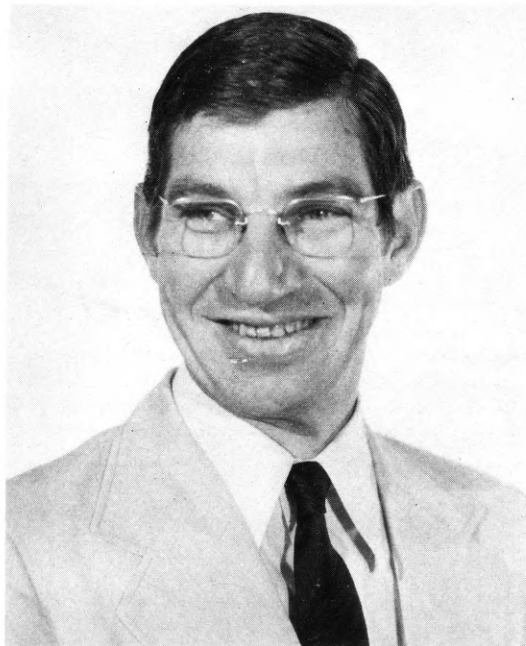


Policing in an Age of Conflict

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Policing in a democratic society raises many problems, indeed it has been said that what the police can do by themselves to overcome the major external problems they have to face is limited. The causes of crime, public turbulence and traffic ills have, up to now, lain beyond their direct influence, but it is a fact that they are becoming increasingly efficient in their approach to detection.

Many Victorian ideals on which the police were founded still hold good today, even if, because of modern pressures some of them seem to be beyond attainment, whilst many of the ideals were unattainable by the Victorians – this leading to hypocrisy – the best which were in each emphasised qualities of compassion and courtesy – a sense of duty – the need for upholding the law and a sense of discretion.

The scene today suggests a wide swing away from many of these ideals – with pressures from society – accentuated by, to a great degree, the media who are often alienated by some slight, or the unintended activity of a police officer which are often highlighted in the televised performance of police encountering members of the public at stage managed demonstrations.

The age in which we live creates conflicts, perhaps of a magnitude never known before, no doubt created by any of the following reasons – permissive attitudes – the break-up of the family unit; lack of parental control – even unemployment, but to mention a few.

For a law enforcement body to have the approval of the society in which it operates it must be prepared to look inwards and examine its public record and be prepared to stand up and be counted in the arena of public opinion.

It is clear that the police cannot successfully carry out their task of maintaining law and order without the support and confidence of the people. The police and the community are one. The police act for the community in the enforcement of the law and it is on its enforcement that the liberties of the community rest.

To this very end police should be encouraged to participate at a reporting and social level with members of the public and more importantly be seconded to public committees dealing in crime prevention – traffic advisory panels – new housing projects and other ventures which directly touch on community life and concern them in the various areas where they may be stationed. Basically this would give a grass roots approach at community level so as they are seen to be

concerned with the problems confronting society.

They must be scrupulous in their handling of juveniles and must be seen to adopt a humane approach to the problems confronting youth.

Complaints against the police should be seen to be adequately investigated to the satisfaction of the public and the public should be given the reassurance that such investigations are fairly and properly handled to the advantage of all concerned.

The effectiveness of the force is largely dependant upon the support and assistance it receives from the public and this in turn is very much influenced by the scale and nature of the coverage of police activities by the press, television and radio and we should take every opportunity to see that we use the media to our advantage in matters of crime prevention – detection of crime i.e. sources of information and for the general good public relations of the service.

We should examine the possibility of a new approach to the press in times of police confrontation with demonstrators – we should work towards responsible press participation under the guidance of police officers so as the police point of view may be put forward and thus allay any misrepresentations as to the event.

What the police may hope for to help them is that they be given the proper political priority in areas that will reduce external pressures and assist them towards the goal of successfully competing in a modern day democratic society, whilst preserving those admirable traits and principles on which the police service was founded.

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HOW TO BRING UP YOUR CHILD TO BE A JUVENILE DELINQUENT

Begin from infancy to give the child everything he wants. In this way he will grow up to believe that the world owes him a living.

When he picks up bad words, laugh at him. It will encourage him to pick up "gutter phrases" that will blow the top of your head off later.

Never give him any spiritual training. Wait until he is 21 and then let him decide for himself.

Avoid the use of the word "wrong". It may develop a guilt complex. This will condition him to believe later when he is arrested for stealing a car that society is against him and he is being persecuted.

Pick up everything he leaves lying around — books, shoes and clothes. Do everything for him so he will be experienced in throwing the responsibility onto others.

Let him read any printed matter he can get his hands on. Be careful the silverware and drinking glasses are sterilized but let his mind feed on garbage.

Quarrel frequently in the presence of children. Then they won't be so shocked when the home is broken up.

Give the child all the spending money he wants. Never let him earn his own. Why should he have things as tough as you had them?

Satisfy his every craving for food, drink and comfort. See that every desire is gratified. Denial may lead to harmful frustration.

Take his part against the neighbours, teachers and policemen. They are all prejudiced against your child.

When he gets into real trouble, apologize for yourself by saying, "I never could do anything with him".

Prepare for a life of grief — "You will have it".

WHAT IS A POLICE OFFICER?

Policemen are human (believe it or not) just like the rest of us. They come in both sexes but mostly male. They also come in various sizes. This sometimes depends on whether you are looking for one or trying to hide something. However, they are mostly big.

Policemen are found everywhere — on land, on the sea, in the air, on horses, in cars, sometimes in your hair. In spite of the fact that "you can't find one when you want one", they are usually there when it counts most. The best way to get one is to pick up the phone.

Policemen deliver lectures, babies, and bad news. They are required to have the wisdom of Solomon, the disposition of a lamb and muscles of steel and are often accused of having a heart to match. He's the one who rings the door-bell, swallows hard and announces the passing of a loved one; then spends the rest of the day wondering why he ever took such a "crummy" job.

On TV, a *policeman* is an oaf who couldn't find a bull fiddle in a telephone booth. In real life he's expected to find a little blond boy about so high" in a crowd of a half million people. In fiction, he gets help from private eyes, reporters, and "who-dun-it fans". In real life, mostly all he gets from the public is "I didn't see nuttin".

When he serves a summons, he's a monster. If he lets you go, he's a doll. To little kids he's either a friend or a bogeyman, depending on how the parents feel about it. He works "around the clock", split shifts, weekends and holidays, and it always kills him when a joker says, "Hey, tomorrow is Election Day, I'm off, let's go fishing" (that's the day he works 20 hours).

A *policeman* is like the little girl, who, when she was good, was very, very good, but, when she was bad, was horrid. When a policeman is good, "he's getting paid for it". When he makes a mistake "he's a sinner", and that goes for the rest of them too". When he shoots a stick-up man he's a hero, except when the stick-up man is only a kid, anybody coulda seen that".

Lots of them have homes, some of them covered with ivy, but most of them covered with mortgages. If he drives a big car, he's a chiseler? little car, "who's he kidding?". His credit is good; that is very helpful, because his salary isn't. *Policemen* raise lots of kids; most of them belong to other people.

A *policeman* sees more misery, bloodshed, trouble, and sunrises than the average person. Like the postman, *policemen* must be out in all kinds of weather. His uniform changes with the climate, but his outlook on life remains about the same; mostly a blank, but hoping for a better world.

Policemen like days off, vacations, and coffee. They don't like auto accidents, family fights, and anonymous letter writers. They have unions, but they can't strike. They must be impartial, courteous, and always remember the slogan "At your service". This is sometimes hard, especially when a character reminds him, "I'm a taxpayer, I pay your salary".

Policemen get medals for saving lives, stopping runaway horses, and shooting it out with bandits (once in a while his widow gets the medal). It sometimes, the most rewarding moment comes when, after some small kindness to an older person, he feels the warm handclasp, looks into grateful eyes and hears, "Thank you and God bless you, son".

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