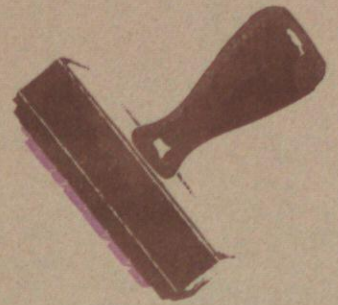




# BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH

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COMMENT



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## IS POLICING THE PUBLIC'S BUSINESS\$?

### INTRODUCTION

Why would anyone feel the need to undertake a study of a police operation (Metro Toronto) which has often been touted as the most outstanding in North America? A general answer, if we accept the foregoing as true, would be to assure that they stay the best and perhaps establish an even superior operation. A more specific reason might centre on the ever-rising cost of policing and a growing need to ensure that all public funds are spent as wisely as possible. In this regard we would have preferred to undertake a program analysis of a particular police function in order to examine the feasibility of improving productivity. However, there was insufficient support for such a study from Metro Toronto police officials so we decided to approach the problem from another viewpoint.

The question became one of determining precisely how police expenditures are presently monitored and police operations held accountable on behalf of the public. In Ontario, this dual responsibility currently rests with appointed Police Commissions which are empowered to act very independently in relation to the general decision-making process in place at the local level. This independence which other boards and commissions share, to some degree, has often placed additional strain on the local budget making process as each agency vies for its share of the available tax dollars. In light of the current program of fiscal restraint instituted by the Provincial government, it is very timely to examine the relationship of bodies such as Police Commissions in the local decision-making process. We will examine the desirability of continuing the use of commissions as a means of overseeing police operations and perhaps gain insight into the value of maintaining other special purpose bodies.



THE COST OF POLICE PROTECTION IN METRO TORONTO

The Metropolitan Toronto Police Commission will spend approximately \$129,000,000 in 1976, which represents about 25% of the overall Metro budget (excluding education). This is an increase of 155% since 1970, when the budget was approximately \$50,500,000. Interestingly, the police operations are running neck and neck with social services as the number one spender of Metro tax dollars. In 1970, social services cost Metro \$63,000,000 and in 1976 the cost has risen to \$126,000,000 or an increase of 110%. These figures are important for two reasons: first, because of the higher rate of increase in police spending; and second, because, while we know where and how the social services money is being spent, we are in the dark on police expenditures.

By any measure, prospects for the future in terms of the cost of policing do not look encouraging. In a Toronto Star article (November 11, 1974), the Chief of Police is quoted as estimating police strength by the year 1999 at approximately 12,000 as compared to the figure at that time of 5,000. This would be an increase of 140%. In that same period, planners are estimating an increase in Metropolitan Toronto's population of between 30% to 40%, depending on whose estimates are used. Why should there be such a dramatic difference and how will this be translated into costs? In 1970, the per capita cost of police protection in Metro was around \$25. This has risen to more than \$60 per capita in 1976 and with the Chief's projection of possible future police strength, this figure would be, in current dollars, in the neighbourhood of \$110 by the year 1999. This also does not take into account any wage increases or fringe benefits and ancillary services usually estimated at 20% or more of overall costs. The sharply rising cost of providing police services was one of the principal concerns of the Ontario Task Force on Policing. The evidence certainly indicates the necessity of identifying some innovative cost/benefit solutions which will not have a negative impact on the quality of police services.

As was previously stated, under provincial law, responsibility for police services is vested in appointed Police Commissions. These Commissions usually have five members, three are appointed by the Province and two by local government. The Police Commission, along with the appointed Chief of Police, carries out police business in relative isolation from all other municipal services. The most common reason given for this separate operation is the need to keep politics out of the police operation. We shall comment on this argument later in this report. The objective at this juncture is to examine more closely the budgetary process in one community, namely Metro Toronto.



As time for the preparation of the budget approaches, the Chief and his deputies begin to gather information on their spending patterns, requirements for new or expanded programs, and other requests. Presumably using last year's budget as a guide, they develop projections for the coming year and submit these to the Police Commission for consideration. The Police Commission, according to information of public record, traditionally has asked a few questions about items which seem to be increasing at a faster rate than the overall average but after an explanation by the Chief, the budget is generally approved with very few changes.

This usually concludes the active participation of the Police Commission until the budget is submitted to the Metro Council for approval. The Chairman of the Police Commission and the Chief then determine their strategy on justification of the increases. When the budget is submitted to Metro Council, Council minutes from the past several years indicate very few questions were asked prior to approval. There was apparently little reason to question or reject the budget since the Metro Police Commission could appeal to the Ontario Police Commission. It was assumed for some reason, that the Ontario Police Commission would always uphold the requests of the Police Commission.

The members of the Metropolitan Council have seen themselves largely in the role of providing a rubber stamp to the Police Commission's requests.<sup>1</sup> This year, a somewhat different pattern evolved because of the restraint program instituted by the provincial government and reforms in the Metro budgeting process. Severe cutbacks in provincial funding to municipalities have caused local councils to take a hard look at all of their services. During this year's budget deliberations, Metro councillors on the newly structured budget subcommittee asked the Police Commission to offer a more detailed explanation of their increased budget and attempt to find ways of reducing costs. The Chairman and the Chief returned to the Police Commission for more consideration. The subcommittee had asked the Police Commission to cut about \$4 million and the Police Commission eventually made cuts totalling \$3,366,000. It is usually at this point that the police, through the media, sound the warning that crime will be on the increase if further cutbacks are made in budget requests.<sup>2</sup> This is the procedure that occurred this year. While the Metro Council did manage to convince the Police Commission to make some cuts, there is still no way of determining if the current police budget

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1. From 1957, the year Metro assumed responsibility for policing, to 1975, police requests for additional personnel have not been challenged.
  2. Globe and Mail, "Downtown Patrol to be Cut if Hiring Frozen, Police Say", March 16, 1976.



can be justified on a cost/benefit basis. This does not suggest that all Metro departments can provide this kind of justification, but information is available and the process has begun in a few departments.

Perhaps it would be helpful to examine each of the steps in this process in order to analyse possible weaknesses which may occur in setting the police budget.

(1) The Chief and His Deputies Make Projections on Spending

At no time, to the best of our knowledge, does the Police Force analyse its spending patterns on a program by program basis. Rather, the traditional categories of detection, patrol, prevention, etc., are continued as a means of determining future needs. There is no apparent organized systematic review of various programs within these major categories to determine whether they are still needed, but rather an intuitive assessment by experienced officers. While this system may have been acceptable 20 years ago and may still work in some instances, we suggest that there are better processes available which should be adopted.

(2) The Commission Reviews the Budget

While the legal responsibility for running the Police Force, and therefore for setting its budget, rests with the Police Commission, it is, except for the active role played by the Chairman, not very tuned in to most policy and budget decisions. Very few Commission members ask probing policy questions.<sup>1</sup> and they get very little in the way of detailed information about the interworkings of the Force.

Therefore, it is the Chief of Police who establishes overall budgetary requirements with the Police Commission primarily offering moral support for his requests. The Commission does not appear to act as an effective check in the decision-making process.

(3) The Council Approves the Budget

Since we last reported on the Metro budgeting process in June 1974, many improvements have been instituted, not the least of which is the establishment of a new system of review by the Metro budget subcommittee and the hiring of budget officers; collectively they review the various Metro operations. While this new review process has produced much valuable information about the operation of most Metro departments, all it produced in the Police Force was a reduction of 2% from the proposed budget. The subcommittee still knows very little about the police operation and has no idea whether cuts should have been substantially less or substantially more. Could another \$1 million or \$2 million be cut with some program innovations?



(4) Public Support Sought Through the Media

One of the things inherent in preliminary discussions with the Police Commission was a decrease in the Police Commission's requested staff complement. Such cutbacks in requested personnel are not well received in any department and the Police Commission is no exception. The concern by the police about such cuts is made public through the media and usually the suggested impact is in programs which are popular with the public.<sup>1</sup> The Police Commission asked for some 400 men this year to fulfill the requirement of having two men in a patrol car during certain periods of the day. This request resulted from an arbitration decision over which the Commission had little final control.<sup>1</sup> Further justification for additional patrolmen was offered in the following list submitted to the budget subcommittee entitled "Statistics Which Indicate the Increased Demand for Police Services".

	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Population	2,124,095	2,157,851	1.6%
Miles of Road	3,116	3,149	1.1
Criminal Code Occur.	181,833	193,707	6.5
Crime Rate per 1,000 Population	85.6	89.8	4.9
Criminal Code - Offences Cleared	98,467	103,412	5.0
Motor Vehicle Registration	889,251	938,160	5.5
Traffic Accidents	54,101	54,256	.3
Persons Charged	91,287	95,509	4.6
Radio Messages	1,982,128	2,138,039	7.9
Calls for Service	811,738	933,872	15.0
Miles Travelled by Police Vehicles	22,894,445	23,703,763	3.1

These were the only figures provided and could lead us to assume that these are the only criteria which the Police Commission feels are necessary to justify its request for additional funding. The acceptance of \$3.3 million in reduced spending tends to confirm this assumption and raises the question of whether or not a more thorough approach to program evaluation and priority setting is not in order.

It would appear that internal fiscal control in terms of knowing which programs should be expanded or cut back, is very poor, and public control, in terms of accountability to the community, is non-existent.

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1. As is the case with most public bodies, there are items somewhat beyond their control such as arbitration awards and provincial regulations. Prime examples in Metro would be the two men in a car arbitration award and the provincial requirement that Metro provide police for duty at Provincial court.



Does Quality Policing Equal a Safe Community?

Police chiefs, especially at budget time, often relate the safety of a community to the splendid work of the police. One of the problems with equating the relative safety of a community with the effectiveness or efficiency of the police force is that there is no established basis for such an assumption. It is not uncommon for many cities to claim to have "the best police force around". Pride of accomplishment in such a difficult area of public service is bound to surface even in communities with relatively high crime rates. These are, however, opinions which have little opportunity of being proven one way or the other since no satisfactory measuring system has been devised.

While the exact relationship between the capability of a given police force and its ability to control crime has not been measured, some new and interesting theories have been put forward. In a recent article in the Toronto Star, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Ontario, Willard Estey, stated:

*"If you divide the control spectrum into percentages, I would say that the courts represent not more than 10 to 15 percent of that effort. The police represent not more than 10 to 15 per cent of that effort. So the other 70 per cent has got to come in the schools and in economic programs."<sup>1</sup>.*

The theme of the interview with Judge Estey was clearly that we should be addressing our efforts to the cause of crime rather than the symptoms. While the Judge's opinions are obviously his own and not proven by research, they point up the problem of placing blame or credit for the reduction of crime on any one sector or group in the community. Obviously, crime has many causes, not the least of which is the general level of morality of the community. One wonders then why some people continue to equate a good police force so absolutely with a safe city. More importantly, in light of this rather difficult placement of the responsibility for controlling crime, how do we determine the extent of a community's resources which should be funnelled into the criminal justice system or into parts of that criminal justice system.

Misunderstanding, or at least disagreement, about the causes of crime on the part of the public as well as many decision-makers are apparent. Educational, economic, and social programs are important in their own right but are not often sold on the basis of keeping down the crime rate. On the other hand, police forces are very visible and their purpose is more clearly established and understood than some of the other human services.

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1. Toronto Star, "Attack Cause of Crime, Not Symptoms: Chief Justice", December 8, 1975.



To amplify, we turn to another portion of the interview with Judge Estey:

Interviewer:

*"There seems to be increasing acceptance of the idea that all you need to control crime and violence are tougher penalties, more prisons, more police, harsher laws."*

Judge Estey:

*"That's been proved over 10,000 years of history to be a dry hole. What we should be looking at are root causes and better treatment. Reduce the causes of crime, reduce the attraction of crime and improve the recovery rate of those who have offended." 1.*

If, as Judge Estey has indicated, the general assessment of the methods of controlling crime is so off-base, this might suggest that the various components of that system also need scrutinizing. For instance, how much do we actually know about the operation of police forces? More importantly, how much should the public be permitted to know and how accountable should the police be to the community at large through their elected representatives? These questions, we suggest, are crucial and deserve a much closer look.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMISSION

Police Commissions operate very independently from the mainstream of local government decision-making. There is a long-standing debate on this issue and the battle lines are well drawn. Various reformers, including some local politicians, have been calling for more elected representatives on Police Commissions and more access by the public to police records. The Metro Police Chief and most Metro Police Commissioners argue that such reforms inevitably lead to political corruption and violation of confidential information which would be helpful to the criminals.

In the Royal Commission Inquiry into Civil Rights, former Chief Justice J. C. McRuer recommended improved public access to the workings of Police Commissions. His report stated:

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1. Ibid.



*"The result (of the present system) is that regulations and by-laws passed by police commissions which are part of the law of Ontario are not available to the members of the public affected by them." 1.*

The key to this problem would appear to be a suitable definition of what constitutes an "effect on the public". The Chairman of the Metro Toronto Police Commission has taken the view that the only by-law passed by the Commission which affects the public is the Parade By-Law. However, it would be hard to imagine a by-law that would not in some way affect the general public if it had to do with police business, since their sole function is the protection of the public and the public's property.

The fact that such a closed system still exists in this day and age is startling and yet the right to continue in this way is defended by several police commission members across the Province, who were interviewed by the Bureau of Municipal Research. One attempt to create more openness suggested that the Metro Toronto Police Commission be expanded to nine members consisting of the Metro Chairman, four elected representatives and four appointed persons. The current Chairman of the Metro Police Commission responded:

*"If the proposal is implemented, it would be the first step in an inevitable and progressive deterioration of law enforcement in this community".2.*

It is indeed unfortunate that the effort to make the Police Commission more accountable deteriorated to a debate over the pros and cons of additional elected representation, because that very clearly is not the issue.<sup>3</sup> The real question in our opinion, should be who appoints the Police Commissioners. Should not more responsibility for such appointments rest with the local councils? Highly qualified individuals could still be appointed but there would at least be an opportunity to select Commissioners whose views were more reflective of a majority of the elected council. The Commission could not help but feel a closer commitment to the overall goals of the community.

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1. Royal Commission Inquiry into Civil Rights, Toronto (Queen's Printer)
  2. Globe and Mail, "Chairman & Chief Fight Police Board Expansion", April 5, 1975.
  3. Opponents of additional elected representation often cite the American experience of having police run as a department and the political interference which sometimes results. However, this is not a widespread problem in the U.S. and it should be pointed out that the social make-up and general government structure are sufficiently different in Canada to minimize this problem.



There should be serious reconsideration of the organizational relationships between the Police Commission and the Chief, as well as the Police Commission and the local Council. We have already suggested that the Chief could be more accountable to the Police Commission and the Police Commission more accountable to the elected council through reforms in the budget approval process and representation. It is difficult to comprehend how these kinds of reforms would cause the serious deterioration foreseen by the Chairman of the Police Commission.

As to the question of the public's right to be informed of the by-laws and regulations passed by Police Commissions, it is very questionable that the current secrecy privileges should still exist. Certainly, there should be a way of providing most of the information which the public may require from time to time without jeopardizing the confidential information which would be helpful to organized crime, which is such a small portion of all crime.

#### Other Commission Responsibilities

##### The Chief

According to the Chairman of the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan, Brian A. Grosman:

*"If the Board of Commissioners influences the overall strategy and policing of a particular community at all, it is through their selection and appointment of a Chief of Police ..."*<sup>1</sup>.

Regardless of how the structure of Police Commissions may be changed, the selection of the chief will probably remain one of the most important responsibilities, as well it should be. Having accepted this, it then becomes important to determine how this selection should be made and what are the appropriate criteria to be used. Given the undesirable level of real understanding by most Metro Police Commission members of the operation of the force, it is a puzzlement as to how they can judge the merits of various candidates for the position of Chief. Certainly the case can be made for stressing not only a strong understanding of police work, but also the need for recognized administrative skills. These skills should include an ability to evaluate programs properly, set priorities and develop better communications using the most modern techniques available. We wonder how these matters could be discussed when there is apparently no system in place which allows the pertinent information to be gathered, evaluated and passed on to the Police Commission members.

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1. Globe and Mail, "Who Manipulates, Who Are Captive of Police Power?"  
April 5, 1975.



Other department heads in Metro are subject to public scrutiny and review by politicians to evaluate performance. If they lack imagination or do not design new programs in response to changes in the community, there is at least the possibility they will be replaced or chastized. This is not likely to happen in the Police Force in Metro or elsewhere, because Police critics can produce little in the way of evidence to support allegations of mismanagement. A more open system would at least allow for this much needed assessment and create either increased community support for policing, or an opportunity to initiate reforms if weaknesses are found.

#### The Metro Police Association

The Police Commission is ultimately responsible for handling labour relations with both civilian and police employees. The Chief again assumes the prominent role in determining what recommendations are made to the Commission but the Commission members must ultimately vote on contract settlements. The openness and credibility of the Commission in dealing with these employees is seen as a critical factor in the morale and performance of the policemen on the street. According to a spokesman of the Metro Police Association, the current relationship with the Police Commission leaves much to be desired. Citing the "*arrogant attitude the Commission has held over the years*"<sup>1</sup>, Sid Brown, President of the Metro Police Association, emphasized that the recent "two men in a car" dispute could have been resolved without threatening cutbacks in the Youth Bureau, Crime Prevention Bureau, and Community Services. According to Mr. Brown, this could have been avoided if patrol areas were made temporarily larger or if the two-man cruiser system had been more carefully planned.

This example is used only as an illustration and should not be seen as an attempt to simplify an obviously complex issue. Deciding how much power the police association or union should have is a separate issue, but the rank and file are upset with many policy decisions of the Police Commission and the Chief. This is significant because it reflects on the management system which exists to deal with such matters and suggests that this system could stand some improvement. The Ontario Task Force on Policing offered some suggestions regarding the prevailing attitude on police management. In the Task Force report published in February 1974, there was considerable criticism of the continuance of a strong military structure in most police forces in Ontario. This military emphasis, according to the report, served a purpose in the post-war years but has outlived its usefulness and needs to be replaced with a system more in tune with our modern society. The report further stressed the need to emphasize the importance of the individual officer in order to enable him to act more independently from the control usually exercised by supervisors.

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1. Globe and Mail, "Brown Says Police Commission is Increasing Cruiser Problems", March 17, 1974.



We think this whole question of police management is summed up in an article by Benjamin Goldstein, Deputy Director of the Connecticut Planning Committee on Criminal Administration, in which he concludes:

*"Overall, within the legal, social, administrative, and political constraints that exist, the police are doing an excellent job -- carrying out their responsibilities to citizens in their respective communities. But more, much more, needs to be accomplished. Improved management practices, upgrading personnel through better selection and training, better supervision, more efficient manpower allocation, community involvement with police -- all these areas need upgrading. Some improvements may require additional financial support -- others require not money but only sincere dedication, hard work, and the re-examination of some basic assumptions."*<sup>1</sup>.

It can be argued that this opinion reflects the situation in the United States and may not apply in Canada, but most of the studies and commissions which we refer to in this report tend to confirm this opinion of police management in Ontario and Canada.

It is indeed reassuring to know that other jurisdictions share some of the same problems as Metro, and while we may be unique in many respects, this should not imply an absolute inability to learn from the experience of other jurisdictions. Perhaps if we take a look at the recommendations which have been developed for Metro as well as for some other jurisdictions, we can find some that are worthy of implementation.

#### SOME REFORM SUGGESTIONS

Proposals for the reform of police operations have been flowing steadily in the past decade from a variety of sources in North America. We will concentrate on the most recent findings which have particular relevance in terms of internal and external accountability. The following three sources will be highlighted:

- 1.) Task Force on Policing in Ontario (February 1974),  
Edward B. Hale, Chairman
- 2.) Police Command - Decisions and Discretion (Toronto, 1974)  
Brian A. Grosman

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1. Benjamin Goldstein, "Police Management Problems", Connecticut Government Hartford, 1974.



3.) The National Commission on Productivity and Work Quality, United States of America (1973-1976)

The Task Force on Policing in Ontario (Established by the Provincial Government) While the Task Force considered a wide range of subjects on policing, we will emphasize their findings in the two basic areas of examination of this study, namely the cost effectiveness of current operations and the question of public accountability. On the first item, the report suggested:

*"In considering the cost implications of policing, the Task Force observed from its examination, that current methods and approaches to police service cannot be afforded. Policing in the province must therefore be both redefined and rationalized."*

The Task Force went on to recommend that:

*"Individual municipal police forces examine the cost effectiveness and propriety of such police services as: transporting prisoners; transporting mental patients; serving summonses; serving motor vehicle operator suspension notices; confiscation of suspended license plates; issuing licenses and enforcing licensing by-laws; other duties inconsistent with police responsibilities and functions; and that representation be made to individuals, organizations, and institutions to transfer such services as appropriate."*

Whether the Metro Police Force has begun to consider these and the many other recommendations of the Task Force is generally unknown. However, discussions with police staff, commission members, and others possessing knowledge of police operations suggests that little serious attention is being given to the Task Force recommendations. This will probably continue to be the case unless the public becomes more involved. Ordinarily, police public relations officers would attempt to provide this kind of information in an effort to gain support for new programs.

On the question of public accountability, the Task Force suggested very little change in the existing relationship between elected councils and police commissions,<sup>1</sup> in spite of strong suggestions from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario for more municipal control. The Task Force did, however, suggest that there was much to be done in the area of police/public communications. Many of the recommendations dealt

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1. This was due to a strong difference of opinion by many members of the Task Force.



with tactical deployment of personnel and more decision-making responsibility for police on the beat but others stressed the obvious advantages of encouraging the public to find out more about how the police force operates.

Police Command: Decisions and Discretion

Brian Grosman, as Chairman of the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan, spent over two years travelling across Canada interviewing police chiefs, commission members, elected representatives and constables, as well as going with the police on many assignments. Mr. Grosman is concerned about the lack of public awareness regarding police power and points out the fact that the running of the police department is left to police management, which is virtually free from public scrutiny and accountability.

In one section of his book he concludes:

*"Thus, it seems that the instrumentality of the Police Commission and its particularist political components may have outlived its usefulness. It does not contribute significantly to community-police communication, nor does it act as an appropriate watchdog over police activities. There is the continual risk of a conflict of interest since the commission acts both as an employer and as a public body responsible to the electorate."*<sup>1</sup>

A review of the agendas of several past Metro Police Commission meetings reveals that their role is indeed very simply one of approving accounts payable, approving training courses for men, granting permission for policemen wanting to move outside of Metro, awarding citations to brave citizens, and dealing with personnel discipline problems. It was suggested, during an interview with the current Commission Chairman that much additional business is conducted behind closed doors but he did not wish to elaborate.

Interviews by the Bureau with a few of the Metro's senior police officers indicate that they see no problem whatsoever with the rather passive role played by the Police Commission and no reason to amend the Police Commission's role as approver of accounts payable and giver of citizen awards. According to these spokesmen, the Force should not be held accountable in any way other than via the public's general impression of whether the city is kept safe. However, in light of opinions, such as Judge Estey's, challenging the assumption that a safe city equals a good

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1. Brian A. Grosman, Police Power - Decisions and Discretion (Toronto: MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1974), p.125.



police force, perhaps Metro police representatives would be wise to back away from this position. If they do not and crime increases more than in the past, the public may begin to place the blame for increasing crime on the doormat of the police, and this may not be totally justified.

Mr. Grosman offers more on this subject of communication with the public:

*"Municipal government must be committed to the development of effective channels of communication into the police department from the widest variety of sub-groups within the community. Once that commitment is made known the more likely it is that the police bureaucracy will take into account community interests beyond those which reflect the needs of the bureaucracy and the middle class alone.*

*Increased utilization of citizen advisory committees which involve a broader spectrum of members of the community in the policy-making process may provide one alternative to the Police Commission. A variety of options ought to be available to meet the particular needs of the community in which the police must function."<sup>1</sup>.*

In terms of cost effectiveness of internal control, Mr. Grosman offers no specific analysis but presents the following assessment of the general attitude towards change in most departments.

*"If the survival of the senior administration is perceived by the executive [the Chief and his Deputies] as depending upon its [the department's] adaptation to change, the bureaucracy may adjust to innovation in order to protect its threatened power. At best, reforms within the bureaucracy tend to be compromised reform. A closed bureaucracy provides major resistances to change whether stimulated by internal or external pressures. Such resistances are becoming less acceptable to those police officers who feel that new approaches are required and to community leaders who challenge traditionally accepted police practices." <sup>2</sup>.*

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1. Brian A. Grosman, Police Power - Decisions and Discretion (Toronto: MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1975).
  2. Op. cit., p.125



It is quite clear throughout Mr. Grosman's book that he feels major reforms in accountability are needed and they are needed now. Nothing which we have been able to unearth in our investigation of the Metro Police Force indicates that these recommendations do not apply here in Metro.

#### The National Commission on Productivity

In the early 1970's the United States Federal Government became concerned about the sizeable growth of public sector employment compared to private sector growth. This concern led to the creation of the National Commission on Productivity and Work Quality with the task of identifying improved work methods in both the private and public sector. The Commission undertook technical studies, pilot projects and eventually the development of a jurisdictional guide which would pull together all reported attempts by various levels of government to become more cost effective.

A report on "Opportunities for Improving Productivity in Police Services" was produced in 1973 and contained a wide range of recommendations for improving police productivity. It is extremely important to note that this effort involved the active participation of police chiefs, criminologists, appointed and elected officials, researchers and citizens who were the most respected representatives of their various groups in the United States. It was their unanimous opinion that while isolated instances of cost savings efforts were known, by and large, it was a subject which has been avoided in most major metropolitan police departments. Various departments ranked high in terms of their clearance rate for certain crimes but there was much evidence to support the need for improved methods of program evaluation and priority setting.

The prevailing situation is perhaps best summed up by Edward Hamilton, one of six authors reviewed recently regarding police productivity.

*"In addition, police workers, the authors agree, have been able to maintain an air of professional mysticism which has enabled them to operate above the external political process. 'The professional police culture', Hamilton concludes, 'discouraged the systematic collection of operational data'. Consequently, during appropriation review, the categorization of an activity as necessary to security limited debate about value received."*<sup>1</sup>

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1. Readings on Productivity in Policing, edited by Joan L. Wolfe and John F. Heaphy, Washington, D.C. Police Foundation, 1975, p.149, Reviewing in Public Productivity Review by Martin Singer, Vol.1, No.2, December 1975, New York.



Pilot projects in several United States cities are also producing some startling results. As an example, in what is now being called a landmark study, the Kansas City police Department found absolutely no correlation between the patrol function (by car) and the prevention of crime. While findings such as this only begin to shoot holes in theories that have been accepted for years, some departments are taking account of these findings and attempting some innovations.

And finally, the United States jurisdictional guide is beginning to document a growing number of these innovative efforts which, in many cases, have not only reduced cost but actually improved the quality of service at the same time.

This information has been passed on to the Metro Police Force. While some of these new concepts may already have been implemented and others may not be applicable, at least they are now available for review and consideration. It should also be mentioned that the Ontario Police Commission is involved in an effort to transfer new technology between and among various police forces. The Hale Report, mentioned earlier, recommended that this effort be expanded considerably and we certainly concur.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The Police Commission may feel defensive because of the several inquiries and commissions which have been looking into various phases of their operation. But they need not feel overly sensitive because these reviews are usually conducted by sincere, well-qualified individuals acting in the best interest of the entire community. If the Police Commission had insisted on the establishment of a better system of program analysis and many of the other improvements in operation which have been recommended, perhaps such reviews would have been less necessary. And unless the Provincial Government, as well as the Police Commission conscientiously examines these new ideas, the public may become dissatisfied with the existing police service and call for stronger reforms than are actually needed. We can see evidence of this type of reaction in the United States where the once highly respected C.I.A. and F.B.I. are under severe criticism for questionable activities. If their operations had been more open to scrutiny by elected representatives and the public these abuses probably would not have occurred.

The average policeman is undoubtedly doing a very good job under existing conditions but how much better could he perform his difficult role if some of the important reforms mentioned in this report had been adopted? Responsibility for improving conditions in Ontario's



police forces rests primarily with the following decision-makers:

The Province- has not acted quickly enough on a wide range of reform recommendations which have been made to them and has not offered any explanation why many of these obviously important reforms have not been forthcoming.

The Metro Council - while aware that changes were in order, a majority of the council has been noticeably silent. In the past, they were clearly reluctant to challenge the Police Commission. Now the Council, as well as the Province, appear satisfied to wait for the Royal Commission examining Metro's operations to report, which should be sometime late in 1976 or early 1977.<sup>1</sup> However, some of the recommended changes would not require the completion of the Royal Commission's report or action by the provincial government. All that is needed is the commitment of the Metro Council and the cooperation of the Police Commission.

The Police Commission - for years has failed to fulfill its proper legal mandate and has acted virtually as a rubber stamp for the Chief of Police. The power to change this and many other things was within its grasp but the majority of Commissioners have chosen to maintain the status quo. We say the majority of Commissioners because the Chairman has apparently developed a much closer working relationship and a greater understanding of police operations. While some guidance and control may be occurring behind closed doors, evidence is lacking as to what changes have been made or are contemplated.

The Police Chief - in any community has the power to initiate any internal action which he feels is necessary. Reluctance to change the status quo is a factor of not only the highly militaristic structure of police forces, but also a general feeling of satisfaction as long as the crime rate is stabilized. But the stream of inquiries, commission reports, and other outside findings should be an indication that reform is on the way and instead of resisting change, Police Chiefs all across the Province could benefit by developing ways of managing these inevitable changes.

The result of this collective indecision and resultant apparent lack of adequate program analysis is that the citizens of Metro Toronto do not have adequate information to evaluate the performance of the police service relative to the cost.

A detailed outline of a study to produce a proper program evaluation and priority setting system has been offered by the Police Commission by the Bureau of Municipal Research. This study could be completed in less than a year and would not be dissimilar to several other studies which the Bureau has undertaken in the past. A recent study on the fire services in Metro produced some interesting and valuable information which is being used by the Robarts Commission as well as the individual fire departments. Why not a similar review of our police service?

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1. The Royal Commission on Metropolitan Toronto, Honourable John P. Robarts, Commissioner.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) A study of police operations should be conducted by an agency outside the Police Force. The BMR would welcome the opportunity to perform such a study in close cooperation with the Police Commission. The study should establish a system of program evaluation and priority setting which would make it possible to assess the ongoing viability of each and every program. The effective direction of resources both within the force and within Metro should be an overall goal. The results of the study should not be made public until the police have had ample opportunity to check factual material as well as make suggestions on content and style. It should be agreed in advance that nothing of a security nature will be printed in the study. Work should begin as soon as possible and be completed in less than a year with an absolute minimum of disruption to daily police operations. Metro Council should become involved in the proposed study. The Council and Police Commission could also ask for assistance from the Ontario Police Commission regarding the proper format for such a project.
- (2) All by-laws and regulations of Police Commissions should become a part of the public record and the appropriate laws should be passed by the Province to effect this change.
- (3) The ultimate of fiscal control and accountability would probably be realized if all special purpose bodies such as police commissions were placed under strict municipal control. Canada's culture and system of government are sufficiently different from the U.S. to dismiss most fears of excessive political interference in police business. However, we see no problem with allowing police operations to continue under the guidance of a Commission, at this time, as long as a majority of its members are appointed by local councils rather than by the Province and budget controls as in recommendation #5 are instituted. Consideration should also be given to allowing the Commission to choose its own chairman for a limited term of office.
- (4) As a method of periodically bringing a new perspective to police operations, there should be a limit on the length of time each commissioner may serve (i.e. no reappointment after 2 five-year terms).
- (5) The budget of Police Commissions should be subject to approval by the local or regional council, depending on the service area of the commission, with no appeal to the provincial government. The council and the finance committee should have the right to require the police chief to answer in person or in writing, questions relating to the financing of police operations. Local councils should have the power to amend the budget in any way which they feel is consistent with the overall goals and financial resources of the community.

Charles K. Bens  
Executive Director