

Regional policing the way to go cheaper, more effective: report

The tool to beat crimes of the future is with us today, according to a recent review by the Ontario Police Commission.

That tool is the regional police, concludes the 74-page Review of Regionalized Policing in Ontario.

Regional policing is more economically and operationally viable than any other form of policing, states the report. Regional policing, it continues, offers the best long-term capability to cope with, and contain, the law enforcement challenges and problems of the future.

Halton Regional Police and seven other regional forces were compared with an equal number of the largest city police departments. In some parts of the report, smaller departments were also used for comparison.

The main force used for examples in the report was the Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police Force. The report was released in May.

Prepared by S. C. Fairweather, the report is confined to using empirical information, mainly numbers charts, with some other evidence to demonstrate regional policing's superiority or equality to other forms of police organization.

Fairweather contends he took on the three main arguments against regional policing. Charges against regional policing are that it costs more, there is no need for it, and finally the "never-recurring argument," as Fairweather puts it, that regional policing is less personalized with less intimate relations between the police and public.

Under costs per capita, regional policing which gets \$5 more per head in provincial grants, is \$12.46 cheaper than the cost of city police.

When equalized assessment is introduced, the overall cost per thousand of equalized assessment drops to \$4.29 in regions and \$5.64 in cities, according to Fairweather.

In terms of equipping a police force, Fairweather found the larger the department, the smaller percentage of the budget is used to equip it. For example, three per cent of Metro Toronto's police budget went to supplies and services. On smaller regional forces the number rose to 3.8 per cent. However, with a department where officers number between 20 and 50 the percentage rises to 7.1. The average for Ontario is 5.1 per cent.

Fairweather concludes that "While providing a very high standard of equipment and other support resources, the remuneration and benefits of officers and civilians is the highest in Canada. In spite of this, regionalized policing clearly demonstrates the lowest consistent with the coverage and protection provided."

Need is very much related to cost, continues Fairweather. "The results respecting coverage, organizational flexibility, self-sufficiency provide a substantial case for justification on the basis of need."

Fairweather states city and regional forces benefit from what he calls "organizational flexibility associated with consolidated manpower resources."

In terms of police coverage expressed in a ratio of policemen to citizens, the ratio is lower in cities at one officer per 516 people. The ratio is 1:567 in the regions, states Fairweather. Therefore on an average the regional officer has 71 more people to police than his counterpart in the city.

Halton's ratio is 1:878, according to a Halton Regional Police Association report for this year. The 1976 annual report from Halton's Police Commission puts the figure at 1:902.

Crime clearance during the decade beginning in 1967 improved by all forces, states Fairweather. He found there were minor differences between the regional and city forces concerning crime clearance rates.

Fairweather, still considering the need of regional policing, contends the cost of such a force is more equitably shared because such forces demonstrate almost total coverage and self-sufficiency.

He introduces charts from which he concludes the population under regional police is between 82 per cent and 100 per cent. "In comparison, municipal police coverage within a non-regional county or district falls between 59 per cent and 69 per cent with the remaining population receiving service from the Ontario Provincial Police."

An outline of the community relations program of the Hamilton-Wentworth department is included in the review. Fairweather found it to be superior to the "informal approach" in terms of overall public impact and benefits.

The Hamilton-Wentworth community relations program ranges from labor relations to investigative and research, public relations and crime prevention.

One officer takes care of labor relations and he works with workers and bosses. "His guidance to both parties in a labor dispute has been accepted with enthusiasm and support," states the report.

Crime prevention takes in such programs as Block Parents, Operation Identification and others such as training programs to prevent or lessen the effects of hold-ups, shop-lifting and fraud.

Public relations includes the use of the media, tours of headquarters and speaking at schools, community and church groups.

Security checks are undertaken also, under investigative and research, of a building where recently a burglary has taken place. Also, any place found to be insecure by an officer is reported and the owner is advised. A crime prevention pamphlet is sent along.

Fairweather uses few figures or other evidence to give an indication of the municipalities' response to the community relations program.

Much of the rest of the report is a detailed outline of the organization of the Hamilton-Wentworth force.

Fairweather predicts the challenges facing police officers in the next decade will be formidable. "The impact wrought by justice reform, changing public attitudes, permissiveness, technology, and last, but by no means least, economic constraint, have already appeared to be a greater or lesser extent. The effect on law enforcement will require that police services be highly attuned and adaptable to these imminent changes."

In his concluding remarks, Fairweather states that technological changes and their cost will be needed in proportion to "the mobility of offenders, computer crime, and the highly sophisticated and syndicated criminals, and their all-pervasive and ominous influence on our society."

The Ontario Police Commission governs all police forces in the province.

Police Commission shouldn't be behind closed doors

"We set policy and the public should be kept informed," he declared.

Administrator Raymond Munro said he couldn't agree more and then proceeded to give reasons why a number of items Coons wanted discussed in public shouldn't be. He was successful in keeping several items classified as for commission members' eyes only. Later he tried to have several in-camera items discussed publicly but failed.

Coons noted substantial in-camera discussion has been the practice of the commission in the past but it is in the police department's best interest "to open things up."

Halton Police Commission is discussing too many things behind closed doors, according to freshman commissioner Dave Coons, a Burlington regional councillor.

He complained Thursday that staff is putting too many items on the in-camera part of the agenda.

Coons said only personnel items and property acquisitions should be discussed behind closed doors.

"Most things should be public," Coons said, suggesting 10 items be deleted from the in-camera part and added to the public portion of the agenda.

Film star Michael Douglas, son of veteran actor Kirk Douglas, will be in Georgetown on Friday, September 8, for a day of shooting.

Michael Douglas, who starred for many seasons in the highly rated television police drama program Streets of San Francisco will play the lead in the new film, 'Running'.

Susan Anspach, who has been in such noted films as 'Play it Again Sam', 'Five Easy Pieces' and 'Bloom in Love', will co-star with Douglas in the Buena Vista Film Productions, of Toronto, movie.

Keith Large, location manager for this film, said Monday, Georgetown was selected for a day of filming because the film company was looking for a New England setting.

'Running' is the story of a long distance runner, Michael Andropoulos who after a ten-year lapse from competition decides to run the Olympic Marathon.

Scenes of the Olympic marathon trials will be shot in Georgetown on September 8 starting at 7:30 a.m. and lasting six hours.

Large said Georgetown fit the New England setting because of its "pretty downtown" and lovely countryside. Both the countryside and downtown areas "work well" Large added.

Besides starring in 'Streets of San Francisco' Douglas appeared in 'Coma' and produced the Academy Award winner 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.'

The script was written by Canadian Steven Stern who will also direct the film destined for theatrical distribution.

Stern, who worked in Toronto radio and later for CBC television before going to Los Angeles a decade ago, will be making his first feature film although he has numerous made for television films to his credit.

Canadian actors Larry Dane, Murray Westgate and Eugene Levy, from Second City, also star.

Monday night Halton Hills works committee gave permission for street closings in Georgetown. Regional approval for street closings for filming is expected shortly. Halton Regional Police have said they will co-operate with the project.

Main Street, Charles Street and George Street will all be closed with traffic also being restricted in the area around these streets.

Councillor Mike Armstrong asked if there were any bit parts available for councillors since "we have some real characters here"!!!

Large said there might be some parts if councillors were good runners.

"We aren't noted for bursts of speed," Armstrong jokingly replied.

Councillor George Maltby said when he heard someone from Second City is involved in the movie he thought there'd be lots of parts for councillors since the satire of Second City "is typical of us."

This isn't the first time Georgetown has been chosen as the set for a film.

Less than two years ago scenes from the film Equus starring Richard Burton were shot downtown. Before that an episode of Quinton Durgens MP was also filmed here.

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Sunday, September 3, 1978
For the month of August Combined Worship Service at Churchill Community Church at 10:30 a.m.

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Everyone Welcome

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9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
10:30 a.m. Choral Eucharist
Church school registration will take place next Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. We encourage you to make sure your children are present.
Wednesday Sept. 6 8 p.m. monthly meeting of A.C.W.

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Sunday, September 3, 1978
10:30 a.m. - Morning Worship at Churchill Community Church.

MAPLE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH
177 Maple Ave.,
Georgetown

Sunday, September 3, 1978
9:45 a.m. - Sunday School
11:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
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THURSDAY 7:30 P.M.
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