

school failure, unemployment, inequality and dysfunctional families. Witnesses stressed in their submissions that the evidence clearly indicates that crime cannot be prevented solely by the criminal law and criminal justice services. It is a social problem that requires all sectors of society to work together for safer communities.

APPROACH TO CRIME PREVENTION: SAFER COMMUNITIES

On the basis of the evidence it heard about the rise in criminal activity, the harm done to victims, the increases in resources to fight crime, and the factors associated with crime and criminality, the Committee believes the time has come for Canadians to get serious about crime prevention and fear reduction. It agrees with witnesses who appeared before it that Canada should develop and promote a strategy to reduce the opportunities for crime to occur and to respond to the underlying factors associated with criminal behaviour.

The strategy supported by the Committee has national scope and involves partnerships and information sharing among all levels of government, all agencies in the criminal justice system, and non-governmental organizations and interest groups. It is a comprehensive response to crime problems referred to by witnesses as the *safer communities* approach to crime prevention.

In her appearance before this Committee, the then Minister of Justice, Kim Campbell, indicated that the Canadian delegation to the eighth United Nations Conference on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders promoted the safer communities agenda. She added:

The congress accepted this concept and adopted a resolution on the prevention of urban crime which describes factors relating to crime and measures to respond in a preventive measure. This framework has guided much of my department's work in the area of crime prevention. (77:5)

The principles of the safer communities approach to crime prevention are:

- the community is the focal point of effective crime prevention;
- the community needs to identify and respond to short- and long-term needs;
- crime prevention efforts should bring together individuals from a range of sectors to tackle crime;
- strategies for preventing crime should be supported by the whole community.

The Committee believes that the safer communities approach is a positive reaction to the inherent limitations in traditional responses to public safety issues. A major limitation, noted by a number of witnesses, is a lack of awareness among politicians and bureaucrats that responsibility for crime problems goes beyond the criminal justice system. The Committee was advised there is little recognition among government departments when setting budgets and initiating programs and policies of the impact their activities may have on levels of violence and interpersonal property crime. Even federal departments responsible for housing, immigration, and social and economic policy, and provincial and territorial ministries responsible for health, education, and social services