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Volume 6, No. 2

READINGS IN RACE RELATIONS

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The Urban Alliance on Race Relations, formed in July 1975 to promote a stable and healthy multiracial environment in the community, is a non-profit organization made up of volunteers from all sectors of the community.

The Urban Alliance on Race Relations is an educational agency and an advocate and intermediary for visible minorities. It works towards encouraging better race relations, increased understanding and awareness among our multicultural, multiracial population through programs of education directed at both the private and public sectors of the community. It focuses its efforts on the institutions of our society including educational systems, employment, government, media, legislation, police, social service agencies, and human services, in order to reduce patterns of discrimination and inequality of opportunity which may exist within these institutions.

The work of the organization is carried out through committees such as:

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Articles offered for publication are welcome. They should be typewritten, double-spaced, with adequate margins for notation.

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Race Relations in Urban and Rural Canada

Race relations in Canada has largely been discussed within an urban framework. As Elliot Tepper's article "The Future of Canadian Cities" clearly demonstrates, the future health of urban Canada will be largely dependent on increased immigration and more rigorous immigrant adaptation and ethnic and race relations initiatives. Canadians, however, received a rude awakening by the events of this past summer and discovered that racism is also very much a part of rural Canada.



The events at Oka have once again demolished the dearly held myth of Canada as the 'peaceable kingdom.' They have also certainly demolished the myth that racism is an urban phenomenon recently imported to Canada as a result of the changing nature of immigration.

A few months ago a Chief of a northern Manitoba Cree reserve asked me in exasperation what can be done to change the blithe attitude of Canadians toward the quiet desperation of life faced by so many of Canada's native people. In a more recent conversation, a young Innu in Labrador was able to draw for me a detailed parallel between the struggles of his community with those of the P.L.O. in the Middle East. These small personal anecdotes would seem to reinforce the recent warnings of native leaders that Oka is only the tip of the iceberg. Race relations in rural Canada would appear to be reaching a frightening watershed.

Violence and Race Relations

At Oka, Canada's 'forgotten peoples' have opposed the 'peaceful vio-

lence' of racism that has permeated every facet of their lives with non-peaceful means. Is it any wonder that such militant and confrontational techniques are being used to remedy such long-standing racial injustices? How effective have been the quiet cooperative partnerships and endless negotiations? What impact have the subtle persuasive techniques of studies, information sharing and sensitivity training had on the resolution and eradication of racial discrimination in Canada?

Canadians, it seems, would much prefer the negative peace of non-confrontation and the avoidance of conflict where the 'peaceful' and therefore invisible violence of racism can continue to fester undisturbed. The pursuit of a positive peace, which is the presence of justice in the true sense of the word, cannot be allowed to take precedence over the need for 'order' it seems; and the violent might of the military will be used to maintain this 'order.'

The lowering of the barricades at Oka has hopefully however shown how extensive and pervasive are the

barriers to racial equality in Canada. The most obvious object of criticism must be the display of racism and incompetence of the Quebec police. How is one to improve relations between the police and racial minorities? This issue of *Currents* devotes attention to the efforts being made by the Ontario government to improve police-race relations. Inadequate though these initiatives may be - as the critique by the Toronto Mayor's Race Relations Committee makes clear - these efforts may nevertheless provide the basis for improvements in other police jurisdictions. While police-race relations in Ontario have largely focused on the urban experience, many of the proposed changes may be applicable to the rural native context whether it be in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Manitoba, or Alberta.

Tim Rees

Initiatives

Race Relations and Policing in Ontario

Following the shooting death of Lester Donaldson and Wade Lawson, the Ontario government, in December 1988, appointed the Race Relations and Policing Task Force "to address promptly the very serious concerns of visible minorities respecting the interaction of the police community with their own."

The Task Force submitted its report in April, 1989 and made fifty-seven specific recommendations under seven headings: Monitoring; Hiring and Promotion; Race Relations Training; Use of Force; Community Relations; First Nations Peoples; and Police Commissions.

On November 16, 1989, the Solicitor General released the following response:

Employment Equity

The Ministry of the Solicitor General will immediately implement an employment equity policy and program for policing services to include:

A provision under the proposed revisions of the Police Act which would require mandatory employment equity policies and programs to be established by Ontario police forces. Police forces would be required to establish employment equity policies and plans to be filed with the Ministry;

Development in consultation with the Ministry of Citizenship and the Human Resources Secretariat;

A model for comprehensive employment equity planning for use by each police force;

Goals and timetables to accelerate the process of achieving community representation;

Implementation for all targeted groups, with special initial measures for visible minority men and women;

Continuous monitoring by the Ministry of the Solicitor General to ensure the review and adequacy of employment equity initiatives; and

A communications strategy to educate and enhance police understanding of employment equity principles and policy.

Recruitment Initiatives

The Ministry of the Solicitor General will implement proposals to elimi-

nate systemic employment barriers to include:

The establishment of a central recruiting unit within the Policing Services Division of the Ministry to provide assistance to all police services.

The unit will develop and implement strategies to attract the targeted designated groups to careers in policing.

The unit will facilitate liaison between local police recruiters and potential recruits;

An expanded outreach recruitment of targeted groups in schools, post-secondary facilities and community groups through the Ontario Provincial Police; and

Examination of testing and screening procedures used in



police recruitment, and development of bias-free selection tools.

Special employment measures will be taken by the Ontario Provincial Police to improve access to employment in all areas of the force through:

Lateral entry of qualified individuals having police training and experience from any police force.

Secondment and contract opportunities for civilians within the OPP; and

Civilianization of OPP positions not requiring policing knowledge and experience, and direct entry into these positions.

An officer training program will be developed to ensure that promotion and advancement are based on knowledge, training, and demonstrated ability.

Community-Relations

The Ministry of the Solicitor General will implement police-community relations proposals to include:

A review of community-oriented policing policies and programs to encourage the further development of innovative community policing strategies;

A police-minority consultation strategy to promote and establish local consultation/advisory committees on a pilot basis;

A community internship program model for use by police forces for the placement of officers with community organizations;

Guidelines to ensure co-ordination of response/communi-

cations between the community and the police;

Regional symposia on community-oriented policing issues;

A feasibility study to provide quarters for Boards of Commissioners of police separate from those of police forces;

An award of excellence for police officers displaying sensitive race relations and community-oriented policing services.

Police/Race Relations Training

The Ministry of the Solicitor General will implement proposals to enhance police/race relations training for all members of Ontario police forces, including:

A review of all police/race relations training programs, courses and instruction manuals

Development and implementation of revised programs;

A revised recruit Race Relations training program and integration of the program into all aspects of police training;

Implementation of the recruit Race Relations Training program by police training facilities;

Mandatory police retraining, including race relations, to be implemented through regulations in the Police Act;

A retraining course in all areas of policing, including race relations, to be developed through innovative and cost-efficient methods;

A Coach/Officer training program to ensure "mentor-

ing" for probationary constables;

A train-the-trainers program for all Ontario police/race relations trainers; and

A race relations training program for senior command officers, civilian staff, and members of police authorities.

Use of Force

The government has accepted the principle of the Task Force recommendation to limit discretion in the use of force and firearms by police. Ministry actions will include:

Petition of the government of Canada by the Attorney General of Ontario to amend the Criminal Code;

Review and amendment of police regulations; and

Provision of additional training with respect to the use of force including the use of firearms, batons and physical restraint.

Special Investigative Unit

The government accepts the recommendation of the Task Force to establish a special investigative unit to include:

Investigations of any occurrence, involving police, which results in death of serious injury;

Permanent establishment of the unit within the Ministry of the Solicitor General;

Trained investigators; and

Investigations scrutinized by a civilian well-versed in criminal law.

Standards and Guidelines

The Ministry will develop new standards and guidelines to include:

Civilianization, community consultation, Coach/Officer training, race relations and firearms/ammunition training and management;

Distribution to all local forces in the province; and

Ministry inspections to monitor progress and compliance.

A model police/race relations policy will be developed to include working definitions of racially prejudiced behaviour.

Revisions to the Police Act

The Task Force made several recommendations for changing the Police Act in particular, regulations under the Act. The Ministry has begun a process to complete major revisions to the Police Act which will provide the necessary legislated authority including:

A special investigative unit, established to investigate any occurrence involving police which results in death or serious injury;

Expansion of the regulation-making authority of the Lieutenant Governor in the Police Act to include: police equipment; standards of dress; recruitment standards; police training; use of firearms; Boards of Commissioners of Police; and employment equity.

An Inadequate Response

The Toronto Mayor's Committee on Community and Race Relations, through its Policing Sub-Committee, has presented the following views on the government's response to the Race Relations and Police Task Force Report.

Monitoring

The government's commitment to meet the concerns of visible minority communities would be far more believable if the Solicitor General had not entirely rejected the creation of an independent civilian agency to oversee the implementation of the Task Force recommendations.

An "Ontario Race Relations and Policing Review Board" was recommended by the Task Force to advise, research, inform, consult, advocate, and particularly to monitor employment equity programs of police forces. The Board would have had the necessary teeth to ensure compliance.

The government response is to keep these responsibilities entirely in-

house, within the Ministry of the Solicitor General. It is regrettable that the government has chosen to pull the Report's teeth by refusing to create an appropriate independent monitoring agency

Hiring and Promotion

The Task Force sought to have each police force in the province establish a visible minority employment equity policy with a five year program of hiring and promotional goals to be submitted by December 1989. It was recommended that 1996 be the year set for the achievement of the goal of all Ontario police forces being representative of the racial diversity of the communities they serve.

Mechanisms for lateral entry, accelerated promotional plans, civilianization, and the creation of a Central Police Recruiting Unit for the province were also recommended. The withholding of policing grants for extremely non-compliant forces, negative publicity for reluctant forces, and awards for meritorious performance were among the carrot and stick measures recommended by the Task Force. The Task Force also made specific recommendations for amendment of Police Act regulations requiring all police forces to allow reasonable accommodation of Sikhs and others in the wearing of religious symbols and dress as police officers and civilian employees of police forces.

The government's response is to require Ontario police forces to adopt mandatory employment equity policies and programs. Plans and policies would be filed with the Ministry and would include goals and timetables. The Ministry of the Solicitor General proposes to engage in continuous monitoring of these employment equity plans. No target dates are established, no carrots or sticks are mentioned. A central recruiting unit in the Policing Services Division of the Ministry is to "provide assistance", "develop and implement strategies", and to "facilitate liaison between local police recruiters and potential recruits." The OPP is to engage in an "expanded outreach recruitment of targeted groups in schools, post-secondary facilities, and community groups." "Examination of testing and screening procedures used in police recruitment, and development of bias-free selection tools" is to be undertaken.

Accelerated promotional plans are not mentioned, although "an officer training program will be developed to ensure that promotion and advancement are based on knowledge, training and demonstrated ability."

Only the OPP is mentioned in reference to lateral entry (and then only from other police forces for persons who are qualified and having police training and experience). Civilianization is mentioned with respect only to the OPP.

The government's response is particularly and notably weak with respect to hiring and promotion. The Task Force recommendations have been severely watered down. A mandatory timetable is not established for employment equity, and there appears to be no enforcement mechanisms. The lack of an effective central recruiting agency means that change will come slowly, if it comes at all.

The government should publish, as soon as possible, draft regulations designed to achieve, with respect to the municipal and regional police forces, at a very minimum the hiring and promotion policies which are to be adopted with respect to the OPP.

The government should also indicate in such draft regulations a mandatory timetable for the achievement of employment equity by the province's police forces.

Data on employment equity, goals and timetables, and hiring and promotion generally should be published regularly by the government and distributed to community groups.

There appears to be no specific responses to Task Force recommendations numbers 10 and 11, relating to the ability of Sikh police personnel to wear religious symbols, reasonable accommodation with respect to religious dress, or the proposed Employee Satisfaction Survey of visible minority employees.

Further consultation with the community is required with respect to employment equity, hiring, and promotional concerns.

Race Relations Training

The Task Force stated that it "cannot over emphasize its concern about the current inadequacy of police race relations training." Teaching approaches were considered by many consultants as not only ineffective but "dangerous." The Task Force believed that the need for a fundamental redesign was so great that there was a danger in continuing to offer existing programs.

As a result the Task Force recommended that the Solicitor General impose an immediate moratorium on current race relations training pending a review (including civilian and

Review Board input) for the purposes of developing a basic program and integrating race relations issues into all aspects of police training. It was further recommended that a revised program be redesigned to include participation of visible minority communities and civilian consultants and implemented within a specific time frame by all police forces and training facilities, and that this program be monitored by the Review Board on a regular basis.

While the Solicitor General has called for a review of all race relations programs and the development of revised programs (including a revised recruit race relations program and integration of the program to all aspects of police training), there is no specific reference to civilian expertise being utilized. In addition, there are no dates by which action will be taken, no moratorium on existing programs, no independent monitoring and evaluation on a regular basis, and no reference to programs being integrated in all aspects of police training (not just recruit training). This, in our opinion, does not adequately address the problems and solutions documented in the Task Force Report.

Generally the Task Force recognized the need for a centralized approach to training, recommending that the Police Act be amended to provide the Solicitor General with the responsibility for setting and maintaining the standards for all police training, including in-service training. It went on to recommend a province-wide review of the adequacy of current training programs generally (at the colleges and in-service) to ensure standardization. The review (to be submitted to the Legislature) would include assessment of standards, instructor qualifications, program evaluation and recommendations for improvement when warranted. This committee fully supports this recommenda-

tion which has not been addressed by the Solicitor General.

The Solicitor General has called for mandatory police retraining including race relations training to be implemented through regulations in the Police Act (not specifically called for in that manner in the Task Force Report). However there is no reference to the frequency of this retraining, nor to what "developed through innovative and cost-efficient methods" refers.

The Solicitor General accepts that there is a race relations program for all senior command, civilian and police authorities. However the Task Force recommended that the Solicitor General, through the Police Act, require that the above (as well as all police officers) receive such training on a continuing basis. Participation should be mandatory, and on a continuing and regular basis.

While the Solicitor General agrees with the Task Force regarding the use of a train-the-trainers program for all police race relations officers, there is no reference to independent review of this program by the Review Board (or any other independent agency) on a continuing and regular basis; nor has any time frame in which the program will be implemented been indicated.

The Solicitor General has made no reference to the Task Force recommendations with respect to general educational opportunities and responsibilities for police officers, which this committee supports as being necessary to the personal and professional development of individual police officers.

In summary, it is clear the Task Force contemplated the creation and implementation of revised training, especially race relations training, and that these race relations programs (developed with the assistance of civilians) be mandatory, continuous, fully integrated into all aspects of police training, and moni-

tored and evaluated on a regular basis by an independent agency.

The independent agency would not only ensure that these programs are effective, but would provide the necessary expertise and assistance in this area to police forces on an on-going basis. The independent nature of the agency would work towards creating an environment which would enable the public to establish the confidence that such programs are being properly monitored.

Use of Force

The Task Force recommended that police officers be limited in the use of deadly weapons in a "fleeing offender" situation. The Task Force would restrict use of deadly force to situations in which the person fleeing poses an immediate threat of death to police officers or others. The Task Force also wanted to amend regulations so that police officers may not draw their weapon except when the officer believes it may be necessary to protect life. The Task Force called for more realistic and continuing training, as well as random spot checks of ammunition actually being used, and a disciplinary offence for use of unauthorized weapons or ammunition. Use of Force Reports should be submitted to, and be analyzed by the Policing Services Division of the Ministry of the Solicitor General when any form of force has been used by an officer.

The Task Force also recommended an independent investigative team to investigate police shootings in Ontario. Included in the proposed team would be at least two civilians.

The government's response has been the establishment of a special investigative unit within the Ministry of the Solicitor General to investigate any occurrence involving police which results in death or serious injury. It would be comprised of "trained investigators" and investigations would be "scrutinized" by

a civilian well-versed in criminal law. Without going into specifics, the government indicates its acceptance of the principle of the Task Force recommendations to limit discretion in the use of force and firearms by police. Additional training will be provided and police regulations will be reviewed and amended, as well the federal government will be petitioned to amend the criminal law.

A more precise response closer to what the Task Force recommended would be preferable. In addition, the trained investigators in the Special Investigative Unit ought to include a significant proportion of civilians and forensic experts.

Community Relations

The Solicitor General's response to the Task Force recommendation with respect to community-based policing lacks specifics, but provides that a review of such policing policies and programs will be conducted to encourage further development of "innovative community policing strategies." Although recognized as a component of community-based policing, there is no specific response to the several Task Force recommendations with respect to the development of effective race and ethnic relations units.

The Mayor's Committee also supports the Task Force comments with respect to informal police/community interaction, including foot patrols, police stations being accessible to the public, and the participation of police in a broad range of community activities with special emphasis on youth.

The Solicitor General has also agreed with the Task Force recommendation that racially-prejudiced behaviour be defined and that a police/race relations policy be developed. The Solicitor General should implement the complete Task Force recommendation which pro-

