

PROVIDE CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINING FOR THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Treatment: The Committee heard testimony in several cities of incidents involving the police and visible minority communities which indicated racist attitudes, mistreatment in the arrest of visible minority persons and discriminatory police actions.

Distorted: When a member of a visible minority is being sought by the police, any member of the community may be considered suspect and consequently interrogated. When a visible minority person acts as a complainant to the police, he may in fact end up being the one charged. Some of this behaviour can be attributed to police ignorance of visible minorities and their cultural differences, and not necessarily to wilful racist acts.

Action: There has been cross-cultural and race relations training for members of the RCMP at both the police college recruit training level and at the level of the in-service workshops.

Regina: The RCMP was the pioneer in the area of training programs with its cross-cultural education program for recruits at Regina. It has been expanded and modified to deal with a number of different minority communities. The program is designed to give officers insight into the problems and conditions of a minority community as well as an historical perspective in which to consider minority culture.

Problems arise, however, because such training programs are not a part of the RCMP training mandate and do not have a staff person assigned to them. There is also a lack of enthusiasm on the part of recruits who find enforcement programs more interesting than community work.

Improvement: Despite all this, records of the number of complaints by visible minorities and aboriginal people have revealed a marked decline over time. There is evidence to suggest that work in several detachments has been partially responsible. Based on feedback given by visible minority participants and police trainees, the course has been adapted and changed over time.

Local police departments as well have developed programs similar to that of the RCMP. In 1977, a police training course for the Metro Toronto Police Commission entitled "Policing a Multi-Cultural Society" stressing human rights and race relations was started. Virtually all police officers in Metro Toronto took the course at a local college. A similar program is given to all recruits at the Ontario Police College.

Handbook: In a further development in Ontario, thirteen police forces with the collaboration of the Ontario Human Rights Commission and the Ontario Police College, are preparing a handbook with the working title "Race/Ethnic Relations: A Guide for Ontario Officers". This handbook will provide the basis for a new training program for the OPP and major urban and regional police forces. The provisional sections are:

Sociological and Historical Background Police and Ontario Minority Communities Ontario Minority Community Profiles

RECOMMENDATION

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