

Crime can be beaten - the CAP story of hope

Chairman Mr Stan Kaplan, Vice-Chairman Mr Izzy Kirsh, honoured rabbis, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

CAP is a story of hope and inspiration. It is the story of how crime can be beaten. Let me repeat that: **CRIME CAN BE BEATEN!** By harnessing the power of intellectual analysis, innovative thinking, community mobilisation, security expertise, heroic volunteerism, charitable generosity and sheer chutzpah, CAP has shown how one of the most formidable problems in South Africa today can, with G-d's help, be solved. G-d has blessed us with miracles to enable CAP to defeat crime. CAP is a remarkable story of heroism and tenacity, of bravery and courage and of dedication to the cause. It is a story of 'Miracles and Wonder'.

Let us try and understand what CAP has, thank G-d, achieved. CAP has through fresh analytical thinking, created a new paradigm for public space security and has brought down contact crime in its area of operation between 80 % and 90 %. Let's make that a bit more real. What is contact crime? Contact crime is human-to-human crime. By definition it is violent and almost always involves a gun. Just to make this a bit more real. In October of 2006, the month before CAP launched its first division, the greater Glenhazel area consisting of about 2000 homes experienced at least 18 contact crimes for that month. I say at least because at that stage our system of reporting crimes was incomplete. This means once in less than forty eight hours somebody in a relatively small neighbourhood had a gun at their head. People were regularly being hijacked, held at gun point, tied up in their homes and suffering many other horrors. CAP launched in November of 2006, resulting in an immediate drastic reduction of between 80 % and 90 % contact crime. In fact, in the last 5 months the Glenhazel area has been averaging less than one contact crime per month. This kind of success has been repeated across our CAP regions. In Saxonwold, for example, in the last 6 months there has only been one! And, thank G-d, there are so many more examples.

CAP is a story of volunteer heroism and tenacity. The CAP project is the most awe-inspiring initiative I have ever participated in. The sheer number of hundreds and thousands of volunteer hours that have been put in, dedicated individuals who have sacrificed so much to bring safety to their areas is quite astonishing. Tonight I would like to pay tribute to these remarkable heroes of this remarkable team of people. The volunteers of our CAP Central Committee, James Teeger, Bradley Sifris, Benjy Porter, Saul Goldstein and Lawrence Brick who meet for hours each week in addition to their other responsibilities within the organisation. CAP area chairmen and past-chairmen and their committees, Sol Swartz, Alan Greenstein, Arnold Bassarabie, Mandy Yachad, Benjy Porter, Colin Goldstein, Stanley Shane, Brian Mel, Neil Jankelowitz, Charles Kramer, Herschel Mayers, Joel Amoils, Della Lawrence, Lance Turner, Jonathan Gimpel, Lawrence Diamond and Neil Myerson. All of these are volunteers who have given and continue to give hours, hundreds and thousands of volunteer hours, on a regular basis. I would like to thank you, in particular and your wives, husbands and your children who have borne the brunt of your absences away from home, night after night, as you have shown this remarkable dedication and tenacity that is required in order to make this project work.

Then, the unbelievable professional staff at the ICCC, the Incident Control and Command Centre, headed up by Mark van Jaarsveld, who has been trained and nurtured by Bradley Sifris, who have together built up a remarkable security unit that co-ordinates, analyses and holds the project together from a security operational point of view. The ICCC is staffed by young, motivated, highly capable people who serve with excellence and kindness amidst the high pressure of a crime fighting environment. Special thanks to Tanya Greenberg and Ilan Osrin, Dale Dermick, Daniel Shapiro and Anthony Muller. Thank you to Saul Hertzikowitz and Gilly Levy and the entire team at the CAP Administration Division, who ensure the financial sustainability of this project. The work of the CAP Administration is crucial because without financial sustainability there is no project. Thank you also to our dedicated service providers: Seven Arrows, Core Tactical and Qmec, and also to Mervyn Swartz, executive director of the Community Safety Trust. I would like to pay tribute to the CSO, many of whose volunteer and professional members have played an important role in CAP's successes, especially in the development and operations of the paradigm-shifting CAP security plan.

You may be wondering, 'How does a Rabbi get into crime fighting?' Good question. The answer is simple and brutal: it is a moral issue. It is about the most sacred values in Judaism such as saving lives and protecting people from harm, injury, pain and trauma.

CAP has a moral mission to fight injustice, to defend innocent people from the horrors of violent crime. The fight against crime is one of the main human rights struggles of the new South Africa. CAP partners with and defends all law-abiding South Africans irrespective of colour or creed or religion, Jews and Muslims, Christians and Hindus, black and white, rich and poor, we're all brothers and sisters in this struggle together. It is also about ensuring the future of our special Jewish community. I have heard from so many people how much they love living in South Africa, except for the crime. Surveys demonstrate and our personal experience shows how crime causes people to emigrate and become embittered about the future here. That is why CAP is so important to our future as a community and as a country.

And so tonight, at this gathering of so many influential leaders of our community, I say to you on behalf of CAP to join with this in our journey which is not yet complete. There are many important areas of our city that are not under CAP's protection yet. If you are not in CAP area yet, come forward, join with us, take the initiative, we are ready and waiting to help you bring CAP to your area. If you are already in a CAP area get involved, sign up, support your committee, call in suspicious activity, make a difference and play an active role in the CAP miracle. On behalf of CAP allow me to address you and our entire community and our citizens using the words of Prime Minister Winston Churchill when on 9 February 1941 when Britain stood alone and Nazi Germany was out the height of its power, Churchill spoke to President Roosevelt and the American people:

Put your confidence in us. Give us your faith and your blessing, and under Providence all will be well. We shall not fail or falter; we shall not weaken or tire. Neither the sudden shock of battle nor the long-drawn trials of vigilance and exertion will wear us down. Give us the tools and we will finish the job.?

And so CAP says tonight to our community, Give us the tools and we will finish the job?. Give us your support and together, with G-d's help, we can all together finish the job of bringing safety to our lives.

To conclude, I would like to publicly give praise and thanks to Hashem for His incredible blessings that ensured CAP's success, and as we approach Rosh Hashana to ask Him to continue His miracles for us in the New Year and indeed to inscribe and seal us all for life and for a good and sweet year. G-d bless you and thank you.