

Police — Community Relations In Omaha Follow-Up

March 1986

A report prepared by the Nebraska Advisory
Committee to the United States Commission on
Civil Rights.

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Nebraska Advisory Committee to the
U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
September 1984

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Dear Commissioners:

The Nebraska Advisory Committee submits this follow-up statement of its review on police-community relations in Omaha, Nebraska as a part of its responsibility to advise the Commission on civil rights issues within the State. The report was approved unanimously by the Advisory Committee.

In 1982 the Nebraska Advisory Committee released its report, *Police-Community Relations in Omaha* which sought to ascertain the general status of police-community relations in Omaha. That report, based on interviews with city officials and concerned citizens, contained recommendations on the recruitment and selection process, human relations training, implementation of the model penal code on the use of both deadly and nondeadly force, community relations efforts of the department and the complaint process.

At that time the Advisory Committee found the city's recruitment efforts insufficient to meet the terms of a 1980 consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice and the Midwest Guardians, an organization of black police officers. The Advisory Committee found that the 1980 decree itself had been the source of resentment, misunderstanding and hostility within the police division and community. Many citizens of Omaha lacked confidence in the fairness and impartiality of the selection devices used by the police division, particularly the polygraph examination and oral interviews. There was insufficient inservice human relations training. The Advisory Committee also found that although Nebraska had adopted the Model Penal Code which restricts the use of force and the police division had adopted guidelines to implement the State statute, police officers were still involved in incidents where the force used caused concern to the minority community. The police division had not established guidelines for escalation in the use of nondeadly force. Police-community relations programs lacked direction and community support. Finally, the Advisory Committee found that the minority community had very little confidence in the citizen complaint process.

For this statement, 30 individuals, including some who had been interviewed for the earlier report, were contacted to obtain their views on the current status of police-community relations. A draft of the statement was circulated to all persons who participated. They were encouraged to tell the Committee what errors or

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Introduction

The Nebraska Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights undertook a study in 1981 to ascertain the general status of police-community relations in Omaha. That report contained recommendations on the recruitment and selection process, human relations training, implementation of the model penal code on the use of both deadly and nondeadly force, the community relations efforts of the department and the citizen complaint process. It was based on over 50 interviews with city officials and concerned citizens, including the three chiefs of police during 1980-81.

For this statement, 30 individuals, including some who had been interviewed for the earlier report, were contacted to obtain their views on the current status of police-community relations. A draft of the statement was circulated to all persons who participated. They were encouraged to tell the Committee what errors or omissions they found. Where appropriate, all responses have been used to correct errors, incorporated into the draft or used as footnotes.

¹ Clyde Tyndall, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983; Dorothy Nelson, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Francis Smith, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Woodrow Benford, Jr., telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Stacy Hopkins, telephone interview, Sept. 8, 1983; Eddie Statton, telephone interview, Aug. 22, 1983; Nebraska Morrow, telephone interview, Oct. 27, 1983; Debra Brockman, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983; Bernice Cooper, telephone interview, Oct. 5, 1983; Thelma Carr, telephone interview, Oct. 4, 1983; Phyllis Evans, telephone interview, Sept. 28, 1983; Ruth Jackson, telephone interview, Feb. 7, 1984.

² Dorothy Nelson, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983.

³ Debra Brockman, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983; Nebraska Morrow, telephone interview, Oct. 27, 1983; Francis Smith, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Phyllis Evans, telephone interview, Sept. 28, 1983.

Generally, the Advisory Committee found community attitudes toward the police division had changed since the time of the original report. Most persons interviewed acknowledged an improvement in police-community relations.¹ One person said "there is a new feeling (good) about the police."² Again and again people told the Advisory Committee that the officers were more visible and friendlier.³

Some people were cautious in their assessment, saying that there had been some improvement in police-community relations but that it remained to be seen if the changes were permanent.⁴ Several thought officers' attitudes had improved.⁵ One woman commented that when the police respond now "they treat you like human beings."⁶ But a few people cautioned that while they had noticed an improved attitude from the officers they thought it could have resulted from their positions in the community (two work in social service agencies and the other is a minister).⁷ One person who observed the change thought some was due to the fact that the chief of police and public safety director had let it be

⁴ Debra Brockman, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983; William Johnson, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983; John Whittington, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983.

⁵ Francis Smith, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Clyde Tyndall, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983; Dorothy Nelson, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; John Whittington, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983; Nebraska Morrow, telephone interview, Oct. 27, 1983; Phyllis Evans, telephone interview, Sept. 28, 1983; Debra Brockman, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983.

⁶ Francis Smith, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983.

⁷ Bernice Cooper, telephone interview, Oct. 5, 1983; Cheri Cody, telephone interview, Sept. 7, 1983; William Johnson, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983.

known that certain behavior would not be tolerated.⁸

A few persons interviewed told of particular incidents which to them illustrated a different attitude in the division. One woman told of meeting two officers while she was dining at a local fast food restaurant with two young girls. The girls were interested in the officers' uniforms and equipment and were especially excited at seeing a woman police officer. One of the girls asked the woman officer how to become a police officer and she answered, "stay in school and make good grades." The woman thought it was considerate of the officers to take the time to talk with the young girls and answer their questions. In her opinion such interaction improved police-community relations more than any special programs.⁹ A representative of the American Indian Center in Omaha told staff that when the Center asked the division to contribute a basketball it received not one but fifteen.¹⁰ A resident of South Omaha told of an officer who organized a swimming trip to a public pool for local children, providing food as well as transportation.¹¹

Several factors may account for the way the community now generally perceives the police

division. Recruitment has increased the number of minority and women officers, human relations training has increased, and programs have been introduced to increase interaction between officers and citizens in a nonconfrontative setting.

The police chief's own style also may partially account for the changing image of the division. When asked about the status of police-community relations one person said there was the appearance of a different style of leadership.¹² Chief of Police Robert Wadman was mentioned in virtually every interview. He was described as competent, professional and responsible.¹³ Citizens seem particularly impressed with his visibility, frequently commenting on his appearance at community functions and his willingness to listen and make changes.¹⁴ The chief has a reputation for taking and returning calls from citizens himself.¹⁵ A community leader, who asserted little if any progress has been made in police-community relations, told Advisory Committee members that Chief Wadman's willingness to meet with the community groups and establish dialogue means there is the potential for change.¹⁶

⁸ Thelma Carr, telephone interview, Oct. 4, 1983.

⁹ Bernice Cooper, telephone interview, Oct. 5, 1983.

¹⁰ Clyde Tyndall, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983.

¹¹ Phyllis Evans, telephone interview, Sept. 28, 1983.

¹² Wilda Stephenson, telephone interview, Oct. 20, 1983.

¹³ Thelma Carr, telephone interview, Oct. 4, 1983; Woodrow Benford, Jr., telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983.

¹⁴ Stacy Hopkins, telephone interview, Sept. 8, 1983; Clyde Tyndall, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983; Dorothy Nelson, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Thelma Carr, telephone interview, Oct. 4, 1983.

¹⁵ Ruth Jackson, telephone interview, Feb. 7, 1984.

¹⁶ Buddy Hogan, interview in Omaha, Feb. 1, 1984.

3. The City will utilize minorities and women on the recruiting team.

4. When placing job orders with community agencies, the City will emphasize its policy of hiring applicants based on merit and its interest in referrals of qualified minorities, males and females for all jobs.

5. The City will establish and maintain personal contact with educational institutions, and community agencies/groups, particularly those which have a large "protected class" enrollment or affiliation in the City's labor area.⁴

Generally, community members have noticed increased police applicant recruiting efforts by the city. A few mentioned seeing posters around town and newspaper articles about upcoming recruit classes.⁵ One business owner commented that the city was doing a better job of outreach because, despite many out-of-town trips, he noticed the campaign and knew some people who intended to apply for jobs.⁶ Officers recruiting for the division visited the American Indian Center. However, they were not very successful in attracting applicants.⁷

Several persons noted that they now see more minority and women officers on the street than in the past.⁸ One woman said she had noticed more minority officers and was particularly glad to see a black woman officer.⁹ Another resident said he considered the increased representation of minorities and women in the division a major factor in his perception of improved police-community relations.¹⁰

Employment figures from the police division support community observation that the recruitment has been successful. As of June 1980, there were one black lieutenant, two black sergeants and 20 black police officers in the division.¹¹ Based upon July 1982 data the city's 1983 affirmative action plan showed a total of 560 sworn officers, including 34 black males and two black women officers. There also were 12 Hispanic males, 17 white women and

one American Indian male.¹² The plan showed one black lieutenant and three black sergeants.¹³ Almost a year after that data was gathered, Chief Wadman told police-community relations subcommittee members that 48 officers of the 554 member division were black.¹⁴ In February 1984 Chief Wadman told Advisory Committee members the current staffing exceeds the 9.5 percent black goal thereby meeting the terms of the decree three years early. He told Advisory Committee members he intends to continue the aggressive recruitment efforts and wants to increase the number of black officers to a sufficient number so attrition will no longer be a problem.¹⁵ The chief said that while the division has been successful in recruiting blacks it has not been so successful in recruiting women and proposed to give more attention than in the past to that group. There is also a need to move minorities up in rank.¹⁶ The public safety director concurred and added that both he and the mayor support affirmative action and plan to continue the recruitment efforts.¹⁷ The city's affirmative action plan repeated this commitment, stating "The aim of the Affirmative Action Plan is to achieve and maintain proportional employment of minorities and women in each department and job classification throughout the City of Omaha."¹⁸

In addition to problems in recruiting minorities and women cited in the Advisory Committee's first report, the police division was criticized for the selection devices it used to choose recruits from the applicant pool. The selection devices then consisted of a written examination, physical agility test, polygraph examination, oral interview, medical examination and psychological profile.¹⁹ The physical agility test was never mentioned in any interview as a source of contention. Similarly the medical examination and psychological profile were not mentioned.²⁰ But the Advisory Committee in 1982 found the community had little confidence in the fairness and impartiality of the selection process, particularly

⁴ City of Omaha, *Affirmative Action Plan* (August 1983), p. 13.

⁵ Stacy Hopkins, telephone interview, Sept. 8, 1983; Thelma Carr, telephone interview, Oct. 4, 1983; Dorothy Nelson, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Frank Dec, telephone interview, Sept. 8, 1983.

⁶ Woodrow Benford, Jr., telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983.

⁷ Clyde Tyndall, telephone interview, Oct. 9, 1983.

⁸ Wilda Stephenson, telephone interview, Oct. 20, 1983; Dorothy Nelson, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Odie Williams, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Bernice Cooper, telephone interview, Oct. 5, 1983; Thelma Carr, telephone interview, Oct. 4, 1983; Raymond Hall, interview in Omaha, Jan. 31, 1984.

⁹ Charlotte Shropshire, telephone interview, Sept. 8, 1983.

¹⁰ Nebraska Morrow, telephone interview, Oct. 27, 1983.

¹¹ *Police-Community Relations in Omaha*, p. 12.

¹² City of Omaha, *Affirmative Action Plan* (August 1983), Workforce Analysis, np.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Robert Wadman, interview in Omaha, May 19, 1983.

¹⁵ Robert Wadman, interview in Omaha, Feb. 1, 1984.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Joe Friend, interview in Omaha, Feb. 1, 1984.

¹⁸ City of Omaha, *Affirmative Action Plan* (August 1983), p. 20.

¹⁹ *Police-Community Relations in Omaha*, p. 15.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Human Relations Training

The Advisory Committee found in its 1982 report that although social services make up the bulk of an officer's workload, the recruit and inservice training for Omaha police officers were seriously lacking human relations courses.¹ It recommended that the Omaha Human Relations Department and the minority community be involved in providing the training.² Since the report 40 hours of human relations training has been included in the in-service training program for all patrol officers. Chief Wadman said community organizations were contacted and invited to attend without much result.³ However, one person interviewed mentioned that the community had been invited to the training and seemed impressed by the gesture.⁴

City Councilmember Fred Conley said he thought the training had improved police-community relations.⁵ Ruth Jackson, Director of the Omaha Human Relations Department, called the training definite progress and said officers were learning how to deal with citizens more effectively.⁶

A portion of the training was developed and conducted by the Omaha Human Relations Department which several years ago had done similar training for the police division. The department staff reported:

The training which we provided was integrated into the Police Division's existing in-service training program. Our portion consisted of two (2) full days per training class. We trained 540 officers in groups of 20-25, and invested

over 1,200 hours in the design, preparation and presentation of the training. The officers involved had from six (6) months to 35 years on the job. Our course work included:

- analysis of values, perceptions and prejudices
- historical issues
- legal theories of discrimination
- case studies in discrimination
- exercises in breaking down stereotypes
- alienation as a shared experience
- analysis of mutual needs
- creation of positive images and actions

The method of presentation included:

- lecture
- guided group discussion
- films
- video tape
- games
- reading assignments

The class members evaluated the training in writing. The general consensus of the opinions was positive toward the training and the presentors, even though many of the officers began the class with strong

¹ *Police-Community Relations in Omaha*, pp. 20-21 and 25-26.

² *Ibid.*, p. 83.

³ Robert Wadman, interview in Omaha, May 19, 1983.

⁴ Stacy Hopkins, telephone interview, Sept. 8, 1983.

⁵ Fred Conley, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983.

⁶ Ruth Jackson, telephone interview, Feb. 7, 1984.

Police-Community Relations

The police division has undertaken several initiatives to promote more communication between officers and the residents they serve, a recommendation of the Advisory Committee in the earlier report. The initiatives have involved a new approach towards police-community relations. When the Advisory Committee conducted its factfinding for the initial study the community services bureau in the police division was made up of 15 officers. The bureau had two sections: the community relations section which included the human relations unit, public information unit and program development unit; and the youth aid section which only encompassed the safety education unit.¹ Some people interviewed in 1981 were critical of the community relations program and one called it a "joke."² City Councilmember Fred Conley said at the time that the improvement of police-community relations should be the responsibility of all police officers.³ Apparently this has been done.

Chief Wadman told subcommittee members that the community relations bureau no longer existed as a separate unit. Instead community relations has become part of the patrol function.⁴ Officers are assigned for a year to particular districts and made responsible for both crime protection and communi-

ty relations, a concept the Chief called "district awareness." Officers are directed to get out of their patrol cars and talk with citizens whenever possible. They also introduce projects such as neighborhood watch.⁵ Chief Wadman asserted that as result of district awareness the community saw officers as more than strangers in uniform.⁶

The district awareness program generally received favorable comments. A couple of residents called it an opportunity for one-on-one communication between the officers and citizens.⁷ Another individual said the officers are making a "real effort" to make themselves known to the staff and clients of the social service agency he directs in one of the districts.⁸ A person familiar with the South Omaha district said the community found the "district awareness" officer very friendly and helpful.⁹

As a part of the district awareness program, officers are walking a beat in North Omaha, the downtown area and a South Omaha neighborhood.¹⁰

Most North Omaha residents interviewed were very pleased with the beat patrol and thought it had reduced crime in the area.¹¹ Some commented that the officers were more noticeable now than in the

¹ *Police-Community Relations in Omaha*, p. 58.

² *Ibid.*, p. 60.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Robert Wadman, interview in Omaha, Feb. 1, 1984.

⁵ Robert Wadman, interview in Omaha, May 19, 1983; Feb. 1, 1984.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Stacy Hopkins, telephone interview, Sept. 8, 1983; Dorothy Nelson, telephone interview, Oct. 22, 1983.

⁸ Eddie Statton, telephone interview, Aug. 22, 1983.

⁹ Dorothy Nelson, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983.

¹⁰ Robert Wadman, interview in Omaha, Feb. 1, 1984.

¹¹ Odie Williams, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Woodrow Benford, Jr., telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Bernice Cooper, telephone interview, Oct. 5, 1983; Stacy Hopkins, telephone interview, Sept. 8, 1983; Frank Dee, telephone interview, Sept. 8, 1983; Thelma Carr, telephone interview, Oct. 4, 1983.

Complaint Process

There has been no change in the complaint process since the 1982 report when the general feeling was that the resulting investigations favored police officers.¹ In the 1982 report the Committee urged that the complaint process be given credibility by revisions that would balance the rights of officers and citizens such as use of an outside agency to take complaints and filing of complaints at locations other than the police division headquarters.² Although there have been no changes, the Committee did not find the strong criticism of the complaint process that it had earlier. A few of those interviewed thought the complaint process was still useless but only one person expressed the need for a citizen review board, a comment heard in the 1982 report.³ One person remarked that now when a problem develops, people contact the division and it is handled.⁴ Several said they had not heard anything recently about the complaint process, leading one woman to conclude that the process is not being used and some others to conclude that there is not the level of dissatisfaction with the police or the complaint process there had been.⁵

¹ *Police-Community Relations in Omaha*, pp. 68-69.

² *Ibid.*, p. 85.

³ Erlene Johnson, telephone interview, Sept. 7, 1983; J. Andrew Thompson, telephone interview, Oct. 28, 1983; Bernice Cooper, telephone interview, Oct. 5, 1983; Debra Brockman, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983; *Police-Community Relations in Omaha*, pp. 68-69.

⁴ Dorothy Nelson, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983.

⁵ Debra Brockman, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983; Phyllis Evans, telephone interview, Sept. 28, 1983; Odie Williams,

One person interviewed for this statement said she believed most people were not aware of the process and therefore did not file complaints or criticize the system. She had not noticed any public information effort.⁶ But both the chief of police and public safety director believe that most citizens are aware of the mechanics of filing a complaint.⁷

Chief Wadman said that as part of district awareness officers are supposed to let citizens know how to file a complaint. He also tries to mention the process when he makes his public appearances.⁸ He does believe that ongoing education about the complaint process is necessary. As a result of his contacts, a local television station did a series on the complaint process and the *Omaha World Herald* printed a full page section telling how to file a complaint.⁹ Public safety director Joe Friend commented that his office occasionally receives complaints. Often these are handled quickly and informally but, if appropriate, the complainant is told of the formal complaint process and assisted in filing a complaint.¹⁰ Chief Wadman said criticism of the complaint process may be less now because people are beginning to view the division as more

telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983; Cheri Cody, telephone interview, Sept. 27, 1983; Thelma Carr, telephone interview, Oct. 4, 1983; Dorothy Nelson, telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983.

⁶ Phyllis Evans, telephone interview, Sept. 28, 1983.

⁷ Robert Wadman, interview in Omaha, Feb. 1, 1984; Joe Friend, interview in Omaha, Feb. 1, 1984.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Omaha World Herald*, July 7, 1982; Robert Wadman, interview in Omaha, May 19, 1983.

¹⁰ Joe Friend, interview in Omaha, Feb. 1, 1984.

Use of Force

Use of force was a major concern in the 1982 report and was the topic of two recommendations even though Nebraska is one of the States which has adopted the Model Penal Code on the use of force.¹ This means that the decision to use deadly force must be based on the danger presented by the actions of the suspect, not the crime committed. The Omaha police division has a written policy on the use of firearms, dated March 1981, which follows the State law and gives specific guidelines.² The model rules on escalation of force published by the International Association of Chiefs of Police were adopted by the division after publication of the Advisory Committee's 1982 report.³ These prescribe the circumstances under which chemical mace, the baton and choke holds should be used or avoided.

Chief Wadman said officers are required to qualify monthly with their firearms and added that the requirement is one of the most stringent in the country.⁴ He believes officers are trained to know when it is legal to use firearms but that a more comprehensive approach on the use of force is needed. He would like to establish a physical fitness program for all officers and has one in the initial stages. He told the Advisory Committee that a

physically fit officer would possess and show the confidence and ability to prevent a situation from escalating into a potentially deadly situation.⁵

Concern about deadly force was heightened in September 1983 when two police officers shot and killed a suspect who had resisted arrest and injured both of them. One person used the confrontation to illustrate her contention that police-community relations have not improved.⁶ According to some of those interviewed, there was a feeling in the community that the man was shot because he was black.⁷ A few persons believed the two officers should have been able to subdue the man without killing him.⁸ City Councilmember Fred Conley noted that there has always been a certain level of suspicion in the black community when deadly force is used and that while the current recruitment program and increased number of minority officers on the force has helped to lessen that feeling, it is still there.⁹ One minister observed that the suspicion is based on "past history of unequal treatment by the police department." He added that the community will not lose its suspicion in just a couple of years (the amount of time Chief Wadman has been in Omaha).¹⁰

¹ Model Penal Code, sec. 1307(2)(b)(i)(IV) (Proposed Official Draft).

² *Police-Community Relations in Omaha*, pp. 34-36.

³ Robert Wadman, interview in Omaha, May 19, 1983.

⁴ Robert Wadman, interview in Omaha, Feb. 1, 1984.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Darlene Smith, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983.

⁷ William Johnson, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983; Darlene

Smith, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983; Fred Conley, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983.

⁸ Darlene Smith, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983; Nebraska Morrow, telephone interview, Oct. 27, 1983; William Johnson, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983.

⁹ Fred Conley, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983.

¹⁰ William Johnson, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983.

Conclusion

The police division still has its critics. Some residents are skeptical of Chief Wadman. One said that he is just more sophisticated than his predecessor in handling the press and the community and that community groups are intimidated by his style.¹ Another said Chief Wadman was a "good talker" who had different styles for handling different groups but that nothing had changed.²

The 1980 consent decree between the city and the Midwest Guardians was considered by some interviewed for this statement to be the only reason for the increased recruitment efforts.³ For those people, the real test of the city's commitment to a representative police division will come when the consent decree is not in effect. One individual asserted that once the terms of the consent decree have been met, the number of black police officers will start to decrease.⁴ He contends that the police chief's failure to make a public statement about future affirmative action goals is indication that there is no real commitment.⁵

A few persons interviewed for this statement reported they were unaware of any special recruitment effort.⁶ And one person who noticed the result

of the recruitment program, namely more minority officers, made it clear that in his opinion black officers are not necessarily more enlightened than white officers.⁷

Regarding human relations training, several persons, even those who supported the police division and noted an improvement in police-community relations, thought more human relations training should be done.⁸ One said that there probably could never be enough.⁹ A representative of the American Indian Center of Omaha said more training, particularly on the special problems in dealing with American Indians, should be included. He added that as far as he knew no one had been asked to provide such training, but he felt the Center had a responsibility to volunteer so the need could be met.¹⁰ One woman said the police officers needed training that would expose them to institutional racism.¹¹

One person, though, contended that the human relations training is not needed. In this person's opinion, officers should be told by the chief what behavior is required and what punishment will be given if that standard is not met. White officers

¹ Ann Else, telephone interview, Oct. 26, 1983.

² Darlene Smith, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983.

³ Erlene Johnson, telephone interview, Sept. 7, 1983; John Whittington, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983; Fred Conley, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983; Buddy Hogan, interview in Omaha, Feb. 1, 1984.

⁴ Buddy Hogan, interview in Omaha, Feb. 1, 1984.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Joseph Ramirez, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983; Darlene Smith, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983; J. Andrew Thompson, telephone interview, Oct. 28, 1983.

⁷ Raymond Hall, interview in Omaha, Jan. 31, 1984.

⁸ John Whittington, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983; Wilda Stephenson, telephone interview, Oct. 20, 1983; Clyde Tyndall, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983; Woodrow Benford, Jr., telephone interview, Oct. 12, 1983.

⁹ John Whittington, telephone interview, Oct. 21, 1983.

¹⁰ Clyde Tyndall, telephone interview, Oct. 19, 1983.

¹¹ Wilda Stephenson, telephone interview, Oct. 20, 1983.

and confrontations between the police and residents.²⁹ Others thought the division should re-establish the police/youth camping program that was tried several years ago, and encourage officers to join more service organizations so the community and officers could get to know each other as individuals, not stereotypes.³⁰

A business owner who reported "significant" changes in police-community relations believes the community also has a responsibility for improving police-community relations. He said the community needs to let everyone know about the success stories, officers who are doing good jobs and programs that work to reduce crime or improve

²⁹ Ann Else, telephone interview, Oct. 26, 1983; Charlotte Shropshire, telephone interview, Sept. 8, 1983.

³⁰ Charlotte Shropshire, telephone interview, Sept. 8, 1983; Nebraska Morrow, telephone interview, Oct. 27, 1983.

relations. He pointed out that news of the hostile confrontations spreads quickly in the community but the opposite is not true. People need to know when the police make a good judgment.³¹

The cautious detente in police-community relations in Omaha may have been best expressed by the director of the human relations department. She said that in the past the police chiefs have built a wall between the police division and the community. Current policies under the new administration are trying to tear that wall down but it is going to take time. She added that change will not come overnight and it may take as many years to tear down the wall as it took to put it up.³²

³¹ Nebraska Morrow, telephone interview, Oct. 27, 1983.

³² Ruth Jackson, telephone interview, Feb. 7, 1984.