

## I. INTRODUCTION

On October 10, 1989, President Joseph D. Olander charged the Personal Safety DTF. These were the details of our charge:

Concern about campus security has been reported nationwide. In our own state, the Senate recently approved Senate Resolution 8712, which states that crime is increasing on college campuses "at a rate higher than that in society." On our own campus, incidents have occurred involving indecent exposure, student office forced entry, sexual assault, etc., that underlie my decision to charge this DTF. As a community, we need an opportunity to think about and articulate our concerns about our personal safety.

This inquiry should not establish the issue of the Campus Security Department becoming an armed Police Department as a central focus. In 1985, the administration went on record as opposing the establishment of an armed, commissioned police department at Evergreen. The administration's position is based largely on the recommendations of a DTF charged to examine this issue in 1984. At present, the authority to establish an armed, commissioned police department lies with the Board of Trustees. However, the Department of Labor and Industries is investigating and has just reported its findings concerning an unsafe working condition complaint filed by one of our officers. Simultaneously, the Senate Higher Education Committee is taking a system-wide look at campus safety, including the proposition that all public campuses have armed police departments. While the Labor and Industries investigation focussed on the safety of our security officers, the Senate committee is concerned about general security on public college and university campuses. I ask the DTF to keep these external factors in mind, but not to let them dominate the discussion about what we, as a community, can do to improve personal security on campus.

### Charge to the Personal Safety DTF

The charge to this DTF is to:

- 1) determine how all campus constituencies evaluate their personal safety;
- 2) determine the causes of the individual's sense of being safe;
- 3) make recommendations (with associated costs) on how to increase personal safety on campus.

## II. SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION GIVING RISE TO THE DTF

1. The Public Context: During the summer and early fall of 1989, The Olympian focused some of its local coverage on safety at The Evergreen State College; at least one article was circulated by Gannett News Service and picked up by a paper outside Olympia. The first articles focused on the fact that outside entrances to campus buildings were unlocked 24 hours a day; the Olympian expressed concern about possible loss of state property and danger to Evergreeners from individuals loitering in the buildings after class hours.

In the fall, the emphasis shifted to the dispute between Campus Security and the Administration over whether Security officers were being asked to work in unsafe conditions when they felt it necessary to respond unarmed to potentially life-threatening situations. The issue had become hot enough to be aired on KOMO TV's Town Meeting and to prompt the station to invite well-known crime victims and victim advocates to speak on the show.

By early October when President Olander charged the DTF, the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries had fined Evergreen \$180 for allowing its officers to work under unsafe conditions, and the college was seeking clarification of that ruling. The Administration had begun a policy of locking doors of selected buildings and negotiating with community members desiring access after hours. President Olander's charge specifically asked us not to make the dispute over arming security a central focus, since not only was a state regulatory agency already involved, but two bills about campus safety were to be introduced in the Legislature. It looked as if Evergreen would not be able to decide for itself whether its Security force should be armed.

In this climate of public controversy, which did not address safety issues raised by a broad spectrum of Evergreeners, the DTF made a firm commitment to avoid rhetoric, evaluate the specific needs of our community in as much detail as possible, and make practical recommendations based on its evaluation.

2. The Statistics: Statistics compiled for use in the 1990 legislative session did show a marked increase in crime over the five years 1983-88 on Washington's four-year college and university campuses. Total crime incidents rose 18.8%, and incidents of Part I crimes--murder, homicide, rape, robbery, and assault--rose 11.2%. A chart comparing total crime incidents campus by campus shows an alarming disparity between Evergreen and all the other campuses for the year 1987-88. Every campus except the UW and Evergreen experienced a decline in total crime incidents; the University of Washington had a very slight

increase from 2,192 to 2,217, and at Evergreen the increase was from 272 to 401 incidents. Between 1988 and 1989, the total incidents rose again to 609. To understand the personal safety of Evergreeners in realistic terms, it is necessary to understand the details accounting for this increase.

First, a correction. "Suspicion" is included as a category in crime statistics reported to the Legislature, though it refers simply to security officers investigating reports and not to verified crimes. When "suspicion" is subtracted from the crime total, the figures are 211 incidents for 1986-87, 280 for 1987-88, and 464 for 1988-89. This change in itself reduces the slope of the graph.

The majority of the increase is in Part II crimes, such things as public indecency, liquor violations, sex offenses, malicious mischief, and vagrancy. Of these, malicious mischief is by far the largest category; in 1987-88 there were more than twice as many cases of malicious mischief as cases of public disturbance, the category with the next highest number of instances. The next year, 1988-89, the number of public disturbances held almost steady, but the amount of malicious mischief was five times as high. Clearly malicious mischief accounts for a rapidly increasing proportion of the total crimes. Almost all the malicious mischief occurring at Evergreen is graffiti and related acts of vandalism, such as cutting the cords on Coke machines to protest the company's involvement in South Africa. At Evergreen, Facilities workers report nearly every case of graffiti, even small statements written on bathroom walls, to Security as separate incidents, something that would never happen at the University of Washington. Many Evergreeners are angered by this particular crime, but it is an offense affecting people's environment, not their personal safety.

Drunkenness and liquor law violations are more clearly related to personal safety; incidents of these crimes have not increased between 1986 and 1989.

Among all the Part II crimes, the single most dramatic increase is in sex offenses, which went from two in 1986-87 to four in 1987-88 and twelve in 1988-89. This is the most disturbing statistic in relation to actual and perceived personal safety.

Among Part I crimes, the largest increase is in larceny, which has more than tripled in the past three years. This category includes thefts from parked cars, classrooms, lockers, and rooms in the residence halls.

The statistics show that incidents of simple assault have actually declined over the past three years, from twelve in 1986-

87 to seven in 1987-88 to five in 1988-89. Aggravated assault seems to have leapt dramatically from no incidents to one to six over the three-year period, but Security Chief Gary Russell explains that three assaults were categorized as aggravated only because they were directed at Campus Security officers, not because they were carried out with weapons or caused bodily harm. Although the total number of reported assaults has remained almost steady, there is still a slight increase in aggravated assault.

Perhaps the major reason for the increase in crime at Evergreen is simply the increased number of people resident on campus since 1987. In the fall of that year, a new student apartment complex was opened, raising the resident population from 600 to 800. In 1989, the population rose again, to 1,000. Security Chief Gary Russell says that graffiti and related vandalism are the only crimes primarily perpetrated by students. For the rest, Russell sees Evergreen as a population victimized by outsiders. Outsiders victimizing Evergreeners seem to be individuals or small groups from the local area, or former students. Some are disturbed, some are opportunistic, and some just want to party.

### III. WHAT THE DTF DID

We spent several meetings sharing our own experiences and feelings about safety on campus, as well as the related, highly politicized issue of guns on campus. We decided to frame a referendum-type question on armed police for our questionnaire, but otherwise to focus on small practical changes that could be made to increase Evergreeners' actual and perceived safety. We spent a couple of meetings brainstorming the content of questions for the questionnaire and critiquing Steve Hunter's drafts of the actual questions. We worked out a plan for distributing the questionnaire--a mailing to all staff and faculty and all students in Housing, plus taking the questionnaire in person to a representative sample of academic programs beyond the Core level. In choosing this procedure rather than mailing to a random sample of Evergreeners, we recognized that we were giving up the ability to claim absolute statistical reliability for the results. We considered the questionnaire to be in the nature of a referendum--a chance for people to state their views--and wanted to extend that chance to as many people as possible, without leaving the process unduly open to tampering. We waited for the Human Subjects Review Board to make suggestions and approve our questionnaire, and we administered it as planned. The rate of return for the questionnaire was quite high; we are gratified by the results of our work.



#### IV. MAJOR FINDINGS

Reviewing the results of the questionnaire and noting the high response rate, the DTF saw that personal safety is a high-priority concern for Evergreeners. Yet this is not an unsafe campus. Nearly 90% of the respondents feel as safe or safer on Evergreen's campus than they do on other campuses or in downtown Olympia. Based on questionnaire results, the greatest perceived risk to personal safety is slipping on the bricks in Red Square. It is followed, at about half the level of concern, by fear of assault and theft. Though some of the community's fears are in response to sensationalist media coverage and events happening at other campuses, these fears are none the less real. We think personal safety should become a higher priority campus-wide.

The Personal Safety DTF questionnaire reconfirmed that a large majority of Evergreeners are against arming Campus Security officers. During fall quarter, faculty voted against arming Security at one of their regular meetings, and students organized a referendum, with similar results. Before receiving the DTF's questionnaire, the staff had not been polled. In designing our referendum question for the questionnaire, we included a preamble several paragraphs long describing the advantages and disadvantages of each choice. Seventy-five percent of the respondents (557 of 744 responding to the item) indicated a preference for the current practice of relying on the County Sheriff for armed back-up. Twenty-five percent of the respondents favored arming Evergreen's security staff.

## V. COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Some factors such as the waterfront location of the college, women's insistence on the right to unrestricted mobility, the staunch anti-gun position of all groups in the community, and the environmentalist values of a large percentage of the college population make for some security problems specific to Evergreen. When people walk the beach trail to muse and enjoy a natural setting, do we want to protect them in that location by installing lights and phones? When people walking to their cars at night have to pass through areas with dense shrubbery right up to the edge of the path, do we preserve every plant? Since theft from cars is becoming a major problem, do we cut down more woods to create parking lots closer to residences? Since both of the bills seeking to arm Security died in the Legislature, and the former situation was deemed unsafe, will we now be happy to rely on the Thurston County Sheriff for almost all crisis intervention? What will be the future role of Security?

The DTF does not have absolute answers to any of these questions, but in our recommendations we have sought a reasonable balance among conservation of the environment, the community's perceived needs, and the financial resources of the state. In seeking this balance, we want to raise the community's perceived needs into higher visibility than heretofore and hold the college's administration accountable for its response.

Many comments written on the questionnaires made suggestions proposing changes in the campus community atmosphere--educational programs about drugs and sexual issues faced by students, increased evening social and cultural events to assure a more populous night-time campus, etc. Some individual members of the DTF would probably be in support of most of these recommendations. Responses to our questionnaire and written comments on it are a rich source of information about this community for anyone wishing to begin or promote a new activity.

We all support efforts already made by Vice-President Gail Martin who currently finances one self-defense workshop per quarter run by Feminists in Self Defense Training (F.I.S.T.). The DTF recommends that these workshops continue.

However, we chose not to recommend any further changes in community life as a DTF because of the disappearing nature of this group. We thought it would be useless to argue for changes without instituting mechanisms for carrying out those changes. We went for what we thought we might reasonably get and what the largest number of Evergreeners rated as their highest priorities.

## VI. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The first three of our four recommendations were the most popular with the campus community according to the questionnaire results. The fourth refers to a discrepancy we noticed as we were doing our work.

The DTF recommends:

1. Increased visible foot patrols by Security and student assistants to Security.
2. Increased outdoor lighting.
3. Vandal-proof outdoor telephones in remote locations around campus.
4. Security record-keeping standardized with other campuses in the state.

### 1. Foot Patrols

598 respondents to the questionnaire (80.6%) indicated that frequent, visible foot patrols would improve their sense of personal safety. In addition, the DTF received an overwhelming number of comments suggesting increased foot/bike patrols in parking lots, housing, and the beach and organic farm trails. The comments mentioned Security as well as Crime Watch/Escort volunteers.

Increasing foot/bike patrols by Security would make them more visible and more a part of the community. Their presence would make the community more comfortable and might even deter crime because they would arrive on the scene unannounced rather than in a car. Criminals might be more hesitant to commit a crime if they knew that they might be approached without benefit of car lights announcing an arrival.

Increased patrols need not be limited to Security officers. The DTF recommends that paid positions be funded and filled by students or other part-time help during peak hours. Students should wear an item of clothing identifying them as student security and must be adequately trained. The DTF further suggests that the organizer for Crime Watch/Escort Services become a paid, part-time position reporting to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, coordinating their work with Security. Survey respondents felt that this service needs increased visibility as well as responsible volunteers. Providing a paid position would allow the coordinator to put time into promoting



the program, defining to the community who volunteers are, and organizing volunteers more thoroughly to provide better coverage.

## 2. Outdoor Lighting

In responding to the Personal Safety DTF, 562 community members (78.1%) identified increased outdoor lighting as an important item in increasing their sense of personal safety. The questionnaire also asked respondents to state where lighting should be increased; they identified some general areas across campus. In an evening walking tour of the campus by the members of the DTF, we identified more specific locations within the areas of concern.

The issue of outdoor lighting is complicated by the sometimes dense natural surroundings of the campus. In some instances, foliage is interfering with the existing light fixtures' ability to adequately light the surrounding area. Furthermore, if the foliage continues to grow unmanaged, it will eventually render many existing light fixtures completely useless. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the DTF that when foliage interferes with outdoor lighting fixtures, the foliage should be thinned/pruned or removed so as to derive the maximum amount of light from each fixture. The paved walkway leading from Parking Lot B to the LAB buildings is an area where thinning or pruning is needed. Regrowth of foliage renders current lighting ineffective.

If thinning or pruning is necessary, all efforts must be made to maintain the integrity of the plant or tree. However, if thinning or pruning will not rectify the situation then the plant/tree must be removed.

The DTF recommends that the EAC formulate a policy procedure that will allow the grounds crew to do their work without constant consultation.

Of equal importance to increased outdoor lighting is the continued vigorous maintenance of existing outdoor lighting campus-wide.

The DTF recommends that outdoor lighting be increased in the following areas:

- 1) Parking Lot C--front parking spots and the middle island.
- 2) Stairway from Red Square near the flags.
- 3) Library Loop side of LAB I between the Greenhouse and the outdoor benches.

- 4) Wheelchair path from C-lot to the COM Building.
- 5) Path in front of the COM Building.
- 6) Path from Red Square to the COM Building.
- 7) Outdoor pavilion.
- 8) Path between Mods 306 and 307.
- 9) Mod bridge to laundry room.
- 10) Driftwood entrance to the Mods.

### 3. Outdoor Emergency Telephones

528 respondents to the survey (78.1%) reported that they would feel safer if emergency telephones were installed in key remote areas of campus.

After analyzing the many areas suggested by the respondents, the DTF recommends the installation of emergency telephones in the following areas (these listed in order of highest to lowest priority):

- Parking Lot F (by center light at front of lot).
- Parking Lot B (between 2nd & 3rd row, closest to campus).
- Parking Lot C (closest light to COM building entry).
- Trailhead to Evergreen Beach.
- Red Square in front of Daniel Evans Library.
- CAB outside of main entrance (near bookstore).
- CAB outside of first floor entrance (near CAB 108).
- COM building outside of main entrance.
- Library loading dock.
- Organic Farm outside of farmhouse.
- Bus shed in from of entrance to the Mods (if no payphone is placed by US WEST).

We further recommend placing signs at appropriate areas informing people where the nearest available emergency telephone is located. Suggested locations are trailheads, LAB buildings, tennis courts, housing community center (facing soccer fields), track, Indian Pipe Loop (dorm loop).

The telephones should be adequately lit, placed on a pole with an easily recognizable symbol, and easily seen from a distance. The telephones should also be as vandal-proof as possible, and have a direct connection with Campus Security.

Many respondents reported a need in the Campus Residence Halls, as well as off-campus areas. The College is not

responsible for the off-campus areas, and the DTF suggests that someone contact Coopers Glen for appropriate placement of whatever equipment they feel is necessary. The Campus Residence Halls are already equipped with telephones, and are accessible 24 hours a day.

We also recommend asking US WEST to place two, possibly three pay telephones. Placement would be as follows: kiosk by Library Loop bus stop, kiosk outside first floor of CAB, and by bus stop at entrance of the Mods. As with the Emergency Telephones, these would need to be adequately lit, vandal proof, and easily recognizable from a distance.

#### 4. Security Record Keeping

Washington State has mandated that Evergreen's Security staff keep records in compliance with the national system of Uniform Crime Reporting. However, only Part I crimes are reported under this system; Security Officers at Evergreen and other colleges tend to keep records of Part II crimes according to systems used by local county or city law-enforcement agencies. Consequently, there is a great deal of local variation in the reporting of these crimes. According to Chief of Security Gary Russell, Evergreen Security gets many reports of small amounts of graffiti which would never even be reported elsewhere. The exact division of functions between Evergreen Security and the Thurston County Sheriff is still being negotiated, but the DTF recommends that Evergreen Security standardize its reporting of Part II crimes to outside agencies with other campuses in the state, so that factors like community sensitivity to graffiti do not get translated into a higher crime rate.