

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF BURNABY
COMMUNITY ISSUES AND SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND ALDERMEN:

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY ISSUES AND SOCIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

RE: CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL FOR CANADA

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the Honourable Bob Kaplan, P.C., Q.C., M.P., York Centre, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6.

R E P O R T

BACKGROUND:

The Community Issues and Social Planning Committee at its meeting held on 1990 April 25 received a letter dated 1990 March 20 from the House of Commons, Mr. Bob Kaplan, P.C. Q.C. M.P. - York Centre reporting on the progress of establishing a Crime Prevention Council for Canada, dedicated to promote crime prevention projects undertaken by local initiative.

This report addresses a proposed new step for Canada in the war against crime, namely, the establishment of a Crime Prevention Council for Canada. Mr. Kaplan's proposal emerges from his own experience as Solicitor General of Canada and from the study of successful developments in Europe not yet applied in Canada but with obvious potential for Canada. The European and North-American Conference on Urban Safety and Crime Prevention was held in Montreal 1989 October 10 - 13, following which the municipalities listed in the attached Schedule 'A' passed or otherwise supported the resolution at the top of the schedule.

CONCLUSION:

The Community Issues and Social Planning Committee expressed support for the concept of a National Crime Prevention Council for Canada and, therefore request that Council indicate its support for same and that a copy of this report be forwarded to the Honourable Bob Kaplan, P.C., Q.C., M.P., York Centre, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

Respectfully submitted,

INTERNAL DISTRIBUTION:

AGENDA 1990 MAY 07

- COPY - MUNICIPAL MANAGER
- DIR. ADMIN. & COMM. SERV.
- DIR. PL. & BLDG. INSP.
- O.I.C., R.C.M.P.

Alderman D.R. Corrigan,
Chair

Alderman R.G. Begin,
Member

Alderman Egon Nikolai,
Member

Alderman F.G. Randall,
Member

Alderman J.M. Sawicki,
Member

MUNICIPALITIES WHO PASSED OR OTHERWISE SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING
RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL FOR CANADA

- RECOGNIZING that Canada's safe cities are a matter of pride with the Canadian people and a national value which deserves specific federal leadership and support;
- CONCERNED that evidence is mounting that Canada's cities are deteriorating in the face of mounting street crime;
- NOTING THE WORK OF the European and North American Conference on Urban Safety and Crime Prevention, concluded in Montreal on October 3, 1989, which demonstrated the relative lack of crime prevention projects in Canada compared to the level in European participant countries, projects which make a positive contribution to safer cities;

CALLS on the Federal Government to establish a National Crime Prevention Council, which, taking account of provincial constitutional responsibilities in the field, would provide leadership and financial support for a broad range of local crime prevention projects, run at the local level, to enhance urban safety in Canada's cities.

City of London (Ontario)
 Town of Markham (Ontario)
 City of North York (Ontario)
 City of Ottawa (Ontario)
 City of Windsor (Ontario)
 Ville de Granby (Québec)
 Ville de Montréal (Québec)
 Communauté Urbaine de Montréal (Québec)
 Ville de Québec (Québec)
 City of Westmount (Québec)
 Halifax County Municipality (Nova Scotia)
 City of Moose Jaw (Saskatchewan)
 City of Thompson (Manitoba)
 District of North Vancouver (British Columbia)
 City of Prince George (British Columbia)
 District of Surrey (British Columbia)
 City of Victoria (British Columbia)

SCHEDULE A

SUBMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN & NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON URBAN
SAFETY & CRIME PREVENTION, Montreal, Oct. 10-13, 1989

by Hon. Bob Kaplan, P.C., Q.C., M.P.

CRIME PREVENTION:

A call for National Leadership in a program of
Local Initiative

During my years in the Trudeau Cabinet as Solicitor General of Canada, the Minister responsible for fighting crime, I began to increase Canada's focus, Federal and Provincial, on crime prevention as an addition to our traditional law enforcement mandate. Both are aspects of the same priority, but law enforcement refers mainly to the activities of solving crimes and convicting and punishing those found guilty, while prevention refers to all the activities which prevent crime from happening in the first place: a) protecting property and persons by reducing their vulnerability (neighbourhood watch, property i.d., better urban and architectural design, block parents, self-defense); b) finding those vulnerable to crime, usually alienated youth, usually easy to find, many already identified as young offenders and putting emphasis on their integration into the community (skills training in neighbourhood settings, drug counselling, social and job projects); and c) improving the fabric of society where it is found to be producing alienation (slum housing, inadequate school and day-care arrangements).

I am convinced that \$1 of prevention is worth \$100 of enforcement, if not more. Our situation confronting crime today is analogous to the situation in the '70s dealing with the health of Canadians. We recognized as a Government* that given the achievement through Medicare of a comprehensive health care

* A New Perspective on the Health of Canadians. Health & Welfare Canada, 1974. I worked on this publication and policy as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister.

network, additional advances in the health of Canadians would not come less from adding yet more doctors and more hospital beds, than from teaching each other better lifestyles: reducing smoking and alcohol abuse, improving our diet, exercising. These goals became official national policies, and in fifteen years the results are already astonishing us. In the war on crime, the better balancing of prevention and enforcement is hardly recognized, let alone achieved. Law enforcement continues in Canada to command the overwhelming attention and priority. The reasons are not all obvious but some are indeed obvious. There is the tradition and drama of solving crime and of nailing Mr. Big; there is the trend to professionalization of policing and corrections which matches, to a certain extent, the professionalization of much criminal activity; and there is the happy fact that the existing law enforcement systems in Canada enjoy high levels of approval when compared with the situations in other countries. These are obvious. But the most important advantage which law enforcement has over crime prevention is not obvious and has the effect of making enforcement more dynamic. The powerful political ingredient present in law enforcement but missing from crime prevention is the victim.

The victim's cry for help, for justice, for punishment of the guilty is a heavy mover of our political system. More dollars and man hours for the search, more courtrooms for swifter action, more jail cells for the guilty. These expensive programs are at the top of the victims' agenda.* Crime prevention by contrast has no victims either in the news or in our offices on Parliament Hill demanding more projects which will keep crime from happening in the first place. Its astonishing results, its

* Victims' organizations are different. The professionalization of the victims' voice into associations has seen a broadening of goals to include some elements of prevention.

amazing cost-benefit ratio do not offset the seemingly "soft" relationship between what we do in crime prevention and what we get from it. Cutting back this or that crime prevention project once begun does not seem to make any difference. No one complains. The record of the Mulroney Government has been a lack of leadership and support. For example, the fact that Canadians take a special pride in their safe cities as part of our peaceable national identity, and the sense that we may be losing this advantage has brought no Federal recognition that this is anything but a provincial and municipal concern.

There is political frustration for those of us who know that crime prevention dollars are a vastly better investment of our taxpayers' money than increments to our effective system of law enforcement although the law enforcement system like the health care system obviously needs always to be kept in good shape. The frustration is enhanced by watching all across our land creative well-meaning prevention projects launched here and there, sometimes with some taxpayer investment, usually with some police support, always with local citizen volunteer participation and enthusiasm, but doomed if the enthusiasm of the volunteer diminishes.

When I introduced Crime Prevention Week in Canada in 1982, I meant to deliver some dynamism which would build a political constituency to keep this scattered field of activity working and growing. There was much resistance to this Federal initiative. Wasn't it a Provincial responsibility? Wasn't it already fulfilled by or in competition with Police Week? Wasn't it a private sector responsibility? Having gone through the labour of birth, I am pleased to see that the Mulroney Government has retained Crime Prevention Week although it has cut back and frozen essential support for many of the projects which Crime Prevention Week celebrates and increases depend wholly on other players.

It is time to move forward with the building of a vigorous political framework which will permit the full range of projects of crime prevention to become rooted among our other institutions within the justice and social policy fields, as lifestyle programs are newly rooted in the health care field.

Canadian solutions will need to take account of Canada's special circumstances, for example the division of sovereignty in the area of crime prevention between Federal and Provincial levels of government and the importance in Canada of involving the police in crime prevention projects because here in Canada police are more respected and trusted than the police of any other country. Nevertheless, there is a lot we can learn from abroad. Many countries with less serious crime problems are far ahead of us in institutionalizing and invigorating the base for crime prevention projects. Perhaps, this is why their rates of crime are lower.

What I have learned from a survey of European experience is that in addition to projects of crime prevention, of which we in Canada have many, we need a national program to maintain support for these projects.

Most impressive, if not fully adaptable to the Canadian situation is the program in France. A National Council has been established, chaired by the President of France, which encourages crime prevention projects to be launched at the municipal level. Currently special emphasis is being put on urban design for crime prevention. But the shelves are bulging with examples of local community projects whose adaptation to local circumstances is encouraged across the country. A key to success, developed under the leadership of Paris-area député, Gilbert Bonnemaïson, who is also very usefully a local mayor, is that the program calls for crime prevention councils to be established by interested municipalities. 550 municipalities have voluntarily established such councils. Their composition is designated half by the Mayor

and half by the National Government. It includes elected aldermen, judges, police, prosecutors and also representatives of social agencies, public and private, whose mandates bear on prevention. These councils undertake through cost-sharing contracts with the National Government to develop and run crime prevention projects. The contract approach ensures that the community "owns" each project so that it works and the National Council apparatus gives a political vigor which helps to solidify the approach to integrating the alienated and reducing crime. The viability of such councils for Canada was demonstrated for me in Surrey B.C. by an exemplary day-long program organized by Councillor Judith Higginbotham whose initiative brought together a number of leaders of crime prevention projects, including the police, whose interchanges undoubtedly reinforced and inspired each other. At moments, the meeting seemed like the 'Prevention Council' meeting which I attended in Marseille built on the structure described above, which meets quarterly.

The British experience, although, in my opinion, less advanced than the French, includes elements which put it also far ahead of Canada. The Prime Minister herself chairs a newly established National Council and a 'safer cities' priority has been committed. There is an emphasis on research less noted in France, and on the compilation of statistics as ways of reinforcing and maintaining public confidence in the prevention projects approach to fighting crime.*

I call on and I hope the Canadian participants in this Conference will call upon their Government to give crime prevention the priority it deserves nationally and to establish a national program with national leadership and tangible support for a cities/towns based prevention council approach to the establishment of local projects.

*While Solicitor General, I established Juristat, which was meant to produce statistics demonstrating, among other things, the benefits being derived from crime prevention projects.

