

Our 10-point solution to the

The Province has
and dozens
are 10
believe
to be done to
solve the problem.

Joseph is his servant and God uses him to save other lives. . . . I know God is using Joe in this world."

— Christina Chan, whose son Joseph Chan was killed

It just wasn't fair. Les never got his reward."

— Marilyn vnows

1 EXPAND THE 'BAIT CAR' PROGRAM PROVINCE-WIDE

The bait car is a proven anti-auto-theft tool, now used only on Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland. With auto theft rising in the Interior and remote regions of B.C., we believe the program should be made available to RCMP and municipal detachments throughout the province.

"The bait car program is going to be expanded into the Okanagan and the Interior. It's been very successful so I decided in the last couple of weeks that it needs to be more available. It hasn't been announced yet, but when we put the vehicles up there we'll make an announcement in those communities. In another two months, it's a pretty safe bet for us to have it ready to go. IMPACT has been very successful so we are not going to reinvent the wheel. We'll let them handle it. I haven't got a specific plan yet for Northern B.C. but my interest is to get this available to as many communities as possible as soon as possible. The more of these people we can get off the street the better."

John Les,
B.C. solicitor-general

2 ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY COURT

Community courts have proven successful in the U.S. and Britain. The concept was introduced after public outcry over weak sentences handed out to property offenders. Justice, non-profit and community groups work to rehabilitate the offender through community service. If the offender doesn't participate in community service and other programs, they are referred back to the traditional court system.

"For some years, I have encouraged B.C. justice interests to consider the community court concept after I visited the first community courts in Manhattan and Brooklyn. I am pleased that a community court [will be] recommended by the Street Crime Working Group — an initiative in which our court participated. It must be recognized that as yet it is only a concept and it will be up to government whether it happens. I expect that may depend on whether integrated ministries can muster the rehabilitative resources typically required to support a community court."

Hugh Stansfield
Provincial Chief Judge

3 ICBC SHOULD BOLSTER IMMOBILIZER INCENTIVES

In July this year, Manitoba Public Insurance launched its immobilizer incentive program, which will pay for half of a standard \$280 immobilizer on the owner's behalf. The owner can get an interest-free loan for the balance and then receives a \$40 annual deduction.

"Immobilizers are almost fail-proof, so ICBC is interested in learning more about them. We are watching the Manitoba program very closely, given they've got such a significant investment in the program. But we won't just blindly go in and implement what they've done. We are doing some behind-the-scenes work on our own, testing what the right incentives are to encourage people to use immobilizers. Manitoba does not have bait car and we do, and that's having an effect. Their move to use immobilizers is really the only tool they had left. We think there's lots to be learned from Manitoba, but we don't want to just replicate it."

Paul Taylor,
ICBC president

4 HEALTH WORKERS TO ATTEND CHRONIC-AUTO-THIEF REMAND HEARINGS

Health authorities need to work more closely with chronic repeat offenders. Almost all chronic offenders have mental health and addiction problems and are well known to police. Police and health authorities need to share information to better treat and help repeat auto offenders.

"Court liaison workers are something we believe in and we are in the process of putting that in place. But it is part of a bigger strategy through our [soon-to-be-launched] Urgent Response Team. We've been in discussions with police for a couple of years, but the biggest issue is having the support in place. Just having one person in court doesn't solve the problem of getting the treatment that will ultimately get them out of the justice system."

Clay Adams,
Vancouver Coastal Health

5 FUND 100'S OF AUTOMATIC LICENCE-PLATE RECOGNITION SYSTEMS

The Integrated Municipal Provincial Auto Crime Taskforce (IMPACT) will try out five automatic licence-plate recognition systems later this year and plans to buy several more if the trial is successful. These systems are critical in the fight against auto crime and should be made available throughout the province. They would also be a great weapon when an Amber alert is sounded.

"I've been aware of that technology for several months. We are going to be using that technology. Knowing what this technology can do in terms of identifying a lot more stolen vehicles and assisting the apprehension of people who are wanted for various reasons makes it a terrific crime-fighting tool. Anything that helps us keep criminals off the street and retrieve stolen vehicles I am fully behind. When I get a request for funding to implement more of this technology, I will be very keen to support as much of that as I can."

John Les,
B.C. solicitor-general

epidemic of auto crime

6 INTRODUCE MANDATORY DRUG TREATMENT IN PRISONS

As highlighted in the case of serial auto thief Robert Jeremy Osborne, a drug-addicted prisoner does not have to participate in treatment in jail. Drug treatment should be compulsory in prison.

"If there's a refusal to take the required treatment to get off a drug addiction then I think there ought to be a mechanism that makes a sentence somewhat more indefinite. I have discussed this a few times and there are other people interested. Some people talk about minimum sentencing, but that's a bit of a blunt instrument. Put the length of the sentence in the hands of the prisoner. If they take their treatment and better themselves as a result, that will make them more likely to be released sooner. If, on the other hand, they refuse treatment and just sit there belligerently for however long, make it unlikely they will be released until they voluntarily subject themselves to treatment. That is something I strongly support."

John Les,
B.C. solicitor-general

7 INCREASE MAXIMUM SENTENCE FOR THEFT OF AUTO

Currently the maximum penalty for stealing a vehicle is 10 years under the Criminal Code of Canada. While *The Province* has found no record of an auto thief ever getting that full penalty, increasing it to 15 or 20 years would send a clear message to judges and would enable them to generally increase penalties.

"I think you have to raise the maximums. That sends a message clearly to the judges that society is taking a different approach to the problem and how seriously it's viewed. I think the Crown prosecutors have to, in certain cases, take a hard-line approach. We have to rethink what we are doing in some of these types of cases. We are having a meeting of attorney-generals in November and the minister of justice will be there and I know we will be discussing raising maximum sentences. The federal government has already decided to increase the maximums on crystal meth offences. The legislative response to public concerns is starting to be heard."

Wally Oppal,
B.C. attorney-general

8 ICBC NEEDS TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT IT SPENDS ON AUTO CRIME

ICBC has spent around \$3.6 million a year on education since 2000. ICBC also devotes only one per cent of basic premium to auto-crime policing — worth \$17 million in 2005. ICBC has made \$750 million in profits since 2002 and could afford to contribute more to policing.

"To me, it's not just about writing a cheque. It's looking at the most effective tools that are available to combat the specific issue. If money is part of the problem, then that's a possibility, but there are different tools. You talk in your paper about the technology to read licence plates. We have a non-high-tech approach using volunteers and last year we recovered over 2,000 vehicles. Have we done it all yet? No, but we shouldn't just think spending money on some whiz-bang technology is going to solve the problem overnight."

Paul Taylor,
ICBC president

9 MANDATORY PRISON SENTENCES FOR ALL AUTO THIEVES

We're pushing for mandatory minimum sentences for auto thieves. They need to receive a prison sentence, not probation or conditional sentences. A serious message needs to be sent out to people who fuel their drug addictions by continually stealing vehicles.

"I can tell you [mandatory sentences] haven't worked anywhere. If you look to see what the Americans have done, they are in almost all cases rethinking mandatory minimums because you take the flexibility out of the sentencing process and no two sentences are alike and no two crimes are alike. You tie the hands of the judge if you say that in all cases someone who is a car-theft offender will be subject to a seven-year term. You'll get a lot of people who will end up in there for five or seven years that shouldn't be there. In the U.S., they have a lot of old people in jail who are in there on a minimum mandatory."

Wally Oppal,
B.C. attorney-general

10 AMEND POLICE CRASH REPORTS TO INCLUDE STOLEN VEHICLES

Currently there are no statistics kept to show how many people are killed or injured in motor-vehicle accidents involving stolen vehicles. Hard statistics are needed to highlight the carnage created by thieves in their stolen vehicles. Including "stolen auto" on police accident reports will go a long way to solving that problem.

"It's a wise idea to include a code on motor-vehicle-accident reports for stolen vehicles. I operate from the principle that the more information we have to make decisions, the better off we will be. The point would be that it could highlight a problem. We are aware when somebody dies in a stolen auto only if it's a high-profile case, and we are very concerned with stolen cars and the way they are driven."

Deputy Chief Const. Bob Rich,
Vancouver Police Dept.

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No, God, I don't want him with you. I want him with me."

— **Soledad Gri,**
upon seeing her husband Brad's face in her mind. Just then, police arrived at her door to tell her Brad had been killed by a car thief in an accident

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We're close but not like we were before the accident. It's just like we're getting to know each other all over again."

— **Mary Bajwa,**
whose kids were left in a coma after a car