



Opening Address

at the conference

Social Change and Policing

April 1-3, 2007

Fairmont Empress, Victoria

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President
Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

Good morning,

Welcome to **Social Change and Policing**.

I am very pleased to be able to bring greetings from the Executive, the Board of Directors, and our members across the country.

This conference is on a very fundamental topic that is at the heart of policing, not only in Canada but world-wide.

We all recognize that change is the constant in our fast-paced lives, whether we like it or not, whether we resist it or embrace it.

The challenges in all professions and in society at large are

- to analyse the forces of change,
- to adapt to change that is occurring,
- to mitigate the negative impacts of change, and
- to influence change in a positive way.

Canada is considered by many to be a success story in embracing social change, and not only at home.

Canada's work abroad, by both governments and non-governmental organizations, is seen as an opportunity to export those values that foster *positive social change*.

This is especially the case in emerging democracies and societies in transition.

Our policing knowledge, drawn from our experience in serving a diverse and changing society, is an important part of what we share with other nations

Our own Association uses these exact words.

The mission statement of one of our committees [Crime Prevention Committee] is

“we support positive *social change* to enhance the quality of life for our diverse communities”.

But as we heard last night from one of Canada’s eminent experts in intelligence and security studies, we must not look at social change through rose-coloured glasses.

We cannot be naïve.

We must not underestimate the extent to which, and the ways in which, social change is occurring.

Nor can we ignore the opportunity that change provides for those whose mission is to de-stabilize our institutions and destroy our democratic way of life.

HR issues have been a priority for the CACP for many years.

The Human Resources Committee and its sub-committees have shown impressive leadership within our Association, in taking the initiative to address HR issues from a variety of perspectives, including:

- ethno-cultural competencies,

- awareness around gender issues,
- risk management in police HR planning and practices,
- training standards,
- recruitment and retention, and
- collaboration with mental health professionals.

HR issues are big ones for our Association, for our profession as a whole, and for those in positions of oversight and public policy development.

The CACP's active role in the Police Sector Council, both as an Association and through the Chiefs of Police who are volunteer members of the Board of Directors, bears this out.

The Sector Council's mandate is to "enable policing organizations, partners and stakeholders to implement innovative, practical solutions to human resources planning and management challenges".

We recognize that there are challenges, and our vision is that we in policing be informed about our environment and its impact on us, our work and the communities where we live.

Our environment today is extremely complex, and this is why our conference will be helpful to us.

The programme covers a wide swath.

It is designed this way to allow us to reflect on the human resources implications of a broad array of topics. Some of these are topics that we may not habitually associate as having a human resource component, or of being "people issues".

In Canada, we continue to look to Sir Robert Peel's principles as our guide: that police are of the people, entrusted by the community with special powers and mandated to serve.

Canada is an exciting living experiment.

It is a place first called home by our indigenous peoples.

Many have come here, over the years, from over the seas.

People continue to come here.

The most recent Census data are very clear: immigration is the reason our population is growing.

This trend will continue into the future. Statistics Canada projects that, by 2030, all of our population growth will be attributable to immigration.

People come here, optimistic that life will be good, that they will find safety and security, educational and economic opportunity, and a peaceful future.

They come—hoping to retain what is intrinsic to them, while embracing the values that make Canada a desirable home.

But amidst this hopeful throng are those who seek a base in Canada for other reasons.

Our federal government faces the challenge of risk managing the entry processes and selection criteria.

Our domestic and foreign policies are challenged to response to the changing demographic of Canada.

We seek new international trade opportunities that arise as a result of our citizens' ties with other countries. But we must not forget that Canada's interests come first.

Provincial governments are the ones that mandate many of the services required by newcomers to ease their transition into Canadian life. These services, which include policing, are adapting in order to be effective and relevant into the future.

Immigrants live in municipalities, which are struggling to meet their needs.

The Acting President of the Canadian Federation of Municipalities, and a councillor in my hometown, has asked:

Where is the national vision to co-ordinate and integrate the work of the federal, provincial and municipal governments, along with civil society and businesses to help new Canadians successfully settle...?

He makes a suggestion in relation to Canada's human resources future. It is very much like the suggestion we have made as an Association in relation to policing, and that others have made in relation to other current issues. He states:

It's time the federal government took the lead in forging a national plan and building a co-operative partnership with other orders of government...

Canada is changing—fast. The census points to important trends that must be addressed by federal policy makers.

Police services, mandated to protect the public from threats to its safety, face the challenge both of serving the public and being attuned to threats—including those of terrorism—that reside within the public and our services themselves.

We apply a great deal of effort into the challenges of serving a diverse community.

We are increasing our awareness, and that of our communities, about systemic racism.

We are looking deeply into our own organizations. We are trying to weed out current practices that are not appropriate, and to build up the ones that both reflect and result in positive social change.

We are treading very carefully through the minefield of discussions around “racial profiling”. We are communicating the distinction between this unacceptable practice and “criminal profiling” that is a tried-and-true *modus operandi* of policing.

We are addressing issues of recruitment and retention.

Our objective is to change the face of policing, so that it better reflects the gender and colour and ethno-cultural face of Canada.

This is a challenge being faced head-on by a cadre of police leaders who, by and large, continue to represent a white and male population.

Risk management permeates the life of a police chief or senior executive.

Risk management is now an element of virtually every decision we made where there are human resources issues at stake.

What is our roadmap? We are in new territory and the old rules do not apply here. This is why we are exploring leadership at this conference.

What does leadership mean in a time of rapid social change? How do police leaders demonstrate a leadership that is appropriate for our times?

Our speakers will initiate these debates and we will have the opportunity to discuss these important issues throughout the conference.

We will be talking

- about values and ethics,
- about bringing new technologies and knowledge to an analysis of information, and
- about preparing for the unforeseen.

Finally, we will turn our minds to the bigger picture of “policing”.

We will propose and debate the roles of police and others who work to ensure a safe Canada .

Why is this conference so important for the CACP?

Because we are committed

- to looking forward,
- to keeping pace with social change, and
- to building the corporate and professional competencies we need for Canada’s future.