

## Police and Community:

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## Policing the

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## Inner City

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In this chapter the relationship between the police force and the community is examined. The nature of this relationship as a source of police ineffectiveness and impetus toward routine violations of democratic norms is analysed. In so doing, it explores the interplay between police strategies and the defensive mechanisms of the communities and how and why in this process these strategies are nullified. Finally, the attempts at correcting the problems in police-citizen relations, particularly the current innovations in inner city policing, are analysed.

The construct “police-community relations” originated in the late 1950s in the USA but was popularized after the conflicts with the civil rights movement of the 1960s as an instrument for treating racial relations [Maynall, Baker and Hunter 1995:41]. In the context of the developing negative reputation of the police for their liberal use of violence, and in the postcolonial spirit of imitation, the construct was imported in 1972 and an administrative unit set up in search of a mission. It became and remains a public relations concept. The purpose of the unit is “to foster improved communication and mutual understanding between the police and the community” [JCF *Annual Report* 1994:68]. This approach is founded on the notion that trust and confidence in the institution can rest on information and image manipulation. Decline in public confidence is thus often diagnosed as a failing of image management rather than a substantive quality of justice problem. This is a manipulative, unidirectional interpretation of the concept.

Here the concept of police-community relations is used descriptively, to map the power relations and modes of interaction between the police and citizens, and prescriptively, as a process of mobilizing the communities for crime related problem solving. It entails an examination of behaviour and their attitudinal sources rather than the police public relations processes.

Good police-community relations that are infused with a democratic spirit are participatory and inclusive rather than manipulative, reciprocal

rather than unidirectional; police priorities are operationally integrated with the felt needs of the communities rather than centrally imposed, ongoing rather than intermittent, and substantive rather than a public relations device [Maynall, Baker and Hunter 1995:41–46]. This type of police-citizen relation is instrumental to crime control and political stability, but it is also a measure of the realization of political values (of justice, participation, people's self-management). The issues of police legitimacy, effectiveness and rectitude are encapsulated in police-community relations. Getting this relationship right must therefore be at the centre of any meaningful police reform.

These issues (of legitimacy, effectiveness and so forth) are structurally most problematic in the inner city communities. There poverty, long-term exclusion from the labour force, a highly developed (perhaps dominant) informal and underground economy, ordinary criminal and political violence, police brutality, systematic violation of citizens' rights (dubious formal and few substantive rights to borrow Bottomore's distinction), injustice, and constant encounters with varied social prejudices are features of everyday life. The inner city provides an ideal laboratory for the study of police-citizen relations and their impact on crime control. It throws these processes into sharp relief, representing an intensive depiction of the problems of crime control, the maintenance of order and police-citizen relations. As these areas remain the locus of the problem, and as events in these areas tend to shape the national image of and the policy responses to violent crime, these are the spaces in which any worthwhile solutions should be considered.

If the problem of violent crime is to be solved and if new models of effective policing on democratic principles are to be developed, they are best developed and tested in the inner city. Moreover, Jamaica is becoming increasingly urban. According to the 1991 census, 50.1 percent of the population was then urban [ESS 1994:17.3], an increase from 41 percent in 1970 [Statistical Abstract 1976:8]. The problems of crime, disorder and police maladministration associated with the inner city are likely to be (are already being) replicated in other towns, including the more vulnerable tourist towns. For these reasons, two Kingston inner city communities were chosen as the research sites.

### **The Research Communities**

Community connotes spatial boundedness and a shared way of life. But it may be argued that community in this *Gemeinschaft* sense has been largely destroyed by the sociological concomitants of the market, thereby replacing the principle of territoriality with that of interest. Nevertheless, the significance of place continues to be recognized in general [Day and Murdoch 1993; Matthews and Danns 1980] and in urban Jamaica in particular [Seymour and Wint 1993]. In the Jamaican context, class, and in the Kingston inner city, political identity, tend to be conflated with place, thereby giving place

significance as an intensifier of social and political conflicts. The indicators of community are: citizens' identification with the area, level of social interaction (distinctive patterns such as school used and police station served) and the extent of political cohesiveness.

Urban communities vary in their social structure, political traditions, and relationship to the law (formal versus informal tenure, garrison versus nongarrison), that is, in the social experiences of their citizens and in the character of their relations with the police. The communities of Normanville and Alexanderville were chosen. Both are communities with high and increasing levels of informal housing tenure, which exhibit political homogeneity and sociodemographic profiles typical of the inner city. Normanville is located in western Kingston (where the problems are intensively expressed). It is not a garrison, and thus not an extreme case, but lives in the shadow of the principal garrison, or rather, to use a depiction that better captures the colonial type relations of dominance, the "mother garrison" of one party. Alexanderville shows garrison features of the "subject garrison" type and lives in the shadow of the "mother garrison" of the other major party. This community is the site of an experimental project in community based policing (CBP). The experiences here could decisively shape the attitudes of both the public and the police to the direction of police reform and crime control.

Normanville is bounded by Arnold Meadows (a pro-PNP garrison community) to the west; "no man's land", a vacated area created by the displacements from the political "war" of 1980, which separates Normanville from Green Villa (a pro-JLP enclave) and Clementville (a former pro-JLP satellite garrison and now contested by the newly formed National Democratic Movement [NDM]) to the south; Trinity Park (a pro-PNP community) to the north; and a declining commercial area to the east. Its identity is in many ways defined by this political geography.

It is a small, densely populated community with a population of 11,000. It has been fairly cohesive, is politically homogeneous and enjoys a strong sense of self-identity [see Seymour and Wint 1993]. This cohesiveness has been largely forged by political conflict with adjoining communities, the police and other "outside" institutions. However, in recent times, as there has been greater convergence and fewer violent conflicts in national politics, the community has become more divided, or rather, Balkanized, with the assertion of new area identities, leadership formation within these locales and new, often violent, conflicts between these areas. Many lament the passing of a not too distant past when Normanville was more cohesive, more orderly and more integrated with the rest of the society, however. Older residents constantly refer to Normanville's middle class past, when the homes were well kept and utility services were legally installed. They are quick to argue that it still has

a “respectable” working class and is being erroneously stigmatized as an inner city ghetto.

The population of Normanville suffers multiple deprivations. Some 42 percent of its labour force are unemployed and 40 percent are squatters who occupy the homes of those displaced by the violence. Government services, such as garbage disposal, are irregular. In practice, they are also deprived of various political rights, including freedom of association and the right to vote.

Local power, as is the case in most politically homogeneous communities, is channelized and vertically integrated into the party structures. Being co-opted in this way provides access to scarce state resources (mainly housing) but on a patron-client basis. Such a political methodology is somewhat disempowering for the clients. Consequently, their efforts have had little effect on outcomes for the quality of life in the community, despite the efforts of a council that coordinates the work of the civic organizations in the area. In not entirely fair elections, the community has voted homogeneously for the PNP, returning between 91 percent and 100.3 percent for the PNP since 1976 [*Report of the Director of Elections* 1976, 1980, 1989, 1993]. Politics has long been a prime source of upward mobility and access to various socially valued goods. These benefits, Figueroa [1994] convincingly argues, are derived from being members of these homogeneous communities (not as individuals). Sections of the population therefore have a stake in its closed, controlled-cum-protected, and conflict-ridden state.

Exploiting the closed character of the community is a thriving underground economy organized around drug trading, robbery, gambling and protection. At the time of the fieldwork, three crack bases were operating within the area alongside a larger number of cannabis outlets. The illegal survival strategies of the males have led to their popular classification as “modellers”, who live on remittances from relatives and friends or support from their female consorts, or both; “rude boys” or delinquents and petty criminals; or “dons” who are usually drug entrepreneurs and organizers of major income-generating crimes and who may also be able to acquire state contracts. Most males express little hope of viable jobs as their skill levels are low, and community stigmatization further reduces their chances of acceptance by prospective employers (with the exception of some state agencies where their political connections provide the necessary entrée).

Such exclusion from viable legitimate opportunities in the private sector and reduced access to state resources provide justification for the most predatory forms of illegality. According to one typically aggressive young man, “Yu have fi just look your own . . . take it from a man.”<sup>1</sup> While this predatory behaviour is primarily directed outward, in Normanville the members of the community are increasingly being preyed upon by their own. All types of work, including illegal work, and all types of community businesses, without

exceptions such as small sidewalk stalls, are now “taxed” by the gangs. Their activity puts a premium on turf control, which provides sovereign territory and a “taxable” population, secures drug bases and markets, and allows greater leveraging of politicians and state agencies. This premium stimulates expansionist tendencies and consequently foments conflicts.

The underground economy is becoming increasingly integrated. The larger gangs provide protection (in some instances, more effectively than the police) and supply a variety of goods and services. Warehouse burglars are able to regularly supply cheap, stolen goods to a local shop and to vendors. One of the local gangs engages in auto theft and supplies scarce car parts cheaply to a local garage and individual taxi operators.

Accumulation via the underground economy and the entertainment services has accelerated the process of social differentiation in the community. The more visibly affluent, upwardly mobile and physically secure are to be found at the intersection of the underground and the formal economy. They provide the young males with models of successful social adaptation and tend to become the leaders and new patrons of the community. They are asked and, on the accepted principle of reciprocity, are able to in turn ask for favours, thereby extending their linkages and networks.

Three territorially based gangs operate in the area. The dominant gang is international in the scope of its operations and has strong historical ties to the dominant party in the area. These gangs have erected clearly defined internal territorial boundaries, marked by wall murals, are fairly organized with clear hierarchies, and meet the diverse needs of their members for physical security, economic welfare, entertainment and status. They are more than just criminal enterprises. This explains their longevity and social entrenchment.

Historically, these gangs, and indeed the community, have been subordinate to the neighbouring garrison community of Arnold Meadows. This is reflected in the location of their respective leaders in the party hierarchy, their dependence on Arnold Meadows as a source of arms, the payment of tribute from robberies and other illegal activities, and their subjection to the informal system of criminal justice administered by the gang leaders from Arnold Meadows.<sup>2</sup> Their subordination has been broken and the structures of party political control weakened by the changes in the local political economy, namely, the decline of state patronage, access to more independent, albeit illegitimate, sources of income, and migration of the leadership. The party administration (the centralizing authoritative force) of the informal control mechanisms has been largely, but not completely, dismantled. The present, more decentralized, power arrangement and the more widespread access to the means of violence have resulted in a multiplicity of conflicts among and within communities and the more frequent resort to the use of violence to settle these conflicts.

Normanville has a long and continuing history of political violence. The sociodemographic (51 percent are under 20 years, and the mean age is 22.9 years), political and economic profile are highly criminogenic and facilitative of violence. In 1993 its rate of violent crimes, such as murder (128 per 100,000) and robbery (516 per 100,000), was, with the exception of rape (168 per 100,000), above the national and city (Kingston) levels [Table 5.1]. Property crimes, which are externally directed, were, not surprisingly, well below the national level. This type of community tends to display patterns that are consistent with, but acutely expressive of, the national trends. This community, like many others in the inner city, has been stigmatized, thereby locking its young males out of the labour market, depriving it of social services and targeting it for “hard” policing. It is caught in a catch-22 that leads to fatalism and provides many with self-justification for criminality.

The other research site, Alexanderville, is a small community with a population of approximately 7,000. Its physical-cum-political boundaries are discretely circumscribed, giving it a clear identity. It is a pro-JLP community bounded by the harbour to the south, and the pro-PNP communities of Ralph Town to the north, Alan Town to the east, and Lebanon to the west, and is within close proximity to the main commercial area in the centre of the city.

Legitimate economic activity in Alexanderville centres on small-scale craft, artisan, commercial and other self-employed projects. The northerly shift of the centre of commercial activity away from the city centre has decapitalized the area. The physical expressions of this, and the general inner city blight, are evident in the large number of destroyed and abandoned buildings in the “no man’s land” or border area between Alexanderville and Lebanon, the Chinese shops vacated by owners who have fled to safer territory, and, just across the border with Lebanon, a lodge building (evidence of a socially active working class in the not too distant past) that now houses a large number of squatters. These buildings (with the exception of those captured by squatters) now serve as receptacles for garbage, billboards for entertainment events and political graffiti, and sites for rape and other forms of criminal activity.

The progressive physical decay of the area is paralleled by growing social disorganization. In 1993 the level of unemployment in the community was estimated at 60 percent. The dependency ratio was 5:1, with 50 percent of households being headed by females, many of whom held low-paying jobs in free zone garment manufacturing and domestic service, were self-employed or dependent on insecure sources of income. Some 47 percent were squatters living in captured dwellings, and 72 percent of all households occupied a single room. As in Normanville, these squatters derive some benefits from the garrisoning of the area, because owners are unable to access their homes

or enforce the payment of rent, and 80 percent of the houses have a free and reliable, albeit illegal, supply of electricity.

This migration of physical and human capital and consequent social disorganization were hastened by the episodic gang-political violence and the vulnerability to criminal victimization. The community is politically homogeneous and, like other urban party strongholds, tends to be expansionist, thus fomenting political conflicts with the neighbouring pro-PNP communities (of Lebanon and Alan Town), particularly during periods of electoral competition. Its history is thus marked by high levels of political violence and major gang wars.

In this community, there has been an unbroken line of continuity between political violence and ordinary criminal violence. Two decades of “warring” between the community and its neighbours, between the political parties, and between gangs and families who have lost relatives and friends, have led to the accumulation of a great blood debt. Between 1986 and 1993, murder rose 80 percent; shooting, 300 percent; rape, 100 percent; and robbery, 100 percent. Thus in 1993, the murder rate for the community was 112 per 100,000; shooting was 308 per 100,000; and rape was 112 per 100,000. The national patterns are highly accentuated – with the rate of violent crime being 1,248 per 100,000, while that of property crimes was 406 per 100,000 [Table 5.1].

This persistent violence has skewed the age distribution of the population in favour of the young, with approximately 47 percent of the community being under 20 years, and 65 percent under 30 years. While this age structure is not radically different from that of the nation as a whole, a distinctive feature of these communities is the seeming invisibility of the middle aged section of their populations and their withdrawal from the central public spaces in which interaction with the young is usually facilitated. This demographic pattern in turn increases the potential for violence, as the moderating influence and authority of the older generation is weakened.

The density of gangs and crews is very high. There are nine of these territorially based youth gangs and organized crime networks in Alexanderville, with colourful names that mark their territorial domains (for example, the Alexander Street Posse), or that connote male sexual prowess (Superstud, Okro-Slime), symbolize a normative inversion (Renkers),<sup>3</sup> or competence in the use of violence (Snipers, Raiders). This high degree of fragmentation has led to greater intracommunity violence and greater difficulty in imposing order and compliance with community codes. However, this may still be coordinated by the local party leadership during periods of political contest.

As in Normanville, these processes have given rise to a thriving underground sector. Earlier, this was based on prostitution, but it is now organized around drug distribution, protection rackets, robbery and gambling. Proximity to the harbour and to the commercial district in the city centre gives the

community a comparative advantage in these areas. While females are more integrated into the lower end of the labour market and numerically dominate the own-account occupations, males predominate in the underground. In contrast with Normanville, where the petty hustlers and small community groceries are exploited by the gangs, in Alexanderville, this is directed outward against the commercial enterprises in the city centre.

**Table 5.1 Crime Rates for Research Communities 1993 (per 100,000 citizens)**

<b>Violent Crimes</b>	<b>Alexanderville</b>	<b>Normanville</b>	<b>Jamaica</b>
Murder	112	128	26.5
Shooting	308	360	45.6
Rape	112 *	84 *	52.5 *
Robbery	406	516	220.1
Total violent	1,248	NA	857.2
Total property	406	NA	622.4

Source: The Normanville and Alexanderville Police.

\* Rates for rape are per 100,000 females.

### **The Doctrine of Survivalism**

The inner city conditions are highly criminogenic. Social scientists are well advised to draw the concepts that are used to describe and explain human behaviour from the social lives that are being studied. In these communities, the notion of survival takes on a very literal meaning. People individually, and indeed their communities, are engaged in a constant and intense struggle (against the social, political and natural forces) for their very existence:

- The level of poverty and the absence of any reliable social support networks (with the exception of the gangs) direct a consuming struggle for physical (food, security) and psychological (the preservation of one's dignity and humanity) survival.
- Dependence on illegal sources of income, particularly street crime, and the constant risk taking involved, or simply having to live in an embattled community, adds another dimension to the struggle for physical survival.
- The intermittent "wars" often put the territorial and political integrity of the community at stake. Geocidal mapping indicates that the incidents of violent crimes are concentrated on the outer perimeter of the communities, and now (perhaps) the internal boundaries as well.
- The high vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters (given the state of the housing stocks and their density), such as fire, flooding (in the case of Normanville) and hurricanes, could easily erase large sections of these communities. Poor solid and liquid waste management, and outright state neglect, have created ecological hazards and an ever present danger of epidemics.



The concept survivalism implies rules and beliefs about social life and what constitutes appropriate behaviour. Here, the people are confronted with stark evidence of the precariousness of their existence in the highly visible cases of social failure – the friend who met a violent death at the hand of a rival gang or the police, mentally ill persons who have been abandoned by family and society, the hopeless crack addict, and the destitute street people of all ages who were once members of the community. In these conditions, criminality is increasingly seen as a form of social struggle. And as unvarnished market relations permeate most aspects of social interaction, giving greater impetus to competitive individualism, the society is perceived as operating on the principles of social Darwinism – whereby all are fair game, and one may resort to any means in the pursuit of one’s goals.

Social transactions in the wider society are characterized by an instrumental attitude to people. People are rarely treated as “good in themselves” with intrinsic value to their lives, but rather as tools to be “used”. Indeed, in Southside, a poster advertising a community dance with the theme “Gal fi mind wi, right behind the winery”,<sup>4</sup> was prominently displayed. Dance themes usually reveal aspects of the current thinking of young urban males. This theme may prefigure a redefinition of gender roles (based on the greater integration of females in the labour force), but essentially, it sought to extend the idea of the instrumentality of the female beyond that of sex provider (the winery) to that of a general material provider, in the service of her demanding and dependent male partner.

This crass *cosification* of people reduces societal resistance to victimizing behaviours.<sup>5</sup> It is solidly anchored in our history of chattel slavery, which was perhaps the most acute expression of this objectification. In this Hobbesian world, the nominal normative order and the law are seen together as an ideological façade that, if taken seriously, dulls one’s survival skills and increases the vulnerability to victimization and social failure. These illegal and corrupt means are, after all, seen by the urban poor (especially the youth) as the main means adopted by the élite and the contemporary local models of successful social adaptation.

Survivalism and the pervasive criminality associated with it offer a radical practical critique of the old normative structure. Acceptance of this normative system rested on the old compact of high rates of social mobility (via training and education), high social wage (public health, free education), state protection of the poor and the powerless, and commitment to change. Its rejection is linked to the reality that the normative structure has failed to “work” for the majority. In these communities, the faces of the working poor are all too familiar. Order is thus increasingly based on coercion, which cannot, in the long run, successfully substitute for internalized controls.

However, while generating greater distrust, this individualism is mediated by notions of moral obligation to the members of one’s community. The

boundaries of moral obligation tend to coterminate with the group, whose boundaries may be social, political or spatial [see Collins 1995]. In the inner city all three overlap perfectly. These shared characteristics tend to foster strong internal solidarities. This partially explains the strong sense of territoriality in the research communities and the inner city generally. Beyond this is a zone of amorality where violent and predatory activity is tolerated and even encouraged. This perspective is nurtured by the highly segmented character of the society, with its discrete social and political boundaries, which makes it easier to negatively stereotype other groups and to suspend the capacity for empathy with their members. This peculiar process of moral neutralization, coupled with survivalism (the Jamaican variant of social Darwinism), makes outwardly directed criminality, predatory behaviour and political violence more acceptable to the offender and his community, and makes the dons valued community assets because they erect the structures and provide the means to enforce these informal codes inside the community and direct predatory behaviour outward. For example, rape victims are preferably selected from the members of another community, or passers-by. Thus, despite the high rates of violent crimes in these areas (three times the national mean), impressionistic evidence, and, indeed, data from a recently concluded survey conducted by the author,<sup>6</sup> suggest that the rate of violent *victimizing* crimes tends to be lower than that of the country as a whole.<sup>7</sup>

This presents great difficulties for police-community relations. In what follows, the public image of the police in the inner city is described. Finally, in contrast to the traditional mode of policing the communities, the experiences at CBP (a police reform pilot project) in one of the research communities is analysed.

### **Policing the Community**

By all the standard measures described earlier (cleared-up rates, complaints from citizens), the police are even less effective in managing crime in the two research communities and the Kingston inner city than generally. The cleared-up rate for murder in western Kingston (which in 1995 had the highest murder rate of all the police divisions, accounting for 20 percent of all murders islandwide) was approximately one-third (14 percent) that of the national average (41 percent) [Statistics Unit JCF]. In Alexanderville, the cleared-up rate for murder was 11 percent.<sup>8</sup> The conviction rates are thus likely to be negligible (certainly in single digits). The key players in the underground operate with near immunity from the law. In both communities, crack houses operated openly in close proximity to the respective police stations. Indeed, both cooperation and some competition between the criminals and corrupt police are evident in Alexanderville, where both parties are involved in the drug trade and the protection business in the city centre.

The research communities, and others like them located in different sections of the city, remain beyond the effective reach of the control agents of the state. The police have in effect accommodated to the norms of illegality that prevail in these communities. Thus in Alexanderville, despite the high density of crack houses, for the three-year period 1992 to 1994, there were only two arrests for dealing in illicit drugs.<sup>9</sup> Police interventions are usually triggered by threats to social order, such as major gang “wars”. Beyond the capacity to enforce the laws, state agencies have instead had “taxes” levied on them in the form of protection money or “security contracts” as a condition for simply being able to deliver much-needed services, such as solid waste disposal, to some parts of the capital city. This accommodation with the gang leaders is based on both their social influence and coercive power.

Enforcement of community norms has been more related to the assertion of power by a dominant party, whose representative enforcers administer the informal justice system, rather than the police. The success of the high profile police “crime fighters” has been largely based on the exploitation of their position as political insiders to enforce the community norms rather than the laws (in many instances of violent crimes there is a happy coincidence of the two). As insiders they have easy access to information related to these violations, but they are obliged to ignore other violations of the law that are compatible with community norms. In these ways, the style of policing in effect legitimizes the existing norms of illegality.

The weakening of the system of party control, which is one of the consequences of the weakening and discrediting of the state in the 1980s, and the subsequent assault on the old politically affiliated dons who were at the centre of this system of control, has resulted in internal fragmentation and disorder, and in more intensive paramilitary type police interventions in the communities. This intervention has contributed to the poor state of police-citizen relations, which is reflected in the perceptions of the police. Generally, the police are seen as uncivil, disrespectful, disregarding of procedural laws, brutal to citizens, corrupt, behaviourally conditioned by negative stereotyping of the urban poor, often politically partisan in their actions, indolent and unresponsive to the security needs of inner city residents, and unjust and oppressive when they actually intervene [see Stone 1991a].

The local police (in Normanville) are discredited for their alleged collusion with criminals. This is sharply expressed in the following, which also captures the personalized nature and record of acceptance of the community codes that characterizes acceptable policing: “The police are informers. When you make a report, they carry your name back to the gunmen especially those [policemen] that drink [rum]. When I want to make a report I go to Central [a distant station] or tell Bigga.”<sup>10</sup> And as another respondent chided, “When

you go to the police with a problem, they always have an excuse [not to act]. They never have vehicle. They do nothing. And as someone dead, they run come. So I say they are with the gunmen.”<sup>11</sup>

As noted earlier, since 1991 public opinion on the police has been fairly uniform across the different social classes [Stone 1991a]; the views of inner city residents are not particularly extreme; they are simply more experientially grounded and thus more emotionally charged. Discontentment with an institution, its leaders, and specific actions or failures must be distinguished from alienation from the institution, or what Easton calls diffused legitimacy [Easton 1965]. With regard to the JCF, people tend to circumvent the structures in order to deal with selected individuals who, either from personal experiences or their reputations, enjoy their trust. This happens at all levels of the Force and was a regular occurrence at the police stations that serve the two research communities. This indicates not just a preference for personalized service, or a working of the informal circuits of political power, but also a profound alienation from the institution.

These perceptions and the conflicts in police-citizen relations are rooted in the logic of reproducing an unjust social structure, the definition of the police function and the style of policing that attends this. The colonial definition of the police function led to the construction of structures and practices that have since framed police-citizen relations. This highly centralized configuration of power affords little protection from abuses of power by the state.

The experiences in the research communities, particularly in Alexanderville where there has been an attempt at community policing, seem to suggest that the people favour a more service oriented police engaged in problem solving and conflict resolution (such as helping drug addicts, controlling the trade in hard drugs, managing violent domestic conflicts and mediating in gang wars). The people tend to prefer informal settlements of disputes, because they cohabit the same community with the families and friends of the offender. This is better facilitated by preventive interventions rather than arrests after the fact. This kind of redefinition of the police function requires reshaping the style and structures of policing and a new attitude to the people.

Indeed, the CPOs are already doing many of these things, but without the institutional support required to do them effectively. This apparent lack of institutional support and the evident differences in style between the CPOs and the units of other sections of the JCF that interact with the people, and even the other officers in the local station, give the correct impression that community policing is an isolated operation rather than a new policy initiative that may prefigure a profound change in policing style. The relationships of the CPOs with the community therefore tend to become personalized and viewed as exceptions that do not belie the rules and traditional dynamic of

general police conduct. Consequently, the benefits of their work tend to have very little positive impact on police-citizens relations and the general perceptions of the police.

The negative attitudes of the people toward the police are matched by equally negative views of the people among the police. Three readily identifiable attitudinal predispositions toward the urban poor permeate the JCF. First, there are notions of the inner city poor being in a state of dependency (much like children). This leads to a paternalistic disciplinary approach to policing. Second, they are seen as dangerous, resulting in the belief among the police that their job entails primarily political control. And third, the people are viewed as somewhat less than full citizens who are totally responsible for generating the problems and conflicts that consume their lives. This leads to the notion that the police function ought to entail some social cleansing. These attitudes are grounded in a Nietzschean view of the world as marked by an ethic of power in which the right to absolute power over the poor is presumed, as well as a dualistic view of people as either good or evil, engaged in struggle. This latter idea is linked to class related notions of the virtues and value of people. Such a perspective effuses a profound disdain for the marginalized poor and is hardly democratic.

In the tradition of policing that has generated these negative stereotypes of the urban poor and mutually reinforcing negative attributional biases in citizen-police relations, police at times foment gang-political warfare by the practice of detaining youths and releasing them in politically hostile territory. This practice has on occasion led to the death of the detainees. It is born of the idea (which is represented in the JCF) that the police should simply allow inner city males to kill each other. It is indirect social cleansing – with the unintended consequence of waiving the negative sanctions for the commission of murder and failing to consider the implications of this for the general problem of violence.

The population of inner city areas suffers overcriminalization, over-policing, class bias and stereotyping in law enforcement, and unresponsiveness to their policing needs. Overpolicing is evident in the use of paramilitary tactics.<sup>12</sup> This is most apparent in the inner city research communities. Here young males are invariably treated as suspect and dangerous.

The concept of dangerousness has its genealogical source in the profoundly political idea of “the dangerous classes”, which was initially a referent for the “riotous masses” who were confronted with the harsh conditions of urban England during the Industrial Revolution. In Jamaica, the idea was applied to the jobless urban poor during a similarly turbulent transition period after emancipation. It was then (as now) related to being black, poor and urban, that is, to otherness from the perspective of the élite. As blacks moved from the plantations into the towns, in closer proximity to the white élite, and

became more densely domiciled and resentful of the social and political oppression they were forced to endure, they were perceived as more threatening. This notion tends to be central to discourses on crime control and public order in highly segmented and unjust societies with large socially disadvantaged populations, and a vulnerable and insecure élite. Control innovations, styles and the boundaries of acceptable control practices by state agencies are, after all, but responses to perceived threats.

The extent of dangerousness is usually determined by five indicators [see Morris 1994]:

- Place of residence. This is taken by the police as a proxy variable for class, status, proneness to criminality and to attracting or committing violent acts. Inner city communities are considered “hot spots” and their residents most dangerous.
- Relation to the labour market. The less integrated one is into the formal labour market, and the lower one’s status is in it, the more dangerous one is taken to be. Most young males in the inner city communities are unemployed, underemployed or engaged in informal economic activity. These “locations” are taken to imply laziness, criminality or potential criminality.
- Record of contact with the criminal justice system (CJS). This serves to condemn and exclude.
- A defiant disposition. This is usually (correctly) interpreted by police interrogators as rebelliousness and resentment of police authority.
- Physical features. These include gladiator marks such as scars from knife or bullet wounds.

When inner city residence is combined with unemployment or low status occupations, the individual is correctly seen as socially disadvantaged, which is in turn incorrectly equated with dangerousness. The perceived dangerousness is amplified by an assumed socialization into a ghetto culture of violence, of irrationality, of a different value system and of otherness generally. This otherness attracts intense surveillance and harsh treatment by the police. The criminalizing treatment of these persons then leads to a record of contact with the police. Such unjust treatment in turn leads to resentment and hostility to the police (and the society), and solace is then found in gangs or crews. Involvement in gangs tends to invite violence, which results in gladiator marks. All the identifiers are now present, making for more frequent and difficult contact with the police in the future.

The social construction of dangerousness serves to legitimate security policing. Both are inextricably associated concepts. The concept of dangerousness serves to justify the treatment of crime as primarily a political rather than a social phenomenon. This notion thus incites indiscriminate

group treatment of inner city residents by subjecting them to paramilitary policing tactics and providing justification for the suspension of individual freedoms.

### **Defensive Strategies Adopted against the Police**

The alienation from the police has led to the development of elaborate defensive strategies against the police. The present mode of security policing assumes the existence of effective informal controls that support the legal codes; but both internalized controls and the traditional community-cum-party organized controls have been weakened. The normative codes and informal mechanisms instead reinforce consensual approval of some types of crimes and discourage cooperation with the criminal justice system. The gang often tries to get the approval of their “corner” on potentially divisive crimes. The “base” where collective cannabis smoking regularly occurs is often used as a forum for collective decision making on these issues. In working for a consensus, focused lobbying is at times done in order to neutralize any opposition to the proposed action.

Those outside the decision making (the older folk) are powerless to resist, although on some “corners”, older males with a record of past involvement in illegality and who are part of the “base” are included in the decision-making process. In one such case, a female member of one of the research communities decided to give evidence in court against someone who had committed a group approved murder. The murder of this witness was negotiated over a period of weeks. The difficulty was in evaluating whether she would actually cooperate with the court or was simply threatening to do so. As part of the process of confirming this, the witness was provoked, and in response she openly threatened to “go to (Commissioner) MacMillan”. This was later cited as conclusive evidence of a serious commitment to attend court and her disrespect for community codes of conduct. Thereafter, a mountain of evidence was cited to show that she had a history of socially undesirable behaviour and had become a general threat to all. She was, of course, murdered.<sup>13</sup>

The normative reorientation, the communal benefits derived from illegality and the embeddedness of criminals have given impetus to the development of community based defence strategies aimed at neutralizing the police. These are aimed at nullifying intelligence, patrol and investigation. Each is discussed in turn.

The police force is highly dependent on specially cultivated, and often paid, informers as its primary source of information. Police intelligence is nullified by stigmatizing, socially isolating and punishing these individuals, and labelling those who collaborate with the police as “informers”. The social power of the criminal and the isolation of the police find concentrated

expression in the attitude to the informer. In the community setting, the informer is labelled an instrument of the most threatening out-group (the police). In this dualistic world inhabited by insiders and outsiders, friends and enemies, members of Party A and Party B, poor and “rich”, the informer/informant is an anomaly, a violation of this order. He or she is both insider and enemy – the worst expression of bad faith. The essence of bad faith is the attempt to escape the self – in this case, the identity as a member of the community and the duties and responsibilities associated with this identity, including the duty to protect one’s own. The informer is, according to this logic, pretending to be what he is not and refusing to choose himself (as member of the community). In becoming an informer he dons an identity mask. From this perspective, it is not sufficient to simply unmask the informer; he or she must be punished by death. The stigmatization of informants, as a defensive tactic that cuts the sources of information to the police, is thus usually very successful.

In some communities there are elaborate early warning systems designed to detect the entry of police patrols. These were developed during intercommunity political and gang warfare, and later perfected against the utility companies. The early warning system against prosecution for using illegal utility connections involves a wide cross-section of the community, including children.<sup>14</sup> This is even regarded as somewhat of a duty. They operate in both research communities, but are most developed in Alexanderville, which has more entry points. There the drug dealers have furnished the system with cellular phones and erected permanent observation posts.<sup>15</sup> Beyond this, physical barriers, such as the narrow, poorly maintained roads, and even sleeping policemen erected by citizens to protect against drive-by shootings, also serve to check the movement of the police. Finally, if all this fails, police patrols may be persuaded to abort their missions by the rifle fire directed at them. Patrols are particularly at risk at night when full territorial control of the communities is asserted by the gangs. And during periods of intense conflicts, the local police stations are usually closed and operate as forts under siege until morning.

Investigation is nullified by obstructing police contact with suspects and prospective informants, misinformation, and by independently negotiating informal settlements with the aggrieved party. The outsider is never allowed free access and is always an object of suspicion and surveillance. A protective code whereby information is never freely given to outsiders or the control agents of the state, and networks that may actively misinform such agents, exist in the two research communities. Counter-reporting is used to divert and often redirect the police away from offenders within the community and towards the members of a hostile group. The response of the police to these obstructions usually to physically hold to ransom (in jail) the suspected



sources of information until the needed information is released. As with every other problem rooted in poor relations with the people, the police are forced to use illegal solutions that deprive citizens of their rights.

Informal agreements between victim and offender are perhaps most frequently used where victim and offender are from the same community. It is most easily done in cases of property crimes but is also negotiated in violent victimizing crimes such as rape. Informal settlements usually involve the return of stolen items or payment of restitution to “compromise” the case. Incidents involving persons from different communities, arising from violent group conflicts, may even involve the trading of cases, whereby each community agrees to withdraw its witnesses in the cases already brought before the courts (that is, a mutual dropping of charges), thereby completely disregarding and frustrating the criminal justice system.

Settlements of the latter type are assisted by the code that in some types of disputes (where relations are nonvictimizing, as is usually the case with young males or gang warfare) the police are to be avoided. Thus, where disputes cannot be properly mediated and where there is little trust between the parties, the result is usually protracted gang wars.

Where these methods fail, witnesses may be suborned or eliminated. Given the overreliance of the police on witnesses, to the neglect of physical evidence, the investigation usually collapses. In highly politicized communities with high crime rates, as in the two research communities, the local police station is often completely neutralized. Traditionally, this is accomplished by political permeation. Where this is effectively accomplished, as has been the case in Normanville, the local police may even be co-opted, thereby forcing not just a waiving of law enforcement but even assistance on local illegal projects. Reflecting the power and primacy of community and party identity in relation to their occupational identity, the constables with social ties to the community are expected and, indeed, tend to form part of its protective network. These elements in the local police station then assist in neutralizing all police action within the locale.

Recent events in Normanville – during the life of the research project – may illustrate this. There one of the major gangs was able to (unwittingly) use the police as a reserve in its war with another gang. During a firefight between the two gangs, the leaders of one set of combatants was able to direct the police against the opposing gang. This was made possible by contacts (usually political) within the local police force who received the report and gave credibility to it, as though it were a legitimate distress call by a concerned informant. Recognizing the apparent partiality in the police response, the opposing gang then came to regard the police as an extension of their opponents, for in effect, the local police force was manipulated to act as the tactical reserve of one of the gangs. Earlier, overt manipulation of this sort was a

feature of political conflicts; now it is done in less direct and more covert ways.

The local police having been nullified, special units of police simply make incursions from time to time. Night (foot) patrols are rare and must function as coordinated teams operating on guidelines that state the maximum distance one from the other and minimum number of units by area. Such tactical deployments suggest that these areas are treated as enemy territory in a war zone.<sup>16</sup>

This resistance to the police in the communities has its local bases in:

- People rightly attributing most of the crime to the social environment. Policing is thus seen as repression of their responses to these structural arrangements, that is, what is regarded as survivalism.
- Whole communities living beyond legality. Community benefits are derived from illegality and state corruption.
- The need for protection from outside predators (for example, rapists) and political competitors. Police are unable to fulfil this function, so community gunmen are accepted.

This process of resistance is perhaps most developed in western Kingston. An embryonic warlordism is evident, whereby communities are dependent on the power of local dons, who lead politically affiliated networks that are usually engaged in organized crime, to preserve order and to protect them. These communities exist, to a large measure, outside the jurisdiction of the state, beyond the reach of its fundamental institutions, such as tax paying, and have neutralized institutions such as the local police. While the state structures have not been completely supplanted, these communities have proceeded to develop their own alternative institutions, such as the payment of tribute and protection tax, and an alternative justice system. In one of the research communities this alternative system was fairly developed – and it would be a grave mistake to regard it as simple vigilantism. In many respects, it is an attempt to replicate the state system, but it operates on the inquisitorial principle whereby a judge or panel of judges is responsible for the investigation of reported incidents. It is fairly intrusive and deals with cases from child neglect and abuse to theft and murder. It is reportedly very swift and effective – operating primarily, but not exclusively, on the principle of retribution. Many readily report incidents to this institution rather than the police because there is a much reduced danger of reprisal from the offender and because the outcomes are speedier and the service less costly. It is seen by many as being more effective than the police. Thus, following a spate of killings in Alexanderville during the course of this research project, one party representative and prospective member of Parliament for the area publicly appealed to the local don to retake “control” of the area.<sup>17</sup>

This alternative system of justice first made its appearance in the urban areas in the 1970s with the maturity of the garrison communities.<sup>18</sup> Using the “model” that was developed in one of these garrisons as the prototype, it has spread fairly rapidly across the city in the 1990s.

Any informal system administered by underworld figures is likely to be highly problematic. The abuses meted out to these control authorities led to a revolt by citizens of the (subject and thus relatively deprived) garrison community Clementville against this system and the political leadership, which was viewed as approving it. But generally, as an alternative police, they tend to be more effective than the JCF as they employ a wider range and, in some instances, a more sophisticated combination of sociopolitical control mechanisms and resources – welfare and coercion, mediation and social ostracism, psychological manipulation and naked terror, among others.

This development is not just a response to the ineffectiveness of the state system; it is also a response to the experiences of injustice. Specifically, overcriminalization leads to disrespect for formal procedures, and the criminal justice system. According to Stone, “a disrespect for formal legal procedures” is fairly general in the society [Stone 1992].

The crisis has highlighted the failure of the traditional approach to policing the inner city, and its contribution to and envelopment in a cycle of criminal impunity. As the formal economy continues to decline relative to the informal, and the state remains feeble and incapacitated in opening viable legitimate income-generating opportunities for young people, the underground and the institutions and skills associated with it may be expected to continue to flourish. This will result in deeper criminal embeddedness in the communities and, consequently, a greater disjuncture between informal internal community controls and formal external police controls. In response, paramilitary modes of policing are reinforced, which in turn leads to poor police-citizen relations and poor information flow from citizens to the police, reluctant witnesses and low conviction rates. This in turn leads to police vigilantism, which further corrupts and delegitimizes the police force, thereby reinforcing the paramilitary mode of policing. These largely nonrecursive processes reflect the general crisis in policing. A schema of this process is presented in Figure 5.1. Although the broad process depicted in Figure 5.1 is presented as a sequential chain of interdependent developments, the process it attempts to describe should not be taken as a simple linear one. Some feedback and interactive effects are described, and the strongest of these are indicated in the figure by reverse arrows. The main positive feedback loops are indicated by the plus signs. It is a simple description of the process and it is not claimed that the factors described in the schema are all causally necessary for the outcomes that have been identified. As aspects of the processes in the schema have been elaborated in some of the earlier chapters, particularly

in chapter 1, to avoid repetition, the discussion here is limited to the more direct aspects of police-citizen encounters.

This cycle of impunity cannot be broken by the mix of hard paramilitary policing and community relations. The strategic approach of the police has been one of containment, which in effect attempts simply to maintain the status quo. This reactive approach may be appropriate where criminality is not embedded and the status quo is tolerable, but where drug dons dominate aspects of the life of the communities, this approach is unable to restore the rule of law to these communities. Providing the conditions for a turn, or return, to the rule of law would seem to involve altering the local power relations by removing the sources of the power of the dons (their drug wealth, guns) while simultaneously empowering the citizens so that they may feel free and justified in collaborating with the criminal justice system and ultimately to take greater responsibility for their own security. Such an approach would suggest a change in the style of policing.

### **Community Policing: The Case of Alexanderville**

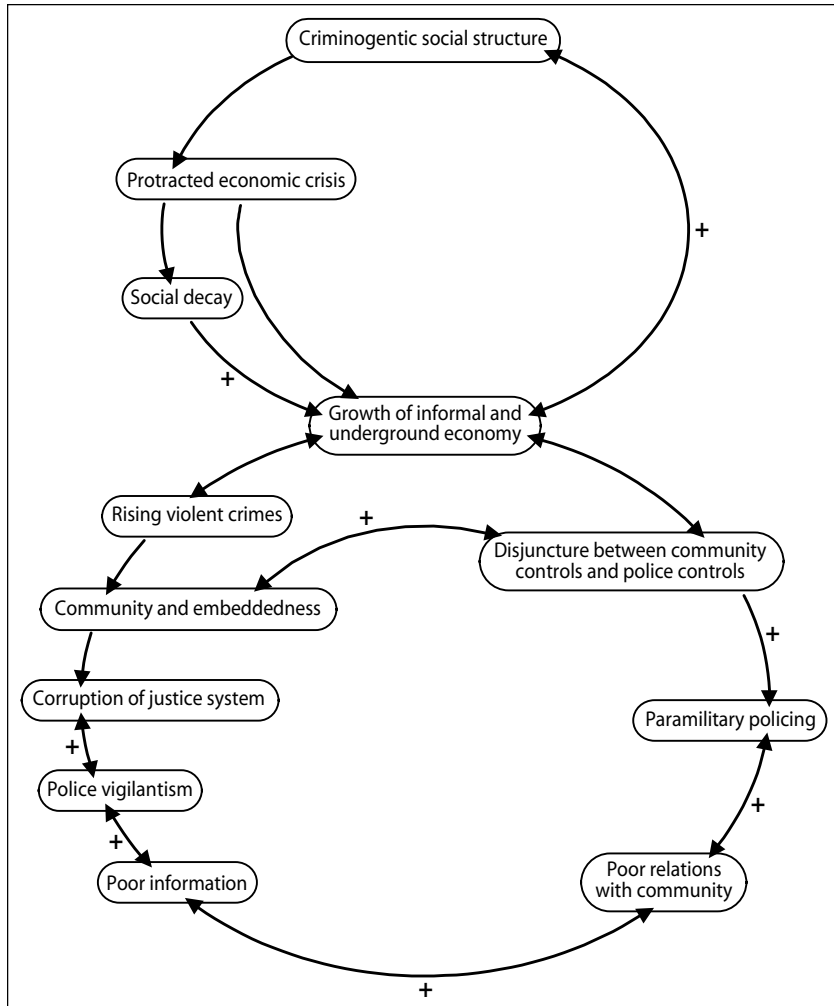
In an effort to develop a new approach, community policing was attempted in Alexanderville in 1994 as part of a pilot project initially involving four communities in the KMA staffed by 18 constables. CBP has its intellectual origins in the Kansas City preventive patrol experiments of 1972 conducted by Kelling et al. [1974] and its practical birth in “team policing”, which was introduced in North America in the 1970s. However, it matured as CBP during the early 1980s [Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux 1990:67–68; Leighton 1991:488–89]. As with other innovations in policing, the transfer of CBP to Jamaica was effected long after its development and without adaptation.

The essence of the construct is the idea that the police are most effective as partners with the citizens in the prevention and control of crime, and in ensuring an improved quality of life. This implies new power relations between the police and the public, their direct accountability to the communities, and a redefinition of the very goals of policing [Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux 1990:5; Skolnick and Bayley 1986:21–22].

CBP is based on a recognition of the limits of the police and the necessity and benefits of popular participation in policing. It represents a more civil model of police work and is more contractarian than power oriented. This intimates a profound philosophical shift from the notion of security as the sole responsibility of the state, which has been a feature of Caribbean polities.

Having redefined the role of the citizen in the formal system of social control in this way, community policing has exhibited considerable potential for breaking the mutually reinforcing negative attributional biases of the

Figure 5.1 Schema of Police-Citizen Relations



community toward the police and the police toward the community described above, which contribute to the impunity enjoyed by the more successful street criminals.

Recently, CBP as a concept has come in for greater critical scrutiny [Fielding 1994; Riechers and Roberg 1990; Goldstein 1987]. A number of problems have been identified at the conceptual level (and many more in its application):

- It is too state intrusive and expansive of the police role in society. CBP is seen as extending the police role beyond law enforcement to norm enforcement, thereby giving the police too much power in the society [Riechers and Roberg 1990].

- It is soft on crime [see Skolnick and Bayley 1986:50–58]. Research shows that it is more successful at reducing the fear of crime than the rate of crime. Nonetheless, it has shown successes in reducing specific categories of crime in specific types of communities [Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux 1990].
- It assumes community and a civic-communitarian tradition. But societies are tending to be more individualistic and atomized. On this basis, Manning [1984, cited in Riechers and Roberg 1990] criticizes it as a vain attempt to recapture a lost past.
- It erroneously assumes a congruence between law and community norms, and community and police values.

These objections are not exhaustive. They simply show that while the general direction in which CBP points may be fruitful (that is, putting police-citizen cooperation and collective problem solving at the centre of policing), it has limitations, some would argue very serious ones, and should not be uncritically applied.

Jamaica has a record of community involvement in policing. The district constables (DCs), Home Guard, and Neighbourhood Watch are all institutions of citizen policing [see Harriott 1994]. Running parallel with these state institutions is, as discussed earlier, a tradition of informal justice in some of the inner city communities of Kingston and Montego Bay and isolated rural areas in the eastern end of the island that have not always been socially integrative.

These forms of community involvement have all been problematic. The DC was a colonial imposition, an extension of an alien institution among an alienated people, and was never integrated into and made accountable to the community. The Home Guard was more successful as an instrument of crime management, but it became politically partisan and, as a result, was eventually overcome by the political resistance that it attracted within the JCF and the society more generally. Neighbourhood Watch, the latest in this tradition, was launched in the mid 1980s. It is the broadest in participation but the most limited in its scope of action, being simply “the eyes and ears of the police”. At the end of 1992, there were 300 Neighbourhood Watch groups in Jamaica. This represented some 15 percent of all community based groups in the island. Most of these groups were located in the KMA [Harriott 1992]. They rapidly multiplied in response to the increasing incidents of crime and the declining confidence of citizens in the ability of the police to protect them. By the end of 1996, there were 445 such groups [JCF *Annual Report* 1996:22].

Although they enjoy a close relationship with the police and are often initiated by the local community relations officers, the Neighbourhood Watch groups have not developed as simply passive adjuncts of the police. They actively lobby the Ministry of National Security and the JCF for better service

and tend to be critical of some of the shortcomings of the Force. At their national conference in 1993, they were critical of the police force for its differential responsiveness along class lines and its breaches of confidentiality by transmitting received information to criminals.<sup>19</sup>

There is a growing recognition of the limitations of the Watches in the context of poor police responsiveness. The national conference of 1993 effused a low self-evaluation and feelings of impotence. “We watch the criminals, but can’t do anything about it,” they lamented. This outcome has two connected sources: the uncritical transplant of the concept as applied in the USA/UK, and the influence of the old professional model of policing. The Neighbourhood Watch remains an imitative transplant (as opposed to a transposition) from the USA where the police have the capacity to make quick responses and the citizen has easy access to firearms. In this context, citizens may be asked to simply be the eyes and ears of the police. But neither of these conditions obtains in Jamaica, thus there has been a call for members of the Watch to become DCs. This is an attempt to give them a capacity to intervene. Community groups have tremendous potential for social crime prevention and problem solving. Despite the problems, the Watches suggest the existence of a significant social base for a CBP type of project.

It is against this background that the Alexanderville experience is best examined. The duties of the CPOs are to patrol, respond to emergency calls, assist in intelligence gathering, settle disputes, service Neighbourhood Watch and police youth clubs, maintain contact with crime victims, counsel juveniles, lecture at schools, and provide fora for the police to meet with interest groups to discuss and implement solutions to local problems.<sup>20</sup> With such a wide range of duties, it is inevitable that some will be de-emphasized. Moreover, some duties are conflicting. For example, some problems such as drug distribution have to be openly confronted in association with the citizens. This may conflict with the intelligence function, which may involve confidence building with the main offenders. These conflicting duties tend to generate considerable tensions as they are not simply contending priorities but, rather, duties that place the CBOs in conflicting roles.

CBP, as practised in Alexanderville, is less oriented on substantive policing and more focused on community relations. Its main substantive crime control work is in the area of settlement of domestic disputes (perhaps guided by the erroneous view that most homicides are a consequence of domestic disputes) and some efforts at social crime control. It is perhaps too early to judge, but CBP has had no apparent effect on the crime rate and, although there has been some success at incident solving, there has not been any attempt at problem solving.

Despite these limitations, there are some indicators of the potential of CBP for advancing policing in the Jamaican context when compared with

the traditional mode. This is best depicted in the new levels of collaboration with the people in the following case, in which a resident of the community stole a refrigerator from the community clinic operated by the local Baptist church. This crime constituted a serious violation of community codes, since the clinic is a socially valued service and the church a sacred symbol. The CIB and other such units were unable to make any advances in the case. Unlike these units, the CPOs received the support of the people and were told where the refrigerator and the offender could be found. After the negotiation of an informal settlement (on the initiative and to the satisfaction of community representatives), the offender was made to do community service.

This type of case would normally have been handled by the community don, as it represented a breach of community norms and threatened the continued provision of a valued service to the community. The outcome in such a case might have been different – perhaps even resulting in a gang war. If CBP, as practised here, simply retakes this ground from the dons, then it would have made an important contribution, as this protector function is an important source of the social power of the dons. It accords them the moral legitimacy to use coercive force.

These simple successes of cooperation in incident solving are helping to positively transform the attitude of the CPOs to the people (and may yet lead to problem solving). But this has come at the price of adaptation to, and acceptance of, community norms as the parameter of police action (which police officials may not be willing to accept). For example, there were no arrests for dealing in drugs by the entire staff of the local police station, despite the existence of at least 11 crack houses in the community. CBP generally claims a good record on the treatment of victimless crimes. Its handling of the drug dealing in the inner city communities of the USA is often celebrated as the biggest success of CBP in crime control and improving the quality of life in these communities [see Skolnick and Bayley 1986]. No attempt has been made to mobilize the community against the crack houses in Alexanderville, despite the strong cultural resistance to cocaine in these communities.

The effect of CBPs on police-community relations has been positive. It has helped to reduce the incidents of police brutality, false arrest, and community vigilante action in response to some types of matters. The community, however, continues to receive mixed signals from the JCF since CBP coexists alongside the “hard policing” of the special squads. The latter is stimulated by the high level of violence, and the former by the need to clean up the resulting alienation. Such an approach runs the risk of the CPOs being seen as a community relations sideshow or, worse, simply intelligence agents on whose information these central units act.



Citizens' involvement in the project is narrowly structured. A consultative committee provides this function, but it is mainly composed of persons who are associated with the community through their professional or business activity but who do not live in the community and are socially not representative of it. The consultative committees ought to simply cap what is a wider process of participation and, through this, the building of consensus on how best to police the community, which ought to occur in the daily activities of the CPOs. This is the essence of the democratic content of community policing.

But these activities have been more about simply multiplying the number and types of contact with the citizens than real consensus building. This is reflected in the ineffectiveness of the consultative committee that operates in Alexanderville. Thus, there is very little real community input into policy, priority setting, problem solving and a deficit of police accountability to the community. That the forms of contact with citizens and the concept of community policing as observed in Alexanderville are emptied of their democratic and consensus-building content should not be surprising as, from his or her experience in the Force, the typical constable becomes steeped in authoritarian practices and thus must be expected to have great difficulty fitting with the style of community policing.

Although most communities enjoy a tradition of civic activism, in Alexanderville, as in Normanville, this has declined (due to greater individualism and fragmentation) and most organized activity is canalized by the political parties. This has meant that police have had to either work with, and run the danger of being co-opted by the party system, or mobilize the associations it is supposed to partner; or alternatively, avoid community mobilizations (as was done) instead of working with selected individuals – usually business persons and church leaders. Either direction is problematic for CBP; both present it with problems of credibility and reduce the problem-solving capability of these structures that are supposed to operationalize police-citizen partnership.

In Alexanderville, the Kingston Restoration Company (KRC, an independent, credible, and resource endowed organization) initially facilitated the development of police-citizens fora. But these were not sustained. It is perhaps too early to make a general judgement, but it is evident that adjustments to this project are needed.

Despite these problems, the experience suggests that good policing not only improves citizen-police relations and offers possibilities for more effective crime control but may also help to transform the communities. Police reform may facilitate community reform. By reducing the dependence on “protectors”, it may assist in bringing the more positive social forces to the fore and strengthen their role in the leadership in these communities.

## Conclusion

Ultimately police effectiveness rests on the active associative participation of the citizens, especially the most victimized. This cannot be achieved without structured consultation with, representation by and accountability to them, indeed, a reordering of the power relations between police-state and citizen and a reordering of the power relations within the inner city communities. In a democratic ethos, legitimacy must rest on democratic principles. CBP, if nothing else, at a conceptual level, recognizes this. But in practice this has so far been lost to an incipient paternalism. A concerted remodelling of the general style of policing remains a challenge for the future.

In a large number of jurisdictions, the average citizen enjoys a fair measure of equality before the law (or at least an appearance of this), although this may stand in contrast to his or her material inequality. In Jamaica, the average citizen must face both an evident inequality in how he or she is treated in the criminal justice processes and material inequality.

This is particularly problematic at the level of attitudes and the affective orientation to the Force and justice system, and the development of alternative institutions on alternative principles. Social order in these communities has been related to the assertion of power by a dominant party. The weakening of the party system partly accounts for the greater fragmentation and disorder in the communities of the urban poor. The police by themselves have had great difficulty coping with these communities as order and stability cannot be maintained by force alone. More open opportunities, greater respect for people as individuals and greater social justice more generally are some of the important bases of lasting stability. Change in the model of inner city policing consistent with these values is vital, if these communities are to be reclaimed rather than remain extrastatal islands beyond the law.

As this and previous chapters exploring the nature of the crisis of policing in Jamaica suggest, the necessity of reform is great and the character of the changes profound. It is to an examination of the attitudes of the members of the Force to such a reform project that we now turn.