport within this capitol-belt area even though the stated objective of the project under audit is to foster lines of communication between that part of the public which is distrusting and the police department which is distrusted. Staff members of the Unit say they have the cooperation of the Police Department in this respect. They claim that they encourage the beat officer and the disgruntled public to get together to iron out problems.

However, bad feelings appear to remain, at this time, at about the same level in relation to community acceptance and trust of its police department as they were prior to the creation of the unit under audit. The units, however, do encourage public discussion of governmental problems in general. They deal with the whole spectrum of government service as it relates to the public or as the public feels it should relate to them. The Unit seems to expend a great portion of time in organizing, developing, and disseminating information about the governmental process as a whole rather than concentrating on police relations.

The Consultant in no way attempts to assess the validity of the negative feelings toward the Police Department, but the existence of these feelings must be acknowledged.

An example of the collective feeling toward the Police Department can be discerned in the attached article which chronicles the filing of a suit against the Prince George's County Police Department by the NAACP on behalf of a number of citizens charging 37 police officers with alleged acts of mistreatment (see Appendix A). Blacks and Latins expressed almost total disbelief in the fairness of the Police Department. The fear of reprisal for making complaints against the police or even speaking of the conditions under which the people live in relation to the Police Department seems strong. People interviewed in the streets would not even give their names. All those interviewed were unanimous in their belief that the Prince George's County Police Department is an unfair and extremely brutal organization in their action towards citizens. It was most difficult to find a person who believed he could even be heard at the Police Department. On the other hand, in the more sparsely populated areas of the County and in the more influential neighborhoods there is almost the opposite feeling—complete trust and belief in the Police Department.

There is a great amount of direct contact at the highest levels of the Police Department with many members of these communities. They experienced no belief in not being treated fairly by the police or in not being heard by the police.

The capitol-belt residents consider the unit under audit to be a "Human Relations Commission" and expressed a measure of confidence in the citizens' ability to be heard before the "Commission." The staff of the unit under audit expressed great distrust of the ability of the Prince George's County Police Department to be fair and objective in its association with the poor and the minorities. The entire staff was unanimous in its belief that credibility would be lost in the community if there were any direct official connection between the Unit and the Police Department. The staff feels it is making progress toward a more cooperative association with the Police Department and the public, but it could not document the improvement. Although there is little promise of substantially improved cooperative efforts, such cooperation is needed if this Unit is to perform the functions for which it was set up. Nevertheless, the Prince George's County Police Department Community Relations Division says that only eight meetings have occurred so far between the Division and the unit under audit.

The cooperation which does exist between the Unit and the Department apparently exists solely on the basis of friendship between the Project Director and the Chief of Police. With the exception of a few of the police officers interviewed who had attended some unit meetings, most police officers knew nothing of the existence of the Police Community Relations Unit under audit, even though they knew the Project Director, Bob Crawley. The police officers only knew Crawley had an "outfit" at the Human Relations Commission. To give another example of the lack of recognition, the Sergeant of Police, second in command of the Prince George's County Police Department, indicated that he had only learned of the existence of the Unit a few days prior to my arrival. He mentioned calling Bob Crawley, the Project Director, and when the phone was answered with "Police Community Relations," he was perplexed since his own office is known as the Police Community Relations Division.

The problem areas within the Police Community Relations Unit of the Department of Human Resources and Development have been defined as follows:

1. A dire need for a viable police/community relations unit.
2. Problems of organization that need addressing immediately.
3. The existence of two units similarly labeled; one under the direct authority of the Department of Human Resources and Community Development, the other under the direct authority of the Prince George's County Police Department. Little or no lateral communication or coordination exists between the two units.
4. A great reluctance, some of which appears to be political, to bring the two units together and to coordinate their efforts and activities.

5. A dedicated but professionally unqualified staff attempting to answer questions and solve problems involving the public and the police. The unit under audit is attempting to tackle problems from only one angle—the public angle. The police unit exerts little or no effort.
6. A very enthusiastic and well-meaning staff, but in need of stiffer guidance.
7. Inability of staff workers to face and solve problems without emotions becoming a factor in reaching solutions.
8. The Unit is too far removed organizationally and physically from a main participating agency—Prince George's County Police Department—to carry out its responsibilities as stipulated by grant objectives set forth in federal and state guidelines.
9. A staff in need of more training in understanding the role and objectives of the Police Department. Field workers seemed to understand the rights of the citizens of the County, but the role of the Police Department seems to be unclear to them.
10. The Unit is not under the direct command of the Chief of Police as it needs to be. The Unit cannot possibly operate very efficiently without some official connection with the Police Department.
11. Civilian field workers are not working out of the several police districts as they should be, but from a central location far removed from any police operation or activity.
12. The Unit has no access to records of any kind which would help pinpoint problem areas so that it might concentrate its efforts where the greatest dissatisfaction exists.
13. Inability on the part of the Project Director to rate workers' performance and efficiency individually. Workers were rated as being about equal. Emphasis should be placed in the future on objectively determining each worker's job efficiency and performance.

Reducing the problem areas can be accomplished through a coordinated effort between the Police Department and the Community Relations Unit by means of the use of a mobile problem-solving machine consisting of a police officer, a civilian field worker, and

the Project Director. The problem solvers would go where the problem is rather than depending solely upon volunteers to solve the local problems. There should be participation by the volunteers, and their advice and consent should be ingredients, but the police officer, the Project Director, and the field worker should be the experts to aid the volunteers in solving neighborhood police/community problems.

One alternative to the present organizational structure of the Unit is to leave the Unit as it is but have the Project Director under the direct command of the County CAO, who is also the immediate superior of the Chief of Police. This would lead to official lateral communication between the two units aforementioned as well as interagency reduction in duplication of efforts and ideas. Under this alternative, reports, suggestions, and complaints would be exchanged between the two agencies on a daily basis making each agency aware of the other's aims. The Unit should also be increased by one civilian field worker in order to correspond to the four police officers assigned to the police/community relations section of the Prince George's County Police Department. In that way civilian-police teams could be formed. This arrangement entails a small revision in the budget. The recruited worker would not receive, at the start, the same rate of pay as the present field workers who have received merit raises.

It is further recommended that one member of each of the presently constituted satellite community relations units becomes a member of a steering committee that would be required to meet with the Chief of Police once a month. At these meetings, overall county problems involving the police and the citizenry would be discussed and solutions would be sought. "Civilian input" would keep the Police Department from becoming ingrown. As an advantage, this setup would also give the Unit direct access to the Chief of Police and to community persons, forming a viable and potent link between the operations of the Police Department and the citizens.

A second alternative would be to rename the Unit the "Office of Human Relations" or "The Investigative Arm of the Commission of Human Relations" or the "Ombudsman." In either case, the Unit's purposes and objectives would have to be redefined to an extent. Human relations can be brought under a broad umbrella that would also include police/community relations problems, but the guidelines of the State's comprehensive plan do not encompass these kinds of actions insofar as the grant is concerned. The Unit would become an organizing unit for seeking recognition of community problems but not necessarily for solving community problems related to police work. The Unit would thus perform the function of being the investigative arm of the Human Relations Commission, which it now does unofficially. This would require a transfer of tasks to the Police Department's Community Relations Division. At this time, however, this would be a very undesirable alternative because of the public distrust of the police.

The third, and the consultant feels the most workable solution to eliminating problem areas, would be to remove the Unit from the Department of Human Resources and Community Development and consolidate it with the Prince George's County Police Department. The present Project Director would then report to the Chief of Police. Official association between the two agencies can thus be established with ties stronger than friendship and persuasion. The Project Director of this consolidated unit would then be held

accountable for making comparative analyses of past and present feelings between the public and the police. The Project Director would participate in the staff meetings of the higher echelon of the Police Department, help solve the "people problems" involving the police, and coordinate the efforts of the field workers and the police so that the public is best served. After the organizational consolidation is completed, the next step would be to physically move the field workers into district police facilities so that they can "rub shoulders" with police officers on a day-to-day basis. This arrangement would give field workers insight into the operation and procedures connected with police work. In this way communication between police and civilian workers would be regular and, hopefully, friendly. I must stress at this point that the field worker, even though identified with the Police Department under the new arrangement, would be for now a better contact with the distrusting public than would a police officer.

Under this setup, both the civilian workers and the sworn police officers of the consolidated unit should have access to departmental records when necessary in connection with a problem involving police/community relations. In the consolidated unit a civilian worker and a police officer would work as a team in coordinating efforts of the "Police Community Relations Unit." Mutual trust of the police officer for the civilian worker and of the civilian worker for the police officer should thereby develop.

As the consultant sees it, the last alternative would increase police officers' awareness of their positions, duties, and responsibilities toward the public and create the necessary concern for the feelings, desires, aspirations, and mores of the society they serve. The police officers would thereby become professionals in the real sense of the term. The public in turn would have more confidence in the Police Department.

Appendix A

9 Sue, Alleging Police Brutality

THE WASHINGTON POST

A 6 Thursday, Dec. 21, 1972

George's Police Sued for Brutality

By Charles A. Krause
Washington Post Staff Writer

A suit charging the Prince George's County police with police brutality aimed at county residents was filed in Baltimore's U.S. District Court yesterday by the American Civil Liberties Union and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund.

The suit seeks injunctions to stop "an alleged pattern practice" of police brutality in the county. It also asks the federal court monitor citizen complaints of brutality to insure that they are properly disposed of by the department's disciplinary apparatus and the county Human Relations Commission (HRC), which may also investigate brutality complaints. The suit was brought by county residents, all of whom are black who allege they were mistreated by police at some point over past three years. It is, however, a class action suit in behalf of all the county's approximately 100,000 black residents.

The suit seeks to establish legal remedies for two problems. The first is alleged brutality by police of county residents. The second is the county's review of citizen complaints against police, which the suit is inadequate and must be improved.

The police would not comment on any aspect of the suit. A spokesman for the police department said that no comment would be forthcoming "until the proper papers are filed from the federal court clerk's office."

Defendants in the suit include Prince George's County Executive Robert W. Gillett, Joseph W. Jenkins, former acting chair of the Human Relations Commission, Capt. Fred W. Gault, deputy chief of police, and 37 county policemen.

The police department has its own review and disciplinary procedures; these do not include public hearings, although a public trial board of 11 members is ordered by the department's own investigation is inadequate.

POLICE. From A1

Of the 37 policemen cited as defendants, 21 of them are unidentified except as "John Doe." The suit says this is because the plaintiffs were allegedly beaten or otherwise mistreated either by policemen without names or by so many policemen at a time that the plaintiffs were unable to identify their assailants by name.

It could not be determined yesterday how many of those policemen named in the suit are still on the county's 640-man police force. It is known that at least several still are on the force.

Jay F. Morris, an aide to Gullett, said Gullett has been working since his election almost two years ago to improve police-community relations, but conceded, "there are still problems and we don't want to dismiss lightly the charges." However, he added, "There are some holes in them based on our records."

Florence B. Isbell, executive director of the ACLU's Washington office, said the suit has been in preparation for more than a year.

"These incidents are very well documented," she said.

Eight of the nine plaintiffs say in the suit that they filed formal complaints of police brutality with the County Human Relations Commission and received no notification of any action taken by the commission or the county police. The commission normally notifies a citizen of the outcome of its investigation.

The commission has the power to hear complaints of police brutality and request the county executive to ask that the county's chief of police call a special police trial board if the commission determines that a charge of brutality has substance. The trial board is open to the public although no public trial boards have ever been convened, according to a police spokesman.

The police department has its own review and disciplinary procedures; these do not include public hearings, although a public trial board of 11 members is ordered by the department's own investigation is inadequate.

A trial heard is an adversary proceeding and lawyers for both the policemen and the department would be required.

According to Morris, a check by the commission of its records showed that three of the eight cases cited in the suit are still under investigation; two of them have been closed and the plaintiffs notified, and three of the plaintiffs have never contacted the commission. The HRC division director, William Jenkins, declined to talk to the press, referring queries to Morris. Jenkins is the paid administrator of the county group.

Morris said that the three cases still under investigation have not been acted on because the commission has not held hearings since it was reorganized in July due to its inability to formulate new rules of procedure.

In one of the two cases closed, HRC records show that the plaintiff was sent a letter for more information at least twice and then sent a "closing letter" that said if the plaintiff did not contact the commission his case would be considered concluded. He never responded.

Morris said that in the case of Floyd C. Spriggs, it was impossible to determine yesterday why it was closed because Spriggs' records could not be found by the commission staff. Spriggs was beaten by police on Feb. 27, 1971, when he went to police headquarters to inquire about his father, who was involved in a car accident. Spriggs subsequently was charged by police with disturbing the peace, assault and resisting arrest but his trial resulted in a hung jury on June 24, 1971.

The police did not contest Spriggs' charges that he was beaten and required 145 stitches to close his wounds. But said that Spriggs had attacked them first.

Among the reports of incidents the suit cites are:

* In October, 1970, William L. Chisley of Cheltenham alleged he was in the process of giving an officer his driver's license when he was beaten, told he would be killed and repeatedly referred to as "nigger" by the officer.

* On Sept. 23, 1971, Rosa Paul of Landover alleges that she was "severely assaulted" while handcuffed and her two children "threatened" by a policeman. Mrs. Paul was charged with and acquitted of disorderly conduct, the suit says.

* On Nov. 29, Beatrice P. Tignor of Upper Marlboro alleged she was driving her injured sister home from the hospital when she was stopped by a policeman who accused her of driving a stolen car. Mrs. Tignor said the officer refused to look at her vehicle registration, handcuffed her and took her and her sister into custody. She was continually "harassed" throughout the incident, the suit said, and was not allowed to call anyone to pick up her sister.

The suit seeks court prohibitions barring county police from these alleged violations of the department's own standing orders: "assault, battery, intimidation . . . and other excessive force; spurious and groundless criminal charges against blacks 'for merely questioning authority,' and racial epithets."

The suit also asks for a variety of measures to deal with police brutality complaints, including detailed police notes and procedures for handling such complaints; a special county investigation unit and formal hearings, as well as maintenance of strict police discipline.

The plaintiffs ask that the court require the county to submit a record of all citizen complaints and their disposition.

Current police regulations prohibit the violation alleged by the suit, although penalties are not spelled out.

END

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