

Community police

Cops on campus -- but this time not the ordinary kind

By PAUL THOMSON

A new concept in community relations, that of community service officers, has appeared on the York campus this year.

Community liaison officers, as they prefer to be called, Bob Annan and Frank Cuthbert are fighting what they term a general breakdown in communications in Society, by making contact with the community and helping those who bring various problems to them.

Annan and Cuthbert are two intelligent and articulate men who appear to be motivated by a desire to improve the social conditions that exist in a city of Toronto's size. Their area of responsibility takes in much more than just York University, since they are attached to 31 Division of the Metro Police which comprises the area between Lawrence and Steeles, and the Humber River and the CN tracks east of Keele.

Their job, basically, is to "get involved in the community." In the case of York, Annan and Cuthbert made initial contacts through friends and by having lunch here, then by letting security know they were on the campus.

They stress they are not here to look for problems although they point out that all segments of society have

certain difficulties. It is with these difficulties that they hope to help; their role is in no way one of spying.

If the officers themselves cannot be of service to someone who brings a problem to them, and this is the voluntary nature on which the service depends, they can direct the person to someone who can help.

Although they have full police powers, Annan and Cuthbert "do everything but the traditional police work." What separates them from other policemen is that they can be, indeed are expected to be, discretionary in their use of police powers.

However they can't help but be identified with police actions. When a pusher is arrested on the other side of the city, the kids in a group with which the officers are establishing contact are often aware of it before the officers, because in today's drug sub-culture, pushers commonly have a wide circle of friends. So the community service officers are blamed and therefore lose some of the rapport they had been building with the kids.

As for their work at York, Annan and Cuthbert do not feel they are at the point yet where students can trust them, they are in the process of making the necessary friendships and trusts.

They admit the biggest thing they have working against them is the word policeman, which after all, is what they are. Most people have a certain awe for this person, whether he wears the recognizable uniform or not, born either out of fear or respect. While the community service officers do not condone any activities that are not within the law, it is not their purpose to bust people.

They want kids to be comfortable in their relationships with the community service officers. Those who go to the officers can expect to have whatever they say kept in confidence unless it is clearly a matter of life or death.

Annan and Cuthbert have run into situations where a kid gives himself up to them, having stolen something or committed a break and enter, in which case "we will see that he gets the best treatment." This involves going to court for him and helping to make pre-sentence reports on which the judge can make a fair evaluation of the case.

Their greatest success so far in 31 Division has been in organizing groups of teen-agers into floor hockey teams. Or as they put it, "causing them to organize themselves." Annan and Cuthbert have done this in several neighbourhoods including Edgley, to the west of York. Having such an outlet for these teen-agers provides a more satisfactory and permanent solution to the problem of groups terrorizing shopping plazas, than simply

dispersing them, which is at best a temporary solution. The problem arises because in suburban areas there is generally very little for adolescents to do.

Both Annan and Cuthbert were on regular patrol work before joining the Youth Services Bureau which, as any policeman will tell you is more valuable than any university course in learning to deal with various social situations. However, they also receive a two week course at police college during which they hear talks by experts in the social sciences.

This background helps the officers understand the basics of the problems they encounter, but it is their day to day experience and their understanding of human problems that is of greatest value in the real world in which they work, rather than any sociological expertise.

So in playing the role of friend and confidant, the community service officers are finding themselves handling all sorts of domestic problems, talking to teachers on behalf of youngsters and being contacted at the station or even at home to talk about things that are never ordinarily discussed with a policeman.

Both Bob Annan and Frank Cuthbert can be contacted at Em.2-1711, Ext. 237.



Frank Cuthbert



Bob Annan

TIM CLARK

A quarter million jobless students

It's going to be a long, long, hot summer

By SUSAN REISLER

Canadian University Press

Last summer there were 200,000 students involuntarily out of work. This summer the numbers will grow even larger.

The federal government is being pressured from all sides to come up with some fast answers to this crisis.

A fleet of 25 chartered buses which would carry our youth free across the country is one of the proposed solutions of an inter-departmental committee set up to study this unemployment.

The committee has completed its report but the federal government is studying it and nothing will be released until sometime in February.

The cost of the committee's proposals is estimated to be in the \$50 million bracket. The government spent \$28 million last year for the same group of people.

The idea of a fleet of buses has brought much sarcasm from the opposition in Parliament, but it would alleviate the hitch-hiking problem a little. Last summer at times there were more hitch-hikers on the roads than there were cars.

The buses would transport the travellers from one hostel to another across the country. Passengers would be required to disembark at various stages to make room for others who had stopped off and wanted to continue their journey.

Youth hostels will be set up in major cities across Canada. The defense department will approve of the use of their armories again this summer and the federal government will probably offer subsidies to people who operate hostels in their own communities.

In order to avoid the friction that developed last year between some communities and those who ran the hostels, government employees, members of the communities will be invited to participate in the running of the hostels and the federal government will not interfere.

The committee also proposed the creation of a youth village, perhaps somewhere outside of Ottawa, modelled after European examples in Germany and Switzerland.

There will also be an extensive campaign to boost student summer employment and

the government may set up information kiosks in major centres to inform transients of hostels, routes they should travel, and points of interest.

A project involving some 30,000 students planting trees and clearing salmon streams has already received verbal approval by many members of the House of Commons. The greatest number of students, 20,000, would come from B.C., Quebec and the Maritimes, where unemployment is the highest. The students would be paid \$10 per day.

The militia program which involved some 5,000 male students last year, will be renewed this summer.

All of the programs suggested by the

government inter-departmental study are meant to be for youth rather than just any unemployed person. A member of the committee said they do not plan to discriminate among those who use the program, including those who would have access to free transportation across the country, but some means will be taken to ensure that older unemployed don't take advantage of the government sponsored program.

The main obstacle standing in the way of implementing any recommendations is the Rochdale experience! Rochdale is one of the political footballs of the year and opposition members are going to complain that they don't want any youth village or bus shuttle

service turning into another centre for drug trafficking.

The inter-departmental committee will have to convince the cabinet that this won't happen if such a youth community is to be designed and constructed.

But even as the federal government is considering these make-shift solutions to unemployment, some provincial and municipal politicians have already indicated that they will be cracking down on the very people the federal government is trying to help out.

Vancouver's Mayor Tom Campbell, arriving back in Vancouver from a trip to Hawaii and other sunny climes, stepped off his plane with a warning to other "transients". He was referring to students and unemployed youth.

Campbell warned them to stay away from Vancouver. He said he would aim at strict enforcement of the law as far as transients are concerned.

"One thing I would like to make clear to them," he said, "they can't come here on the excuse they are looking for work, because there isn't any."

Meanwhile Vancouver is attracting more and more of those very people. The city has become the mecca for migrating Canadian youth.

Youth on the road — under 25, from backgrounds varying from upper middle class to below the poverty line, living on unemployment insurance, welfare or spare change they beg off the streets, dealing and sharing.

These are the nouveau-pauvre, 30,400 of them in B.C. alone — the under 25, unemployed products of accelerated education and an affluent society which has lost control of its labour market, says Michael Bennett, a writer for Canadian Press.

Young people, many of whom are recent school drop-outs, pick up and move to the west coast, hoping for something better. But the Good Life in B.C. shows an unemployment rate of no less than 8.6 per cent. It has risen above 10 per cent this year.

What are you going to do this summer? And next September?

