

MANITOBA SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY INC.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES:

In November, 1969, an inaugural dinner meeting was initiated by 4 local members of the then Canadian Corrections Association to explore the interest and need for a multi-disciplinary society focused on the field of corrections. The immediate interest and participation of a widely representative group of individuals involved in corrections in Manitoba confirmed the appropriateness of such an organization. A steering committee was chosen to begin detailed organization of the society.

The M.S.C. was founded on a strong commitment to involve and reflect the views of people from all the points along the criminal justice continuum and to address itself to problems arising in an equally broad spectrum. Most importantly, the society set out to become a forum where those from all disciplines and vocations concerned with crime and corrections could meet, exchange and express opinions and thus broaden their own knowledge and experience and hopefully also that of the public. These objectives were stated as follows:

- (1) to encourage co-operation among all individuals and groups in the Province of Manitoba interested in problems that derive from criminal and delinquent behaviour;
- (2) to study the problems posed by the administration of justice, prevention of crime, protection, probation and parole, correctional institutions, and of related groups, agencies and services concerned with the treatment of offenders;
- (3) to develop public understanding of the above problems;
- (4) to encourage criminological research.

During its existence, the M.S.C. has pursued its original objectives

in as vigorous and diverse a fashion as possible given the limitations of its budget and a voluntary Board of Directors, executive officers and committee members. The M.S.C. has held a variety of public seminars, meetings and conferences as well as engaging in special projects and consultations both at its own initiative and at the request of provincial and federal governments, in cooperation with other non-governmental organizations.

The minimal budget that has been available to date has precluded many basic and obviously necessary items relating to the strength and well being of the society: regular newsletters, publication of proceedings, basic research, clerical assistance, referendums, membership drives, etc. The continued viability of the society is dependent largely on the ability to recover from chronic negligence of these basic areas.

A member of the Manitoba Society of Criminology is automatically a member of the Canadian Association for the Prevention of Crime of Canada. This association is a non-government organization with the following purposes:

"Taking into consideration the constantly changing social and economic situation in Canada, to help develop and promote the administration of criminal justice and related services at a high level of quality and efficiency. This applies to public and private agencies dealing with children and adults in the fields of crime prevention, law enforcement and corrections".

The following professions are represented on the Board of Directors: judges, lawyers, law enforcement officers (R.C.M.P.; Winnipeg Police Department, etc.), university professors, clergymen, social workers, parole officers, correctional officers,

administrators and businessmen, and others.

The Board of Directors meets ~~bi~~-monthly except in the summer. The responsibility of a Director are similar to any board members' responsibilities; i.e. attending meetings of the Board on a regular basis; participating in committees of the Board according to his interests, expertise, etc. and helping in the preparation of special events like the annual conference.

It is notable that the M.S.C. is the only inter-disciplinary form in the area of criminal justice in Manitoba. As such, it represents no partisan positions but rather provides some opportunity for a synthesis of opinions from all areas of corrections irrespective of profession, program or employment affiliation. This position of independence and relative neutrality allows the M.S.C. to take thoughtful and objective positions with the benefit of a highly representative input from the field. This ability to be relatively objective and representative places the M.S.C. in an ideal position to act as a consultant to government and as an information conduit between the field and legislators. Indeed, this role has been filled in the past and is planned to continue. In addition, the M.S.C. has taken a more active role in public information and education and most recently published a series of 5 articles on the jury system as it operates in the Province of Manitoba. Such publications are time consuming in their preparation but further publications are anticipated as the M.S.C. strengthens its organizational base and is able to martial more adequate resources,

In 1975, the Manitoba Society of Criminology became incorporated as a non-profit organization. To accomplish this, new by-laws

were drafted and approved at a general meeting. This resulted in a change in the membership year to its present status, namely April 1, - March 31 in order to coincide with the same year end C.A.P.C.

Membership costs \$20 which enables the applicant to become a full member of MSC and C.A.P.C.

To assist the tasks of the executive, there are several standing committees, namely: Nominating Committee, Finance Committee, Public Education Committee, Program Committee, and Membership Committee. The chairpersons of each of those committees comprise a management committee which meets with the executive shortly before each board meeting to determine the agenda. Committees meet between each board meeting.

In addition to co-operating with the United Nations Association (Winnipeg Branch) in preparing submissions for the 5th and 6th United Nations Congress held in 1975 and 1980 respectively, MSC is mobilizing resources and gathering information and material for a series of public seminars that will contribute to the 7th United Nations Congress on the prevention of crime to be held in 1985 in Morocco, North Africa; MSC initiated a series of public seminars at Clear Lake, Manitoba. The first seminar was held September 15-17, 1979, which was assisted by the sponsorship of the Solicitors-General's Department which granted financial assistance and/or providing the Organization Committee, through the office of the Provincial Commissioner of Corrections, with reference material, research papers, and advice.

The Honourable Rob Kaplan, Solicitor-General of Canada, who headed the Canadian delegation to the 6th United Nations Congress held in Caracas, Venezuela, August 25 - September 5, 1980, emphasized in his final report the importance of the Clear Lake seminars as follows:

"A program of regional consultation seminars commenced in September, 1979. In this connection an important initiative was taken by the Manitoba Society of Criminology, the Winnipeg Branch of the United Nations Association of Canada and the Corrections Service of the Province of Manitoba. These three organizations working together sponsored a weekend seminar at Clear Lake, Manitoba, September 15-17, 1979, for the discussion of Congress Agenda Topic I "Crime Trends and Crime Prevention Strategies". (Report of the Canadian Delegations of December, 1980, page 7).

MSC sponsored an annual conference at Clear Lake, Manitoba, until May, 1982. All Clear Lake seminars were planned by an Organization Committee chaired by the Honourable Mr. Justice James E. Wilson, Court of Queen's Bench, Manitoba. The Provincial Department of Community Services and Corrections was continually supporting the Clear Lake conferences by rendering technical assistance, secretarial and communication services.

One of the most rewarding experiences for the members of the Society was acting as host to the Canadian Congress for the Prevention of Crime held in Winnipeg (July, 1981).

As a direct result of that Congress, which for the first time directed its focus towards measures for the "prevention of crime", the Board of Directors gave its approval to the formation of a crime prevention program entitled "Project Prevention" under the chairmanship of Dr. John Bock with the able assistance of Ms. Patty Park (as coordinator).

Project Prevention is a province wide program designed to allow local resources and local initiatives in various communities throughout Manitoba, to organize crime prevention programs and share that information with other communities within the province. Project Prevention is the coordinator of these activities and channels the information from one part of the province to all other sectors within the province by way of a newsletter.

Project Prevention organized a central facilitating committee which in addition to Society members had representatives from the Manitoba Teachers' Society, Manitoba Police Commission, Manitoba Trustees Association, Manitoba Government Employees Association, Manitoba Law Society, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Interfaith Council of Churches, Winnipeg City Police, public media, Chamber of Commerce, Department of Education, Manitoba Pharmaceutical Association, Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba, Manitoba Child Care Agencies, Winnipeg Junior League, Manitoba Society of Seniors, Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse, Canada Life, Hudson's Bay Company, McKim Advertising Company, members of the public and other business groups.

Each of the above interest groups organized internal sub-committees which developed and promoted ideas and activities related to crime prevention.

The program received such wide-spread support that in November, 1982, the Premier of Manitoba, the Right Honourable Howard Pawley, agreed to declare November, 1982, as Provincial Crime Prevention Month. The inaugural meeting and announcement was attended by approximately 30 individuals representing a cross-section of the various organizations involved.

The Committee continued to operate and grow and on November 3, 1983, the Right Honourable Howard Pawley attended a 7 a.m. breakfast meeting along with 342 interest Manitobans representing a cross-section of interest groups, agencies, and individuals at the community level. Once more, November, 1983, has been proclaimed Crime Prevention Month in Manitoba.

In order to facilitate participation at the community level, Project Prevention promoted the development of local committees in such places as Brandon, Dauphin, Portage la Prairie, Selkirk, Thompson, The Pas, Beausejour, and others.

In 1982, we developed the theme "Crime Prevention is Everybody's Business". In 1983, our theme is "Doing Nothing is a Crime".

In addition to the above, a separate Program Committee developed a series of luncheon speakers (a tradition of the Society) to take place on the third Friday of each month commencing in September, and ending in June. To date, our speakers have been the Minister of Community Services and Corrections, Mrs. Margaret Taylor (Citizens against impaired driving), Mr. Ken Johnston (Chief of Winnipeg Police Department) and the Reverend Bruce Miles (Chairman of the Mayor's Committee on Race Relations).

The board is so structured that ad hoc programs can be conducted on short notice should a guest speaker arrive from out of province or out of country who will be addressing members of the Society on a topic of interest to them.

In addition, separate seminars have been conducted of specific (as opposed to general) interest to one segment of the criminal justice system. For example, "the role of the medical examiner in criminal investigations"; "crime investigation techniques - R.C.M.P. and Winnipeg Police"; "advocacy for lawyers and judges".

In order to foster better relations between corrections and the judiciary, MSC was asked to organize a "Corrections - Judiciary" Committee in order to share information and to break down traditional barriers of communication in order to foster a better understanding of their respective roles in the criminal justice system.

The board consists of thirty-six members, all of whom are volunteers. The purpose of each is to facilitate and better understanding of the other persons role and to communicate concerns for their own role in the hope that each will benefit and learn from one another.

In truth, the Society need not be modest in its assertion that in Canada it is seen as one of the most active organizations having

conducted many pilot projects and programs of first instance which demonstrates the tremendous confidence held by others in the performance of the Society and its members.

Finally, it is necessary to recognize those volunteers who have served so capably on the board of directors. To that end, each board member (after serving one year on the board) is presented with a framed membership certificate as a member of the board of directors. In addition, an outstanding achievement certificate is awarded to any member of the society who has made an extraordinary contribution.

Individual membership cards, a three sided advertising podium, and plexi-glass signs were designed and acquired at cost for use at functions of the society.

None of the above would have been achieved but for the dedication and hard work of those individuals desiring an improvement of the system within which they work by a willingness to contribute and communicate their expertise and to learn from one another.