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User Report

Police and the Elderly:

Evolving Implications In
An Aging Society

No. 1990-03

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Private Consultants

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Ce document de travail est disponible en français.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Police are faced with the continuing challenge to understand and respond to the needs of the communities they serve. One factor which will have a significant effect on Canadian society in the coming decades is the aging of the population.

Canadian Society is Aging Rapidly

The number of Canadians aged 65 years and over will more than double between now and 2031 when almost one in four citizens or at least 7.5 million Canadians will be 65 years of age or over.¹ The dramatic aging of society is likely to affect the very social fabric of Canadian communities....our ways of living, work patterns, and demands placed on services... including police services.

The rapidly increasing number of seniors in neighbourhoods across Canada, and the social changes which may accompany this increase, could have profound effects on crime and victimization patterns, on the size and nature of police caseloads, and on the types of demands put on police.

This study attempts, in a preliminary way, to explore the emerging implications of the aging society for police over the next decades, by tapping the insights of a number of police, representatives of seniors' organizations, provincial government officials, academic experts, and social service providers concerned with the policing needs of seniors. While the results of this study cannot be seen as conclusive, the information gathered provides thought-provoking material for future planning concerning policing and seniors.

¹ Leroy O. Stone and Susan Fletcher, "The Seniors Boom", Statistics Canada Publication 89-515E, Ottawa 1986, Section 1.1.

How Is Crime Against Seniors Likely to Be Affected by the Aging of Society?

Most Canadian statistics indicate that the rate of victimization of people 65 years of age and older is considerably less than that of the younger population,² and so it is quite possible that as the society ages, the overall crime rate will decline. However, some predict that as the number of people aged 65 years of age and over living with their children or other relatives increases, the potential for elder abuse will also greatly escalate.³ There is also speculation that fraud against the elderly will grow with the aging of society not only because the potential victims will increase but also because the perpetrators of fraud can and do come from all age groups.⁴

Further, even if the crime rate does decline, police may find that the demands on them will not decrease because of the high level of fear of crime experienced by many seniors. As the elderly population grows, seniors may increasingly call on the police to investigate the source of immediate fears and to help alleviate their general fear levels through crime prevention programs. Research consistently shows that fear of crime is considerably higher among seniors than among younger people.⁵ Research further reveals that fear among people 65 years of age and over is closely linked to the degree of isolation they experience as well as to their

² For example, the Canadian Urban Victimization Survey says criminal victimization of the elderly is only about one-sixth of the rate for all adult residents in urban centres. For this reference see "Criminal Victimization of the Elderly", Canadian Urban Victimization Survey, Bulletin No. 6, Solicitor General Canada, 1985, p.1.

³ Nancy Gnaedinger, Elder Abuse: A Discussion Paper, Report prepared for the Family Violence Prevention Division, Health and Welfare Canada, Ottawa, 1989, p.3

⁴ Several policemen interviewed for this study made this suggestion.

⁵ "Criminal Victimization of the Elderly", op cit.

fears of ill health, poverty and loneliness as a result of criminal victimization.⁶ In fact, studies indicate that fears among seniors of the serious consequences of crime are well founded. When elderly people are victimized, they are more likely than people in other age groups to suffer severe health and financial setbacks.⁷

How are Police Responding Currently to Seniors?

Many police across Canada are already taking steps to provide more sensitive services for people 65 years of age and over. Policing for seniors is a high priority within the crime prevention units of a large number of police forces across Canada. For example, the R.C.M.P. has launched a national initiative to provide a specialized crime prevention service designed to meet the needs of elderly people. In addition, a number of police programs and policies encourage the use of seniors as volunteers in crime prevention programs.

However, in the majority of police forces, policing for seniors has not emerged as a consistently strong priority outside the crime prevention divisions. Nonetheless, there are a few police forces that are going further than crime prevention programs in their attempts to respond to the needs of their seniors' population. These forces are gradually shifting their entire orientation away from a reactive style of policing to a proactive, community-based policing orientation....an orientation which responds to the needs of the community, even if these needs fall outside the traditional definition of the policing role. For example, in one community cited in the main report for this study, police have developed a general

⁶ Yves Brillon, Victimization and Fear of Crime Among the Elderly, Toronto, Butterworths, 1987.

⁷ Ibid., p.2

warning system to allow seniors to alert neighbours to call the police for any kind of emergency, not just for a crime incident.

This shift in orientation increases the visibility of police in the neighbourhood. A few police forces now have store-front policing offices and may have at least one "beat cop" working out of each office. Forces that are committed to this vision of proactive community policing have also escalated their attempts to involve community members as partners in reducing crime in their neighbourhoods.

While the disparate needs of seniors in the community have often provided the catalyst for this change in policing philosophy and practice, the police forces developing this orientation extend this approach to the whole community. It appears that once police have seen the inadequacy of a reactive role towards seniors, they begin to see the benefits of a more proactive, community-based approach for all the people they serve.

What Type of Policing Do Seniors Want?

Certainly this shift in orientation responds well to the perceptions and wishes of seniors. Seniors interviewed for this project as well as service providers who work with seniors spoke of the loss they felt as police moved from the street to patrol cars. Seniors wish police were more visible on the street, more accessible, more a part of the community, not just the "bearer of bad news" that police have become for so many seniors.

Seniors want a return to the old community "beat cop" who could offer a kind word, a feeling of safety, some kindness, some reassurance. Seniors want to be able to call on police when they are afraid. Seniors want to think once again of police as their protectors, even if the kind of protection and reassurance they need

falls outside the current definition of appropriate policing roles.

Do Governments Share This Concern?

While federal, provincial/territorial and municipal governments generally are concerned with the aging of society and with the needs of seniors, policing and seniors does not tend to be a high priority. Governments are more concerned with housing and health issues, and with the problem of elder abuse. Although elder abuse is generally defined as a crime, the main consensus is that police do not have a major role to play in elder abuse.

Issues and Dilemmas

While there are some exciting developments in the police response to seniors and an aging society, these developments are not receiving widespread recognition and support for a number of reasons.

First, because governments and police forces do not tend to share the same priorities around crime and seniors, police forces are not always receiving the support they need to develop a more proactive, community-based orientation.

Conversely, because most police forces do not currently deal with many elder abuse cases, there is a gap between government policies and concerns in the area of elder abuse and police awareness and response to these concerns.

Second, police forces are not unanimous in their acceptance of a more proactive, community-based orientation to policing to meet the needs of seniors as well as other community members. Some police feel that this style of policing could work well in small towns and rural areas, but would not be appropriate in larger urban centres with higher crime rates generally and more violent crimes specifically.

Third, there are many unresolved questions concerning the appropriate role of police toward seniors. For example:

- ◆ Should police set up special programs for seniors or improve general programs to meet the needs of seniors more effectively?
- ◆ How involved should police be in elder abuse cases?
- ◆ Is adult protection legislation needed to help police protect the elderly, or will this legislation erode their rights?
- ◆ Should there be mandatory reporting of elder abuse and neglect?
- ◆ What should the balance be between proactive and reactive policing?
- ◆ How can police intervene if seniors will not report crimes against them?

Evolving Policy and Policing Implications In An Aging Society

Despite the uncertainty and questioning surrounding the appropriate role of police toward seniors in an aging society, a number of evolving policy and policing implications emerged from this exploratory study.

General Awareness:

1. It is important that police forces, governments and service organizations recognize that the aging of society is a serious demographic trend which will profoundly affect policing and other services over the next decades.

Policing Orientation:

2. More emphasis on proactive, community-based policing is essential to respond to the needs of seniors for more accessible policing. This style of policing may help to reduce the fears of seniors and can increase the involvement of seniors and other community members in helping to prevent crime in the community.

Specifically, police may become more accessible by:

- ◆ Visiting seniors in their residences and places of recreation;
- ◆ Launching public education campaigns which stress that police are there to support community members and to help alleviate fears;
- ◆ Providing "beat cops" particularly in areas with a high proportion of seniors;

- ◆ Providing community policing offices in neighbourhoods with a high seniors population;
 - ◆ **Naming** a designated officer or officers to act as a contact for seniors. **Police** officers interviewed estimate that in most police forces between one and three additional staff positions would be required to provide this resource;
 - ◆ Providing volunteers and where possible police officers to escort seniors home on pension cheque deposit days;
 - ◆ Involving seniors more actively in crime prevention programs; and
 - ◆ Creating active "outreach" programs which would develop ties to seniors' groups and to individual seniors.
3. To respond to the multifaceted needs of seniors, police should strengthen their knowledge of and links to other community services. Seniors, particularly in smaller communities, often see the police as their only source of help. To serve seniors effectively, therefore, police must take a more interdisciplinary approach to policing in order to provide the referrals and the multidimensional responses that seniors often require.
 4. A surprising finding of this study was that most people interviewed felt that in order to respond more effectively to the needs of seniors, specialized services for seniors would not be the advisable route. Instead, seniors as well as other community members could be served more effectively through a general shift in policing services toward a more personal, community-based approach.
 5. There is a need for multidisciplinary crisis intervention teams to respond to the needs for emotional support and practical assistance of many seniors who are victims of crime.

6. Interdisciplinary protocols should be developed to deal with such crimes as elder abuse and sexual assault of the elderly.
7. Seniors Crime Prevention Advisory Committees, like those teams initiated by the R.C.M.P., are needed across Canada.
8. Support for the creation of victim services where they do not exist, and continued support for existing victim services are needed.
9. Police forces should consider hiring seniors for some policing positions.

Public Education:

10. Governments could assist police by providing current statistics on aging trends, as well as on the needs of seniors and by providing regularly updated statistics on victimization patterns broken down by type of crime and age.
11. Police, other service agencies, and governments should work with the media to reduce programming which escalates fear among seniors.
12. Funds are needed for the creation of public education materials or initiatives which would be appropriate for rural and isolated areas. For example, in remote areas with a high rate of illiteracy, print materials are totally ineffective and often speak of resources which do not exist in these communities. In these locations, funds for a social action theatre group could enable police to provide the information needed in a relevant way.

Elder Abuse:

13. **Police forces** and seniors need clear, factual information on the types of elder abuse, and on legal and service options.
14. Public education is needed to reduce the common fear among seniors that if the police are called in to respond to a case of elder abuse, the senior will be removed to an institution.
15. Police can play an important role in elder abuse as part of an interdisciplinary team of service providers committed to a "problem solving" orientation. This orientation would define elder abuse as a crime and therefore not exclude the possibility of charging and punishment of the offender, but would not define legal action as the only or necessarily the primary course of action.

Other Ways of Reducing the Fears of Seniors:

16. Governments could seriously consider facilitating direct deposit of old age security cheques in seniors' bank accounts.

Enhanced Police Training:

17. Where applicable and appropriate, police training programs should be reassessed to ensure that police are well informed about the realities of aging, as well as the fears, needs and strengths of seniors.

Research:

18. **Research is needed which helps identify the costs of NOT being more proactive.**
19. **There is a need for more in-depth, multidisciplinary research to understand better the concerns of a variety of service providers who work with seniors.**
20. **Evaluations of car patrols and other police methods are needed to demonstrate whether or not different modes of policing are beneficial.**
21. **Research is needed on the prevalence of lifetime abuse among women who were abused as children, later become battered wives and then abused seniors.**
22. **Research is required on the needs of seniors who are aboriginal or who are members of ethnic or racial minorities.**
23. **Demonstration projects would be beneficial to explore the potential for police forces to respond more effectively to people with disabilities.**

Conclusion

These implications raise interesting ideas which could help create an approach to policing in an aging society which will respond sensitively and effectively to the needs of seniors. Now the political will is needed to make these ideas a reality.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Canadian society, like most western societies, is aging rapidly. Currently fewer than one in ten Canadians is 65 years of age or over. In just 40 years, one in four Canadians will be a senior.⁸ What will this major shift mean for our society? What will this population change mean for police?

Many police forces across Canada are already living with the reality of an aging police force. In addition, a growing number of police forces are currently serving communities where over one-half the population is 65 years of age or over. Even now, police in these forces feel that the aging of society will have strong implications for policing, since police are often the first and sometimes the sole source of professional help for older women and men.

As the population of seniors grows, the needs, concerns, fears and experiences of seniors will influence the social fabric and significantly define the mandates and delivery of health, social and justice services, including police services. The former Solicitor General of Canada has remarked that the aging of society means that police "must be mindful of the growing needs of senior citizens for police services".⁹

⁸ Rick Linden, "Demographic Change and the Future of Policing", Ministry of the Solicitor General, Canada, 1989, generalized from p. 3.

⁹ Speaking Notes for the Honourable Pierre Blais, former Solicitor General of Canada, at a news conference announcing the R.C.M.P.'s Elderly Victimization Prevention Program, Vancouver, B.C., 1989, p. 1.

This ~~research~~ report examines, in a preliminary way, the evolving implications of the aging of our society for police services across Canada. It is a qualitative, exploratory study only, and as such it is not based on the results of scientific questionnaires administered to a representative sample of police and seniors. Instead, it draws heavily on the considerable insights and knowledge of police officers already working in some communities where seniors are a significant proportion of the population served. The insights of a number of seniors and community workers selected because of their interest and knowledge concerning the policing needs of seniors, as well as the knowledge of a few provincial and government officials also contribute an important source of information on seniors' needs. This combined wisdom is complemented by highlights from research studies which help to clarify changes and trends that will have an impact on policing services and that point to possible directions for effective programming for seniors.

Preparation of the Research Report

This report summarizes the results of a brief, exploratory study which uses the hands-on knowledge of police across Canada, as well as the insights of workers in services for seniors and the experiences of seniors themselves to suggest creative policy and program directions for policing and seniors in an aging society.

Fifty-three in-depth telephone and personal interviews were conducted with: police personnel (26 interviews), representatives of seniors organizations (7 interviews), workers in other community services and policy organizations (10 interviews), academics concerned with aging and crime victimization (2 interviews), as well as with provincial government officials (8 interviews). Twelve of these interviews were conducted as part of four site visits to Victoria, British Columbia and the communities of Halifax, New Glasgow and Mahone Bay in Nova Scotia in order to learn more about the programs for seniors in these locations. (A list of key

informants and the interview guides used are appended to this report. It should be noted that the interview questions were used as a general guide to the topics rather than as a scientific survey instrument).

In addition, a literature review was completed and a bibliography compiled. However, a real effort was made to ensure that the key issues identified came from the front line, in order to recognize police as the pivotal experts in planning their own futures.

An attempt was made, within the time and resource constraints of the project, to survey a diverse sampling of communities (those in southern and northern areas of the country, those with predominately rural and urban populations, and those with larger and smaller seniors populations). Communities that are policed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (R.C.M.P.), municipal police services and provincial police services were also chosen.

Of the police interviews, 19 were completed with police in large urban centers, five with police in rural, small town detachments, and two with police in mixed urban/rural settings. Eight of the interviewees represented communities described by the respondents as having a "significant senior population". While formal statistics were not gathered, in some of these communities, the respondent estimated that 60% or more of the population was elderly.

Only three of the communities represented in this study were considered by those interviewed to have a sizable immigrant or ethnic population, and these were all large urban centers -- four communities had what the interviewee considered a significantly large aboriginal population.

Sixteen of the police interviewed were with municipal police forces, two with provincial, and eight were with the R.C.M.P..

How Are Seniors Defined in this Report?

There is a broad range of definitions of "senior" used in different sectors across Canada, and it appears that this definition is tending to get lower over the years, despite the fact that seniors are living longer. Some programs, attempting to tap into a large number of younger, vital seniors are defining seniors as people 50 years of age and over, some reach out to those 55 years of age and over, others define people 60 years of age and over as seniors.

However, the most common definition of "seniors" is women and men 65 years of age and older. It is noteworthy that some interviewees stated that in the case of aboriginal elders, it is often appropriate to refer to anyone over 45 years of age as a senior, since so many aboriginal peoples, and particularly the Inuit age quickly because of difficult life conditions.

To reflect this variety of perspective, the researchers have, where appropriate, used the definition of "senior" suggested by the people or programs cited. However, where no definition is specified, the researchers simply equate "seniors" with people 65 years or over.

II. THE "AGING SOCIETY" AS A POLICE ISSUE

Demographic Trends

In 1986, approximately 2.7 million Canadians were 65 years of age or more. By the year 2000, there will be nearly four million seniors in Canada. In 2021, the seniors population will reach six million, and in 2031, 7.5 million. In other words, in the next 40 years, the population of women and men 65 years of age and over will almost triple in size.¹⁰ By 2030, one-quarter of Canada's population will be comprised of people aged 65 years or more.¹¹

Within the population of older Canadians, it is the group over 75 years of age that is growing at the fastest rate. This group is "most vulnerable to physical, mental and financial crises requiring family and societal care."¹² One estimate suggests that by the end of this century, the population under 65 years of age will have increased 17%, while the population aged 80 years or more will increase 77%.¹³ It is evident from these figures that the aging of the Canadian population is a significant demographic trend. The magnitude of this increase could have a significant impact on the size and nature of police case loads.

¹⁰ Leroy O. Stone and Susan Fletcher, "The Seniors Boom", Statistics Canada, Publication 89-515E, Ottawa, Ontario 1986, Section 1.1.

¹¹ Susan McDaniel, Canada's Aging Population, Butterworths, Toronto, Ontario 1986, p. 106.

¹² Donna J. Shell, "Protection of the Elderly: A Study of Elder Abuse, 1982", Manitoba Council on Aging, republished by Ministry of Supply and Services, Canada, 1989, p. 1.

¹³ The growth estimate for the population under 65 is taken from Donna Shell, op cit., p. 1. The growth rate for seniors over 80 is taken from Stone and Fletcher, op cit., Section 1.1.

What Will Future Seniors Be Like?

The rapid demographic shift toward an aging society makes it difficult to predict the degree to which future seniors populations will be similar to or different from present day seniors in terms of living arrangements, the proportion of seniors who are women, and the mix of cultural backgrounds. These factors could have a significant influence on the policing needs of seniors and on their relationships with police.

Living Arrangements

For example, it is not clear where future seniors will live. In the past decade, the highest proportion of seniors inhabited small urban centres (11.2% of the population in 1981) and the lowest proportion lived in rural farm areas (5.4% of the population in 1981).¹⁴ However, with the erosion of the family farm, and the movement of young people away from rural communities, there are already some communities in the prairie provinces that are made up of "seniors and a church", and there is speculation that many farming communities will be populated almost exclusively by people 65 and over in the near future.

Gender Distribution

The gender distribution among seniors may also change. Over the past few decades, women have tended to outlive men. As a result, the majority of seniors, particularly those seniors over 75 years of age increasingly are women. In 1986, for every 100 men aged 65 to 69 years of age, there were 125 women, while for every 100 men aged 80 to 84 years there were 175 women the same age, and for

¹⁴ Stone and Fletcher, "The Seniors Boom", op cit., Section 2.5.

every 100 men aged 90 years or more there were 267 women the same age.¹⁵ Since the 1950's, the ratio of women to men in all the older age categories has risen dramatically. However, the rise in this ratio has now practically stopped, and men now have a better chance of surviving past age 80 years of age.¹⁶

Cultural Mix

The effect of immigration trends is also open to speculation, since immigration policies vary with the political and economic climate. While immigrants historically have been from the younger age groups, there has been an aging of the immigrant population in the past two decades. For example, the median age of male and female immigrants rose between 1970 to 1980, from 25.5 to 27.8 for males and from 26.3 to 30 for females.¹⁷ According to Susan McDaniel in Canada's Aging Population, "this phenomenon is explained in part by the Canadian government's policy of family reunification. Once the younger immigrants are settled, they sponsor their older relatives."¹⁸ If this policy remains in place over the following decades, human service organizations may increasingly be required to respond to the particular needs of immigrant seniors.

¹⁵ Stone and Fletcher, op cit., Section 2.6.

¹⁶ Stone and Fletcher, op cit., Section 3.3.

¹⁷ McDaniel, op cit., p. 101.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Values and Beliefs

Even more uncertain are predictions about the values and beliefs of seniors in the emerging boom. The aging baby boom that created the advancing population bulge has resulted in a population group that has, for the past four decades, put unprecedented demands on society. Some experts speculate that it is a group which, in its senior years, will be very different from the current population of seniors. It is a population group that has been accustomed to having an influence, and that will likely continue to exert significant political and social pressure. It is a population group that may be less respectful of authority than the present group of seniors, and therefore demanding and less satisfied with policing services than the seniors of today.

On the other hand, a more demanding seniors population could have some very positive effects. Seniors of the future may be much more actively involved in working for change in our justice, health and social service systems, and may be important allies in assisting police to make changes in existing programs. All of these factors may mean that the aging of society will create both pressure on and support for police to change their approaches to providing services to seniors in particular and citizens in general.

Even though these anticipated changes contain a number of "grey" areas in terms of forecasting the needs and characteristics of seniors in the future, there are some trends concerning seniors and crime that provide a more certain picture of influences on policing patterns in the decades to come.

Fear Among Seniors

Fear of crime is high among those 65 years of age and over and is closely linked to other fears and insecurities which are associated with increased age in our society. The Canadian Urban Victimization Survey found that 59% of elderly men and women in the seven urban centres surveyed felt unsafe walking alone after dark, compared to 40% of respondents in the general population.¹⁹ This higher level of fear is associated with a perception among most seniors that crime rates are higher today than in the past. Yves Brillon, in his study Victimization and Fear of Crime Among the Elderly, found that 91% of people 60 years of age and over believe that the crime rate in Canada has increased over the past five years. Only 62% of those 30 years of age and under believe there has been an increase in crime.²⁰ Brillon also found that fear of crime is closely linked to other fears related to such concerns as health, poverty or loneliness... realistic fears that are in reality strongly linked to the potential for victimization. Other researchers have found that the high rate of fear among seniors is related to the degree of isolation they experience. One team of British researchers found that when an individual had stable contacts with others, he or she was less fearful of crime.²¹ The reduction of fear of crime through social change and development may become an increasingly important crime prevention strategy.

¹⁹ "Victims of Crime", Canadian Urban Victimization Survey, Bulletin #1, Programs Branch, Research and Statistics Group, Solicitor General of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario Canada, 1983, p. 6.

²⁰ Yves Brillon, Victimization and Fear of Crime Among the Elderly, Toronto, Ontario Butterworths, 1987.

²¹ Allan H. Clarke and M.J. Lewis, "Fear of Crime Among the Elderly: An Exploratory Study", British Journal of Criminology, 22, 1 (January 1982):49-62.

The Victimization of Seniors

While most Canadian statistics do indicate that the rate of victimization of the people 65 years of age and older is considerably less than that of the younger population (about one-sixth the rate for all adult residents in urban centres, according to the Canadian Urban Victimization Survey ²²), research also indicates that when elderly people are victimized, they are more likely than people in other age groups to be seriously affected, and to experience more severe effects on their health and on their financial well-being.²³ One study on a very limited sample conducted in Portland, Oregon, found that when elderly people are injured as a result of crime, well over one-quarter are dead within a year, "not so much because of the injuries sustained in the attack, as because of a 'terrible sense of violation'".²⁴ In property crimes, the average value of goods stolen tends to be greater for people 65 years of age and older than for the population in general, which is particularly serious since many elderly people are on a low or fixed income.²⁵ In some cases, the money stolen may be their life savings.

Crime against seniors often occurs in and around their residences, so that the victims are constantly reminded of their vulnerability, and feel that they have no safe haven from potential danger.²⁶ In fact, research is now surfacing which indicates that many seniors do not have a safe haven, for seniors are often at risk

²² "Criminal Victimization of the Elderly", Canadian Urban Victimization Survey, Bulletin No. 6, Solicitor General of Canada, 1985, p. 1.

²³ Ibid., p. 2.

²⁴ Bernard Edelman, "The Blue and the Grey", Police Magazine, September, 1982, p. 58.

²⁵ Yves Brillon, Victimization and Fear of Crime Among the Elderly op cit., p. 39.

²⁶ Ibid.

of elder abuse within their homes. The reader should be cautioned that research on elder abuse is still in its early stages. As a result, definitions of elder abuse vary widely and many incidence figures are necessarily based on "guesstimates" because of the lack of standardized data and because of the reluctance of many people to report or even recognize elder abuse. However, one of the most thorough investigations of elder abuse to date is a recent study by Elizabeth Podnieks which reveals that 4% of seniors over 65 years of age suffer some form of abuse. Podnieks determined that 12,000 seniors are victims of physical violence, that approximately 5,000 elderly Canadians every year are threatened by a family member with a knife or a gun, and that 60,000 seniors had been the victims of material (property or financial) abuse.²⁷

Other Social Trends

There is some speculation that a number of additional factors and trends could contribute to the victimization, fear and suffering of seniors in the future. More and more elderly are being cared for in the home. This trend helps to create the condition for a potential escalation of elder abuse.²⁸ Nancy Gnaedinger, in a report prepared for the Family Violence Prevention Division, Health and Welfare Canada, suggests that a shortage of training and assistance available to families and paid caregivers of frail or impaired elderly, as well as the isolation of families in a vast country with a harsh climate, may greatly increase the potential for elder

²⁷ Elizabeth Podnieks, et al., "Survey on Abuse of the Elderly in Canada: Preliminary Findings", Ryerson Office of Research and Innovation, Toronto, Ontario Canada, October 17, 1989, p. 3.

²⁸ Cornelia M. Beck and Linda Phillips, "Abuse of the Elderly", Journal of Gerontological Nursing, 9, 2 (February, 1983), p. 97.

abuse.²⁹

Researchers predict that we are just at the beginning of a social movement to protect the elderly from abuse. In future years, these researchers warn, there will be increased pressure on the police and on other social agencies to intervene in elder abuse cases.³⁰

Research has been done which indicates that conflict rather than consensus may be the main dynamic in aging relationships. Thus, a growing elderly population could increase the potential for violence in society.³¹

Emerging Societal Concerns

The high level of fear, the seriousness of the consequences of victimization and the increased occurrence and detection of elder abuse experienced by seniors in our society has become the subject of escalating concern among policy makers and professionals across Canada. Federal and provincial/territorial governments and a number of police forces are beginning to plan for the future by developing policies and programs which will address the needs of an ever-growing population of seniors.

²⁹ Nancy Gnaedinger, Elder Abuse: A Discussion Paper, Report prepared for the Family Violence Prevention Division, Health and Welfare Canada, Ottawa, Ontario 1989, p. 3.

³⁰ Terence Moore and Victor Thompson, "Elder Abuse: A Review of the Research, Programmes and Policy", The Social Worker, 55, 3 (Fall 1987):115-122.

³¹ R. Wolf, K. Pillemar and M. Godkin, "Elder Abuse and Neglect: Report from Three Model Projects".

III. THE POLICE RESPONSE TO SENIORS IN AN AGING SOCIETY

Is Policing for Seniors a Priority in Canadian Police Forces?

Policing for seniors is a high priority within the crime prevention units of many police forces across Canada, but it has not yet emerged as a consistently strong priority outside of these divisions. Certainly in those forces where drug abuse and youth crime is a major part of their work, policing for seniors tends to be seen as less important. Some police in these forces suggested that it is "soft" police work, that dealing with seniors is "social work" not "real policing". In other policing organizations, services for seniors are not seen as a high priority because the numbers of seniors in their communities are low. However, in those communities where seniors are the majority of the population, their presence seems to strongly influence the very nature of policing, urging it towards a more proactive, community-based, supportive model.

What Are Police Doing for Seniors?

Police programs and policies related to seniors fall into several often related categories:

1. Specialized crime prevention or victim assistance programs directed specifically at seniors;
2. A shift in orientation to increased sensitivity to the needs of seniors within existing police programs; and
3. Policies and programs which encourage the use of seniors as volunteers.

Several examples of programs/policies which fall under these major headings are summarized here. Some of these programs do not fit neatly into the groups suggested above. This reflects the emerging trend away from specific programming to meet the needs of distinct groups, such as seniors, toward a more generalized

community-based approach in which police are encouraged to be more sensitive to the needs of all community members...an approach which is particularly apparent in communities with a high proportion of residents 65 years of age and over.

Specialized Programs

R.C.M.P. Elderly Victimization Prevention Program

On July 31, 1989, former Solicitor General of Canada, the Honourable Pierre Blais and Commissioner Norman D. Inkster of the R.C.M.P., announced a national initiative to provide a specialized crime prevention service designed to meet the needs of elderly people in order to maintain and improve their quality of life. A highlight of this program is a video presentation dealing with a variety of frauds and confidence schemes to which the elderly often fall victim. The video is currently available in English and French and has been reproduced for the Japanese, Cantonese and Mandarin communities. The video will eventually be produced in other languages as well. The initiative also includes efforts to involve senior citizens as volunteers in community-based crime prevention initiatives.

The R.C.M.P. Commissioner and the former Solicitor General of Canada stated: "the objective of our program is to reduce the opportunity for elderly victimization, reduce fear levels and alleviate concern through education and awareness, and to involve senior citizens as a volunteer resource in community-based programming and related crime-prevention initiatives."³² This policy appears to be having an effect on many community police forces, including

³² Quoted from the news release issued on July 31, 1989 when the Solicitor General of Canada and the Commissioner for the R.C.M.P. announced The Elderly Victimization Prevention Program.

provincial and municipal services. A number of police interviewed who were not members of the R.C.M.P. were aware of the policy and were trying to respond with their own programs or approaches to provide better crime prevention for seniors.

The Calgary City Police Senior Liaison Program

Since 1978, the City of Calgary Police has had a Seniors Liaison Program as part of its Victim Assistance Unit. This police unit takes a proactive approach to crime awareness/prevention, and to victim assistance targeted at seniors. The Senior Liaison Officer works with a committee comprised of seniors to develop a preventive educational program for teaching seniors to protect themselves through presentations geared to their needs on home security, frauds and cons (using the R.C.M.P. video), elder abuse and suicide. The same educational tools are also used to help sensitize caregivers and hospital personnel to the needs of seniors, and to train patrol officers and recruits to deal more sensitively with elderly women and men.

The Victims' Assistance Unit is not geared specifically to seniors, but it is delivered in a way which is sensitive to the individual needs of seniors. All occurrence reports which are forwarded to the Victim's Assistance Unit contain the age of the victim, and the Seniors Liaison Officer reviews every case involving a senior.

If the situation is straightforward, it is referred to a regular victim assistance volunteer. If the case is difficult, or involves violence, the Seniors Liaison Officer responds personally.

The Seniors Liaison Officer deals not only with victimization through crime, but also with victimization caused by fire, housing crises, etcetera and so attempts to be responsive to a wide range of needs and problems which seniors may bring to the police. The willingness of police in Calgary and in other locations surveyed for this study, to define an appropriate police response to seniors as one that goes beyond the traditional police role to include health, housing and general security concerns was a striking finding of this study, and one that will be echoed throughout the report.

"Hull-Ville en Sante" and "Pre-Vol"

In Hull, Quebec, the police crime prevention unit has collaborated with the C.L.S.C. and the Fire Department to create two crime prevention programs, "Hull-Ville en Sante" specifically for seniors on security at home and "Pre-Vol" to prevent robbery.

The Fredericton "J" Division R.C.M.P. Crime Prevention Program

The New Brunswick office of the R.C.M.P. provides crime prevention coordination services to 47 detachments in the province to promote effective crime prevention for seniors. It provides texts of speeches, statistics and presentation aids to the detachments, to encourage talks to seniors groups and organizations in order to break down isolation and to foster a policy of "seniors helping seniors". The education program is designed to help prevent crime and to prepare seniors to be more proactive in seeking police assistance by reporting crime.

Project Blue Light

This is an alert system, initiated and used by police in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, which is designed to assist elderly and disabled people in an emergency. A lamp with a blue light bulb, that flashes when the lamp is turned on, is placed in a window visible to neighbours or passersby.

If someone in the house or apartment is fearful, or is experiencing some sort of emergency and is unable or reluctant to call the police, he or she can simply turn on the blue light to signal to passersby that help is needed, and that the police should be called. Although this is a specific crime prevention and fear reduction program aimed at the elderly and disabled, it is part of a general shift in orientation in New Glasgow, which will be described in the next section.

A General Shift in Orientation

In a growing number of communities across Canada, where seniors make up a significant proportion of the population, police are gradually shifting their orientation away from a reactive style of policing to a proactive, community-based policing orientation. This shift, even if it was initiated because of a concern for seniors, in many cases extends to all aspects of policing and benefits the entire community. Policing philosophies and programs in a few of these communities (most of which were visited by the researchers for this study) are highlighted below. (More detailed descriptions of some of these programs are included in Appendix A of this paper.)

New Glasgow Police Department

Under the leadership of two individuals, Chief Kinnaird and Constable Don McDavid, the New Glasgow Police Department, in just four years, has created a police force in a small townrural setting based on a proactive model of policing, which frequently takes police out of a "traditional" police role to respond to a variety of health and social as well as justice needs of New Glasgow citizens. The approach was developed in 1986 in response to a needs assessment undertaken by the Pictou County Crime Prevention Committee. For this study, committee members met with one hundred people for an informal brainstorming session. The results of the meeting demonstrated that there was an urgent need for programs to respond more sensitively to seniors.

Seniors stated that they wish police to take them seriously and to listen to their concerns (for example, their anxieties about young people hanging around their houses or swearing loudly on the streets), even though younger people might consider these concerns minor annoyances only. The seniors stated that they miss seeing policemen on the street, and wanted "whistling Joe" back. They reported that police have become "untouchable" for seniors; now all they are is bearers of bad news. They want police to be there to reduce their fears of suffering or dying alone, and they told police that they want to be involved, to feel that they belong in their community, and would be happy to work with the police whenever possible.

Their responses helped to reinforce the community-based orientation of Chief Kinnaird and Constable McDavid, and led to the creation of 21 community-based programs, including the Blue Light and Vial of Life Programs described in other sections of this paper. The New Glasgow Police Department bases its approach on the ideal of the police and community working "hand in hand". The police

service believes that it alone cannot make a community safe, but that all community members must work as a team to preserve a lawful society. As Chief Kinnaird says: "the police are the only members of society that are paid for a duty that is incumbent on everyone."

Chief Kinnaird also stressed that while the whole force operates on a community-based model, it is vital to the success of the program to have one full-time, widely known person in charge of community liaison particularly for the transition period between a more reactive model and a proactive model. Constable McDavid has played this role in the New Glasgow police force. (A more detailed description of this program is included in Appendix A of this paper.)

Mahone Bay Police Department

Mahone Bay is an even smaller Nova Scotia town, with only three full time police, who also work to serve the needs of seniors through generalized community-based policing. It is a tourist town with a large population of seniors who live there year round. Chief Clark estimated that about 60% of the resident population is 65 years of age or over.

When the town hired a new police chief several years ago, they explicitly looked for a chief who would be an integral part of the community and who would respond to their needs and concerns. They found Chief Clark, who makes a point of keeping in close touch with all the seniors in town. As one senior pointed out, "He knows all of us... that's why we have him." He and his officers drop in regularly to have tea with some of them, to share a joke as they pass in the police car, or to ask how they are.

The police force also organizes annual senior citizens' nights, which combine entertainment and education. This year, the force brought together 25 resource people who can and do offer services for seniors including: local lawyers, doctors, politicians, public health nurses, gerontologists, representatives of senior citizens' clubs, the Legion, Public Legal Education from Halifax, homemakers, and a representative from the Adult Protection Program for Nova Scotia. Each of these resource people gave a brief presentation, and seniors were encouraged to speak to any of them about problems of concern to them.

Every year a real attempt is made through this event to respond to the community and to increase community and police partnerships. The police force raises funds throughout the year by holding yard sales, car washes and dances, to support these senior citizens' evenings.

Chief Clark stressed that it is a joy for him to deal with the seniors in his community. He quoted a passage from a tape called "Cops", produced by a radio announcer from Charlottetown, which sums up his feelings:

"Through all the misery police go through, the one thing that makes it all worthwhile, is when a senior reaches out their hand and says, 'God bless you'."

(A more detailed description of this program is included in Appendix A.)

The Halifax Community-Based Policing Program

Community-based policing to meet the needs of community members, including seniors, is not only a small-town trend. A similar approach is being applied in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

In 1985, ~~the~~ Halifax Police force changed its philosophy and procedure dramatically. To facilitate the organization of the new approach, the city was divided into three zones or communities: Alpha zone -- a low density, bedroom community; Bravo zone -- an older, more settled community; and Charlie zone - - a central-core, diversified community with businesses, entertainment, several seniors complexes, a large public housing project, and a broad racial and age mix.

Each zone has a Community Advisory Board, made up of a wide range of community representatives, which meets with the police once a month to talk about their needs. Ten Community Support Teams assist the zone commander, and each zone has a community office staffed by the zone commander, and a community relations crime prevention worker who works as a beat cop.

Charlie Zone, the zone with the highest crime and the highest proportion of seniors, has recently installed a computer system with modem and voice capabilities, allowing community office staff to proactively plan their crime prevention and intervention strategies. It also enables them to keep community members up-to-date on crime activity in their areas. Police officers can simply input a brief report on a crime committed or a suspect apprehended into the computer, and each community member entered in the system is automatically called and given this information. The telephone numbers of all those citizens enrolled in Neighbourhood Watch (a large proportion of citizens in this zone) are included.

Through this model, the police are constantly looking for ways to stimulate mutual support and partnership between police and community members. As Superintendent Vince MacDonald said:

"We will be looking for ways that we can be of assistance to seniors, and we want to make it a two-way street where they can help us as well."

(See ~~Appendix~~ A for a fuller description of the Halifax program.)

The James Bay Community Police Service, Victoria

A program similar to the Halifax model is also being tested in James Bay, a neighborhood of Victoria, British Columbia. The James Bay community has a relatively high population of seniors. Forty-nine percent of the residents in James Bay are 55 years of age and over and 33% are 65 years of age and over. A large number of seniors' organizations exist and social, health and recreational services for seniors are extensive. James Bay differs considerably in socio-economic terms from the Charlie Zone in Halifax. Although James Bay is a mixed income neighbourhood, average incomes are high, there are few distinct cultural or racial groups and most seniors live independently in apartment buildings. Crime rates are low and are comprised mainly of thefts from autos, break-ins and vandalism. According to several service providers and seniors advocates, crime is a concern to seniors in James Bay, and fear of crime is high. A community policing model, which was developed by the City of Victoria Police Service is being pilot tested in the James Bay Community, and in four other Victoria neighbourhoods. This approach to policing services addresses many of the concerns of seniors.

The Community Police Station (C.O.P.S.) model, was introduced by the City of Victoria Police Service in 1987 "to bring the police and community more closely together to work in making Victoria a safer and better place." Eight objectives were determined, including: the reduction of crime and the fear of crime, increasing community accessibility of police services, and increasing program delivery and services to the elderly population.

Community Police Stations are staffed with trained volunteers and one regular police officer. The Community Police Station receives and responds to occurrence

calls during office hours, and provides one patrol officer who is based at the station and responds to neighbourhood complaints. Crime prevention programs have been decentralized from headquarters to each of the community stations, so that education programs are designed to respond to the needs of the community served, and are delivered by staff and volunteers familiar with local needs.

In the James Bay area, the Community Police Station is a store-front office located in a small shopping mall. It responds to about 100 client contacts per month, a large number of them from seniors. In general, response by the community to storefront policing has been positive, in part because the model has been developed in close consultation with citizens and community groups and in part because the model attempts to remain responsive through regular surveys to tap community needs and satisfaction. Seniors in the James Bay area report good experiences with the police and are reassured by their presence in the community. (This program is described in more detail in Appendix A.)

City of Winnipeg Police Service

Crime prevention activities in Winnipeg have been organized into six districts, and include activities related to seniors. Each district works closely with a voluntary committee called Citizens for Crime Awareness, in which seniors are active. Founded in 1982, these committees set priorities for crime prevention activities in their area. The police crime prevention officer acts as an advisor to the group. In fact, the police see these groups as central to the delivery of good crime prevention programs. Senior safety has been identified as an issue in most areas, but safety does not extend to elder abuse. The police also speak to seniors groups, and provide outreach programs.

Although ~~this~~ program does not represent as holistic an approach as some of the other community-based examples cited above, it demonstrates a move toward community-involvement and the encouragement of generalized sensitivity toward the needs of community members on the part of the police force.

Programs Which Use Seniors as Volunteers

Many community policing models and crime prevention programs include volunteers who are seniors. Police personnel are increasingly interested in using seniors as volunteers in response to the aging of the population and a smaller pool of younger volunteers available during the day. Police who use seniors as volunteers consider them excellent resources because they are trustworthy, often know many people in the community, and have more free time than most younger volunteers.

R.C.M.P. Seniors Volunteer Programs

The R.C.M.P. has involved seniors in a number of their crime prevention programs. This initiative began in 1979, when the R.C.M.P. began using seniors to provide some counselling and victim services. In 1981, the R.C.M.P. organized the first volunteer group of seniors in Coquitlam, British Columbia, to help with the vandal watch program.

Pre-Vol Program, Hull, Quebec

In the Pre-Vol Program, one-third of the 550 people participating in a telephone community network are seniors.

New Glasgow, Nova Scotia Volunteers

Seniors are used as volunteers in all their crime prevention programs and are most active in neighbourhood watch, the Vial of Life Program (described in the next section) and the Blue Light Program (described earlier in this report).

Other Programs for Seniors

Two additional programs identified by the researchers deserve special mention.

Vial of Life Program

The Vial of Life Program in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, is an example of the attempt by police forces to respond to the needs of seniors and to provide proactive, outreach services. This program is designed to speed up medical care response during the first critical moments of an emergency. Participants in this program complete a form with pertinent information about their medical histories and that of their families (if appropriate), put this information inside a small vial, and attach the vial to a shelf in their refrigerator. A decal is placed on the outside of the fridge door which indicates that this person is part of the Vial of Life Program.

While not exclusively a police program, it is one in which police participate in the distribution of the kits and education of the public, along with ambulance services, fire departments, and local organizations like the Kiwanis, Kinsmen or Rotary Clubs. It is an excellent example of one police department stretching their definition of the policing role and cooperating with other community organizations to provide a needed service.

Prince Edward Island Intergenerational Project

The Prince Edward Island provincial police are currently involved in a project exploring the potential for programs which stimulate intergenerational contacts between seniors and young people in order to reduce the fear many old people feel toward youth, to increase public awareness of aging issues and to create informal community support groups.

HOW DO POLICE RESPOND TO CASES INVOLVING SENIORS WHICH ARE NOT STRICTLY LAW ENFORCEMENT CASES?

From the preceding descriptions of community-based policing, it is evident that police are increasingly extending their role in serving seniors to include cases which are not strictly related to law enforcement. Police contacts spoke of their growing involvement in interdisciplinary initiatives, their desire to develop better referral networks which contribute to a sensitive and efficient response to the needs of seniors, as well as their attempts to involve seniors on advisory committees and as volunteers in crime prevention and victim assistance programs.

What Are the Attitudes of Police Toward Seniors?

While some of the key contacts interviewed did stress that some police have very condescending, ageist attitudes toward seniors, the majority of police respondents spoke extremely positively of seniors and their relationships with seniors. As one police crime prevention officer said:

"We have a special feeling for the seniors. They are often our best supporters. We want them to feel free to call and not feel silly. They want someone to talk to, and we respect that. A lot of people on patrol will stop in from time to time, although we are aware of not creating expectations that we will be back regularly, so that we don't disappoint them if we can't make it."

Many police reiterated this sentiment. Other respondents noted:

"We try harder with seniors because they treat us with respect".

"They see us as something more than average...in an old fashioned way...they sometimes still call us 'me honour'."

"These are our most enjoyable calls. These older people are very interesting people. They have respect for the law and for police."

Police also stressed that seniors are a valuable resource for police, because they are very civic minded, have a strong sense of justice and are aware of occurrences in their neighbourhoods. Some of the police and others interviewed emphasized that it is essential that police stop thinking of all seniors as senile, and start to change paternalistic attitudes towards the "poor elderly". Police also emphasized the need to view elderly people as generally vital members of the community with important contributions to make.

The only consistent complaint police raised was with the trusting nature of seniors. Several police officers spoke of their difficulties in encouraging seniors to street-proof themselves, and to take precautions against break and enters and thefts from their homes, because the seniors believed so strongly that "it wouldn't happen to me", and that "most people are good".

A number of police contacts stated that they believe the attitudes of police personnel toward seniors are improving, in part because the police force is also aging.

What Are the Overall Trends in the Police Response to Seniors?

From this very brief overview of some examples of police programs and approaches related to seniors as well as other community members, and from comments on attitudes expressed by police toward seniors, it is obvious that police are very concerned with seniors and many are actively involved in putting this concern into action.

Perhaps the most striking finding to come out of the research interviews was the pronounced trend toward a re-definition of traditional police roles vis-a-vis seniors to develop programs which really respond to the whole range of seniors' needs. It appears that as a result, in part, of their primarily positive attitudes towards the elderly and their general empathy with the wide range of seniors' concerns, a significant number of police have become impatient with a narrowly-defined, reactive police role.

Interestingly, once police have seen the inadequacy of a reactive role towards seniors, this awareness is often extended to the community as a whole, and fuels interest in proactive, community-based policing generally. It was interesting to note that in many communities using a community-based policing model, the original catalyst for the development of the model was a concern for seniors in the community. Ultimately, however, the model benefitted not just seniors, but all community members.

This trend is likely to grow, if the predictions of police concerning future crime trends involving the elderly prove to be accurate. Police predict an increase in the number of crimes in which the victim is a senior as the population ages. Because seniors are so often the victims of fraud and extortion, the diminishing pool of younger perpetrators would not lead to a decrease in crime, for senior perpetrators

could also defraud their peers. There was also a fear that economic conditions will worsen as social programs are cut back, leaving seniors even more vulnerable to theft. Some respondents felt that a decline in economic security would create the conditions for more elder abuse because a greater number of seniors could be forced to live with their children and because tensions over an additional dependent could run high.

IV. ARE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED WITH CRIME AGAINST SENIORS AND WITH POLICING FOR SENIORS?

Is This a Federal Government Issue?

Several initiatives signal a concern on the part of the federal government to address the issue of crime against seniors. During the last several years, the federal government has produced publications which focus on the victimization of the elderly.³³ More recently, it commissioned a report on the effect of demographic change, including the effect of the aging population on the future of policing.³⁴ In addition, the R.C.M.P., as reported earlier in this document, has recently announced a priority concern with seniors as victims of crime, and crime prevention activities targeted at seniors. Finally, over the past decade, the federal government has made a strong commitment to family violence, including elder abuse. Although initiatives focusing on elder abuse have not been as numerous as those focusing on child abuse or wife assault, Health and Welfare Canada commissioned a major incidence study on elder abuse, cited earlier in this report.³⁵ Other departments working on the family violence initiative, including, inter alia, Solicitor General of Canada and the Department of Justice, are now focusing more on the issue of elder abuse.

³³ For example, a special bulletin on Victimization of the Elderly was produced as part of the publication series for The Canadian Urban Victimization Survey, produced by Solicitor General of Canada.

³⁴ Linden, op cit.

³⁵ Elizabeth Podnieks, et al., op cit.

Is This a Provincial Government Issue?

Although provincial/territorial governments were not systematically surveyed during this study, from those provincial government representatives contacted, it appears that a number of provincial/territorial governments have a growing concern with seniors, but that, in general, crime against seniors is not a high priority within policy and program development for seniors'.

Government officials interviewed expressed personal awareness of the issue of crime victimization and seniors, but reported that they receive little input concerning the crime issue from seniors' groups and therefore have little reason to give crime against seniors a higher priority. Instead, seniors' groups are most vocal about health, finance and housing concerns. The low public emphasis which seniors place on crime issues was strikingly demonstrated in British Columbia recently where a task force was created to examine the needs of seniors and available services for seniors. A report just released by this Task Force deals peripherally with crime issues. Representatives of the task force stressed that the material for this report was gathered through public submissions, and the dearth of information on crime issues reflects the fact that very few of the seniors which presented to the task force made mention of crime issues.

Similarly, representatives from the Nova Scotia Seniors Secretariat reported that very few of the calls they receive from seniors deal with crime issues.

Provincial government interest in crimes against the elderly seems to focus primarily on elder abuse. So, for example, elder abuse was such a major concern for the Nova Scotia government that Adult Protection Legislation was drafted and ratified in large part to help deal more effectively with this abuse. In addition, the Department of Health and Social Services in Quebec organized a special

committee to study the issue of elder abuse and crime against senior citizens.

Is This a Municipal Government Issue?

No municipal government officials were interviewed for this study. However, based on information gathered from other sources, it appears that municipal governments are concerned with the elderly (for example, Toronto and Victoria both have Mayor's Task Forces on the elderly). Crime against the elderly is not a focus, however, and when it is dealt with the emphasis once again appears to be mainly on elder abuse.

However, there is a growing interest in Canadian municipalities in crime prevention generally, which will have spill over effects for the senior population and may lead to more emphasis on the security of seniors in the future. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities co-sponsored an international conference in the fall of 1989 on crime prevention, and has submitted a proposal to the federal government for a broad community-based initiative in crime prevention which will affect seniors as well as other population groups. In addition, some municipalities are already taking impressive steps toward increasing safety including the safety of their seniors. For example, the City of Toronto, through The Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children (M.E.T.R.A.C.) has sponsored studies to reduce crime against women on the transit systems, and in the parks.³⁶ M.E.T.R.A.C. is also currently involved in a study of underground parking garages. Even though these studies are targeted at all women, they certainly have important implications for the safety of seniors, the majority of whom are women.

³⁶ "Moving Forward: Making Transit Safer for Women", Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children (M.E.T.R.A.C.), the Toronto Transit Commission and Metro Toronto Police, Toronto, 1989; and M.E.T.R.A.C., "Planning for Sexual Assault Prevention: Women's Safety in High Park", Toronto, Ontario, 1989.

How do Police and Government Concerns Compare?

From this brief description of the concerns of governments and the concerns of police, it appears that there are currently some gaps between the priorities of police forces and governments at all levels related to the issue of crime and seniors. Certainly at present, the pronounced interest in elder abuse at all levels of government is not reflected in the priorities of police forces. Similarly, there was no evidence from this preliminary investigation that government officials are aware of, or provide support for the apparently growing trend in police forces toward a more holistic, community-based response to seniors based on their needs, rather than on a traditional definition of an appropriate police role.

Interestingly, in the future, the trend toward more community-based policing could open police work to more proactive intervention in elder abuse cases, and the increased interest among municipalities in crime prevention could also move more municipalities to provide the support police need to promote more community-based policing. The roots of mutual support now exist. Only the recognition of these roots and the political will to nourish them is now required.

V. IS CRIME AND POLICING AN ISSUE FOR SENIORS?

Are Seniors Satisfied with the Current Police Response?

Conversations with seniors organizations and other community service representatives indicate that there are mixed opinions about how well police relate to seniors and about how satisfied seniors are with the current police response. Despite the very positive attitudes police reported toward seniors, several non-police respondents suggested that many police still hold paternalistic, stereotypic attitudes, and that satisfaction of seniors with the police response would be much improved if police were better sensitized to the realities of aging.

When police do not support the elderly sensitively or effectively, seniors tend to feel they have done something wrong. Several people who work with seniors (and in some cases were themselves seniors) said that there are many seniors who would rather suffer than seek justice, for they see the police as unreachable, sometimes arrogant, too demanding, impatient, and as the source of more potential trouble for them. One of the biggest concerns of seniors, particularly concerning elder abuse is that if the police are called, they will remove the seniors to institutions, instead of dealing with their problems within the community.

Do Seniors Wish the Police Would Do More?

Perspectives on this question are very mixed given that not all seniors trust police to do what is best for them. However, seniors have many needs that could be met at least in part through enhanced police services.

Many seniors report being afraid of young people hanging around their houses, in their back yards, or on the streets. Others fear going to the bank. Seniors wish police were more visible on the street, and more interventionist with "rowdy kids",

so that they could feel less fearful in these situations. One respondent suggested that it would do so much if only police would walk two blocks home with them from the bank. This woman suggested that if police walked a regular beat, she would wait at the bank for the officer to pass so that she could walk with him or her.

The biggest fear of many seniors, however, is being injured or sick and dying alone. Social agencies and seniors believe that police could play an important role in alleviating this fear. The Vial of Life and Blue Light Programs in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia provide good examples of ways that police can help reduce this fear.

But many seniors need and want something much less dramatic from police... a kind word, a nod of recognition, some respect, some kindness... a return to the old community "beat cop" who knew everyone and was an important part of the neighbourhood. Seniors feel that much has been lost with the current version of policing.

In addition, service providers emphasized that police need more information on the ailments and disabilities suffered by some seniors. For example, interviewees suggested that police should be better educated to discern among behaviours which signal that a person is diabetic, suffering from Alzheimers, or intoxicated. Many seniors have been unfairly maligned for being drunk when in fact they were suffering from Alzheimers or diabetes.

The literature also stresses the importance of follow-up for all victims of crime, but particularly for elderly victims, since these individuals tend to suffer the most serious physical, financial and psychological impact from criminal victimization.³⁷

³⁷ For example, this point is made in J. Muir and Van Raamsdorf, "Resource Manual for the Instructor's Guide", Victim Response Course, Vol. 4, Solicitor General User Report 1987-09, Ottawa, Ontario 1987.

VI. WHAT IS THE FUTURE FOR POLICING AND SENIORS?

Issues and Dilemmas

The police, community service workers, government officials and seniors interviewed for this project, identified a number of difficult choices which police face in planning for their future role in relation to seniors in an aging society. In this section, the issues and dilemmas identified will be summarized, along with the major positions and considerations raised in the interviews and in related literature.

Should Police Set Up Special Programs for Seniors or Improve General Programs to Meet the Needs of Seniors More Effectively?

Advantages of General Programs:

The consensus among the majority of people interviewed is that, particularly as the population ages and seniors become a major segment of the population, general programs would best meet the needs of seniors. These proponents argue that specialized programs inevitably ghettoize and infantilize seniors and make assumptions about the types of problems they will have.

On the other hand, all citizens would benefit from services which respond to the needs of seniors for such things as compassion, better information and more extensive follow-up services. Everyone would benefit from a general humanizing of police forces. A generalist trend, these proponents argue, would also demand an upgrading and broadening of police education... something that many informants felt was badly needed.

Finally, in small detachments, specialized services are not economically feasible. There are simply not enough officers to create special units, and there is

insufficient demand for services to justify the designation of staff.

Advantages of Specialized Programs:

Other informants argued that specialized programs help respond to the need for an identifiable contact, or group of contacts for seniors... someone they can get to know and trust, even in large urban centres. This personal link is considered crucial if police are to encourage seniors to become more active in crime prevention programs.

The argument was also made that specialized services would help police become more sensitive and react more effectively to the particular needs of aboriginal seniors, seniors who are part of immigrant or visible minority groups, and seniors living in rural and isolated areas. Generally these people felt that seniors will only get good service through a concerted, specialized effort and through targeted programs.

Advantages of a Combined Approach:

A compromise position was also suggested: a general humanizing of police forces would be ideal, but with some targeted programs, particularly through referrals to specialized organizations.

How Involved Should Police Be In Elder Abuse Cases?

Although there were many concerns raised around this question, two major positions emerged.

Elder Abuse is Not a Policing Issue:

While some police said they suspected there is a great deal of elder abuse in their communities, most police said they had never or very rarely seen and/or dealt with a case of elder abuse. Most people interviewed concurred that almost everyone, including the police, see elder abuse as a health issue. In some communities, the researchers were told that even social services does not want to intervene. Of all the provinces, only Nova Scotia has a protocol for police to use in applying The Nova Scotia Adult Protection Legislation. But even in this province, the representative from the Adult Protection Division of Social and Community Services reported that the police role in enforcing this legislation is limited. In 1989, only six out of 300 referrals to Adult Protection under the Act came from police. If police are involved, it is generally to assist Adult Protection workers to gain access to the residence, or to enforce a removal order.

Others stressed that seniors, their extended family, friends, neighbours and even community service workers are reluctant to call the police unless the situation is absolutely desperate. The dominant fear is that police will make the situation worse, by escalating perception of the seriousness of the problem to such a point that the senior's important relationships with her or his family will be irreparably damaged, and the senior will be forced to leave the home and enter an institution... an alternative which is resisted by almost all seniors.

Even ignoring this resistance to report elder abuse to the police, it appears to make sense to involve police in no more than five percent of all elder abuse cases seen by medical and social service personnel. Much of the elder abuse identified by adult protection and social service workers is self abuse, a type of abuse which police do not feel confident to determine, and in which police intervention is not appropriate. The second most common form of abuse is financial abuse, and the

degree of abuse in many of these cases is not clear, the researchers were told, because sometimes what is labelled an abuse is in fact a change in perception about an agreement that was once reached mutually and not under duress. For example, situations in which an elderly parent freely gave money to her children to renovate a part of the house to allow her to live with them, or agreed to pay for a grandchild's university education, only in later years to resent that this money had been "taken" from her, were cited.

Certainly, the interviews did not give the impression that any service providers were identifying the 12,000 cases of physical abuse which the recent national study undertaken by Podnieks, Pillemer, et al.,³⁸ estimated as occurring each year in Canada.

Elder Abuse is a Policing Issue:

People who held this position tended to believe that "elder abuse is where we were at with wife battering ten years ago in terms of awareness and acceptance of the severity of the problem". At that time it was not considered appropriate to deal with wife battering as a crime. Instead family mediation was the preferred method of intervention.

But, some informants argued, this approach individualizes the problem, disguises the social roots of the abuse, and tends to fragment the solution and put the responsibility for change on individual family members. People taking this point of view refer to the statistics from recent research which say that about four per cent of all seniors suffer some form of abuse, and propose that as a society we must stop hiding behind professional and personal denial that this problem exists.

³⁸ Elizabeth Podnieks, et al., op cit.

Instead we must take definitive action by designing clear cut procedures for identifying cases of elder abuse and by creating appropriate and sensitive services for the victims, the abusers and the other family members. Only in this way will we express our common outrage at this form of violence, and begin to provide the services that are needed to help prevent elder abuse.

Does Adult Protection Legislation Help the Elderly or Erode Their Rights?

This is a debate where the arguments for both sides are forcefully put, and yet where there are persuasive aspects of both sides of the argument for almost all people involved. Some provincial governments, including Ontario, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Alberta have enacted special legislation which to some extent helps protect victims of elder abuse and vulnerable older adults. The legislation in Ontario is the 14 year old Nursing Home Act which is not even considered an Adult Protection Act by many. Interestingly, in this study, it was only in Prince Edward Island and in Nova Scotia that all informants seemed to be aware of such legislation, perhaps because in both these provinces the legislation was passed recently (in 1985 in Nova Scotia and in 1988 in Prince Edward Island) and because both were passed explicitly to help deal with the problem of elder abuse.

Adult Protection Legislation is Essential to Help Protect Seniors:

People who support this position do not believe that such legislation need be intrusive. In fact, in the provinces where there is adult protection legislation, those responsible for implementing the legislation say it is mainly to give some power to those who witness or become aware of such abuse, and to promote clear public education concerning the total unacceptability of elder abuse. In no case was the legislation seen as a tool primarily for police. In Nova Scotia, respondents stressed

that they try to increase care, as well as to protect legal and human rights through the legislation, and that the act in practice is used primarily for self neglect. In Prince Edward Island, those interviewed emphasized that they try to use the legislation as an educational tool and to allow someone to intervene and give some support and respite to caretakers who can no longer cope. In provinces with adult protection legislation, police do not tend to have a leadership role in implementing the legislation. Instead they tend to be called in to enforce removal orders and as such have no proactive, preventive role.

Adult Protection Legislation Erodes the Rights of Seniors:

Those who were against adult protection legislation felt strongly that such an act would treat seniors like children, and potentially remove their powers of choice and discretion. In addition, critics of such legislation point out that the legislation is only as good as the service network used to back it up. They argue that we do not have the counselling, support services and alternate housing options available which such an act would demand if it were to truly benefit seniors.

Should There Be Mandatory Reporting of Elder Abuse and Neglect?

This particular facet of adult protection legislation deserves to be considered in its own right, because even those people who are in favour of the legislation are not generally in favour of mandatory reporting. Only Nova Scotia includes mandatory reporting in its Adult Protection Legislation.

Mandatory Reporting is the Only Way to Protect Seniors Adequately:

Those in favour of mandatory reporting believe that as a society we have a social responsibility to protect the vulnerable. Through mandatory reporting, they argue,

we are able to take some of the burden of decision making off individual professionals in the field. Mandatory reporting would contribute to more reliable statistics and a better understanding of incidence and patterns of abuse. The statistics and records of individual cases which could be kept in a central registry if mandatory reporting were instituted would also help service providers trace the history of abuse and care for an individual senior, leading to more effective support and treatment.

Mandatory Reporting Would Result in Fewer Reported Cases:

Those who are against mandatory reporting argue that mandatory reporting would open up professionals to law suits for wrongful accusation, and would generally frighten away those who might want to seek help in a case of elder abuse, due to fear of the involvement of the justice system. Mandatory reporting implies punishment for non-reporting, and confines attempts to help individuals and families living with elder abuse within a legalistic model, which many see as too adversarial and too stark in its definitions of right and wrong. Some also argue that we must be careful not to usurp social rights when we are trying to improve social welfare because we are so outraged by elder abuse.

What Should the Balance Be Between Proactive and Reactive Policing?

Proactive Policing is Good in Theory But It Just Won't Work:

Those who discounted the benefits of proactive policing tended to be police on forces in large urban centres. These officers could not reconcile proactive policing with the widespread problems of drugs and street violence they are currently facing.

Proactive Policing is the Only Way To Really Reduce Crime:

The proactive policing proponents argued that policing can never be effective as long as police limit their responsibility for managing law and order in our society to reacting to unlawful events. These people argued that peace and security are community goals which can only be achieved if the whole community is involved in their realization, and if the problems underlying the unlawful behaviour are addressed in attempting to prevent future occurrences.

Advantages of a Combined Approach:

The Halifax Police Department attempts to ensure that half their policing functions are reactive and half proactive. Under proactive policing, they include prevention, referral and public consultation/education. Under reactive, they include response, enforcement and crime solving. They are beginning to implement a "problem/solving" approach to policing and see this as the direction for the 1990s. They believe that the environment is now right for police to incorporate activities not traditionally assumed by police. Halifax police see the aging of society and the fact that there is a good chance that as society ages, seniors will increasingly be targets

for crime, as an excellent reason for working toward problem solving policing with a proactive emphasis to help forecast and reduce their victimization before it increases.

How Can Police Intervene If Seniors Won't Report Crimes Against Them?

This issue did not have a clear "either/or" option, but was certainly a dilemma raised by numerous interviewees. According to our respondents, elderly people

generally have a lower reporting rate than the younger population, for most crimes except purse snatching and destruction of property.

They are reluctant to report fraud because they feel embarrassed to have been so gullible, or because they don't think anything can be done. They are reluctant to report elder abuse, particularly if they are being abused by one of their children, because of the stigma of raising a child who abuses them, because they are often emotionally and/or financially dependent on their child, because they may not even identify the treatment they are receiving as abuse, and because they are afraid that if they do report the abuse, they will be sent to an institution or bring further revengeful violence on themselves.

There was some speculation as well that older people would be very reluctant to report sexual assault because they would be ashamed and afraid that people would not believe that they had been sexually assaulted. Unfortunately, in our society older people are not seen as "sexual" and sexual assault is still often equated with sex instead of with the violence and control that it is in reality. Certainly this speculation is supported by the research.³⁹

It is noteworthy that research does not support the observation of many of our informants that the reporting rate of seniors is low. The Canadian Urban Victimization Survey found that "for all types of crime, reporting increased with age".⁴⁰ However, it is possible that research studies reporting this type of finding may not be adequately overcoming the perception of seniors that many crimes

³⁹ For example, see Cynthia J. Lent, and Joseph A. Harpold, "Violent Crime Against the Aging." FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, 57, 76 (July 1988):11-19.

⁴⁰ Canadian Urban Victimization Survey, Bulletin #6, Solicitor General of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario p. 6.

against them are not in fact crimes, and in particular may not have probed elder abuse events in depth. However, if seniors do not report crimes, how are police to help them? This problem becomes particularly critical when police spoke of responding to the particular needs of aboriginal seniors and/or immigrant seniors. Some police and others interviewed expressed the concern that elder abuse in both aboriginal and immigrant communities is high, but that in both communities there is distrust and disrespect of police because of past treatment either by white people in general or specifically by police in their country of origin. This isolation is further exaggerated by language and cultural barriers. Police also spoke of the erosion of the respect which aboriginal seniors once commanded in their communities and speculated that seniors in some aboriginal communities are now seen as appropriate victims.

No solution was proposed for dealing with this problem. Several respondents did speak of the necessity for aboriginal people to develop their own justice system. However, respondents also stressed that reaching these seniors through community groups, and building on proactive policing with these seniors and their communities are essential if police are ever to become a trusted part of the community and if the isolation of these groups is to be reduced in the future.

Other Issues and Dilemmas

These major issues and dilemmas must be put in the context of other problems raised by police, which many feel may impede their ability to plan creatively for an aging society.

"There is not enough social agency back-up to allow police to move toward true community-based policing."

"We still have a lot of people on our force who see their work as putting people in jail. This approach just doesn't work when it comes to the elderly."

"We want more women, aboriginal and immigrant recruits, but there aren't enough who want to join the police to go around. More and more we're in competition with other forces for these officers."

"In many locations seniors just don't seem to be interested in crime issues. They believe, "It doesn't happen here."

"Policing is a field where everything has been watered down too much. We are too concerned with procedure, not with what really happened."

"We get alot of repetitive calls from some seniors, which can be frustrating because we know they really need medical or economic or psychological help. They come to us because the right kind of help just isn't available."

"We spend alot of our time dealing with mentally disabled people who have been de-institutionalized. They are becoming offenders, and sometimes we just need to help them because they may not be able to find their way home. It isn't fair to them or to us that they're just left to their own devices when some of them really can't make it on their own."

"How do we educate seniors without making them more afraid given all the hype the media gives them?"

"So many changes in legislation puts handcuffs on us."

All the dilemmas and issues identified above by police and service providers helped inform the suggested recommendations for change which follow.

What Do Police Need to Better Serve Seniors?

Police and service providers interviewed were remarkably consistent in the types of assistance they feel police need to better serve seniors in an aging society.

Additional Resources

The resource needs expressed by police on the whole were quite modest. They spoke of the need mainly for one to three additional staff people, depending on the size of the force and the senior population they serve, in order to coordinate senior volunteers, to act as an identifiable full-time liaison person with seniors, and to exchange information and develop experimental intervention strategies with other police personnel in similar positions across the country.

Training

Training is needed both at the recruit level and at the operational level in the form of in-service training courses. Interviewees emphasized that training must include a real education about aging, not simply a few suggested ways of "handling seniors". Police need to better understand the process of aging. They need to understand how certain diseases manifest themselves. They need to understand more about the fears, needs, and strengths of seniors.

A request was also made for specific training to help police gain a more sensitive understanding of the cultures and particular needs and concerns of immigrant and aboriginal seniors. Several informants suggested that it would be helpful to be able to pay seniors to act as trainers for some sessions.

Public Education

More effective police training will not be of maximum benefit unless it is offered in a context of a public awareness campaign which helps alert all citizens to the realities of aging, and which also helps present security issues to seniors in a more realistic light than is usually present in the media.

More Widespread Victim Services

There was almost universal agreement that seniors who have been victimized need the follow-up which can be provided by a victim service program. Unfortunately, victim services are not available in all police jurisdictions.

The Capability to Deal More Effectively with Seniors as well as Younger People Who are Disabled

Some police forces do have some officers who can provide sign interpretation for the deaf, but generally the capability of police forces to deal with disabilities ends there. More information is first needed on the range of disabilities with which police officers may have to cope, and their projected frequency in an aging population. Then, targeted planning is required to ensure that police have the capability to help people with these disabilities in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

Better Data Collection to Help Police Understand Trends in their Own Communities and also Across Canada

A number of police mentioned how hindered they are in their planning processes by a lack of meaningful statistics on aging trends and the needs of seniors.

Crisis Intervention Groups

Police recognized that seniors often need someone to spend time with them after they have been victimized, and they may need someone to explain police procedures and what to expect if they go to court, for example. Unfortunately, policing schedules do not always permit the officer to give the senior this valuable

time. Crisis intervention groups, available for the police to call upon, would help immeasurably and work towards more widespread community involvement in policing.

A Seniors Crime Prevention Advisory Committee

The establishment of Crime Prevention Advisory Committees, either related exclusively to crime against seniors but linked to a broader advisory committee, or more general committees which include representation by seniors at least in proportion to their presence in the community, was seen as a need by most people interviewed.

Outreach Programs

These programs could be organized by the resource people hired to liaise with seniors. Through these programs, seniors could be encouraged to come to police offices to meet the people who police them and to learn more about how the justice system works. Even more importantly, outreach would help police develop ties to seniors' groups and would help police to take the lead from seniors in developing programs for the elderly. Through outreach programs, police could bring seniors together and teach them to be more assertive, and more challenging of the system. Police could act as a resource to seniors' organizations.

Greater Emphasis and Support at Senior Policing Levels for Interdisciplinary Approaches which Involve All Community Sectors

As one officer said, "to adapt the justice system to the needs of seniors, we must change our way of thinking and work together". Another officer suggested a special fund to enable them to hire members of cultural communities in order to

form links with these sectors. A few respondents suggested the need for interdisciplinary protocols, particularly to deal with such crimes as elder abuse and sexual assault of the elderly, or to deal with immigrant or aboriginal victims who are also elderly.

Educational Resources to Meet the Needs of Police Forces in Rural and Isolated Areas

Pamphlets, other handouts and audio-visual resources are generally designed for large, urban centres and do not have much relevance for police in rural and isolated areas. Governments could help police in this respect by becoming more creative in delivering messages about victimization, for example, by translating videos or funding native drama groups.

A Change in Thinking from Police "Force" to Police "Service"

Some police noted that among police, the crime prevention "beat" and proactive policing is considered "soft". Police working in these areas and police who work with a more proactive orientation receive little respect from police doing "real" police work. But increasingly, police believe that by emphasizing the "force" in police work and by increasing the distance between police and their communities through almost total reliance on patrol car policing, police are losing the support of the very people they are trying to help. A growing number of police want to build on the service aspect of their work to make police once again an integral and trusted part of the community.

Practical Research Is Needed to Help Demonstrate the Need for a Change in Organization and Thinking in Police Departments

A number of potential research studies were suggested:

- ◆ Research which helps identify the costs of NOT being more proactive; research into the possible results of having an aging police force could help change the dominant thinking, and stimulate changes in organizations and deployment within police departments.
- ◆ Some of those interviewed suggested the need for more in-depth multidisciplinary research, similar to that undertaken for this study, but perhaps examining case files of social workers, physicians, police officers, emergency workers, public health workers and others, to better understand the concerns of criminal justice practitioners and people in other agencies who work to enhance the physical and emotional well-being of elderly Canadians.
- ◆ Research is needed on the prevalence of lifetime abuse, looking at women who were abused as children and later become battered wives and finally abused elderly.
- ◆ Evaluations of car patrols and other police methods are needed to demonstrate whether or not different modes of policing are beneficial.
- ◆ Research is required on the needs of seniors who are aboriginal or who are members of ethnic or racial minorities.
- ◆ Demonstration projects would be beneficial to explore the potential for police forces to respond more effectively to people with disabilities.

VII. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study point to a dramatic shift in policing, a shift not only toward proactive, community-based policing, but toward a vision of police as catalysts to community development. Police are showing a striking willingness to get involved in meeting a broad range of needs of seniors, including those which have little or nothing to do with crime and the criminal justice system. Police expressed a desire to become more a part of communities which serve seniors better.

Working with seniors has convinced many police that effective policing means responding to the needs and expectations of seniors, even if these needs and expectations do not fit into a reactive policing role. Once convinced, these officers often want to take this realization and apply it to the broader community.

This emerging vision of policing regards crime as a social problem and as a community problem... a problem police cannot deal with alone. Police personnel have expressed a readiness to move toward a "problem solving" mode of policing, but they want to problem solve with other community members, including service providers working in other social and health agencies including seniors themselves.

According to one police officer, the ideal police role for working with seniors is to fill needs as required, and even to anticipate these needs, to facilitate a smooth police/citizen relationship, to help seniors find and use available services and to help seniors gain a sense of personal strength and competence in dealing with different services, and in living within the community more generally. Police services must be more than law enforcement agencies. They must become services that are humanly caring.

Certainly the importance of making police services "humanly caring" came through clearly when police were asked: "If you were 75 years old and had just been victimized, how would you want the police to treat you?" The responses police and others gave encapsulate the spirit of this new community-based, proactive and humanly caring police approach.

"I would want to be treated like an adult, not a 'poor old person'."

"I would want police to spend time with me, to really try to understand the problem, and to look for a solution to the problem, not to settle on the knee-jerk reaction of catching the guy and sticking him in jail."

"I would want to be responded to quickly, efficiently, respectfully, with professional service... not like twelve social workers, but like a good police service, caring, but not meddling and taking over my life."

"I would want police to be compassionate, caring, sympathetic and respectful of all the years I have lived and the experiences I have had."

"I would want the chance to be involved in the solution. Give me choices of where I could move to, give me the ability to use my brain in defining options, give me the ability to be a partner in my own future."

Police are now ready and willing to involve seniors as partners in determining the future of policing in an aging society. Now the political will is needed to make this proactive, problem solving, community-based approach to seniors, the policing reality in an aging society.

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APPENDIX A

SITE VISITS

The researchers visited four communities as part of the project: Victoria, British Columbia, as well as three communities in Nova Scotia: Halifax, New Glasgow and Mahone Bay. The programs in each of these locations will be described in some detail as part of this appendix.

Community-Based Policing in the City of Halifax Police Department

Halifax is considered by some to be the first police force in Canada to adopt a truly community-based, proactive policing model. In 1985, the force divided the City of Halifax into three zones or communities, in an attempt to develop a more focused approach to community needs. The three designated zones are:

1. **Alpha Zone**, which is a large geographic area with low density population. It is essentially a bedroom community with one housing project;
2. **Bravo Zone**, which is an older residential area, a less transient, settled community, with the lowest rate of housebreaks; and
3. **Charlie Zone**, which has some established housing, but is a mixed use, downtown location including commercial and entertainment property as well. This zone also includes mixed racial and age neighborhoods. It has several seniors complexes within it, and a large public housing complex. Crime is relatively high compared to the other zones, and there is more street life and drug trade.

Each zone has a community policing office which is staffed by a zone commander and a community relations crime prevention worker who patrols the zone. Although not every office currently has a clerical support worker from the community, in time these staff positions will be created in each zone office. The Charlie office has a computer system in place which has the capability to relay information by phone through a voice simulation

feature to any household in the community that the police have included in their telephone data base. This system allows officers to immediately share information related to crimes and police activities, so that residents can take precautions if necessary and so that residents will feel an ongoing link to police.

Each of the zones also has a Community Advisory Board which meets with police once a month to discuss the needs of the residents in its area. Ten community support workers, who are uniformed volunteer civilians, support each zone commander in the proactive activities of the zone (for example, they have been used to expand the Neighborhood Watch program).

Each community office has a very different flavour in keeping with the community and the facilities that were available in the community. Charlie office is brand new and is situated across from a large public housing complex. Three seniors' complexes are located within easy walking distance of the office.

The goals of the zone approach are:

1. To ensure that police are in touch with the community's needs ("We want to find out what's important to the community, not what's important to the police.");
2. To be more proactive;
3. To challenge police by making them think and by giving them back some discretion;
4. To create a team approach to policing (each zone holds squad meetings to give officers a chance to talk over their problems, concerns, needs and ideas for change);
5. To be "user friendly". With the zone offices, community members can easily find an officer from Monday to Friday at the least. The model also attempts to increase the accessibility of officers by increasing the amount of time they are walking in the community, rather than driving; and

6. To utilize volunteers in order to limit escalating resource needs and also to build a sense of partnership in the community around policing issues. Police cannot "do it all" themselves. Peace and security are community goals and can only be achieved through cooperation and shared responsibility.

Overall, the approach used is a "problem solving approach." Like all the other programs highlighted in this Appendix, the success of the program depends to a large extent upon the dedication and vision of individuals, and the political support of the program. The Mayor and other municipal politicians are very supportive of the community-based approach.

Constable Logan "proactively" decided in 1983 that a group police were unintentionally ignoring was seniors. He visited senior citizens' complexes, talked to as many seniors as he could, got together with the presidents of the organizations and distributed pamphlets. He involved seniors in crime prevention programs, primarily through the Neighborhood Watch program. He organized meetings to determine the concerns and needs of seniors and tried to reach seniors through social clubs. The officer provided practical assistance to the seniors he met, for example, by checking their homes for security and giving them safety advice.

He also helped to create a multidisciplinary team composed of a representative from government social services, two social workers, and two doctors from two major hospitals, to work together on elder abuse cases. The team developed a communication system whereby the doctor or the other professional who first learns about the abuse fills out a standard form which is then forwarded to everyone else in the network.

This team also advocated on behalf of the proposed Adult Protection Act. Before the Act was passed, professionals could not intervene unless the senior reported the abuse and was willing to go to court. Since the passage of the Act, service providers are more likely to work cooperatively on cases of elder abuse. Whenever possible, they remove the abuser and give him/her counselling if appropriate, and/or process the case through the justice system.

The Halifax Police Force has been described in a conference brochure as "the living laboratory for policing into the 1990s and into the next century". They have developed the first phase of their planned evolution: community-based zone policing. Now they are embarking on the second phase: community-based problem solving policing. This model is based on six policing functions, which are subdivided into reactive and proactive

policing. Ideally each major category occupies 50% of an officer's time. Under reactive policing, the functions include: response, enforcement and crime solving. Under proactive policing, the functions include prevention, referral and public consultation/education.

From speaking to the security director at the largest seniors complex in Charlie Zone, it became apparent that the goals of the program are being met. As the security manager said:

"If anything happens, especially after hours, the police are right here, at a moment's notice. I also call the police a lot just to talk over problems I'm having. They help to point me in the right direction."

Crime Prevention in the New Glasgow Police Force

New Glasgow is the hub of Pictou County in Nova Scotia. New Glasgow itself has a population of 11,000, of which about 10-15% are seniors. Over the past four years, Chief Kinnaird and Constable Donald McDavid have launched such a successful community-based policing program with a particular emphasis on community-based crime prevention, that crime rates in this town have dropped dramatically.

In 1986, there was no proactive policing in New Glasgow. There were a few crime prevention programs only. At that time the police force did a needs study in an attempt to create a Pictou County Crime Prevention Committee. The police brought together 100 people for an informal brainstorming session. This meeting identified the need for programs directed toward senior citizens, demonstrated how "unreachable" police had become for many citizens and highlighted the regret many older people feel that they no longer have their "whistling Joe" police officer walking their streets. Participants emphasized the strong desire of seniors to be more a part of the community, and to assist police in whatever way they can to strengthen law and order.

These findings gave Chief Kinnaird and Constable McDavid the material they needed to put into place an approach to policing based on their shared commitment to a more proactive approach. Constable McDavid had no trouble finding community members who wished to become involved. They stressed that they had long wanted to do something meaningful for the community, but needed leadership. Constable McDavid acted as a catalyst for community interest and involvement.

The New Glasgow Police Force makes every effort to involve as many different sectors of the society as they can in their crime prevention activities. For example, in the summer months, students are employed to raise awareness regarding Neighborhood Watch. Last year, an interagency public education blitz was organized. Twenty-two different agencies were involved. Police also participate on the Family Violence Committee of Community Agencies for Pictou County. This Committee deals with child abuse, wife abuse and elder abuse and is presently creating protocols related to different types of family violence. It is also embarking upon a process which allows agencies to dialogue together to solve problems. The radio station and weekly newspaper are both very generous about giving air time and print space to public announcements related to policing activities.

Currently, the New Glasgow Police Force has twenty-one community programs in place. Two of its programs which have received considerable attention in other communities are the Blue Light Program and the Vial of Life Program. Project Blue Light is a program designed to assist elderly and disabled persons in an emergency. A lamp with a blue light bulb that flashes when it is turned on is placed in a window which can be seen by neighbors or passersby. The police have worked with the Pictou County Y's Men's Club on this project. Shoppers Drug Mart donated the lights and the flashers and the Y's Men's Club contributed the remaining funds.

The Vial of Life Program is a program which also was developed cooperatively and is jointly administered by the police force, the fire department, public health nurses and other community organizations. It is a program which falls outside what is traditionally thought of as the policing role. In this instance, the police are helping to respond to the very real fear of seniors that they will die unnecessarily because they are not given prompt or appropriate medical treatment. Individuals wishing to participate in this program fill out a form detailing personal and family medical history, conditions, etcetera. The form is put in a small vial and attached to a refrigerator shelf with a rubber band. A decal is placed on the door of the refrigerator to indicate that this person is participating in the program. Whoever comes to the aid of the person then has clear information to help ensure that medical attention is prompt and appropriate to the person's needs.

In 1989, in recognition of the dedication and imagination Constable McDavid has shown in his policing role, he was presented with the Solicitor General's National Crime Prevention Award for "outstanding leadership and enthusiasm" in implementing crime prevention programs in the town of New

Glasgow. The former Solicitor General of Canada, the Honourable Pierre Blais declared that:

"Constable McDavid's efforts serve as an excellent example of how police officers can play an influential role in stimulating and encouraging community awareness and involvement in crime prevention."⁴¹

The cooperation and community involvement that marks the policing of this town has certainly had impressive results. In 1986, the community reported 186 break and enter occurrences; in 1989, this had been reduced to 32 for the year. As Chief Kinnaird said:

"Donnie and I can't solve crime alone. We are just resources to community members. The public and the police are in partnership. Cooperation works."

A Seniors' Positive Approach -- Mahone Bay Police Department

Mahone Bay is a small town of about 11,000, where the primary industry is tourism and where 60% of the resident population is 65 years of age or over. This town does not have quite the impressive array of programs that New Glasgow does, but it is known across the province for its "seniors' nights" and also for the sensitive and dedicated way that its police force responds to seniors through community-based policing.

When the town was replacing its retiring police chief several years ago, it sought in a replacement someone who believed in a community-policing model. They found Chief Clark, a police officer who has a personable and personal relationship with the seniors in the community -- he delights in sharing a joke or an anecdote with an older resident and is equally well known by the kids in the schoolyard.

Chief Clark began a yearly tradition of "seniors' night" in the community. This event is a combination educational opportunity and a social event. Each year is somewhat different depending on funds available and on the interests and needs of community members. The police force finances the event by

⁴¹ Regional News, The Evening News, Monday, October 30, 1989, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia.

raising money through car washes, garage sales and dances.

Public speakers may be brought in, entertainers may also be part of the evening. Information envelopes with the slogan "Seniors are Special People" were distributed at one seniors' night. "Special" seniors in town are honored. Transportation is provided. A good time is had by all, and the links between the police and the community are strengthened. This year, because they had not raised quite as much money, the event did not include any entertainment "stars", but the police force brought together twenty-five different service providers that seniors might deal with (for example, doctors, public health nurses, lawyers, gerontologists, homemakers, members of the local Legion and senior citizen clubs and representatives from the Public Legal Education Society and the provincial government Adult Protection Program in Halifax). These individuals each gave a short presentation to the seniors who were encouraged to speak individually to these people to ask them any questions which were bothering them.

Other initiatives in the community point to the commitment of the police force to work proactively in the town. For example, Mahone Bay started the Society for the Promotion of Police and Community Relations in 1983. On a day-to-day level, the police make regular visits to the two apartment buildings for seniors in town and to the nursing home. They have provided a van to take people in the nursing home to Halifax for the day. The police also make a point of dropping in on seniors living on their own in the community. They encourage seniors to call for help no matter what the problem, and they are called often by seniors who have fallen out of bed, by seniors who are worried about prowlers and want the police to check their yard, and by seniors who are just lonely and want to talk.

The police chief makes a point of keeping informed about the needs and problems of seniors. He has been asked to sit on the Board of the Gerontology Association of Nova Scotia. Through this association, in 1989, the police force was able to sponsor a seminar on death and dying, and in April 1990, they sponsored a seminar on elder abuse.

Police in Mahone Bay recognise the occurrence of elder abuse and see an important role for police in detecting and responding to cases. This belief (that police have a major role in elder abuse) was not widely shared by those interviewed for this study. Mahone Bay police see police intervention in elder abuse as just one example of the broad-based range of duties which a police officer should perform for the community. The Police Chief explains:

"Our job here is 70% social work. We're known and trusted by the people in town, often much more so than other professionals who come in from out of town. We also know how to diffuse an unpleasant or dangerous situation."

Seniors are important to the police in Mahone Bay, and the seniors respect and rely on the police. The police slogan used for Seniors Nights says it all: "Seniors are special people to Mahone Bay Police Department."

Community Policing to Seniors – City of Victoria Police Service

The form in which community policing has developed in Victoria, British Columbia provides an excellent example of how a high quality, "general" police program can serve the needs of a distinct group, while remaining responsive to the community as a whole.

The Community Police Station (C.O.P.S.) model was introduced by the City of Victoria Police Service in 1987. Both the police administration and City Council sought a way to reduce the escalating crime rate, improve the image of the police as responsive to the community and improve the effectiveness of police officers in responding to crime occurrences. The stated purpose of the program was "to bring the police and community more closely together to work in making Victoria a safer and better place". Eight objectives were determined, including the reduction of crime and the fear of crime, increasing community accessibility of police services and increasing program delivery and services to the elderly population.

Based loosely on the Detroit model of mini-police stations, five community police stations were opened in selected neighborhoods within the City of Victoria between September, 1987 and February, 1989. The community police stations are part of the Victoria Police Community Services Section and are managed by a Community Police Station Manager. A Steering Committee representing all other sections of the Police Department meets regularly to facilitate clear communication between areas and to ensure consistency in approach among the community stations. Community input into the program is encouraged and the staff officers are members of the local inter-agency councils (citizens advisory councils for the stations themselves are currently being considered). This approach to policing is unique in several ways. Community Police Stations are staffed, with the exception of one regular police officer, by trained volunteers. The Community Police Station receives and responds to occurrence calls during

office hours, provides one patrol officer who is based at the station and responds to neighborhood complaints. Crime prevention programs have been decentralized from headquarters to each of the community stations. Education programs are then designed to respond to the needs of the community served and are delivered by staff and volunteers familiar with local needs. Prevention programs include bicycle safety, Block Watch, drug education and traffic safety in schools and a one-to-one safety program which provides daily telephone contact with seniors in their homes.

James Bay is a distinct neighborhood of Victoria, British Columbia. Both Victoria and the James Bay area have high proportions of senior citizens; 49% of residents in James Bay are 55 years of age and over and 33% are 65 years of age and over. Seventeen percent of Victoria residents are seniors, which has resulted in a very proactive and progressive approach to providing a full range of services to an aging population.

Although it is a mixed income neighborhood, average incomes are high, there are few distinct cultural or racial groups and most seniors live independently in apartment buildings. Crime rates are low and are comprised mainly of thefts from autos, break ins and vandalism. A large number of seniors' organizations exist and services for seniors are extensive.

A strong sense of community development has survived in James Bay since the 1960s. Many community organizations and services have been developed under the auspices of the James Bay Community Project. Health, social and recreation services are delivered by several multi-service centres. The availability of affordable housing, and the provision of non-institutional options to the growing frail elderly population remain critical problems for the community. According to several service providers and seniors' advocates, crime is a concern to seniors in James Bay, but fear of crime far outstrips the actual incidence of robbery and violence. Many seniors' sense of loneliness and isolation is exacerbated by their fear of leaving home, even during the day. Fear of crime also results in increased paranoia about victimization, which spreads through the community after an incident. Community workers also believe that many crimes against seniors, especially personal crimes, go unreported because of fear of retaliation, embarrassment and timidity. The community policing model which is being pilot tested in the James Bay Community addresses many of the concerns of seniors related to fear of crime and the use of police services.

In the James Bay area, the community Police Station is a store-front office located in a small shopping mall which also contains retail shops and several seniors service organizations. It responds to about 100 client contacts per

month, a large number of them seniors. The community policing model responds to seniors' needs by providing a more personal police service located near home. The use of volunteers who are trained to respond to the need for information and support provides a more caring and sensitive service. Many seniors who would not likely go downtown to the main police station for information or to report a crime, drop into the community police station. The community police officer has become well known in the community through crime prevention activities and is seen as approachable and familiar. Conversely, individual police officers become more committed to the communities they serve. The visibility of the police service reduces the fear of crime and provides community residents with a more positive experience of the police in a non-crisis context. The presence of the police organization in the community also increases cooperation with other agencies serving the community.

In general, response by the community to store-front policing has been positive, in part because the model has been developed in close consultation with citizens and community groups and includes attempts by the police to remain responsive through regular satisfaction surveys and consultation with community leaders. Seniors in the James Bay area report good experiences with the police and are reassured by their presence.

Staff and volunteers are aware of several challenges in further developing the community-based police model. Promotion and awareness of the service remain a concern. While knowledge of the community police station is increasing, a significant number of residents still are not aware of the police station in their neighborhood and of the services it provides. In the area of services to seniors, reaching those who "fall between the service gaps" and are isolated from the seniors community remains a serious challenge. A shortage of staff limits the amount of outreach. In general, lack of funding is a major concern. The community police program currently relies on outside funding of about \$200,000 to support its five offices.

Police personnel and other community members recognize that elder abuse is an underreported crime which will require a concerted community-wide effort to address. An interagency committee is presently studying the problem as it attempts to coordinate responses to individual cases. One problem that results from underreporting is that service providers (including police patrol officers and investigators) who do not regularly see known cases of elder abuse do not recognize and encourage disclosure of cases. The apparent satisfaction with this model in a community with a high proportion of seniors supports a generalized approach to services for seniors based on their integration with other groups. Rather than setting seniors

apart as a special needs group, individualized services allow the needs of seniors to be met on a situation-by-situation basis. However, this model does not address the response by non-community-based officers whose attitudes and abilities to respond individually to seniors' needs are more limited.

The James Bay initiative (a holistic and integrated approach to community health and social services, including policing) provides a futuristic view of a community which is meeting demands placed on it now, that most other communities will experience in the next two decades. As the population ages across the country and expectations for responsive, client-centred approaches increases, other communities will be under pressure to develop models similar to that in Victoria. Ironically, and appropriately in the case of seniors' services, this model is not a new one, but a return to a more community-centred approach to urban living which seniors value and feared they had lost forever.

APPENDIX B

METHODOLOGY AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

Methodology

Fifty-three in-depth telephone interviews were conducted with police personnel, representatives of seniors organizations, workers in other community services and policy organizations, academics concerned with aging and crime victimization as well as with provincial and federal government officials. A list of all key contacts interviewed is attached as Appendix C.

Some attempt was made to ensure that interviewees were chosen from all provinces and territories, that there was some representation from rural as well as urban locations, and that the police interviewed came from the R.C.M.P., from provincial police forces and from municipal police forces.

However, beyond these concerns, the interviewees were chosen through a loose snowball technique. The researchers attempted to identify police forces, academics, social service agencies and seniors' organizations with an interest in the issue of policing and seniors.

Because the study was by definition exploratory, the interviews were largely open-ended and not fully structured. Interview guides (which follow) were used, but not adhered to or designed as scientific survey instruments. They were used as tools to stimulate discussion, raise issues and dilemmas and to learn more about existing programs.

Interviews with Police

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE
ORGANIZATION
ADDRESS
TELEPHONE NUMBER
AFFILIATION/TITLE
TYPE OF POLICE FORCE (municipal, provincial, R.C.M.P.)

Profile of Crime and Seniors

1. Could you start by telling us a little about the community you serve?
 - Is it predominantly urban or rural?
 - Do you have a large population of seniors?
 - How do you define seniors?
 - Do you have a large population of immigrant, ethnic or aboriginal peoples?

2. About what proportion of your offender caseload involves seniors?
 - About how many are:
 - ... "younger" seniors (under 75 years of age)?
 - ... "older" seniors (75 years of age and older)?
 - ... women?
 - ... immigrants?
 - ... members of distinct ethnic groups?
 - ... aboriginal peoples?
 - ... disabled persons?

3. In what types of crime in your community are seniors involved as perpetrators?

4. What proportion of crime victims that you deal with are seniors?
 - About how many of them are:
 - ... "younger" seniors (under 75 years of age)?
 - ... "older" seniors (75 years of age and older)?
 - ... women?
 - ... immigrants?
 - ... members of distinct ethnic groups?
 - ... aboriginal peoples?
 - ... disabled persons?

5. What types of crime are seniors most often the victims of?
6. About how many cases of suspected elder abuse have been reported to you in the last year?

Internal Services and Approaches

7. Is crime against seniors a special concern for your police force?
8. Does your force have a special protocol/program and/or policy related to policing and seniors?
Probe:
 - ... a special crime prevention program for seniors?
 - ... a victim assistance program which provides particular services to seniors?
 - ... staff training related to crime and seniors?
9. (Where adult protection legislation exists), have guidelines for police been developed to help in enforcing the law?
10. Does your force use seniors as volunteers in any capacity?
If yes, please elaborate.
11. Does your force hire seniors for pay?
If yes, please elaborate.
12. Have you evaluated the effectiveness of any of these programs in meeting the needs of police and seniors?
Are you currently doing these evaluations?

Changes and Trends

13. In the last five years, have you noticed any changes in the numbers or types of crimes:
 - ... where the victims are seniors?
Why do you think this is so?
 - ... where the perpetrators are seniors?
Why do you think this is so?

14. Looking ten years into the future, do you anticipate any changes in the numbers or types of crimes in which seniors
... are the victims?
Why do you think this is so?
... are the perpetrators?
Why do you think this is so?

Interdisciplinary Approaches

15. Is your organization involved in any community coordinating efforts related to the needs of seniors?
If yes, what role does this organization play in the community?
What are the benefits of participation for your force?
What are the disadvantages/costs of participation?
16. Is your organization involved in any other interdisciplinary or coordinating group?
If yes, what role does this organization play in the community?
What are the benefits of participation for your force?
What are the disadvantages/costs of participation?

Seniors as a Client Group

17. Do seniors put different demands on police than other people?
18. In your experience, do police respond differently to seniors?
19. Do you think the crime reporting rate by seniors is higher or lower than that of other population groups?
20. Are there particular crimes seniors are more or less likely to report?
21. In your experience, do seniors make good or poor informants/witnesses?
22. Do you know of any other special problems that you or your officers have in dealing with seniors?

23. Are there any specific problems in dealing with seniors who are:
- ... "younger" seniors (under 75 years of age)?
 - ... "older" seniors (75 years of age and older)?
 - ... women?
 - ... immigrants?
 - ... members of distinct ethnic groups?
 - ... aboriginal peoples?
 - ... disabled persons?

What's needed in the future?

24. Is the issue of policing and seniors of special concern to you and your force?

Given the reality of limited resources, how big a priority is services for seniors in your organization?

What are your major concerns related to police services for seniors?

Given your priorities, what do you feel you need to deal with your concerns?

Probe:

- ... more financial and human resources?
 - ... clearer guidelines concerning legislation and policy?
 - ... better training programs?
 - ... better information/data collection?
 - ... better knowledge of the issues?
 - ... better evaluation tools?
 - ... anything else?
25. Do you need any help in responding more effectively to groups with distinct needs? Then probe what would be helpful for these groups:
- ... "younger" seniors (under 75 years of age)?
 - ... "older" seniors (75 years of age and older)?
 - ... women?
 - ... immigrants?
 - ... members of distinct ethnic groups?
 - ... aboriginal peoples?
 - ... disabled persons?
26. Do you feel you need any assistance in responding to the predicted increase in the senior population?
- If yes, what assistance?

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27. Do you know of any (other) effective program models or approaches in other police forces in Canada or the United States to serve the needs of seniors?

Interviews with Seniors' Organization Representatives

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE
ORGANIZATION
ADDRESS
TELEPHONE NUMBER
AFFILIATION/TITLE
TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

Profile of Crime and Seniors

1. Could you start by telling us a little about the community you serve?

Is it predominantly urban or rural?
Do you have a large population of seniors?
How do you define seniors?
Do you have a large population of immigrant, ethnic or aboriginal peoples?
2. Could you tell me a little about your organization and the services it provides?
3. In the last year, have you worked with seniors who were victims of a crime?
If yes, about how many?
4. What types of crime are seniors most often the victims of?
5. About how many cases of suspected elder abuse have been reported to you in the last year?
6. In the past year, have you worked with seniors who have committed a crime?
If yes, how many?
What types of crime?

Internal Services and Approaches

7. Is crime against seniors a special concern for your organization?
8. Does your organization have any special protocols/programs and/or policies related to crime/victimization and seniors?

Probe:

- ... a special crime prevention program for seniors?
If yes, do you use police as resource people?
- ... victim support services?
- ... staff training related to crime/victimization?

Changes and Trends

9. In the last five years, have you noticed any changes in the numbers or types of crimes:
 - ... where the victims are seniors?
Why do you think this is so?
 - ... where the offenders are seniors?
Why do you think this is so?
10. Looking ten years into the future, do you anticipate any changes in the numbers or types of crimes in which seniors:
 - ... are the victims?
Why do you think this is so?
 - ... are the offenders?
Why do you think this is so?

Interdisciplinary Approaches

11. Is your organization involved in any community coordinating efforts related to crime/victimization of seniors?
 - If yes, what role does this organization play in the community?
 - What are the benefits of participation for you?
 - What are the disadvantages/costs of participation?
12. Is your organization involved in any other interdisciplinary or coordinating group?
 - If yes, what role does this organization play in the community?
 - What are the benefits of participation for your organization?
 - What are the disadvantages/costs of participation?

Needs/Issues Related to the Police Role

13. In general, how good has your relationship been with police in dealing with crime/victimization of seniors?
Have the police been sensitive in dealing with the needs of specific groups of seniors?
Probe:
... "younger" seniors (under 75 years of age)?
... "older" seniors (75 years of age and older)?
... women?
... immigrants?
... members of distinct ethnic groups?
... aboriginal peoples?
... disabled persons?
14. In general, what do you think would make police response to crime/victimization against seniors more effective?
15. Do you believe that police should be more actively involved in:
... the protection of seniors at risk of elder abuse?
... preventing elder abuse?

What's needed in the future?

16. Do you think police would benefit from any help in responding more effectively to groups with distinct needs? Then probe what would be helpful for these groups:
... "younger" seniors (under 75 years of age)?
... "older" seniors (75 years of age and older)?
... women?
... immigrants?
... members of distinct ethnic groups?
... aboriginal peoples?
... disabled persons?
17. Do you feel police need any assistance in responding to the predicted increase in the senior population?
If yes, what assistance?
18. Do you know of any (other) effective program models or approaches in police forces in Canada or the US to serve the needs of seniors?

Interviews with Provincial/Territorial Government Representatives

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE
 DEPARTMENT/GOVERNMENT
 ADDRESS
 TELEPHONE NUMBER
 POSITION/TITLE

Approaches, Changes and Trends

1. Is crime against seniors a special concern for your government?
2. In the last five years, have you noticed any changes in the numbers or types of crimes
 - ... where the victims are seniors?
 Why do you think this is so?
 - ... where the perpetrators are seniors?
 Why do you think this is so?
3. Looking ten years into the future, do you anticipate any changes in the numbers or types of crimes in which seniors
 - ... are the victims?
 Why do you think this is so?
 - ... are the perpetrators?
 Why do you think this is so?
4. Does your province/territory have a special protocol/program and/or policy related to crime/victimization and seniors?

Probe:

 - ... special crime prevention initiatives for seniors?
 - ... initiatives related to elder abuse?
 - ... funding for victim assistance programs which provides particular services to seniors?
 - ... professional and volunteer training related to crime and seniors?
 - ... initiatives to stimulate interdisciplinary approaches?

5. Does your province/territory have adult protection legislation?
If yes:
 - ... could you briefly describe the intent of the legislation?
 - ... in your opinion, how effective has the legislation been in serving the needs of seniors?
 - ... have guidelines for police and/or other service providers been developed to help in enforcing the law?
6. Have you funded the evaluation of any policies or programs related to policing services for seniors?
Are you currently doing these evaluations?

Needs/Issues

7. Is there any need to undertake major police programs for seniors given that research suggests that currently neither the elderly themselves nor the police report many negative feelings toward each other?
8. It seems that many of the common types of crimes against seniors are not considered "serious" crimes (e.g., medical quackery, consumer fraud). Do you think police should take crime/victimization of seniors more seriously and lay more charges where appropriate?
9. Do you favour special police units to deal with the needs of seniors or do you think that general training and awareness for police officers would best address the needs of seniors?
10. Rural depopulation is leaving many small, rural communities with a large proportion of senior citizens but too small a population base to support a police detachment. How can the police provide better services for these elderly people?
11. Canada's population includes an increasing number of immigrants who are elderly. How can police better deal with the cultural realities of this group, many of whom have had negative experiences of police in their native country?
12. The aboriginal people of Canada are fighting for their own justice system. How can police meet the needs of aboriginal elders and still respect their desire for self-government?

What's Needed?

13. Given the reality of limited resources, how big a priority is the enhancement of policing services for seniors in your province/territory?
14. What do you think police organizations need to improve their services to seniors?
Probe:
 - ... more financial and human resources?
 - ... clearer guidelines concerning legislation and policy?
 - ... better training programs?
 - ... better information/data collection?
 - ... better knowledge of the issues?
 - ... better evaluation tools?

Interviews with Experts on the Elderly

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE
ORGANIZATION
ADDRESS
TELEPHONE NUMBER
AFFILIATION/TITLE

1. Are the current services and approaches by police to crime and victimization of the elderly adequate to meet the needs of this group?
Probe:
 - ... "younger" seniors (under 75 years of age)?
 - ... "older" seniors (75 years of age and older)?
 - ... women?
 - ... immigrants?
 - ... members of distinct ethnic groups?
 - ... aboriginal peoples?
 - ... disabled persons?
2. Does the small number of seniors who are victimized or are perpetrators of crimes justify a special emphasis on this population group within policing services?
If yes:
 - ... why?
 - ... what are the specific issues related to police services to seniors that should be addressed?
3. Is there any need to undertake major police programs for seniors given that research suggests that currently neither the elderly themselves nor the police report many negative feelings toward each other?
4. It seems that many of the common types of crimes against seniors are not considered "serious" crimes (e.g., medical quackery, consumer fraud). Do you think police should take crime/victimization of seniors more seriously and lay more charges where appropriate?
5. Do you favour special police units to deal with the needs of seniors or do you think that general training and awareness for police officers would best address the needs of seniors?

6. Rural depopulation is leaving many small, rural communities with a large proportion of senior citizens but too small a population base to support a police detachment. How can the police provide better services for these elderly people?
7. Canada's population includes an increasing number of immigrants who are elderly. How can police better deal with the cultural realities of this group, many of whom have had negative experiences of police in their country of origin?
8. The aboriginal peoples of Canada are fighting for their own justice system. How can police meet the needs of aboriginal seniors and still respect the aboriginal desire for self-government?
9. Are mandatory reporting and adult protection legislation beneficial to the elderly? Is it appropriate for a government to legislate a problem in the absence of other apparently effective remedies?
10. Given resource constraints, what do you think police need to do to improve their services to seniors?

Probe:

- ... more financial and human resources?
- ... clearer guidelines concerning legislation and policy?
- ... better training programs?
- ... better information/data collection?
- ... better knowledge of the issues?
- ... better evaluation tools?
- ... anything else?

APPENDIX C – LIST OF KEY CONTACTS

The researchers would like to extend warm and sincere thanks to all those people who gave us their time and wisdom so generously. We hope that we have accurately captured the sense of the many and varied points made by the key contacts listed below and that we have synthesized the richness of the material into a vision for the future which our contacts can share.

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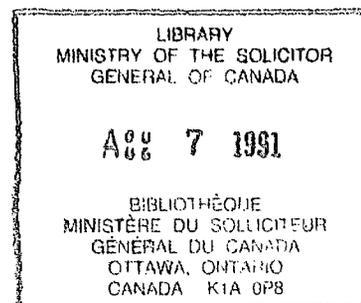
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