

The President's Column

THE RISE OF VIOLENCE

On the 17th October, 1988 the Commonwealth Government announced that a committee under the Chairmanship of Professor Duncan Chappell, Director of the Australian Institute of Criminology, was being established to look into the matter of violence in Australian society.

I am sure that I speak for all members of ACPC as well as their friends and associates, when I say that it is our hope that this committee will achieve success in not only identifying the incidence of violence; determining whether or not there is a rapid increase in its prevalence as generally believed; and equally, if not more importantly, discovering the conditions in which violence is able to germinate, the atmosphere that is conducive to its growth and the social milieu necessary for its survival.

There have been a number of recent incidents that have shocked each of us, bringing graphically to our attention the fact that violence is a very real part of our present day society. When, however, it comes to attempts at explaining these incidents there have been many factors and proposals put forward — on the surface creditable and logical — but with rare exception, lacking in agreement as to the underlying causes — and even less specific and helpful when it comes to acceptable answers.



Hopefully, the newly established committee will be able to address the above problems and to identify and put forward explanation. Equally hopefully, society will consider and respond to positive recommendations that will eventually flow from the process now being undertaken.

It should be noted here that the 1989 ACPC Conference scheduled for Melbourne 3-6 July, 1989 has as its theme, "*Crime: Inevitable or Preventable?*" and that it is planned to have an open public session on Monday evening, 4 July, devoted to the topic of violence — its causes and possible methods of prevention.

**JOHN VAN GRONINGEN
PRESIDENT**