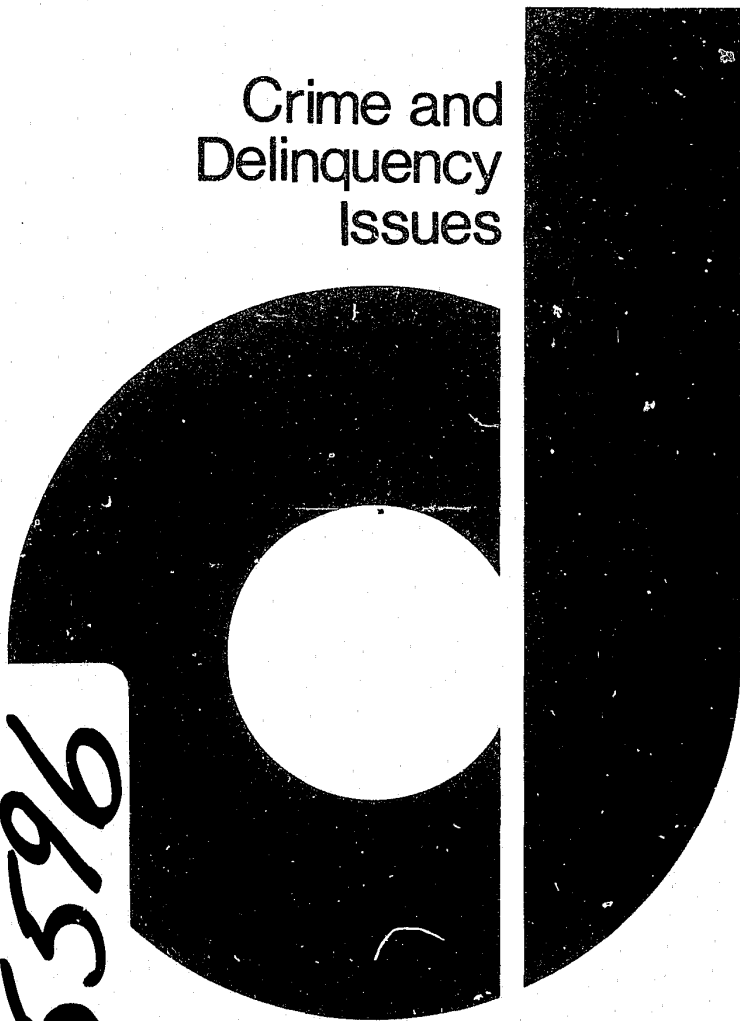


Decision-making in the Criminal Justice System: Reviews and Essays

Crime and
Delinquency
Issues



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CHAPTER III

Police Decision-Making

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There is a widely held stereotype that the police officer works solely to develop evidence of crimes and to apprehend offenders. The popularity of this stereotype is not at all remarkable. The occupation of the policeman is known as law enforcement. His oath centers on upholding the laws of the jurisdiction he serves.

Indeed, many policemen are wedded to this conception of their job. When a policeman helps someone find a lost child, the policeman is apt to be heard to complain that he is not doing what he is supposed to be doing. This albeit the common report that 80 percent of the incidents handled by a typical police patrolman fall into the category of "service" rather than of "crime" (or perhaps only 70 percent as in Kansas City, see President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice 1967, p. 121).

Most police administrators recognize that the role of their officers includes a considerable amount of service. A few administrators conclude that their officers should be trained to specialize in offering a variety of options to their citizen-clientele in such situations. Most administrators regard this service call (with the possible exception of those for emergency services) as a nuisance and a burden either to be reduced, ignored, or to be passively endured.

Small wonder, then, that practically all research on police decision-making focuses on aspects of how police decide to enforce or whether to enforce the law. Even in the rare instance of research reports on police service, like Bittner's (1967a) report on police decisions as to how to respond to apparent mental illness, police decisions are at least very nearly characterized as law enforcement decisions—such as whether an involuntary mental commitment shall be made. There is a valid and important question to be explored as to whether the police decisions only partially involve law enforcement. However, given the predominant state of thinking among police and the practically exclusive perspective of social scientists, there are almost no data by which to describe police decisions without a law enforcement

referent. Hence, this discussion of police decision-making will be limited to how police decide to enforce or whether to enforce the law, questionable though the restriction might be.

Within the boundaries of this restriction, there is another issue that need not be resolved stereotypically. The issue is one of whether discretion to enforce the law is viewed as a matter of deciding whether to treat an actual violation of the law as such, or as a matter of deciding whether to regard a case as a violation of the law.

Goldstein (1963b), for example, stands on the first side of the issue. To him the question of discretion is one of why the police do not fully enforce the law. From this point of view, violations of the law are real or actual. The job of the police is to discover the violations, apprehend the perpetrators, and develop evidence of the offenses sufficient to convict the perpetrators. Full enforcement is an assumed and yet unattained goal of police work. The goal of full enforcement is held not to be attained because of police reticence to do their duty and because of difficulties in obtaining sufficient information about offenses. These impediments to full enforcement are the objects of investigation in this approach to police decision-making research and are the stereotypic concern of the police themselves.

The other side of the issue is adopted here. According to this view, the matter of whether a violation of the law has occurred is one of social definition. There are, to be sure, degrees of social consensus as to what the operational definition of a given crime should be. Given a complaint of a robbery with a film of a man with a gun taking a bag of cash from a bank, few would be expected not to agree that a robbery had in fact occurred. But a decision as to whether a welfare check had indeed been stolen from a welfare mother's purse would be expected to be more equivocal. The decision would be even more problematic if the report to a victim surveyor alleged the theft to have taken place 9 months previously. Or what is to be made of a man's statement that his wife has just slapped him without justification? The matter is not one of adequate evidence alone, but also of what conduct is to be regarded as an offense. Even if the slap occurred, perhaps it is not included in that which should be treated as an assault. If a man takes some stationery home from the office to write letters to friends, perhaps it should not be considered a theft, or should it? As lawyers soon learn, the boundary between what they term "questions of fact" and "questions of law" is often ambiguous, let alone the difficulties inherent in resolving each of these questions. To the policeman, this means that he is apt to be drawn beyond the questions of whether he can make an arrest or provide sufficient evidence for a successful prosecution to the confrontation of the issue

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of whether he should treat an incident as an offense at all, not merely on ethical grounds but on epistemological ones as well. Thus the central research question on police decision-making is one of how the police decide whether to respond to information as though an offense has occurred, given legitimate ambiguity on the point. From this perspective, the exercise of police discretion is fundamentally a matter of deciding how to treat ambiguous information, not one of ignoring what are already known to be offenses or of failing to find unknown ones. As is shown below, the data on police decision-making are fully compatible with this premise.

The decisions of police supervisors and administrators concerning their subordinates are not covered in this chapter for three reasons. First, police management carries theoretical foundations and practices which are quite distinct from those of police interaction with private citizens. As McNamara (1967) reports, administrators and supervisors typically are more concerned with running a quasi-military organization, such as by making certain officers are properly dressed, than with the day-to-day decisions line policemen must make. Even administrative decisions concerning deployment of police forces tend to be so global that they scarcely cover the decisions line policemen routinely must make. While police management decisions are well worth investigation and description, they constitute a digression from consideration of other police decision-making.

Second, there are few data available on police management. Most of the police management literature is exhortative rather than descriptive. There is therefore little material available to us to report on police management decision-making.

Third, most police decisions are hardly subject to supervision anyway. Whether on the street or in an office, a police officer typically operates with a high degree of autonomy. The potential for effective administrative control of the police, as in dealing with police corruption (see, e.g., President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice 1967, pp. 208-215), or violence (Toch 1970, or most comprehensively, in the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals 1973), has only begun to be explored. As matters now stand, most line police decisions must be made by the officers themselves without the guidance of their supervisors or administrators.

By way of example, this author observed the traffic enforcement patterns of a group of urban patrolmen for more than 600 hours (Pepinsky 1972). Even while supervisors were speaking of the need for strict enforcement to cut accident rates, particularly at specified intersections, enforcement patterns varied considerably among patrol-

men. Some patrolmen were notorious for "tagging" a number of motorists. Others habitually warned motorists, and some rarely even looked for violators. This variation occurred even as formal note was made of the number of traffic citations given by each patrolman from month to month. In other words the gap between management decision-making and patrol decision-making was considerable.

Nevertheless, a considerable range of police decisions is discussed here. Given the focus on police decisions as to whether and how to treat information received as that of crimes or delinquent acts, a variety of decision-makers remain to be covered. These include uniformed patrolmen, detectives, and members of specialized units, such as those dealing with juveniles, morals, narcotics, and organized crime. Decision-making for some categories of offenses, such as traffic offenses, differs from that for others. The next section of this chapter describes the various categories of police decision-makers in some detail.

THE POLICE DECISION-MAKERS

Policemen can receive a variety of assignments and the decisions policemen are called upon to make vary accordingly. Since this chapter does not deal with police management, no attempt will be made to describe patterns of administrative hierarchy, from sergeants to chiefs or commissioners. Nor will special assignments relating primarily to administrative issues, such as those in community relations, in internal investigation, or in research and planning be covered.

The basic distinction in police assignments is between those wearing uniforms and those in "plainclothes." Uniforms are intended to be highly visible to the public, plainclothes to be inconspicuous. Not surprisingly, therefore, most of the literature on police decision-making has focused on decisions by the conspicuous police—the uniformed patrolmen.

Incidentally, it has been found (Cizankas 1973) that the public tends to offer greater deference to officers dressed in suits than to officers dressed in traditional uniform. In some communities, this has led to dressing patrolmen in blazers. Effectively, blazers are still uniforms. All of one color, with a crest on the breast pocket, the blazers still serve to make the police wearing them readily identifiable by the public.

Uniformed or not, the police decision-makers generally have a good deal in common. Practically all have the same job qualifications and

have undergone the same formal training; practically all have begun their police careers in uniform; practically all work an 8-hour shift each day 4 or 5 days a week (though some departments have experimented with 10-hour shifts); practically all are subject to working overtime on special assignments or for court appearances; and in any assignment except community relations (or planning and research, an aspect of police management not here considered), some will be working or on call any time of the day or night. These commonalities function as constraints to lend some similarity to police decision-making regardless of assignment.

On the other hand, there are also structural features of the various assignments which dictate differences in patterns of decision-making. These features will now be described.

Uniformed Patrolmen

Most uniformed patrolmen in any department are generalists. Some may walk beats, but most are assigned districts to patrol in squad cars—most in marked squad cars. In large enough cities, patrolmen work out of precinct stations, each comprised of several districts. Though no data are available on the point, in this author's experience a "large enough" city will have a population of nearly 200,000 or more.

In some departments, patrolmen ride two in a squad car, in others, one. Those on routine patrol are responsible for answering calls for assistance relayed to them by the dispatcher. Though in some areas of large cities police can be overloaded with responding to calls (see, e.g., Reiss 1971, pp. 78-79), a more common problem for patrolmen is compensating for the paucity of calls they receive.

For example, this author gathered data on observations of 70 patrols in the busiest precinct in Minneapolis (Pepinsky 1972). The patrolmen received an average of six calls in each 8-hour patrol and spent an average of about 10 minutes for each response (in a range of a couple of minutes on such calls as those to "check kids disturbing" to an hour-and-a-half for a response in which an arrest was made). Typically, then, the patrolmen spent about an hour of their 8-hour shift responding to calls and took off another half hour for meals. This left 6½ hours in which the patrolmen had to make work for themselves.

Adam 12 notwithstanding, patrolmen are not in the habit of discovering offenses in progress as they ride through the streets. During the 70 patrols of data collection and the 10 patrols of pretest

in Minneapolis, this observer only once was witness to catching offenders in the act (except for traffic violations)—catching a group of burglars when the observer was in a squad car that had been called to back up the arrest. The myth of patrolmen constantly fighting crime is far removed from the daily routine of most police.

Traffic enforcement is often a relief from the boredom of routine patrol. Tickets can be written for a streetful of parking violators (though in cities with meter maids, this task is largely preempted). The patrolmen can sit at a street corner and wait for someone to go through a red light, though often at such times drivers can be frustratingly law-abiding. Conveniently, a speeder or someone driving a car with a broken muffler may pass by. As a last resort, cars can be stopped for license, registration, and traffic arrest warrant checks. Or the patrolmen can scan license plates of parked cars to see whether they might be listed on the "stolen sheet."

Occasionally, a suspicious character may be spotted running across a lawn or parked in a back alley. A stop for a cup of coffee may relieve the monotony. But all too often, patrolmen are left to suffer the frustration of riding around aimlessly for hours at a time.

There are some special assignments for uniformed patrolmen. Walking the beat has been mentioned. Here, at least, the patrolman is apt to find more opportunity for conversation than in the car. Some cities have special traffic details, including those directing traffic, those concentrating on traffic enforcement, and those investigating accidents.

Some departments have tactical squads or special units. Men receiving this assignment are apt to receive training in crowd control. They are also assigned to ride unmarked patrols in high crime areas literally to look for trouble. Indeed, if they do not make arrests, they are apt to be sent back to regular assignments (Rubinstein 1973, p. 363). As expected, they find trouble and make arrests more than other patrolmen, but sometimes they practically have to drive across a city at high speeds to "back up" a call in order to do so.

There is a good deal more tedium in police patrol than has been popularly and scholarly recognized. This is not to deny that many other jobs are more tedious, nor to suggest that there is not a fair amount of variety in the situations to which patrolmen are called to respond. At one moment a patrolman may be helping someone into a locked house or car, at another trying to calm down a raging husband and wife, at another picking up a drunk off the street, and at another taking a report on an alleged burglary. The demands of the job are as various as one can imagine but commonly not nearly so frequent as one might suppose. The lack of activity for uniformed

patrolmen, and their relatively low status in most police departments, lead many of them to seek other assignments.

Detectives

In some very small departments uniformed patrolmen do criminal investigation themselves or call on aid from other departments or agencies. Generally, however, even small departments have full-time detectives. Larger departments have divisions of detectives, subdivided into units specializing in investigation of particular kinds of crimes. The subdivisions range from broad categories in medium-sized departments (e.g., property offenses) to those covering specific offenses in large departments (e.g., burglary). "Detective" may also be a rank above patrolman, equivalent in some departments to that of sergeant and in others to that of lieutenant. In these cases one usually becomes a detective by civil service examination.

In a few departments, team policing has been instituted. The most widely discussed and adopted plan originated in Syracuse. Under the plan, a team is made up for each district, including not only patrolmen, but a detective and members of specialized units as well. There are no reports on patterns of decision-making that have in fact emerged under such a plan, but in theory coordination among the various types of officers is much closer than under conventional police organization. In theory, too, detectives would be on the street a good deal, but data on the point are unavailable.

Detectives are distinct from members of specialized units, such as narcotics, discussed below. Detectives generally do not initiate investigations but proceed on the basis of offense reports and sometimes arrest reports received from uniformed patrolmen. They try to find offenders, locate missing property, and prepare evidence to present cases to prosecutors.

Dragnet has presented another misleading image about the police. Most offenses known to the police are not cleared by arrest (see, Federal Bureau of Investigation, annual). Most detectives spend the bulk of their time at their desks, going through papers and using the telephone.

Regrettably, empirical studies of detectives are nowhere to be found. As with most of the specialized units, hypotheses about decision-making are made in this chapter, but with very little evidence in the literature as foundation.

Specialized Units: Juvenile or Youth Aid Officers

The movement to treat wrongdoers under 18 years of age as wards of the State to be helped rather than as criminals to be punished began in the United States around the turn of the century. Separate courts were established for juvenile delinquent offenders. The definition of "delinquency" was extended to include not only those acts which if committed by adults would be crimes. Children were also termed "delinquent" (or "persons in need of supervision") if they were truant from school, "incorrigible," "stubborn," or in a plethora of ways demonstrated the need for State supervision *in loco parentis*. However, it is a moot point whether adjudicated delinquents came to be treated any less harshly than convicted criminals (Kittrie 1971).

In conformity with the spirit and demands of the juvenile court movement, police departments developed juvenile or youth aid divisions. Members of these divisions were specially assigned to investigate and to some extent manage the cases of problem children. Cases involving children were to be referred to these officers by other police, by other agencies, especially including schools, by parents who sought assistance in dealing with their own children, by other involved or concerned citizens, and in some cases by the courts or court services themselves.

Some juvenile policemen (or women) are assigned directly to schools as liaison officers. It is generally well understood (e.g. Goldman 1963) that juvenile officers have a considerable amount of discretion as to whether to make use of informal disposition of cases or of formal referral of cases to juvenile court and of whether formally to take juveniles which will be discussed here. Remarkably, patterns of police decision-making with reference to juveniles appear to be practically the same as those by patrolmen concerning adults. In fact, all of the findings on police decision-making can be subsumed under a single theoretical framework, as they are later in this chapter.

Specialized Units: Morals Squad Officers, Narcotics Officers, and Organized Crime Officers

These units usually are found only in large departments. Officers in these units specialize in laying the foundation for prosecution of what Stinchcombe (1963) has referred to as "private offenses." These

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are offenses characteristically committed out of the public view in which even those who might be considered victims will not or cannot complain to the police. For instance, it would be rare to find a citizen complaint in cases of gambling, prostitution, or sale of narcotics. Thus, officers in these units rely primarily on three techniques to gain evidence of offenses for arrest and prosecution.

One technique for obtaining information is to pay or cajole those already involved in illicit activities. The paid informant and/or the informant who is asked to cooperate in return for some form of immunity from arrest or prosecution may in some cases be induced to serve as a prosecution witness. More often, however, his or her information is used as a prelude to the use of one of the other two techniques.

A second technique is covert surveillance or examination of suspects. An informant's statement, for instance, may provide sufficient basis for authority to use a wiretap to gather incriminatory evidence. Or a search warrant may be issued permitting officers to come upon suspects unawares to find evidence such as narcotics.

The third technique, again commonly based on informants' statements, is for an officer to gain the confidence of a suspect and get the suspect to commit an offense in the officer's presence. This technique is commonly used as a basis for arrests for drug sales.

The literature on how members of these units decide whom to treat as suspects and which activities to treat as illicit (e.g., those of a pimp versus those of a prostitute) is practically nonexistent. One academic and yet basic reason for the paucity of data on this topic is no doubt the difficulty of constructing a controlled research design for locating patterns of decision-making in this type of activity. This difficulty is explained in the following section of the chapter.

GENERAL APPROACHES TO POLICE DECISION-MAKING: REACTIVE AND PROACTIVE

The distinction between proactive and reactive law enforcement has been brought into common use by Reiss (see, e.g., 1971). He uses the terms specifically to refer to activities of uniformed patrolmen. If the patrolmen respond to a call from the dispatcher, their action is called reactive. If the patrolmen find incidents without the dispatcher's aid, their action is called proactive. It is theoretically useful to generalize these categories to consideration of all decision-mak-

ing. Not so obviously, perhaps, there is more reason for the categories to be salient to the researcher than to the patrolman or other decision-makers. For the researcher, proactive decisions form a null category, a category definable only as a residuum of decisions not known to be reactive. What defines reactive action is a practically certain signal to the researcher that an occasion for a decision is at hand. For instance, when a patrolman receives a call from the dispatcher, the observer is practically certain the patrolman must decide which kind of official response to make, including the option of having found an offense to have occurred. For other patrol decisions, the observer does not have this certainty. The patrolman may be equally nearly certain of what he is called upon to report in other situations, but the observer does not share this awareness, if such awareness exists at all.

The question of shared awareness is irrelevant to the observer in an important sense. If he is to study the substance of decisions as a dependent variable, he needs to induce the independent variable from which to begin his process of explanation. For instance, if the observer seeks to isolate variables explanatory of patrolmen's decisions to arrest, a control group of decisions not to arrest is required. More specifically, if more blacks than whites are arrested by patrolmen, the observer needs to be able to show that the patrolmen decided proportionally *not* to arrest a lower proportion of blacks than whites to prove that blacks are more likely than whites to be arrested. Decisions to treat cases as warranting law enforcement can be controlled against those not so to treat cases only in instances of reactive police decision-making. Most of the literature on police decision-making focuses on these instances.

Which, then, are to be dealt with as reactive police decisions? First, obviously, patrolmen's responses to calls from the dispatcher are included. Recall that decisions of concern here are those of police as to whether matters are to be treated as involving the commission of crimes or delinquent acts. Police are asked to make a formal response to each call, in which they must decide whether to report the offenses they are sworn to uncover.

There is no way to enumerate the incidents patrolmen consider proactively. Does one include all suspicious glances of the patrolmen in a squad car? One can enumerate the proactive and reactive decisions by patrolmen that law enforcement activity is warranted. Black 1970, however, found only 24 percent of such decisions to be proactive. This author, Pepinsky 1972, found 1 percent of such decisions to be proactive. By accounting for patrolmen's reactive decisions to treat matters as in the jurisdiction of law enforcement, one accounts for

the vast majority of *all* patrolmen's decisions to treat matters thusly.

Traffic enforcement by patrolmen is predominantly proactive. The dispatcher can scarcely be expected to direct the patrolmen to find moving violators, and patrolmen are seldom dispatched to write parking tickets.

As Black and Reiss (1970) point out, juvenile officers get most of their cases by referral—from patrolmen, from schools and other agencies and citizens. Their decisions are therefore treated as typically reactive. The decision-making literature uniformly proceeds on this premise, assuming that juvenile officers are called upon to treat every case as though it might be referred to juvenile court.

Detectives practically always base their activity on offense reports. Hence, their activity is also treated as reactive. No signal is discernible for action by members of other special police units adequate to treatment of their decisions as reactive. The paucity of decision-making data on activities of special units is consistent with this premise as is the generally private nature of these categories of offenses. Thus, the activities are treated as proactive for purposes of this report.

Based on an understanding of the roles assigned to police decision-makers and of the basic approaches to decision-making taken by policemen, the decisions themselves can be explained.

Reactive Decisions—Manifesting Legitimate and Respectable Control

The findings on reactive discretion by patrolmen and juvenile officers fall into a tradition of research and writing on police discretion, represented in a general way by Aaron (1966), Abernathy (1962), Adler (1964), Banton (1963, 1964), Barker (1966), Cressey (1957), Herman Goldstein (1963 *a*, 1963 *b*), Kadish (1962), Parker (1965), Toch (1963, 1968) and Whitaker (1964), in addition to those whose work is cited below. The findings on how the discretion is used are all consistent with the imputation of a rather simple motivation to the police in their work. That motivation is to try to make manifest to themselves and to others that they are in control of police-citizen interactions, and that this control is legitimate and identifies the police as occupying a respectable status within society. Reiss has described this effort by the patrolman as an attempt to meet "the problem of establishing legitimacy of authority" (1971, p. 3).

Universalistic vs. Particularistic Devices for Manifesting Legitimate and Respectable Control

The way in which the literature has indicated the police might manifest legitimate and respectable control in reactive situations can be divided into four categories: (1) meeting what they perceive to be expected of them; (2) anticipating what kinds of situations will warrant offense reports and then fulfilling their own prophecies; (3) asserting their control by making decisions opposite to those they believe any parties who challenge their control would want them to make; and (4) making decisions as to whether to report offenses in such a way as to show that they identify with respectable people of apparently attractive social status and to show they identify against the unrespectable. The first two of these devices are, in Parsons' (1951) terms, universalistic. That is, they suggest that the features of situations significant for these purposes do not depend on the nature of the relationships developed between the patrolmen and the citizens they meet. The latter pair of the devices is particularistic—that is, they depend on the nature of particular police-citizen relationships.

The universalistic devices should take a while to internalize. Hence, it is to be expected that their use becomes more salient as the seniority of the policeman increases (though the decision-making literature does not explicitly touch this issue).

The learning of the universalistic devices might be a part of the socialization of the policeman described by Niederhoffer (1967) and Westley (1970). Socialization is probably a slow process, however, since it is not uncommon to hear policemen comment that it takes from 1 to 5 years to become "streetwise." Conversely, the particularistic devices are to be expected to be more salient for the more junior officers. Besides not being as sensitive to universalistic cues as their senior brethren, the junior officers can be expected to have to use particularistic devices more often to bolster their identities as good policemen (McNamara 1967, pp. 163-252).

The particularistic standards are likely more salient overall for those with the lesser social distance from the citizens they meet in a reactive situation. Goffman's (1963) concept of role distance suggests that those more apt to be identified as members of the low-status community are likely to make manifest that they are unrelated or only negatively related to the undesirables. The same may be hypothesized to apply to other measures of social distance, such as place of residence and race. This is consistent with Wilson's (1964) no-

tion that ethnic differences of policemen can make a difference in the ways they do their job.

Universalistic Devices: Meeting Perceived Expectations

There should be some cues the patrolmen get that treatment of a situation as warranting formal law enforcement activity is or is not the socially expected response for them to make. As several authors (including Bittner 1967a, 1967b, Cumming, et al. 1965, Stoddard 1967, and Wilson 1963) have suggested, the policemen look for external instruction as to whether they are presented with a situation that calls for formal law enforcement action—as by an offense report or an arrest. The first clue the patrolmen receive as to what is expected of them is in the dispatcher's call. This author (Pepinsky 1972) found in fact that patrolmen he observed based their decisions on whether to report most offenses practically entirely on whether the dispatcher mentioned an offense in his call, provided only that the patrolman talked to someone who corroborated the call. This is consistent with Skolnick's (1966) and Wilson's (1968) observations that police feel impelled to demonstrate to those in a position to hear that they give priority to law enforcement activity.

The expectation most commonly referred to in the literature is the explicit request or demand by a complainant that the police take specified action. Black (1970) found that police rely on complainants' expressed wishes in deciding whether to report offenses. Black and Reiss (1970) and Hohenstein (1969) report the same reliance on complainants' wishes in police decisions as to whether to take juveniles into custody.

The Minneapolis study (Pepinsky 1972) also provided a small number of cases that suggest other normative expectations are operative in patrolmen's reactive decision-making. Where the complainant knows an alleged suspect, the patrolmen believe they can settle such matters as thefts informally. Elderly complainants can safely be regarded as senile. Their complaints are apt to be ignored. Women are to be protected, and the patrolmen treat their complaints of assault more seriously than those of males.

Since the patrolman knows that official action against more serious offenses connotes more effective enforcement to his superiors, he (or now occasionally she) shapes his (or her) decisions to this expectation. Black (1970) found patrolmen more likely to report felonies than misdemeanors. Rubinstein (1973) reports misdemeanors resulting in arrest more often than violations.

The reactive decisions of detectives fall overwhelmingly into the category of meeting expectations. The detectives react to offense reports, most of them received from patrolmen. The Federal Bureau of Investigation annually reports that, nationally, detectives "unfound," or decide to treat as not stating offenses, only 4 percent of the reports they receive. The only meaningful prediction to make about detectives' reactive decisions as to whether to treat cases as involving violations of the law is that every case will be so treated. Detectives apparently see it as their duty to treat all cases they receive as involving offenses, and they practically always meet this expectation.

In meeting expectations in reactive decision-making, policemen are subscribing to a lesson they have learned in their training. They are instructed that there are professional traditions as to how legitimate and respectable control through law enforcement is to be accomplished. Insofar as no other guidelines present themselves as to what constitutes the accomplishment of legitimate and respectable control, the police are left to rely on cues from others as to how decisions are to be made. As can be seen, a variety of such cases or expectations have been found by observers of police decision-making, and the expectations are often reflected in the decisions that follow.

Universalistic Devices: Fulfilling Prophecies

The other universalistic device, suggested by the writing of Merton (1968, pp. 475-490), is the self-fulfilling prophecy. As these conceptions become learned and internalized, the police have been found to use them as a basis for deciding whether an allegation of harm to which they are called to react should be treated as an offense. In turn, conformity by citizens to these stereotypes of offense behavior is reinforced and fulfills the prophecy, as the work of Lemert (1972) suggests.

One of the most interesting and best documented of these stereotypes is that when a black assaults another black (particularly with a knife), the conflict will turn out to have been an ordinary family quarrel; whereas when both parties are white, the matter will be regarded as highly unusual and serious (La Fave 1962, cited in Skolnick 1967, p. 171). While Black's (1970, pp. 744-746) data do not show support for the role of race in offense-reporting, his findings might have been different had he analyzed harms involving the person separately from those involving only property. A basis for the stereotype that some groups ordinarily do more serious violence to one another than do others has been provided by the work of Wolfgang and Ferracuti

(1967). There is good reason to believe that patrolmen reinforce citizens to act out the stereotype by treating violent offenses among minority group members as commonplace and tolerable, and among whites as exceptional and intolerable.

In apparent contradiction to this prophecy, there are findings (e.g., by Thornberry 1973, in police decisions relating to juveniles, though not supported by such findings as those of Terry 1967) that police in reactive situations are more apt to treat cases (including those of violence) involving minority group suspects as warranting formal law enforcement than those involving whites. The best evidence is that the higher rate of formal action against minority group members in cases involving alleged violence is attributable to behavior of citizen-suspects toward the police, not toward other citizens.

Bayley and Mendelsohn (1968, pp. 122-137) found in Denver that more minority group members reported mistreatment by the police and complained about police than did whites. Biderman et al. (1967, p. 137) found in Washington, D.C., that whites are consistently and generally substantially more "pro-police" than are blacks. It is therefore to be expected that minority group citizens are more likely to be antagonistic toward the police than are whites, as indeed this author observed in Minneapolis. Since citizen demeanor toward police rather than the operation of a self-fulfilling prophecy seems to account for reactive police decisions disproportionately to treat situations of alleged violence involving minority group members as demanding law enforcement, the findings on this decision-making factor are covered in a later section. As to higher rates of arrests for blacks in cases of alleged property offenses, racial stereotypes have been shown to operate in police decision-making. This bias is addressed in the section below on status identification.

Pollak (1950) has argued that a great deal of hidden female criminality exists, which he attributed in large measure to females being treated as offenders by police much less readily than men. Here again a self-fulfilling prophecy apparently operates. Given the stereotype that women commit fewer crimes than men, patrolmen less often reactively treat women as offenders than they do men; and thus fewer women than men turn out to be offenders in official eyes.

The research by Terry (1967) suggests the operation of another self-fulfilling prophecy in the reactive decisions of juvenile officers to treat problem cases as officially recognized instances of delinquency. A prior record of juvenile delinquency indicates that a case should be formally disposed of, thereby increasing the relative proportion of known recidivists among those regarded as delinquent of juveniles seen. The criterion used by juvenile officers for their decisions

becomes the basis for the rationale that more delinquents, "after all" (Garfinkel 1956), have that characteristic.

One way of posing the question of whether legitimate and respectable control has been accomplished is to ask whether control through treatment of cases as demanding law enforcement is needed. Stereotypes are learned by policemen in the course of their careers. As Rubinstein (1973, pp. 150-151) notes, the stereotypes become clearer to policemen as their experience increases. Together, the stereotypes constitute street wisdom. Certain categories of people clearly need to be treated as offenders. Why? Because they have tended to be those found likely to be offenders in the past. The reasoning is circular but powerful to the policeman who has no independent way of testing the power or of knowing the origin of the stereotypes. The stereotypes are therefore definitive of when and where the respectable and legitimate approach to control of a situation is officially to treat it as an occasion for law enforcement activity.

Particularistic Devices: Responses to Demeanor

It has been found repeatedly that those juvenile suspects whose demeanor toward the police is cooperative (see Black and Reiss 1970; Chambliss and Nagasawa 1969; and Piliavin and Briar 1964) earn more lenience from the police than do those whose demeanor shows a lack of respect (Goldman 1963; LaFave 1962; and LaFave 1965). Black (1970) found that the more cooperative complainants were with the police, the more likely were the police to report offenses. Reiss (1970, p. 51) found that patrolmen were more hostile or authoritarian and more likely to ridicule citizens of two races when "the citizens were agitated" than when they were "calm and detached." Though not all directly on point, this literature lends considerable support to citizen demeanor as a major criterion of reactive decisions by patrolmen and juvenile officers as to whether to treat situations as instances of violation of law. One New York City Police Captain who has given training to patrolmen on the handling of domestic disputes confirms that, in the case of alleged family assaults at least, patrolmen generally arrest only when they receive abuse, regardless of possible injury to other citizens.

A chain of reasoning leads to a connection between accomplishment of legitimate and respectable control on the one hand, and the demeanor of citizens toward the police on the other. The police commonly hold the plausible assumption that citizens who respect the

authority of the law are those more likely to behave in adherence to the dictates of the law. In the typical view of the policeman, he does not act as an individual, but as an agent sworn to uphold the majesty of the law before the public. If a citizen behaves disrespectfully toward the officer, the citizen is not seen by the officer as merely showing disregard to the officer as an individual. The citizen is seen as disregarding the larger authority the officer believes he represents. Thus, disrespect to the officer represents the best evidence the officer is apt to have of disrespect for the law itself—hence, of a citizen's determination not to adhere to the dictates of the law in the future.

In a few moments of contact, there is little an officer can do for long-term effect on a citizen's disposition to obey the law. Minimally, the officer can reward any manifestation of respect for him and punish any manifestation of disrespect as elementary learning theory would appear to dictate. To take a complainant seriously and thus to reward him is to treat his complaint as deserving of law enforcement activity, and vice versa. To punish a suspect is to invoke the weight of the criminal justice system against him as by arrest, and vice versa. Hence, in reactive decision-making by the police, citizen demeanor toward them is a rational criterion for choice of action most likely to accomplish legitimate and respectable control.

Particularistic Devices: Status Identification

The principle of the use of status identification as a criterion for decision-making is divisible into two parts. If the decision-maker perceives the status of a subject of his decision to be desirable, the decision-maker will act to carry out the subject's wishes as the decision-maker perceives them. If the decision-maker perceives the status of a subject to be undesirable, the decision will be to act against the perceived wishes of the subject.

Status identification does not appear to be an important factor in reactive police decisions concerning possible offenses against the person. As noted above, these decisions seem to be a function of the combined effects of reliance on self-fulfilling prophecies and citizen demeanor. Nevertheless, status identification appears to operate as a principle of decision-making in matters involving possible property offenses and juvenile status offenses. Nearly 30 years ago, Robison (1936, pp. 27-29) observed that a disproportionate share of delinquents turned out to be from poverty backgrounds because the police were more apt to ascribe wrongdoing to those from "the wrong

side of the tracks." Shortly thereafter, Johnson (1941) made similar observations about police treatment of adults, as in arrest decisions. Police discrimination against minority groups or low socioeconomic status persons in reactive police decisions has since been corroborated in a number of studies, including those by Black (1970), Bordua (1960), Cochran (1971), Goldman (1963), Kephart (1957), Skolnick (1966), and Thornberry (1973).

Some have discounted the role of racial or socioeconomic status discrimination in law enforcement. Green (1970) has taken this position, finding no racial discrimination in police arrest decisions concerning adults. He attributes the appearance of racial discrimination to "the wider distribution among Negroes of lower social class characteristics associated with crimes" (p. 488). The common association of race and socioeconomic status makes this distinction tenuous at best.

Terry (1967) found from time series data that severity and number of recorded offenses rather than race explained juvenile officers' decisions as to disposition of cases, though Thornberry (1973) found an independent effect of race or socioeconomic status on such decisions using cohort data. Terry's findings cannot stand in any event provided race and socioeconomic status determine police decisions as to whether to record offenses and as to how severe the recorded offenses are to be.

Race as associated with socioeconomic status thus appears to be a substantial factor in police decision-making. The higher the socioeconomic status of a potential suspect, the greater the probability that police at any stage of reactive decision-making will opt out of treating cases as appropriate for formal law enforcement activity. Where the racial or status identity of a potential suspect is unknown, Black's (1970) findings suggest that higher socioeconomic status complainants have the higher probability of getting the police to opt for formal law enforcement activity.

Status identification is a variant of Goffman's (1963) concept of "role distance." By setting himself in the position of adversary to those he perceives to be of low socioeconomic status, the policeman hopes not to be identified as "one of them." This author (Pepinsky 1970) has suggested that the police aspire to accomplishing such status distance by eliciting confessions from suspects. Conversely, if the policeman follows the perceived wishes of a citizen, he can hope to share an identity with the citizen that includes the citizen's perceived status. Thus, the policeman has an interest in cooperating with those citizens who appear to have a status which the policeman is satisfied with having ascribed to himself, as Black (1970) found.

In one sense, control means for the policeman working for or against those he meets. The policeman's action gains respectability from its conformity to the expectations of respectable citizens as opposed to those of the unrespectable. The action is given legitimacy by the tautology expressed by Quinney (1970). The legal order tends to express the interests of the dominant stratum (or strata) of the society. This dominant group also consists of people at the top of the socioeconomic hierarchy. Therefore, what those at the top of the order want is by definition officially legitimate, in contrast to that which is desired by those at the bottom of the hierarchy.

The Interrelationship of the Criteria of Reactive Decision-making

The development of the use of these four criteria for reactive police decision-making has not been historically traced. Deductive reasoning, however, suggests that reliance on particularistic criteria preceded that on universalistic criteria. Reactions based on demeanor and on status identification can, over a period of years, institutionalize notions of what is to be expected of a decision-maker on the one hand and institutionalize self-fulfilling prophecies on the other. As he becomes socialized into the job, the policeman learns the traditions or conventional wisdom about how the job is to be done or about who is more likely to be the real offender. The policeman's skill is demonstrated by picking up cues as to which decision is correct with less and less reliance on experiencing interaction with particular citizens. This skill or street wisdom does much to give the policeman a professional identity, just as possession of conventional wisdom gives the lawyer or the doctor a professional identity. Thus, the demand for professionalism leads the decision-maker to place credence in such universalistic criteria as expectations and self-fulfilling prophecies, and to rely on such particularistic paths to those criteria as demeanor and status identification.

Proactive Decisions: Manifesting Legitimate and Respectable Control in a Different Pattern

As far as can be seen, the police subsume proactive decisions to the same goal as that for reactive decisions. The main difference between reactive and proactive decision-making is that reliance on status

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identification is not apparent in the latter case and that demeanor is used for proactive decision-making only after initial decisions to treat cases as meriting law enforcement activity. Hence, when an initial proactive decision is made for treating a situation as appropriate for law enforcement activity, the decision characteristically will be based on a universalistic criterion. The demeanor of a suspect is used only to modify such a decision in cases of traffic enforcement.

The reason for the preeminence of universalistic criteria in proactive decision-making is rather obvious. Citizens tend to resent proactive police intrusion into their lives, which restrains the policeman's proactive activity (Rubinstein 1973, p. 155). The policeman typically requires some justification for proactive law enforcement activity, and the justification must therefore precede contact with potential suspects. Since justification must come before the policeman develops particularistic relationships with potential suspects, only universalistic criteria are available for use in decision-making. The use of these criteria will be considered first in the realm of traffic enforcement and then in the realms of enforcement against what Schur (1965) has called "crimes without victims"—narcotics, morals, and organized crime offenses.

In Traffic Enforcement

Most traffic stops are a matter of meeting expectations. Quite simply, unless a patrolman is on the way to an emergency call (Rubinstein 1973, p. 93), he is expected to stop anyone seen to commit a moving violation.

There are a couple of exceptions to this rule. If the violating driver will be too hard to catch, he is to be left alone. For example, if a car is going at high speed in the opposite direction of a patrolman on a heavily traveled street, the danger of a high speed chase with little chance of catching the offending driver is apt to lead to a decision not to pursue.

Second, there are some established conventions in various departments about tolerable violations of traffic laws (Gardiner 1969). It is unusual to stop a driver for exceeding the speed limit by a mere 5 miles-per-hour. In some areas, rolling slowly through a stop sign at a quiet intersection will be tolerated.

Thus, uniformed policemen are expected to stop traffic violators unless (a) their presence is immediately required elsewhere, (b) catching the offending driver is impracticable, or (c) the traffic offense is within tolerable limits. Nonuniformed officers seldom make traffic stops at all.

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Once a stop has taken place, demeanor plays an important role in whether the policeman will "write a tag" (Gardiner 1969). This motivation is exemplified by the police handling of some traffic matters. From informal observation in the Minneapolis study (Pepinsky 1972, pp. 47-49) this is what happened during a typical interaction between a patrolman and a motorist. The motorist argued the allegation that he had violated a traffic ordinance; he was given a ticket. Even asking what he had done improved his chances of receiving a "tag." If he tried to excuse the violation (e.g., "I was having engine trouble and wanted to get to a garage without stopping"), he was more apt than not to get a ticket. If he got angry at the officer, he was very likely to get a ticket. If he asked the officer why he had not stopped the person who had run the light before him, his probability of receiving a ticket was high. If he asked the officer for his badge number he had likely earned a ticket. If he talked about his friends on the police department or in politics, he was apt to get a ticket (see also Rubinstein 1973, p. 159). If, on the other hand, he both readily admitted running the light and indicated to the officer that the officer had done the right thing in stopping him, his chances were excellent of being let off with a warning. By this conduct the motorist had signaled to the officer that the officer was in control of the situation and could legitimately do as he wished with the motorist. Similarly, if the motorist used a term of respect for the patrolman in addressing him, such as "sir" or "officer," showing a recognition of the worth of the patrolman's status, he stood a better chance of escaping the notice of violation.

One particular incident illustrated the likely fate of the deferential, respectful motorist. One of the two officers in a marked squad car saw someone enter an intersection just as the light turned red. His partner could not corroborate this, and he himself thought there was some uncertainty as to whether the motorist had actually committed a violation. The motorist pulled over. The officer who had seen the car go through the intersection got out, saying, "If he gives me any trouble, I'll tag him." The motorist got out of his car and met the officer as he approached. They talked for about a minute and then the officer waved at the motorist and returned to the squad car. He seemed a little nonplussed as he reported to his partner, "I asked the guy if he knew what he'd done and he told me, 'Yes sir, I ran the red light.' He was so honest I couldn't bring myself to write him a tag." To this observer he added, "I'll go out of my way for someone who tells me the truth, but if there's one thing I can't stand it's a guy who lies to me." This appears to have been a common attitude among the policemen observed. As a rule, then, traffic enforcement

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as the product of meeting expectations turns out to be used primarily to teach apparently recalcitrant drivers a lesson in respect for the law. Perhaps this would not be the case where ticket quotas or bribery are the practice, but at present these practices seem to be limited to isolated areas.

Uniformed patrolmen assigned the responsibility of traffic enforcement are also asked to find drivers who are not driving under proper authorization from the State. This includes drivers who are driving under suspended or revoked licenses, those driving without proper car registration, and, in some jurisdictions, those driving without proof of insurance. The patrolmen may also be asked to locate drivers with warrants outstanding against them for failure to pay traffic fines, as is the case in Minneapolis.

Under these circumstances, the patrolmen need criteria for stopping some drivers who have not just been seen violating the law. For this purpose, patrolmen in Minneapolis (Pepinsky 1972) were found to rely on a self-fulfilling prophecy that seemingly had grown out of status identification. The prophecy is that minority group members driving relatively dilapidated cars are those most likely to be improperly authorized to drive or to have outstanding warrants. It may be, for instance, that white drivers of expensive new cars are as likely to be driving under suspended licenses as their counterparts, but this hypothesis remains untested. Since violators are found only among the group stopped by the police, the patrolmen can honestly say that the data "show" that minority group drivers of dilapidated automobiles are those most likely to be driving under arrest warrants or without proper authorization.

As has been mentioned, patrolmen generally abhor writing parking tickets. They will, therefore, do so only if a strong demand is made, as by (a) a sergeant, (b) a private citizen under personal duress (e.g., whose driveway is blocked), or (c) by the owner of a commercial establishment (Rubinstein 1973, pp. 46, 156-157).

In Narcotics, Morals, and Organized Crime Enforcement

Though hard data on the point are unavailable, officers in these units apparently base their decisions to enter into law enforcement activity on self-fulfilling prophecies initiated by citizen informants. The officers receive information as to identities, locations, and alleged conduct of suspects from the informants. The informants may be motivated to provide intelligence for personal power, material gain, lenience from the police, revenge, or, in rare instances, moral indignance.

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Once the suspect is identified, if his alleged conduct meets departmental expectations as to which conduct is worthy of police attention, it is practically foreordained that the officers of the specialized unit will do their best to gather evidence for his or her arrest and prosecution. Bribery or further intelligence from the suspect may alter this course of action, but there are insufficient data to analyze decision-making in these contingencies.

Otherwise, rumor has it that there is but one other exception to this pattern of police activity. In some areas, morals squad officers are said to work out "understandings" with known prostitutes. Periodically, at the convenience of the prostitute, she will submit to arrest and plead guilty to a minor charge provided she is left free to ply her trade in the meantime. In this way, the morals squad officers meet a more or less formal quota of arrests of prostitutes with the prostitutes' full cooperation. This exception to the use of the self-fulfilling prophecy criterion by narcotics, morals, and organized crime officers appears to be isolated, however.

SIGNIFICANCE OF POLICE DECISION-MAKING PATTERNS

The goal now directing police decision-making is beyond reproach. If the police, charged as they are with an aspect of formal social control, succeed in convincing the citizenry and their superiors that the control is being exercised legitimately and respectably, there is no room for quarrel with their performance of their duties.

On the other hand, the bases the police use to make their decisions in pursuit of this goal remain problematic. The explicit statement of these bases makes their arbitrariness manifest. Arbitrariness in itself is no condemnation of the bases, but it begs the question: Are these bases the optimal ones for the police to use?

As stated in the introduction of this chapter, the dictates of the law are not an adequate basis for police decision-making. It is small wonder that none of the major criteria revealed in research on police decision-making is the terms of the law. The law may impose limits on police decisions, but it surely does not determine the decisions. The frames of reference of legislators and legal scholars are simply too abstract to indicate to policemen how day-to-day decisions are to be made.

Nor has any basis other than those now used by policemen presented itself for adoption by the police. Therefore, as matters now

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stand, the choice of bases for decision-making must be among the four already being used.

The use of particularistic bases is difficult to defend, probably too difficult to defend. If the policeman is to represent a higher authority than himself, then his decision to enter into law enforcement activity must transcend the state of his personal relationship to a citizen or citizens. The idea that the policeman represents a higher authority stands against his basing a decision to invoke the authority of the criminal justice system on personal feelings.

This implies that demeanor and status identification are unsatisfactory bases for police decision-making. Is a person to be deemed eligible for criminal justice penalty because he does not get along with a particular policeman? Certainly not. Is a person to be deemed eligible for criminal justice penalty because he belongs to a socioeconomic status to which the policeman does not aspire? Certainly not.

Thus, the use of universalistic devices in police decision-making is to be preferred. There is little room for agreement that it is undesirable for the police to act to meet the expectations of the citizens they serve. There is good argument that the use of self-fulfilling prophecies is unsatisfactory.

The reasoning supporting the use of self-fulfilling prophecies must be circular. The proof that matters must be treated as deserving of law enforcement activity is based on their having been so treated in the past. The reasoning leads to such police statements as, "When a black hits a black, it is not a crime because we have not previously regarded it as a crime." Minimally, an adequate basis for police decision-making must be independent of prior police decision-making. The decision may coincide with prior decisions, but it may not be founded upon them. Otherwise, one is led ultimately to subscribe to the principle that the police can act as they will without regard to others' concerns.

By process of elimination, we are led to the meeting of expectations as a criterion of police decision-making. As a result of this limitation, many police decisions to treat matters as appropriate to law enforcement activity can be characterized as illegitimate. These include practically all such decisions by members of narcotics, morals, and organized crime offenders. Among others, Morris and Hawkins (1970) concur with this conclusion. There may be a legitimate role for police to play in enforcement against these "crimes without victims," but the role remains to be demarcated.

The use of some expectations by the police is as indefensible as the use of self-fulfilling prophecies. For instance, why should a patrolman report an offense? Simply because the dispatcher expects it of him?

Because this is how things are done? Once again, the reasoning approaches circularity.

There is no dearth of abstract expectations communicated to patrolmen to guide their work. If not circular, though, the abstract expectations become ambiguous, unrealistic, or mutually contradictory when applied to concrete cases. For instance, as alluded to above, while the Minneapolis study (Pepinsky 1972) was being conducted, a team of psychologists was carrying out a program to train patrolmen as to how to respond to calls to domestic disputes. When the psychologists began to learn the details of actual cases the patrolmen faced, the psychologists quickly came to despair of meeting the challenge of goal definition. Their solution was to tell the patrolmen there was practically nothing worthwhile they could accomplish and therefore that the patrolmen had best seek to leave the domestic disputants as soon after arriving as possible. The message to the patrolmen was that they could do harm but no good, and that they had better do nothing but watch out for their personal safety and extricate themselves as quickly as they could from an untenable situation.

A lesson of experience in working with police is that instead of attempting to define expectations for patrolmen and their citizen-clientele, the police and their clients will have to be equipped to define expectations for themselves. The task before the social scientist-consultant is not that of defining the substance of policemen's expectations but of defining a procedure by which expectations can be articulated and revised by those who must meet them. Thus a procedure for articulation of expectations will be discussed in the following section of the chapter.

Recommended Procedure for Articulation of Expectations of the Police

Patrolmen

There are three important considerations to bear in mind in establishing a procedure for articulation of expectations for patrolmen. First, what citizen-clients do is as important to the meeting of an expectation as is what the patrolmen do themselves. This is generally expressed by patrolmen in terms of a need for citizen cooperation. For example, if one expectation is that patrolmen catch burglars in a neighborhood, they can hardly do so without citizens watching out for burglars and calling for assistance. Or if another ex-

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pectation is one of helping spouses not to fight, the spouses have to want the help for it to be given.

Second, even within one precinct, the needs and therefore the expectations for patrol service vary considerably from one district to the next, and even among parts of one district. For example, there might be a number of drunks on the sidewalk on only a couple of blocks of one street in a precinct. Therefore, the procedure should allow for patrolmen assigned to different areas arriving at different sets of expectations.

Third, the problems and hence the appropriate expectations may change in a given area from time to time, and expectations once thought viable may later prove to be inviable. For example, the children in one neighborhood may do a lot of vandalism in the summer but not in the winter. Therefore, the procedure for articulation of expectations must be permanent and continuous; it must allow for reassessment of existing expectations.

These considerations dictate that a procedure be established for patrolmen in each district to meet repeatedly with a variety of groups of citizens residing and doing business there. The question then arises as to how these meetings are to be organized.

The first problem is to locate groups of citizens and bring them to meetings. Initially, at least, it would probably be overly ambitious to create groups especially to meet with patrolmen. The history of community organization has mostly been one of frustration in attempts to stimulate citizen participation in community action. It is better to risk malapportionment of citizen representation in goal definition for patrolmen than it is to risk nonrepresentation, and so active, established groups, such as churches, schools, chambers of commerce, and political committees, should be approached to meet with patrolmen.

Most urban police departments today have community relations units. Typically, members of these units are speech-makers. Where such units exist, their members can serve as coordinators for arranging the patrolmen-citizen meetings. Where such units do not exist, they should be established for coordination purposes. Community relations officers' primary responsibilities would be to locate established citizen groups, contact their leaders, set up times and places for the meetings, and serve as informal chairmen at the meetings.

In police departments that have not already done so, manpower would need to be allocated so that two patrol units are on duty at any one time in each district. The Model City Precinct in Minneapolis provides an example of how this can be done. In each district, there

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were three basic shifts of 8 hours each (not counting an extra shift to cover heavy activity in the early evening hours). Three secondary shifts overlapped the three basic ones. Thus, the early day watch began at 7:00 a.m., the late day watch at 10:00 a.m. The early middle watch began at 3:00 p.m., the late middle watch at 6:00 p.m. The early dog watch began at 11:00 p.m., the late dog watch at 2:00 a.m. The car on early day watch was on primary status from 7:00-11:00 a.m.; the car on late day watch took over primary status from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and so on. Thus, each car on regular patrol had primary responsibility for answering calls for 4 hours, and backup responsibility for the other four. If these cars were unable to handle emergency calls, a car was dispatched from a neighboring district.

In this situation, the backup patrolmen could have been out of service at any time without seriously impairing the capability for handling calls in any given district. Meetings with citizens could easily be scheduled for backup patrolmen to attend for a couple of hours. The benefits of potentially improved service from goal definition with citizens should outweigh the costs of taking backup patrolmen off the streets.

With citizens and backup district patrolmen in attendance at the meetings, the community relations officers would introduce discussion with one short question: "What can the patrolmen do for you citizens, and what can the citizens do for you patrolmen?" Perhaps members of a church could provide a place for patrolmen to bring public drunks for the night. Perhaps patrolmen could try to obtain portable radio units for citizen street patrols to call in police assistance. Perhaps a committee of citizens and patrolmen could develop lists of referral services for the patrolmen to use in response to various kinds of crises.

Out of the meetings, the patrolmen and the citizens should develop a sense of what they can reasonably expect from one another, and discuss how best to do what is expected. As patrolmen and citizens encounter problems with one another, they can raise the problems in the meetings with a view to resolution.

For the patrolmen-citizen process of articulation of expectations to be effective, it would have to be reflected in the reward structure of the police department. Thus, the community relations officers would be given responsibility for distilling criteria of patrol performance to correspond to the expectations of patrolmen coming from the meetings. When a community relations officer in a district could arrive at a set of operational criteria which all of the patrolmen in the district and the leaders of participating groups signed, the criteria would be placed in the personnel file of each district patrolman. The

sergeant or sergeants in the district would then be given primary responsibility for making periodic evaluations of the patrolmen, *on terms of the agreed-upon criteria only*. Hence, for example, unless the patrolmen and citizens agreed that patrolmen should make arrests for particular offenses, records of arrests for those offenses would *not* be included in the patrolmen's files. When a civil service group rated a patrolman's work and scored it on a promotional examination, the score would be based on the criteria that peculiarly arose from the police-citizen interaction in one district. If any group or any patrolman petitioned the community relations officer for a revision of the criteria, the community relations officer would be obliged to circulate the revision for possible approval and subsequent use.

Under the premise, then, that there is a need for articulation of expectations of police patrolmen, this is a proposal not of what the goals should be, but of how they should be obtained.

Members of Other Units

Members of other police units should be integrated into the procedure applied to patrolmen. Organizationally, this also calls for adoption of a version of the Syracuse team policing plan.

At a minimum, juvenile officers should be assigned to specific patrol districts under the coordination of the district sergeant. Whenever the patrolmen (who are the generalists) in their meetings with citizens reach matters concerning juvenile officers or detectives, the patrolmen should call these specialized officers to attend the meetings and negotiate reasonable expectations with the citizens. As with the patrolmen, these expectations should be adopted as criteria of job performance for the juvenile officers and detectives.

It has been suggested already that there appears to be no legitimate role for members of specialized units, such as those dealing with narcotics, morals, and organized crime, to play. Initially, then, these units should be eliminated and their manpower reallocated to other assignments. Should a police-citizen group manage to develop a viable set of expectations for officers in one of the jurisdictions of crimes without victims sufficient to require the full-time attention of one or more officers, a special assignment could be created in the local team. Since the articulation of concrete expectations for these kinds of assignment is theoretically so difficult, the development of such expectations is unlikely. Special assignments for enforcement of laws against crimes without victims should probably be permanently relegated to accounts of the history of ineffective law enforcement days gone by.

CONCLUSION

This survey of police decision-making is in no sense a condemnation of the police themselves. On the contrary, the literature indicates that police generally are trying to meet the proper goal in their working—that of manifesting legitimate and respectable control over the citizenry. When the police have failed to meet this goal, it is because the citizenry they serve has not equipped them to do so. It is likely that most citizens have not bothered to think through concretely how they expect the police to meet the goal of good law enforcement, and it is certain in any event that the citizenry has not communicated such expectations to the police.

The underlying organizational problem made salient by the findings on police decision-making is not unique to the police. It is generic to bureaucracies and has long since been noted by such observers as Selznick (1943) and Blau (1955). The problem is commonly called "goal displacement." When no clear way to meet a goal is presented to a member of an organization, the member will do his best to make it *appear* as though his conduct serves the goal, though rationally the service of the goal is not demonstrable.

If there is an indictment implicit in this discussion of police decision-making, it is an indictment of a failure of planners for police departments to address themselves to removing undesirable constraints on officers' capabilities. It is manifestly unreasonable and apparently unnecessary to ask a policeman to do a job without giving him the tools he needs to perform his duties. This, above all, is the lesson taught by research findings on police decision-making.

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