PART V

A HERMENEUTIC STUDY OF THE

ONTARIO POLICE COLLEGE
The History of the Ontario Police Force

The Canadian system of policing is difficult to categorise as it has been influenced by French, British and American systems. However one point which is unquestionable is that it is extremely decentralised, and in this way it is quite different from the Hong Kong and Singapore systems of policing, described in the previous sections. This decentralisation is sometimes attributed to the country's low population density, with Canada having only 2.5 persons per square kilometre, compared with countries like China and The Netherlands, which have 100 and 375 persons per square kilometre respectively (Mawby, 1990). But comparisons like these fail to take into account the fact that 85% of the Canadian population lives within a small area, lying within 200 miles of the United States border (Torczyner, 1987).

Some would argue that in practice the Canadian Constitution has been more influential in the formation of the police services' structure (Mawby, 1990; Stansfield,
1996). Two acts in particular were crucial in the development of public policing as it exists today: the British North America Act of 1867 which, through subsection 92(14), made the local provinces responsible for their own "administration of justice", and; the Constitution Act of 1982, which provided national conditions but allowed certain modifications at the provincial level (Mawby, 1990). By providing autonomy to the local provinces, these two acts formed the basis for the creation of a federal government, in which the national parliament has had the power to pass laws for the entire country, but each province has been responsible for their own justice. As a consequence, policing in different parts of Canada has differed notably.

Right throughout history policing has varied greatly from region to region in Canada, according to the type of settlers and the nature of the problem. The first clearly identifiable form of policing was in the French settled areas of Quebec and Montreal. Here policing emerged as a means of controlling the "hostile indigenous" population, and responsibility for the policing was in the hands of the wealthy landlords. Local county constables were appointed in each province, and unpaid volunteers were commissioned in the towns and parishes to act as
nightwatchmen (Kelly and Kelly, 1976). Over time the police’s role grew to include that of curtailing threats from the United States against gold discoveries in British Columbia, civil unrest against the forces of imperialism, and whisky and buffalo trading across the borders. In achieving these aims, the Canadian system of provincial policing was modelled increasingly on the Royal Irish Constabulary (Kelly and Kelly, 1976) – a system similar to that used in Hong Kong and Singapore.

In Ontario, the situation was somewhat different. Here, in 1729, the Parliament appointed high county constables to oversee the unpaid nightwatchmen, but as soon as the English took control, paid police forces were introduced in line with Peel’s thinking. As such, in 1835, Toronto had a paid police force of six officers, and this number increased to 42, by 1859, so that by the time of the 1967 British North America Act, a provincial force had already been initiated (Mawby, 1990). Similarly, in British Columbia a province-wide force had already emerged (Kelly and Kelly 1976).

In addition to these provincial forces, two federal forces emerged at a similar time: one, the dominion police, based in Ontario and Quebec, which had the objective of
protecting parliamentary and government buildings; and the other, the North-West Mounted Police Force, which today is called the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Mawby, 1990). The latter force was substantially more powerful, being based on a military, regimented model with the aim of acting in the national interest of maintaining law and order (Macloed, 1976).

In reality, the North-West Mounted Police was a central power aimed at imposing imperialism (Morrison, 1985). Its objective was to ensure that no foreign laws were introduced and that no foreign powers gained sovereignty (Mawby, 1990). However, its functions expanded much broader than this, in that it was also the major force aimed at: maintaining order during the construction of the Welland and St. Lawrence canals, collecting customs and preventing whisky trading, dealing with difficulties emerging from the gold rushes, controlling whaling in the Hudson Bay, and maintaining authority during the exploration of the MacKenzie delta (Mawby, 1990). From this perspective,

"...the Mounted Police were, in a certain sense, the Canadian equivalent of those forces of imperialism - the British army, the Royal Irish Constabulary, and the various colonial police forces - which brought British law and civil administration to the wild corners of the Empire. The difference in the Canadian case was that the colonial power was in Ottawa rather than in London."

(Morrison, 1985, p. 2)
Following the First World War, the North-West Mounted Police grew rapidly and later it took control of the smaller dominion police, changing its name in 1920 to become the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and moving its headquarters to Ottawa, the centre of the federal government.

Between the two World Wars, the RCMP continued to expand, but despite this, the Force’s popularity declined and it was involved in poor publicity regarding the lack of unions and other scandals relating to the staffs’ attitudes towards strikers, ‘communists’, and immigrants.

In the meantime, provincial police forces had been established in Canada’s 10 provinces, but in 1950, the RCMP assumed responsibility for provincial policing of British Columbia - a process which set a new precedent, and which allowed the RCMP to take over British Columbia and assume responsibility for the municipalities. This stretched the powers of the RCMP and by the mid 1950s, it was responsible not only for federal policing, but also for the Yukon and North-West Territories, eight of the ten provinces, and for some individual arrangements with specific municipalities (Mawby, 1990). Stansfield (1996)
pointed out a particularly interesting situation in Newfoundland where:

".....the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) - which is technically a provincial police service - provides municipal services in the capital St. John's, and two other cities, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) - a federal police service - provides municipal and provincial police services in the rest of the province."

(Stansfield, 1996; p.15)

This unusual set of contracts exists even today, and the RCMP has taken over responsibility for policing in many provinces and municipalities. The only two provinces that continue to have a degree of autonomy over their policing are Quebec and Ontario, with their forces being named the Surete du Quebec, and the Ontario Provincial Police - the latter force forms the basis of the present study.

The Ontario Provincial Police Today
The Ontario Police are made up of 116 municipal and 9 regional departments with approximately 19,000 officers (Mawby, 1990), accounting for roughly a third of the total police numbers in Canada (Stansfield, 1996). The Ontario Provincial Police, on the contrary, have a total of 6,068 officers, of which 4,888 are uniformed officers (Ontario Provincial Police, 1998), and they provide general police
services to a population of over 2.3 million (this figure can rise to 3.6 million in the summer). In Ontario - unlike in Newfoundland, Yukon and the North West Territories - responsibility for provincial and municipal policing has remained with the Ontario police, and the RCMP's role has been restricted to that of federal policing.

In terms of levels of crime, Ontario is more like the United Kingdom than it is like the United States. While its homicide rate is slightly higher than England's, its rates of burglary and car theft are lower (Kalish, 1988). As such Canadian police on average spend approximately 80% of their time performing social service functions and only 20% performing crime control functions (Ericson, 1982; Hodgson, 1993). These relatively low, yet increasing levels of crime, have led to an overall view of Canada as a society that functions in an orderly and smooth fashion, in which there is a relatively equal distribution of wealth, power and privilege.

Multiculturalism is an issue which Canada has prided itself on. Since 1988, the Multiculturalism Act has recognised and promoted cultural pluralism as the very essence of Canada's identity, arguing that Canadians are
proud of their multicultural heritage and that the wealth of ethnic diversity is what has distinguished Canada's history from that of many other countries. Ontario was one of the first provinces to promote multiculturalism. Even prior to the Race Relations and Policing Task Force, which was established in 1989, the Ontario police had commissioned six reports on multiculturalism and policing (Das, 1993).

However, despite the Canadian police's ability to avoid large scale racial confrontations like those experienced in the United States and Great Britain, the Race Relations Task Force Report (1989) stated that "relations between police and visible minorities in the province of Ontario are at a dangerously low level". Since this report numerous community policing programmes have been set up and efforts have been made to improve community relations. Training has moved more towards the concept of problem-oriented training as described in Chapter 7, with police identifying, analysing and responding to specific problems in partnership with the community (Eck and Spelman, 1993). Furthermore, Canada's already decentralised system of policing has made "zone" policing easier, with communities being sub-divided into infinitely smaller groups, allowing
different police strategies to be applied to different groups according to needs.

But, despite greater awareness by police officers and a general willingness to endorse multiculturalism (Lewis, 1989; Harding 1991), the social inequities which are the basic cause of the multiculturalism continue (Stansfield, 1996). Consequently the programmes have done little to appease the racial tensions which exist between police and the public, and there have been a growing number of claims of racial abuse against the Canadian police. The existence of a "Ways and Means Act" highlights the unfair and inequitable way in which police work and the existence, as Ericson (1982) highlights of a "rotten apple" theory of organisational deviance among the police, which removes the responsibility for police wrong-doing.

In fact, many have argued that community policing efforts in Canada have failed to take into account the massive changes of the post modern, information society (Toffler, 1981; & Drucker 1993), and it is this failure that has led to the dramatic growth of private policing in Canada over the past three decades (Shearing and Stenning, 1987). As Normandeanu and Leighton (1990) pointed out, in 1990, Canada had an estimated 125,000 private police as compared...
with 55,000 public police - a situation which it has been argued, reflects the private polices' ability to adapt to public needs and their use of more "preventative, subtle and co-operative" forms of policing (Shearing and Stenning, 1987).

To what degree public policing can confront the massive changes being placed upon it and can integrate successfully with the community and with private policing groups depends to a large degree on the quality of training provided to police officers. For this purpose, our study has looked at a large Canadian police college, the Ontario Police College, which is a "closed" police system, training only police recruits not students outside the police system. In 1980, the Ontario Police College was criticised by Ferguson (1980) as being based on the old "pedagogical" approach to education, with a clear distinction in roles between instructors and students, and with instructors being totally responsible for the design of curriculum. Students were to memorise and recall information, and emphasis was placed on fighting crime and not on working with the community in non-violent conflict situations (Stansfield, 1996). In our analysis we aimed to see whether there has been a recent move towards more
andragogical approaches to education and whether a shift had occurred to encourage problem oriented learning.

Future Issues/Strategies of the Ontario Police

Since 1992, the Ontario Police have made a major attempt to:

"develop a comprehensive strategic plan for training, education and development of police personnel in Ontario for the next decade which will meet the needs of the community, ensure that the training, education and development is current and appropriate and enhance the professionalism of policing."

(Ministry of the Solicitor General, 1992; p.13)

To examine some of the key issues the Ontario Police College organised a seminar in February 1992, which brought together key groups to discuss estimated future trends that would have major impact on policing. In particular the seminar looked at what existing specialties may become less important and why? And what others may become more important and why?

The diversity of Ontario’s population was one of the issues which drew most attention among senior officers. As mentioned previously, issues relating to multiculturalism, Ontario’s aging population, the
breakdown in the traditional family unit and the increase in single parent homes, required police to learn to deal with diversity. Training will have to be adapted to encourage younger officers to increasingly visit groups of elderly in their social settings and learn how to work with them. Equally the question of the accommodation of disabled employees into policing specialist functions and how such training could be done, and what training would be required to ensure that they are accepted positively into the workplace. In particular it was argued that rather than any officer being specialised in working with cultural, aging or non-traditional families, each officer should develop the skills required to deal with the issues arriving in any of these areas.

With the growing complexity of issues such as recruitment, career development, job sharing, flexi hours, employment equity, workplace harassment, and stress management, human resource management will become a specialised field within policing. This will require the input of external support within the police services and greater interaction between police and social and other organisations - a process which the working party recognised would involve a different form of training to that traditionally practiced by exclusively police based training colleges.
In terms of community policing, seminar participants highlighted that to date this had been practiced in Ontario mainly as a ‘canned’ programme, with specially designated community policing specialists. From their perspective, in the future, community policing will be seen more as a philosophy, involving a partnership in which police resources will be co-managed by the community and the police to mutually address and resolve problems. To this end, police will need to develop ethno-linguistic, facilitation, and human relations skills to operate in their new environment.

Furthermore, as public pressure mounts, policing will continue to experience an increase in accountability in order to justify the use of police financial resources. This will be further pressurized by the media, public and through new legislation. More specialised case managers will be required to coordinate human and physical resources and to ensure the effective use of time in major investigations. Pressure on accountability will be combined with reduced financial resources, and a pressure to do more with less, requiring the employment of financial analysts and marketing specialists.
In line with accountability is public expectation. As the public becomes more knowledgeable through the media, they become more vocal about their concerns, and media relations and media training will become a specialisation. Police, like other organisations, have to market themselves.

However, perhaps the area of greatest change over the next decade will be in the field of technology. Not only will computer technology impact communications systems, police information systems, crime detection systems, etc., but they will also encourage a shift in the type of crime and will serve to support organised crime groups.

With these issues in mind the Strategic Planning Committee, carried out a review of “best practices”, to help the Ontario Police to develop an appropriate training/educational programme (Laiken, 1992). The conclusion of this study was that in order to overcome the obstacles that will confront the Ontario Police in the next decade, the Police will have to pass through five phases towards organisational learning (Woolner’s Model, 1991). To this end a model was drawn up which highlighted the five stages:
• Informal/unplanned learning.

• Learning as a consumable, in which education takes place outside the organisation and is followed by the individual as a result of personal interest.

• Learning inside the organisation, where programs are specifically designed to respond to organisational need.

• Identification of learning agenda, where strong links are made with other educational organisations. This requires a more detailed process of needs assessment, performance objectives, and evaluation of training in terms of its impact on job outcomes.

• Task related learning involving the integration of work with learning, and coping with the daily realities of work life.

Thus, while not using the term andragogical learning, the Ontario Police Academy has developed a model which follows many of the same ideologies of learning. It implies the need to understand why it is important to learn a particular theory or practical skill and a readiness to learn that capability, hence Woolner's model stresses the importance of assessing learning needs and objectives and of police participation in both the setting and evaluation of learning objectives. It also stresses that police
education is a process leading on to problem-centred learning with line management and work teams being at the heart of the process which drives performance.

One of key questions which the Ontario Provincial Police will have to address over the next decade is how to implement this model in a way that it addresses the specific needs of the community of Ontario. From this perspective, the aim of the hermeneutic study outlined in the next chapter was to analyse the issues from the officers' viewpoint and to encourage them to reflect on the processes of organisational change/education required to achieve the specific goals outlined in this strategic planning process.