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SEARCH

Special Report

June 15, 1972

COMMUNITY RELATIONS — WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN SAN DIEGO?

The term Community Relations has been used and over-used in recent years to the point where its meaning often becomes obscured in the maze of bureaucratic and community rhetoric. The San Diego Police and Sheriff's Departments have units conducting what those organizations see as community relations activities. The smaller police departments in the county also give varying levels of emphasis to the concept as do a host of other agencies both in and out of the criminal justice system, as well as inside and outside the governmental arena.

Two San Diego organizations are in business solely for the purpose of improving community relations — the County Human Relations Commission (HRC) and the Model Neighborhood Community Relations Board (CRB), a city government operation. Perhaps by scanning their purposes and developing efforts over the past two years, we can get a glimmer of what the concept has evolved to mean in San Diego.

The following summary was obtained through the cooperation of Floyd Wilson, Executive Director of the HRC, and Wilbur Hagler, Executive Director of the CRB.

Just what impact the innovative efforts of these two programs will have on the nagging social problems which loom beneath the scrubbed surface of our proud community and intermittently threaten crisis, we cannot predict. But the ultimate measure of HRC, CRB and the rest will be their collective ability to bring equal opportunity and equal justice to the point where most groups and individuals who now feel the effects of oppression and injustice perceive themselves to be free of these historic burdens.

Despite important distinctions in the two programs, it seems clear that the common thread they share is race relations and the tensions that arise therefrom.

	HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)	COMMUNITY RELATIONS BOARD (CRB)
FUNDING SOURCE	SAN DIEGO COUNTY REVENUE	HUD MODEL CITIES (FEDERAL)
STATED PURPOSES	1. Encourage development of local human relations commissions; assist in their implementation. 2. Conduct, recommend and advise in activities which further mutual respect and understanding among all racial and ethnic cultures. 3. Conduct studies and inquiries into incidents of tension among racial groups and take proper action to alleviate such tensions.	1. Promote better cooperation between criminal justice agencies and residents of the San Diego Model Neighborhood (Southeast San Diego and San Ysidro). 2. Provide a vehicle for residents to participate in the formulation of policies, practices, and programs designed to make the justice agencies more responsive to the needs of the Model Neighborhood.
UNDERLYING PURPOSES	(Editor's perception) To foster racial calm through understanding and cooperation. To reduce racial tensions, prevent and suppress riots and disorders.	
AREA OF JURISDICTION	San Diego County; political subdivisions; school districts; etc.	The San Diego (City) Model Neighborhood, including most of Southeast San Diego plus San Ysidro.
SCOPE OF SUBJECT MATTER	The entire range of human relations issues, i.e., race poverty, criminal justice, employment practices, sexism, governmental accountability, housing patterns, education, health services, etc.	Limited to matters closely related to or having a direct bearing on crime, criminal justice administration, and the desires and needs of residents for law and justice services.

	HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)	COMMUNITY RELATIONS BOARD (CRB)
TYPICAL ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS EXISTING OR PLANNED	1. Organize sub-area community relations commissions; coordinate the activities of all human rights groups in the county. 2. Law & Justice — Develop community relations training programs for peace officers throughout the county; conduct police/community interchange workshops. Receive, record, and process complaints against police and other agencies. 3. Employment — Conduct directly and provide technical assistance to government and industry in affirmative action and other minority equal employment opportunity programs. 4. Health/Education/Welfare — Coordinate and support all citizen-based efforts to improve services in these fields for all racial/ethnic groups. Act as "broker" to stimulate such programs. Provide consultant services to service delivery agencies. 5. Housing — Combat discrimination in housing and encourage efforts to provide all racial groups with safe, sanitary, attractive shelter according to the desires and needs of housing consumers.	1. Promote voter registration drives aimed at fully integrating petit and grand juries in San Diego. 2. Develop community relations curricula for police personnel training — cadets, sergeants, lieutenants, etc. 3. Investigate and process citizen complaints against criminal justice agencies; keep cumulative records of such complaints; use this data to recommend procedural, policy, and statutory changes and innovations. 4. Develop eligibility list for interview panels which screen public safety job candidates. 5. Sponsor seminars, etc., to familiarize residents with criminal justice agency operations. 6. Coordinate special action projects such as a multi-service law and justice center located in the ghetto area administered by minorities with major decision-making involvement by the community. 7. Work closely with community and with the justice agencies to promote programs facilitating equal employment practices in those agencies.

TO SUBMIT NEWS OR COMMENTS TO SEARCH, CALL JEFF GHELARDI, CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLANNING – 239-7711, EXT. 1200.

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REGIONAL JUSTICE PLAN CLEARS FIRST HURDLE

The San Diego County-wide 1972 criminal justice plan for projects totaling about 1.4 million in CCCJ funds has cleared its first review by Sacramento. The California Council on Criminal Justice Plan Review Subcommittee supplemented by several Sacramento staff people met on Wednesday June 7th at the Sheraton Hotel on Harbor Island in a half day work session with San Diego staff. The Committee found the plan generally very sound but made a number of recommendations. The most noteworthy was a proviso regarding research and development.

Concern was expressed that in San Diego, as in most regions, not enough emphasis has been given to the evaluation of ongoing projects to determine their effectiveness in meeting their objectives and in responding to community needs. While San Diego had allocated $50,000 for unspecified research activities, this item was the last of six contingency projects which are reserved for situations where "first-line" projects cannot be implemented for various reasons. An agreement was reached to place research first on the contingency list and to schedule it as a first-line activity in the next annual plan.

The regional plan now goes to the full CCCJ Board for its review and adoption now scheduled for June 22nd.

MAYOR WILSON PUSHES FOR CONSUMER FRAUD INVESTIGATORS

During the last San Diego mayor's race both Pete Wilson and his chief opponent Ed Butler expressed concern over the growing problem of consumer fraud. Mayor Wilson is now trying to transform that concern into action. He has recommended that the City Attorney include in his 1972-73 budget request two full-time investigators to specialize in consumer fraud cases. Currently the City Attorney has no investigators and therefore must rely heavily on the services of the County District Attorney who has recently stepped up his fraud unit to seven attorneys and seven full-time investigators.

The field is a complex one involving both civil and criminal sanctions. Cooperation between City and County has been excellent, but the skyrocketing number of cases reported to the D.A., the Sheriff, and the City Attorney have taxed the resources of all these agencies in the last six months or so. Many authorities say that with the increased concern and awareness on the part of the public and of law enforcement, we will find that we have been seeing only the "tip of the iceberg."

If the Mayor's recommendation is approved by the City Council two more experts will be added to the team, but actual hiring will not be possible before about September of this year.

HOOBLER ORDERS POLICE TO WORK WITH WAR ON LITTER

June 19th through 26th has been designated "Clean-up, Paint-up, Fix-up week," according to Duane Dobbs of the War Against Litter Committee. His committee will work with the City Sanitation Department and the Police Department in a concerted effort to spruce up the "City in Motion."

Chief Hoobler has urged the citizens of San Diego not to treat this event as a one time thing, but as a reminder to work year-round to beautify San Diego.

THE CHARGER IN THE D.A.'S OFFICE

What does Mike Garrett, running and pass-catching superstar for the San Diego Chargers, do in the off-season? He's in the criminal justice game. As Special Assistant to the District Attorney, he joins a growing cadre of "minority liaison" or "community relations" type positions which have in recent years been gaining prominence in agencies throughout the criminal justice system.

In his new role, Garrett sees himself as a communications link between the minority community and the District Attorney. He spends most of his time circulating in the community, particularly around high schools and junior high schools. He looks into court cases which might have racial connotations and sometimes is able to act on behalf of defendants. He investigates situations where false rumors can lead to trouble and works to suppress such rumors. He tries to be generally available to people who need help.

Garrett frankly concedes that until very recently (he's held this job about four months) his acceptance by minority youth has been limited. He feels that he is just beginning to "learn who the actors are" to the point of being able to help people in trouble. He has great respect for his Chicano counterpart, Phil Saentz who "knows the key people, knows the ropes and gets things done." While the job of Special Assistant to the D.A. is not easy to explain, Garrett feels that he and Saentz have a real service to offer if only the community will learn to seek them out and take advantage of it. His phone number is 239-7711 ext. 723.

CHICANO FEDERATION BLAZES NEW TRAILS IN SOCIAL SERVICE

"My boy's in jail. What can you do?" "My husband was beaten up by the police. Help me!"

"I want a job, but I'm afraid of being deported."

"Some Black and Mexican students are squabbling. Help us work with them."

"My utilities have been disconnected. What can I do?"

These are the kinds of problems faced by Chicano Social Services which was established three months ago. The unit consists of one probation officer, two social workers, two County PEP employees and two student workers, all but the students paid by the agency from which they are assigned.

Nayade Keiger, unit supervisor, says that in pursuing their calls for help, workers have made contacts with the District Attorney's Special Investigators, the Sheriff's Office, Police Community Relations personnel, the Community Relations Board, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Municipal and Superior Courts, the Welfare Department, Defenders, Inc., the Probation Department, the Jr. High Schools in the Southeast Area, and many other public and private agencies. She says cooperation is usually best achieved when they contact people at the working level of the agency, rather than "going to the top."

With such a wide variety of problems to deal with and with so many people needing help how can such a small staff be effective? Unit members feel they do offer a minimal level of service for such a new operation. But they hope to expand by developing new projects including more staff, particularly in the area of legal services. They can be reached at the Chicano Federation, 233-6131.

GREEN BILL WOULD DISCLOSE POLICE COMPLAINT RECORDS

The process of disposing of complaints by citizens against police officers has long been a subject of controversy here and throughout the United States. One of the primary sources of public suspicion is the secrey under which most agencies process grievances. In California, Section 6254 of the Government Code gives the legal basis for such procedures. It prohibits the disclosure of investigations of complaints even to the complainant and to his attorney.

Assembly Bill 1883, introduced by Assemblyman Bill Green, proposes to change all that. The key language reads as follows:

> "...that all records relating to the investigation of any complaint against a police officer for violation of any rule, regulation, or law shall be disclosed to the complainant and his attorney..."

Hearings for consideration of AB 1883 by the Assembly Criminal Justice Committee are scheduled in Sacramento for June 20, 1972.