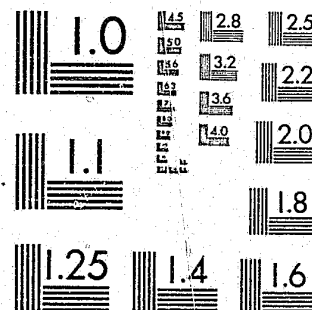


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THE METRO TASK FORCE:
A PROGRAM OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

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Special debts are owed to the troopers who worked in the MTF, the officers in Trenton's back-up units, and the Trenton vehicle and foot patrol officers who patiently discussed their views about the MTF operation. In addition, staff in the State Police Uniform Crime Reporting Unit helped us tremendously in obtaining the crime and arrest data we needed for the evaluation.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In December of 1980, the Attorney General of New Jersey submitted, to the Governor of that state, a set of recommendations which were suggested as responses to "the clear and present danger posed to the citizens of this state by crime in the streets." Although the document proposed changes at virtually all stages of the criminal justice system--from victim/witness programs to corrections--the section entitled "Improving Police Services" was defined as the report's "bedrock". That section had three components: (1) the development of statewide minimum standards for police training and performance, (2) approaches to ensuring the funding levels of local law enforcement functions during periods of strain on local revenues, and (3) a proposal to commit State Police personnel to urban areas for limited time periods in order to bolster the efforts of local police departments.

The idea of temporarily assigning State Police officers to urban law enforcement duties was implemented in Trenton, N.J. in March of 1981, and the program continued until the end of September 1981. The State Police contingent was called the Metro Task Force, and the operation of the Metro Task Force in Trenton is the subject of the evaluation reported in the ensuing chapters.

The Attorney General's recommendations did not specify in detail what the objectives and tactics of the Metro Task Force would be. However, several statements in the recommendations did set the overall framework:

- * The State Police units would be "committed to major city high-crime areas on an alternating basis."
- * The units "would concentrate on clearly delineated areas for a specified length of time."
- * Their "tactics would include responding to crime-in-progress alarms in an effort to arrest suspects at or near the scene, otherwise apprehending fugitives and establishing a patrol presence....City police would continue responding to all calls for service as well as performing all routine investigative activities."
- * The objective of the State Police units "would be limited to suppressing violent street crimes and armed robberies of certain commercial establishments."

State Police units have been deployed in other metropolitan areas (e.g., Miami, Atlanta, New Orleans) to assist local police departments, but their functions have been limited primarily to traffic law enforcement in attempts to "free-up" more local police time to deal with street crimes. The New Jersey Metro Task Force program was unique; to the best of our knowledge, it represented the first time a State Police agency had been called upon to provide pro-active enforcement of criminal laws within the jurisdiction of an urban municipality when there was no civil disorder in progress.

The Evaluation

The report of our evaluation of the Metro Task Force (MTF) program, as it was conducted in Trenton, N.J., consists of five components: (1) program implementation, (2) MTF operations (3) relationship between State Police and the local criminal justice system, (4) reactions of the citizens of Trenton, and (5) impact of the MTF program on crimes known to the police and on arrests.

Implementation

Information about program implementation was derived primarily from internal agency documents and interviews with State Police trainers and senior State Police officers. Examination of the process reveals some problems that should be taken into consideration in the event a similar program is attempted elsewhere.

Operations

The results of an evaluation of "street-level" program, such as the Metro Task Force, will have little meaning unless they can be viewed with an understanding of the day-to-day activities of the people involved in the program and their feelings about the activities. To provide this perspective, we interviewed the State Police officers who patrolled the streets of Trenton and Trenton Police Department officers who worked most closely with them.

State-Local Relationships

The major reason why the Metro Task Force program was attractive for an evaluation was its involvement of state and local law enforcement agencies in a joint venture. Although cooperation and coordination between state and local law enforcement agencies are not rare events, they generally consist of highly specific, specialized activities: gambling and drug investigations, sharing of crime laboratory resources, crowd control for special events, containment of mass disturbances. The Metro Task Force program, in contrast, placed State Police officers on vehicle patrol duties within the city of Trenton for an extended period of time.

In examining the relationships between the state and local agencies in this venture, we relied on interviews with state and local police officers, interviews with personnel in other parts of the local criminal justice system, and reviews of newspaper coverage of the program.

Public Reactions

As will be discussed later, the goals of the Metro Task Force program shifted somewhat away from the sole purpose of "suppressing violent street crimes and armed robberies of certain commercial establishments." Statements made by officials during the program indicated a concurrent goal of easing public concerns about crime. Because of this goal, and because public cooperation and support is very helpful to almost any street-level law enforcement program, we decided to assess public reactions to the Metro Task Force. This was done with a random-digit dialing

telephone survey of Trenton residents after the Metro Task Force program had ended in Trenton. In addition, two earlier surveys of Trenton residents had been conducted, and we were able to compare our results to some of the results of those surveys.

Crimes and Arrests

Although easing public concerns about crime became incorporated into the goals of the Metro Task Force program, the reduction of street crime was always viewed as the primary goal. In assessing whether the program attained this goal, we examined trends of crimes known to the police and arrests in Trenton for a period that extended from 14 months before the program began in Trenton to 9 months after the program ended. The crime and arrest trends for Trenton were compared to the crime and arrest trends for several other New Jersey cities during the same time period. Using data available only for Trenton, we also examined shorter term trends in specially defined "street-related" crimes and in the distribution of crimes among the city's police patrol zones.

Contents of the Report

Chapters 2 through 6 of this report correspond to the five components of the evaluation discussed above. The conclusions of the evaluation and the recommendations for other cooperative police patrol programs that can be derived from the findings are discussed in Chapter 7. Throughout the report, the emphasis is on presenting the findings in a clear, easily readable fashion, unencumbered by the technical details of the data collection and analytic techniques. The more technical details about the data collection and analysis are available from the senior author.

CHAPTER 2

IMPLEMENTATION

Although the recommendations made by the New Jersey Attorney General in December 1980 covered a wide range of criminal justice activities, the ones dealing with law enforcement aroused the greatest public debate. And the reception given the ideas--particularly those concerning State development of minimum standards and the deployment of State Police in cities--by local police officials was somewhat chilly. By early February of 1981, the New Jersey Association of Police Chiefs had rejected the Metro Task Force (MTF)* idea, and the mayor of the State's largest city (Newark) had flatly rejected the idea of using State Police to patrol the streets of his city.

This initial resistance is understandable for a number of reasons, some of which stem from the general structure of criminal justice in the United States and some of which were unique to the situation in New Jersey during late 1980 and early 1981.

First, the strong tradition of local control of law enforcement admits participation by higher levels of government only grudgingly, especially when the participation has high visibility and involves the most basic functions of the local police. This resistance is not necessarily an indication of a petty reluctance to share authority. Many believe sincerely that the close contact between police and citizens--a much closer

*Because "Metro Task Force" is mentioned so frequently, the abbreviation, "MTF", will be used in the remainder of this report.

contact than is found in other segments of the criminal justice system--requires local control of police departments. In addition, the dispatch of State Police into jurisdiction to conduct patrols carries the implication that the local police are not performing their regular functions adequately. (The same implication is attached to the idea that the State should set minimum standards for local police, but we will concentrate on the MTF proposal.) These sources of resistance are strengthened when recommendations to increase State involvement in local law enforcement are made prior to any systematic consultation with local officials, as was the case with the original MTF recommendations.

Second, the recommendations of the Attorney General came at a time when localities were experiencing budget squeezes caused by generally weak economic conditions and legislative caps on municipal expenditures. Local officials wanted State assistance for law enforcement, but in the form of resources to expand their own departments rather than the temporary assignment of State Police contingents.

Finally, the recommendations were made in the midst of a gubernatorial primary campaign in which the Attorney General and the mayor of the State's largest city were contenders. Thus, it is not surprising that both the Attorney General's recommendation for a MTF and Newark's refusal to participate as a host city were regarded widely as politically motivated decisions. We make no judgments about the motivations of the people involved: whether they made their decisions on what they perceived as the merits of

the proposal or on what they perceived as the best political strategy. The MTF idea was implemented in one city, so we have an opportunity to examine how well it worked; but the political context of the MTF did have some influence on where the program was implemented and how people viewed the program.

By mid to late February of 1981, the strong resistance from local officials had faded from newspaper headlines as State officials settled down to a series of discussions with mayors and police chiefs about the details of the Attorney General's recommendations. The statewide controversy ebbed even more when, in late February, it was announced that Trenton would be the first city to host a MTF operation. And later in the year, during the MTF operation, the controversy was removed from gubernatorial politics when the primary campaigns of both the Attorney General and the Mayor of Newark proved unsuccessful.

But, while the public debate swirled in the media during January and February, the State Police were busy laying the detailed groundwork necessary for the smooth implementation of a MTF operation.

State Police Operational Plan

In January of 1981, a State Police planning committee was formed to develop an Operational Plan for the MTF program. The committee consisted primarily of staff from State Police headquarters, but also included one of the regional troop commanders. This committee articulated the basic purposes and procedures of the MTF and received input from personnel responsible for training, communication, transportation, public

information, budgeting, and record-keeping. In addition, each of the three regional troops prepared a plan showing how they would organize a MTF operation for cities within their own geographical areas.*

The Operation Plan was submitted in mid February. It stated clearly that MTF operations would be used to supplement local police resources, that their purpose would be to suppress violent street crimes (including armed robberies of commercial establishments), and that they would rely primarily on high visibility patrols using marked vehicles with a minimum of two uniformed State Police officers per vehicle. The committee offered several recommendations concerning MTF implementation; the recommendations stressed the need for close, top-level coordination with local officials prior to deployment of a MTF contingent, the importance of special training and orientation for MTF personnel, and the desirability of conducting only one MTF operation at a time (because of the impact on other State Police functions).

Selection of Trenton

Our interviews suggest that there was no great desire among the senior staff in any of the three State Police Troops to have the first MTF city selected from within the boundaries of their geographical regions. This reluctance had nothing to do with whether the MTF was viewed positively or negatively as a law

*The New Jersey State Police is organized into three geographical troops: A in the south, B in the north, and C in the central part of the State. Two additional troops are responsible for the major toll highways in the state (Turnpike and Parkway).

enforcement strategy. Rather, it reflected a perfectly reasonable desire to avoid a situation in which the selected Troop would have to strain its own manpower needs (MTF officers were to be picked from existing Troop personnel, without replacements from outside the Troop) and conduct a controversial operation in a politically charged atmosphere.

However, the suspense did not last long. By mid-January of 1981, there were already rumors that Trenton would be the first city selected for the MTF. In retrospect, it seems almost inevitable that Trenton would be chosen as the first site. Four reasons appear to have been primary in the selection of Trenton.

First, Trenton is the capital city of New Jersey. As such, the city and state officials are accustomed to working together on joint concerns. Trenton police officers probably have more routine contact with State Police officers than their counterparts in other cities do because of State Police law enforcement roles connected with state property and functions.

Second, selection of Trenton simplified the administrative and command responsibilities associated with a MTF operation. State Police headquarters is located just to the northwest of Trenton city limits, and the headquarters of Troop C (which would have direct, day-to-day responsibility for a MTF operation in Trenton) is located a few miles east of the city.

Third, Trenton is a manageable site for trying out a new patrol operation. It has all of the problems associated with old urban areas (deteriorated housing, unemployment, racial/ethnic tensions, pockets of high-crime activity), but it is a small to

tensions, pockets of high-crime activity), but it is a small to medium size city (population just over 90,000), and it is relatively compact (about seven square miles).

Fourth, a MTF operation in the New Jersey city with the most severe crime problem--Newark--was precluded by disagreements between state and local officials.

Thus, the announcement in late February that Trenton would be the first host city for the MTF came as no great surprise.

Selection of Officers

State Police Troop C estimated that they would need about 35 officers for the MTF operation in Trenton: three 10-man patrol squads (including a sergeant in charge of each) and auxiliary personnel for communications and supervision. Because of the sensitive nature of the MTF assignment, Troop C officials wanted to select personnel who displayed high levels of motivation and professionalism; at the same time, they wanted to minimize the effects of putting manpower into the MTF on the Troop's day-to-day functions.

These twin objectives were met primarily by temporarily disbanding some specialized units within the Troop and assigning their members to the MTF. The specialized units were two Tactical Patrol Units ("Tac Pacs"), which are used for concentrated enforcement in areas showing unusually high traffic accident patterns, and the Troop's TEAMS unit (Technical Emergency and Mission Specialists), which responds to situations involving hostages, scuba searches, hazardous wastes, etc. About 18 troopers were made available by temporarily disbanding these specialized units; another dozen were selected from among

troopers who were assigned to regular road duty within the Troop.

Inclusion in the MTF was more or less voluntary for the troopers. Those drawn from regular road duties were, for the most part, true volunteers. Troopers from the specialized units were given the option of refusing the MTF assignment, but if they did, there was no guarantee that they would be able to rejoin the specialized units when the MTF operation was completed. Voluntariness was not an issue for the supervisors (four sergeants and one lieutenant); they were hand-picked by the Troop commander.

Of the men initially assigned to the MTF in Trenton, only three were replaced during the eight-month operation; two requested reassignment, and the work of one was viewed as unsatisfactory.

It should be noted that Troop C officials saw the assignment of more than 30 of their men to the MTF as a major manpower problem. The total Troop C contingent is 250, and the unavailability of about 15 percent of this force for an extended period placed a strain on normal Troop functions.

Training

A three-day pre-operational training program was conducted at the New Jersey State Police Academy. Most of the components in the training program were taught by instructors permanently assigned to the Academy and covered topics included in routine State Police training sequences: juvenile justice, drug enforcement, officer survival, medical emergencies, stop and approach, use of force, and arrest, search and seizure. On the third day of training, a block of time was set aside for a

question-and-answer period with supervisors from the Trenton Police Department.

There is little doubt that some sort of special training program was needed for the State Police officers scheduled to participate in the MTF. This need was recognized by virtually everyone connected with the MTF. However, two factors limited the utility of the training program that was conducted. First, the training was meant to prepare the troopers for a new type of operation. Little was known about what general problems the troopers might encounter in Trenton. The unknowns associated with the newness of the MTF operation were aggravated by a second factor: the speed with which the MTF operation moved from concept to implementation. Recall that the idea of the MTF was first introduced in December 1980 in the Attorney General's report. The training program was conducted in mid-February, about two months after the MTF idea was announced, and only a few weeks after Trenton had been selected as the host city for the first MTF operation.

Under these conditions, the training program was at least partly a matter of show rather than substance. By announcing that the troopers would undergo special training for their urban assignments, the State Police were able to alleviate some of the skepticism about the ability of the troopers to handle the special demands of urban policing--skepticism that was especially widespread in the minority community where experiences with the State Police during urban disorders of earlier years helped to shape the perception of the State Police as a stringent, quasi-military, overwhelmingly white police force.

On the other hand, it was important that the training program was conducted. Some aspects of the program were valuable to the troopers, but more importantly, the program provided a reference against which experiences during the actual MTF operation could be measured and upon which improvements could be suggested. Our interviews with the trainers and with MTF troopers who underwent the training, as well as our review of the suggestions brought out during the post-operational debriefing of MTF participants, showed a high level of agreement about the shortcomings of the training and about where improvements could be made.

Virtually all of the troopers viewed the MTF training program as primarily a review of material that had been presented to them in their initial State Police training program and in their periodic refresher courses. Many found the repetition boring; even those who saw some value in going over the material again thought that the review could have been conducted in a shorter time period. The trainers realized that most of their material was drawn from previous presentations, but they had little opportunity to prepare more directly relevant material, and they were just as much in the dark about what the troopers would face on the streets of Trenton as were the troopers themselves.

Most of the MTF troopers who attended the training sessions thought there was value in having police officers from the target city available for questions. However, it was obvious that the usefulness of the Trenton officers was limited first, by the short time they were available at the training program, but also

by the fact that they too were uncertain about how the MTF program would actually operate and how state and local police roles would be coordinated.

Our interviews with the troopers who participated in the MTF operation occurred after they had withdrawn from Trenton, and many of them had suggestions about how the training program could be improved, based on their experiences in Trenton. Similarly, a list of training recommendations was derived from the debriefing in which the MTF troopers participated immediately after their departure from Trenton. We will discuss these suggestions and recommendations in the concluding chapter of this report.

Coordination With Others

There does not appear to have been a great deal of formal joint planning involving the State Police and Trenton agencies during the MTF implementation. Once agreement was reached between state officials and the relevant city officials (mayor, director of public safety, and chief of police) about the general nature of the operation, the task of working out operational arrangements was passed to lower levels. As it turned out, there was very good coordination between the State Police and the Trenton Police at the point where the two departments interfaced, and there was little need for involvement in daily operations by personnel above the rank of sergeant once the program got started. However, this process appears to have been facilitated greatly by the fact that the point of interface within the Trenton Police Department was a small, specialized unit that was already performing functions similar to those planned for the

MTF; the importance of this fact will be discussed later.

Once the decision was made to link the MTF to the Trenton Police Department through a specialized unit, there were few attempts to explain the operation to regular Trenton patrol officers. Four days before the troopers entered the city, the Trenton Chief of Police issued a memorandum announcing the operation. Aside from a few brief comments about reporting procedures, the Chief's memorandum indicated only that the activities of the MTF squads would be guided by a December 1980 order in which the policies and functions of the specialized Trenton patrol unit had been outlined. Most of the regular Trenton Police Officers we interviewed indicated that they learned more about the MTF operation from the media and from informal conversation among peers than from any other sources. As we shall see later, this created a few misunderstandings.

Pre-implementation contact between officials in charge of the MTF and non-police agencies in the local criminal justice system (county prosecutor's office, municipal and county courts, public defender's office) was minimal to non-existent. Again, this lack of contact probably led to a few problems that we will discuss later.

Finally, Trenton and State Police officials tried to ease the concerns of local minority groups by engaging in several meetings with black community leaders before the troopers entered Trenton. By all accounts, these meetings were not particularly successful, and the MTF operation began amid a great deal of distrust in Trenton's black community.

Entering Trenton

One year prior to the MTF operation, the Trenton Police Department had established special "back-up units" within its Patrol Section. Two units were created, each consisting of one sergeant, one canine officer, and four patrol officers. The units were to report directly to the Patrol Commander's office, and, while on duty, were not available for dispatch on routine assignments or calls for service. The purpose of the units was stated in a Police Department General Order (#3-80-007), which says, in part:

* The formation of these units is to provide a sufficient force of manpower, free from service type assignments which shall be constantly available in the field for use as:

- a. Back-up support for radio beat, sector and foot patrol units in the field which may be involved in activities requiring additional manpower.
- b. As a saturation unit, capable of saturating a relatively small, high crime area to discourage the commission of crime.
- c. As a directed patrol unit for use in areas where common nuisances are perpetrated and constant police presence is required to discourage same.
- d. For preventive patrol in areas where frequent entries, purse snatches and/or muggings occur.

In addition to the above described incidents, this type of patrol may be required to respond to large serious fires, murders, missing children, etc.

Obviously, the functions of the Trenton Police Department's back-up units have a degree of similarity to the MTF functions foreseen in the New Jersey Attorney General's original

recommendations. Both the MTF and back-up units were viewed as supplemental units to be used primarily in focused patrol operations; both were exempted from responding to normal calls for service and from conducting other routine activities. In addition, the Trenton Police Department chose -- to the extent possible -- to staff their back-up units with highly motivated, volunteer officers, a pattern that the State Police tried to follow in assembling the MTF.

Thus, the back-up units provided a natural organizational point through which the MTF could be introduced into the city of Trenton.

The actual entry of the three State Police MTF squads into Trenton occurred in stages. A staged entry was not planned; rather, the problems involved in pulling troopers from other duties on short notice prevented Troop C from having all three MTF squads fully staffed when the operation began.

Entry of the MTF began in early March, and by early April, all three MTF squads were operational and working independently. The first group of troopers to enter Trenton rode with the back-up units during their regular patrols. At first, two troopers rode with two Trenton officers; later, one Trenton officer and one trooper patrolled in either a Trenton or State Police vehicle. The joint patrols lasted about two weeks, which according to our interviews, gave the troopers enough time and exposure to learn the geography of Trenton (both in terms of the physical layout of the city and the distribution of trouble spots).

One of the initial concerns of planners of the MTF program

to the urban setting in which they would be placed. The expectation was that all of the troopers would spend rather lengthy periods conducting joint patrols with local police officers. This proved unnecessary. As a supervisor in one of the Trenton back-up units observed, the troopers were "experienced rookies" -- they were "new to the urban area, but not to police work."

The troopers "caught-on" to the routines of the back-up units quickly. There was also some discomfort in the fact that the joint patrols involving one trooper and one Trenton officer required the splitting up of partners who were accustomed to working together. Thus, the first troopers who entered Trenton were paired and conducted their own patrols in State Police vehicles after only a few weeks. Troopers who entered subsequently, to form the full complement of three squads, had even briefer initiation periods. Some spent one or two days riding with the back-up unit personnel; all spent at least some time working with other troopers who had already become accustomed to patrolling Trenton.

By mid April, the implementation period was completed, and the MTF program had settled into an operational routine that did not vary much until phased withdrawal of the troopers began in late September.

Observations

As with all new programs, the implementation of the MTF operation in Trenton was handicapped by the lack of prior experiences that could inform the process. This was compounded by the speed with which the original concept was put into practice. For example, if another month or two had been allowed for implementation, the training session for MTF troopers could have consisted of much more than refresher modules and a question-and-answer period in which all of the participants -- trainers, troopers, and Trenton officers -- were almost equally in the dark about what to expect.

On the other hand, the actual entry of the troopers into Trenton went more smoothly than most people expected. This can be attributed, primarily, to the existence of the back-up units within the Trenton Police Department. The incoming troopers did not have to carve out a niche within a diverse urban police department. The back-up units provided the niche: a small, organizationally distinct group of Trenton officers who were already performing many of the types of duties planned for the MTF. This situation allowed the patrol personnel and supervisors of the MTF squads and back-up units to develop quickly the kinds of informal understanding and mutual trust that facilitated day-to-day cooperation. Had it not been for the presence of these back-up units, entry into Trenton by the MTF probably would have been a prolonged, tension-producing process characterized by the need for periodic intervention by superiors to settle disputes about roles and responsibilities.

CHAPTER 3

MTF OPERATIONS

To provide an understanding of the context in which the results described in Chapters 5 and 6 occurred, this chapter and Chapter 4 explain, respectively, the operations of the MTF during its stay in Trenton and the nature of the relationships between state and local criminal justice components that characterized the program.

Most of the information in this chapter and Chapter 4 is derived from interviews with three groups of police officers: (1) the state troopers who participated in the MTF, (2) members of the Trenton Police Department's back-up units, and (3) Trenton police officers assigned to routine patrol duties during the MTF operation. Attempts were made to interview all of the MTF troopers and all of the back-up unit personnel. Only two of the MTF troopers refused to be interviewed, and all of the Trenton back-up unit officers were interviewed. From Trenton officers on regular patrol duty on different days, we selected a random sample of 30 individuals; 27 were interviewed (14 from vehicle patrol assignments, 9 from foot patrol, and 4 from K-9 patrol).

Deployment

After the three MTF squads had been fully phased into Trenton and had completed their ride-along periods to become familiar with the city, they settled into a shift pattern that corresponded generally the pattern being used by the Trenton back-up units. Scheduling was based almost exclusively on two shifts: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and 7 p.m. to 3 a.m. The usual

pattern involved all three MTF squads on patrol from Tuesday through Friday, with two of the squads on the 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. or the 7 p.m. - 3 a.m. shift during alternating weeks. Generally, only one squad patrolled on Mondays, and none patrolled on Sundays. MTF presence varied on Saturdays; on some Saturdays, one squad would patrol during one of the shifts, and on other Saturdays two squads would be used, one for each of the shifts. A typical schedule for the three MTF squads, reflecting the month of July 1981, is shown in Table 3.1.

Each MTF squad had a maximum of four two-man patrol cars on the street while it was on duty. At any given moment during a shift, however, the number of the squad's vehicles on active patrol was often less than four, primarily because of time spent processing arrestees at Trenton Police Department headquarters.

As noted, the shifts for MTF squads coincided, for the most part, with the shifts worked by Trenton's back-up units. At the beginning of each shift, the MTF Squad(s) and the back-up unit going on duty held a joint briefing. These were typical pre-shift briefings, covering the day's assignments, recent major crime patterns, current trouble spots, and special events that might be relevant to law enforcement.

The Trenton Police Department divides the city into nine geographical patrol zones. The MTF squads were given their zone assignments at the pre-shift briefing. The assignments were worked out between the sergeants in charge of the MTF squads and the Trenton back-up units, and several considerations were taken into account in making the assignments. Summaries of crimes known

TABLE 3.1
Patrol Shifts for MTF Squads During July 1981

	Squad #1	Squad #2	Squad #3
Wed., 1	10-6	10-6	7-3
Thu., 2	10-6	10-6	7-3
Fri., 3	10-6	10-6	7-3
Sat., 4			
Sun., 5			
Mon., 6	7-3	7-3	10-6
Tue., 7	7-3	7-3	10-6
Wed., 8	7-3	7-3	10-6
Thu., 9	7-3	7-3	10-6
Fri., 10	7-3	7-3	10-6
Sat., 11			
Sun., 12			
Mon., 13	10-6		7-3
Tue., 14	10-6	7-3	7-3
Wed., 15	10-6	7-3	7-3
Thu., 16	10-6	7-3	7-3
Fri., 17	10-6	7-3	
Sat., 18			
Sun., 19			10-6
Mon., 20			10-6
Tue., 21	7-3	10-6	10-6
Wed., 22	7-3	10-6	10-6
Thu., 23	7-3	10-6	10-6
Fri., 24	7-3	10-6	
Sat., 25	7-3	10-6	
Sun., 26			7-3
Mon., 27			7-3
Tue., 28	10-6	7-3	7-3
Wed., 29	10-6	7-3	7-3
Thu., 30	10-6	7-3	7-3
Fri., 31	10-6	7-3	

SHIFTS: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 3 a.m.

to the police -- broken down by zone, time of day, and type of crime -- were used, but more often, assignments were based on more intimate knowledge of the neighborhoods: for example, complaints by residents that "troublemakers" had been congregating at a particular location or intelligence information about drug sales occurring in a particular area. In addition, the MTF and back-up unit sergeants coordinated the assignments of their men to provide maximum coverage of several zones or intensive coverage of one or two zones, depending on circumstances.

After the pre-shift briefing, the MTF troopers began patrolling their assigned zones in their vehicles. At the beginning of the MTF program, there was little deviation from the zones assigned in the pre-shift briefing. But as the MTF troopers became more accustomed to the physical layout and criminal behavior patterns in Trenton, more flexibility was used. For example, if the level of activity was particularly low in the zone assigned initially, the sergeants would move the MTF unit to a different zone--either to another high-crime zone to look for more criminal activity or to one of the low-crime zones (in which initial assignments were rarely made) to demonstrate the presence of State Police patrols throughout the city. In addition, when the MTF patrols became aware of other units responding to major activity in some other zone, they would begin to move toward that zone, in case the other units needed assistance.

Patrol Activities

As mentioned earlier, the MTF troopers and the Trenton back-up units were to engage in basically similar activities on the street: high visibility, aggressive patrolling that was not to be interrupted by responding to routine calls for service or routine follow-up duties. Nevertheless, the street activities of the MTF troopers and the back-up units were not exactly the same because the back-up units engaged in a wider range of activities. The troopers always rode in uniform in marked cars; information about other crimes that they developed during the course of their patrol activities was generally turned over to Trenton or State Police investigators for follow-up. In contrast, officers in the Trenton back-up units utilized covert surveillance and other forms of investigation, particularly in drug cases. Most of the MTF troopers that we interviewed felt that the program would have been more effective if they had been allowed to engage in similar activities as a supplement to their visible patrols.

Thus, the activities of the MTF troopers while on the streets on Trenton were quite straight-forward. They patrolled visibly and watched carefully for suspicious persons and activities. When they saw something--people behaving in a disorderly manner, someone trying to conceal an object after spotting their presence, and so forth--they would approach and question the subject or subjects. Identification would be requested and, if there were signs of criminal behavior, subjects would be "patted down" for weapons.

The troopers rarely came across major crimes (such as armed robberies or burglaries) in progress during their patrols. But the troopers expressed some surprise about how easy it was to make arrests--at least initially--in Trenton. More accustomed to making vehicle stops on open highways, the troopers found themselves on the densely populated streets of low-income urban areas where a trained observer could spot dozens of misdemeanors and city ordinance violations occurring in the open, where it was not uncommon for an identity check to produce information that the person had one or more warrants outstanding (usually for municipal traffic violations), and where a cursory search would often lead to the discovery of a weapon or a small amount of a controlled substance. Not surprisingly, of the 1,464 persons arrested by the MTF troopers, about two-thirds (66 percent) were charged as fugitives or for possession of small amounts (under 25 grams) of drugs.

Of course, the "street people" eventually adapted to the presence of the troopers, and the amount of overt illegality declined over time. This was one reason why many of the troopers we interviewed thought that the MTF program would have been more effective if they had been able to vary their tactics: use unmarked cars, conduct undercover operations, and so forth.

Anticipated and Actual Problems

This section looks at some of the problems that the MTF troopers expected to encounter when they entered Trenton and the extent to which the problems materialized. It covers only those problems that the troopers thought they might encounter during

their own patrol duties.

During our interviews with the troopers who had served in the MTF, all respondents were asked if they had any special concerns or questions about operating in Trenton before they entered the city. Only a few of the troopers said that they had no special concerns. Among those who reported what their concerns had been, multiple replies were common, and three general areas of concern predominated: how they would get along with the Trenton police, how Trenton residents would react to their presence, and what situations they would face in an urban setting. Issues about relationships with the Trenton police will be covered in Chapter 4, and reactions of Trenton residents are examined in Chapter 5; our attention here is on the troopers' concerns about the practice of urban patrol.

The pre-entry concerns about urban patrol expressed by the MTF troopers did not reflect any doubt about their ability to handle the task that was being assigned. At least in retrospect (the interviews took place about one year after the troopers initially entered Trenton), the troopers indicated that they went in with a high degree of confidence about their ability to conduct patrol operations in Trenton. They expected problems to arise, but they felt that they could adapt.

The two patrol-related concerns mentioned most frequently were uncertainty about the extent to which procedures for stopping and approaching pedestrians would differ from stopping and approaching motorists, and unfamiliarity with the physical layout of Trenton. However, according to the troopers' accounts--which were verified frequently in our interviews with

members of Trenton's back-up units--these concerns did not materialize into real problems.

The troopers soon found that only minor modifications in the stop-and-approach techniques they used on the road were necessary in pedestrian encounters. Furthermore, according to our interviews, they did not go into Trenton unaware of the minor modifications that would be required; the differences between stop-and-approach procedures for pedestrians and motorists were covered during the pre-operational training sessions mentioned in Chapter 2. A related difference that the troopers did encounter was a greater frequency of fleeing subjects during their Trenton patrols than during their regular road duties. The occupant of a vehicle stopped by troopers on the open highway has little opportunity to flee on foot; that is not the case with pedestrians in a dense urban area. The troopers defined the frequency of foot pursuits more as a difference between urban and highway patrol, rather than as a special problem for them; however, some did mention that their somewhat bulky, formal, "Class A" uniforms and leather-soled shoes hindered them during foot pursuits.

The pre-entry concern about learning the physical layout of Trenton dissipated quickly during the troopers' initial period of riding along with Trenton back-up unit personnel on the street. All of the troopers said that they felt comfortable enough to patrol on their own after about one or two weeks and that they knew the geography of the city very well after about one month on patrol. On the other hand, a few of the troopers mentioned that,

throughout the 5-7 months they were in Trenton, they would occasionally come across nooks and crannies of the city with which they were unfamiliar. Overall, initial concerns about the lack of familiarity with Trenton's geography did not translate into serious problems for the troopers during the MTF program.

Our interviews the the MTF troopers lead us to believe that they experienced more problems because of unfamiliarity with the street people than because of unfamiliarity with the streets. This was apparent in the troopers' attempts to run warrant checks on people they stopped and questioned. Information about outstanding warrants was kept in a card file at Trenton Police headquarters. When troopers called for a warrant check, response was usually rapid because radio dispatchers had quick and easy access to the card file. However, the cards rarely had much descriptive information about the wanted person--generally just a name and address--and there was often a backlog of cards that had not gotten into the file. When a suspect tried to conceal his or her identity, troopers reported that they had some difficulty in trying to verify that the suspect did, in fact, have a warrant outstanding. Occasionally, a Trenton Police officer would be nearby and would help in clearing up the identity issue. After a few months, however, the troopers themselves became able to recognize many of the street people, and just as important, they began to develop questioning techniques that would trick people into revealing their true identities--a "real art", according to one of the troopers.

In sum, the MTF troopers entered Trenton with a great deal of confidence in their general ability to handle any situations

that might arise on the streets. They had some realistic concerns about the differences between urban and highway patrol they might encounter, but they felt they could adapt to the differences. In fact, they adapted quite quickly on urban patrol, even to problems that they did not anticipate.

State Police, Trenton Police Differences

In the next chapter, we will discuss how the MTF troopers and the Trenton Police officers interacted with each other and their relationships to each other. This section is concerned with the differences that existed between the styles of the troopers and the regular Trenton patrol officers. That different police departments are characterized by different styles of law enforcement is not a revelation to anyone familiar with prior research on policing. The MTF troopers and the regular Trenton patrol officers represent an almost classic case of contrasting styles.

The selection and training methods used by the New Jersey State Police encourages a strict, "by-the-book" approach by troopers in their interactions with citizens (suspects and non-suspects). The "spit-and-polish" appearance of the troopers matches their preferred mode of questioning: an air of confidence that is meant to leave no doubt about who is in charge, and a manner of communication that is politely aggressive, probing, and direct, leaving little room for extraneous banter or other digressions from the matter at hand.

Many Trenton patrol officers, in contrast, take a more relaxed approach to their interactions with citizens. More

discretion is used, and unless a major crime has been committed, making an arrest is often viewed as less important than keeping peace on the beat. The appearance of the Trenton police officers--relative to the appearance of the State Police troopers--reflects their more relaxed styles: polish and standardization are less in evidence.

Both styles had their critics and supporters among the people we interviewed. Not surprisingly, the formal style of policing was preferred by virtually all of the troopers who served in the MTF, while regular Trenton patrol officers preferred the more informal style of policing. Some of the MTF troopers even offered the opinion that local lawbreakers preferred to be arrested by the troopers rather than by the regular Trenton officers because the behavior of the troopers was more direct and predictable. In contrast, some Trenton officers thought that the troopers mishandled street situations by making "cheap" arrests either because they didn't understand the people and the contexts in which the situations occurred or because they were trying to accumulate impressive arrest statistics.

There were also, however, a few interviewees among the troopers and the Trenton officers who not only recognized the style differences but who appreciated the positive aspects of both approaches. For example, several respondents from both groups noted that the MTF troopers were able to utilize their direct, formal, "by-the-book" style in situations where Trenton police would find it difficult to do so. The troopers, for the most part, did not live in Trenton, and their Trenton assignment was temporary; the Trenton officers generally lived in the city,

had friends and relatives there, and could expect to be dealing with the same people on the streets, day after day, for an indefinitely long period of time. Thus, the situation of the Trenton officers on regular patrol differed substantially from that of the MTF troopers, and it generated pressures favoring a more accommodating, "live-and-let-live" posture by the Trenton officers toward minor, visible illegal acts.

Many of the MTF troopers interpreted the informal style and less than impressive appearance of the regular Trenton patrol officers as indicators of "burn-out". As one trooper commented: "They patrol the same crummy areas every day, and nothing ever changes. They see the same scum back on the street every day, even after they arrest them." A majority of the MTF troopers suggested that the Trenton Police Department should rotate assignments among its officers to avoid "burn-out" and should institute unspecified incentives to encourage sharper appearance and a more aggressive style of policing. Of course, such comments and suggestions amount to the troopers saying that the Trenton police should be more like the State Police.

Perhaps one of the main reasons that so many of the MTF troopers attributed "burn-out" to the Trenton officers was that the troopers themselves experienced a degree of "burn-out" during the program. Our interview outline did not contain any specific question about the troopers' opinions on the length of the MTF program. Nevertheless, all but five of the troopers commented on this--usually in the context of answering a question about how the program could be improved--and none of them suggested that

the program should have lasted past the first week in October 1981, when the last MTF squad withdrew from Trenton.

Evidently there was some uncertainty about exactly when the program would end, and this was uniformly felt by the troopers to be a problem. On the issue of program duration, those who gave an opinion were about evenly split between thinking that the program lasted too long and those who thought that program length was about right. However, even the latter said that the program should not have continued past the point when it actually ended. Furthermore, proponents of both views cited trooper "burn-out" as their rationale for why the program should have been shorter or should not have been longer.

Most of the reasons given by the MTF troopers for their own "burn-out"--e.g., the intensity of urban patrol, seeing the same people and behavior on the streets day after day--were the same causes they attributed to what they perceived as "burn-out" among the Trenton officers. Probably because of this similarity of experience, only a few of the MTF troopers described the Trenton officers themselves as second rate. Almost all of the troopers who voiced an opinion thought that Trenton's officers were good cops caught in a structure that discouraged initiative.

Which style of law enforcement is most effective and appropriate for Trenton police officers remains an unanswered question. There is little doubt, however, that the MTF troopers and the regular Trenton police officers carried out their patrol duties in substantially different ways.

Personnel in the Trenton back-up units, which worked closely with the MTF, apparently utilized a policing style that fell

between those of the troopers and the regular Trenton patrol officers. The comments in our interviews suggest that officers in the back-up units were more highly motivated and aggressive than their Trenton peers, but that they did not bring as high a degree of formality to their interactions with citizens as the troopers did.

The preceding discussion of the style differences among the law enforcement agencies operating in Trenton during the MTF program helps to deepen our understanding of what was happening on the streets while the MTF program was in effect. It also provides background information that will be useful when we examine, in the next chapter, the interactions between the state and local police during the program.

CHAPTER 4

STATE POLICE-LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS

In the preceding chapter, we discussed ways in which the MTF troopers and the regular Trenton patrol officers differed with respect to the duties involved in their patrols and the styles they employed while on patrol. During the course of that discussion, we drew on our interviews with troopers and Trenton officers and noted some of the opinions that each set of respondents held about each other. In this chapter, we will rely again on interviews with MTF troopers, regular Trenton patrol officers, and Trenton back-up unit officers--as well as State Police and Trenton Police supervisors--to examine how the two law enforcement agencies managed to work together. We will also examine the relationship between the troopers and other components of the local criminal justice system (particularly the prosecutor's office and courts) that developed during the MTF program.

MTF and the Trenton Police Department: Specific Examples

To illustrate how the MTF meshed with the Trenton Police Department we will discuss three specific functional issues in this section: communications, case processing, and handling of citizen complaints. Then, in the next section, we will give an overall description of the roles of the MTF, the Trenton back-up units, and the regular Trenton patrol force vis-a-vis each other.

Field Communications

One of the most basic issues in a joint patrol operation involving two separate law enforcement agencies is how to set up a communications system that will allow the major participants to keep informed of each other's activities. The solution used in the MTF program was to give the troopers access to all channels of formal communication.

The State Police maintained their own radio dispatch system adjacent to the Trenton dispatchers at Trenton Police headquarters. The State Police and Trenton dispatchers were then able to keep in constant face-to-face touch with each other. In addition to the State Police and Trenton dispatch channels, another radio channel was used by the Trenton back-up units while they were in the field.

The MTF troopers were tied into all three of these communication channels while they were on patrol. Their car radios were set to the channel of the State Police dispatcher stationed at Trenton Police headquarters. But they also carried two walkie-talkies; one was tuned to the Trenton dispatch channel, and the other was tuned to the channel used by the back-up units. Thus, the MTF troopers could monitor all three lines of field communications. They were particularly pleased with having the walkie-talkies (which the State Police rarely use in their regular duties) because it allowed them to maintain contact with someone while they were outside their vehicles, particularly when they were engaged in foot pursuit.

The back-up units and regular Trenton patrol officers did not have direct access to all three channels. The only channel the back-up units could not monitor was the one used by the State Police dispatcher, but this created no problems because the back-up units could communicate directly with the MTF troopers who were on patrol via walkie-talkie. Information about the activities of the MTF squads and the back-up units was much less available to the regular Trenton officers while they were on patrol. Their line of communication was with the Trenton Police dispatcher; radio communications concerning the back-up units and State Police came to them indirectly, through the Trenton dispatcher, who had access to both the State Police dispatcher and the back-up unit channel. This lack of direct access to all of the field communications channels is an indicator (and, to some extent, possibly a cause) of the isolation of the regular Trenton patrol officers from the MTF troopers and even from their own back-up units--an issue that will be discussed later in this chapter.

Processing of Arrests

Police departments tend to use somewhat different forms and procedures for recording information about arrestees and for processing arrestees and associated evidence. Furthermore, they tend to be possessive about arrests made within their jurisdictions because arrests are viewed widely as an indicator of police performance.

Arrest reports used by the Trenton Police Department and the State Police were very similar at the outset of the MTF program,

so only minor adaptations were necessary for paperwork. But the most important factor in preventing tensions and disagreements about arrest processing was the initial decision by the State Police that the MTF would not have a separate procedure for processing the arrests made by the troopers. The attitude was that the troopers' role was to assist the local police department and that they would adapt to the existing procedures in the host city.

The procedures used in the Trenton Police Department's Docketing Division during the MTF program are fairly common for city police departments. The docketing staff normally consists of a lieutenant and two reserve officers. When an arrestee is brought to the police station, he or she is turned over to the docketing staff who take care of fingerprinting and photographing (when required) and the recording of information about the arrestee. Any evidence associated with the arrest is also turned over to the docketing staff for identification and processing. Meanwhile, the arresting officers fill out an arrest report. The report is assigned a number by the docketing lieutenant, and it is recorded in a master log. The docketing lieutenant also fills out and files an index card on each arrest, which is used for internal Police Department information.

The MTF troopers used the State Police arrest report form for arrests they made in Trenton. However, this form is very similar to the one used by Trenton, and the only major change required was the recording of a Trenton arrest number on the form. The report was then marked as a "Co-op" arrest, and copies

were made for the Trenton Police Department.

Virtually every one of the MTF troopers we interviewed thought that the arrest processing procedures in the Trenton Police Department were excellent. In fact, they noted that the Trenton procedures involve less work for the arresting officer than do the State Police procedures; for example, a trooper who makes an arrest normally has to fingerprint the suspect himself.

Despite all of this, however, the docketing area proved to be one of the major sources of the problems encountered by the MTF. The procedures were fine, but at times, the process became overloaded. Our interviews with members of the Trenton Police Department suggest that, even before the MTF program, it was not unusual for the docketing process to become backed up, especially during the peak arrest periods (e.g., Friday and Saturday nights). Apparently, no provisions were made for "beefing-up" the docketing staff during the MTF program, and the rather large numbers of arrests made by the troopers simply overwhelmed the process at times, creating what some respondents described as inordinate delays and near chaos in the docketing area.

Of course, when the docketing process was backed up, the arresting officers spent large amounts of time in the docketing area rather than on the streets. This was experienced as a particular problem by the MTF troopers who viewed their role as conducting high visibility patrols and clearing the streets of "troublemakers".

Like most of the problems encountered during the MTF program, delays in the docketing area were alleviated as the program went on--for example, the MTF squad leaders would help

out in docketing at particularly busy times, and the troopers themselves became more adept at moving their paperwork and suspects through the process. Furthermore, only a few of the people we interviewed suggested that the delays could be attributed to a purposeful slowdown by docketing personnel reacting to the higher workload generated by MTF arrests; almost all our respondents thought that the delays were inevitable, given the absence of additional personnel assigned to docketing. Nevertheless, delays in the docketing area continued to occur throughout the MTF program. These delays did affect the ability of the MTF troopers to carry out their assigned mission by decreasing the amount of time they could spend on the streets, and the issue of delays in docketing was one of the few factors recognized by almost everyone we interviewed as a problem in the MTF operation.

Handling Complaints

The question of how complaints against visiting officers should be handled in a joint operation such as the MTF would seem to be a source of potential conflict between the visiting and host agencies. The host agency rightly feels the responsibility for maintaining a maximum amount of control over all law enforcement personnel operating within its jurisdiction; the visiting agency is reluctant to give up any of the control it exercises over its own officers.

The agreement for the MTF program called for the Trenton Police to turn over any complaints against MTF troopers to the State Police, who would follow their established internal

investigatory and, if needed, disciplinary procedures. Fortunately for the smooth operation of the MTF program, only two formal complaints against MTF troopers were lodged during the program, and these were dealt with expeditiously and without fanfare by the State Police, apparently to the satisfaction of all interested parties. Unfortunately, the absence of major, publicly controversial formal complaints against the MTF troopers means that there was no experience on which we can base an assessment of whether a host agency should or should not agree to not being involved in the handling of complaints against officers from visiting agencies.

MTF and the Trenton Police: A General View

As seen in the preceding section and in Chapter 2, some important issues of the "mechanics" involved in a cooperative effort between two law enforcement agencies at different levels of government were worked out quite well in the MTF program. Many potential problems were anticipated and dealt with through the planning and implementation process; when problems did arise during the program, the participants were usually able to adapt to the situation and keep things running relatively smoothly.

But before dismissing the operational complexities of inter-agency law enforcement programs as simply minor "kinks" that can be worked out in practice or with some attention to planning, it is worthwhile to consider the question of how thoroughly the MTF operations were integrated with the routine activities of the Trenton Police Department. The greater the degree of integration, the more confidence we can have in viewing the MTF program as a rigorous test case of the problems associated with

cooperative law enforcement ventures. To the extent that the degree of integration was limited, one must conclude that at least some potential problems of such cooperative ventures were not given the opportunity to arise, and our conclusions must be correspondingly reserved.

In Chapter 2, we pointed out that implementation of the MTF program was facilitated by the existence, within the Trenton Police Department, of the back-up units, which already engaged in activities similar to those planned for the MTF. The MTF troopers were introduced to the geography and life of Trenton's streets primarily by the back-up units; during the MTF program, the troopers held joint pre-shift briefings with the back-up units and coordinated their patrol strategies closely with those of the back-up units. Not surprisingly, the MTF troopers and their supervisors developed a great deal of rapport with the patrol officers and supervisors of the back-up units. The rapport extended beyond the job to off-duty socialization. In our interviews with the MTF troopers and members of the back-up units, we found nothing but high praise for each other's professionalism and motivation.

On the other hand, the MTF troopers had little working contact with the Trenton officers who were on regular vehicle and foot patrol. Perhaps the best way to get some insight into the issue of how fully the MTF was integrated with normal Trenton Police Department functions is to examine, in more detail, the results of our interviews with the 27 Trenton officers who were assigned to routine vehicle and foot patrol during the MTF

program.

Virtually all of the regular patrol officers respected the professional abilities of the State Police troopers; most thought that the citizens of Trenton reacted favorably to the presence of the MTF; and, of the 23 who gave an opinion, 18 said they would be in favor of another MTF operation in Trenton (although several of the 18 qualified their opinions by saying that they would support another MTF operation if it was the only way to get additional manpower on the streets). Beyond these generally approving attitudes, however, there were many reservations about how the MTF program was actually conducted.

At least in retrospect, the regular Trenton patrol officers reported a great deal of skepticism in their initial reactions to the idea of the MTF program. Partly, this was a reflection of their near unanimous belief that the program was politically motivated. It was also partly a result of a lack of information about the program. When asked where they had received most of their information about the MTF when it began, only a few officers (five) mentioned their supervisors or other formal sources within the Trenton Police Department. Eight specifically mentioned the local media as their primary source of information, while 12 referred more vaguely to rumors and "scuttle-butt" among their peers (two officers had relatively unique sources of information). Apparently the information they did receive was very sketchy because most of the officers reported to us that they were unsure about what the exact roles of the MTF troopers would be.

Most of the Trenton officers voiced an attitude of general acceptance of the MTF on the basis of a perceived need for more manpower: "The more the merrier," "any help is good," "there is strength in numbers". But a majority of these officers would have preferred to see the assistance come in the form of an increase in the size of the Trenton police force. According to our respondents, there were some initial hard feelings among their peers because implementation of the MTF was seen as carrying an unspoken suggestion that the Trenton police officers could not do their jobs and that the troopers would show them how. These feelings apparently dissipated as the program progressed--especially as the regular patrol officers discovered that there was little overlap between their duties and the duties of the MTF.

The MTF troopers, as has been noted, did not respond to routine calls for service. In addition, they did not handle common complaints from citizens who approached them on the street or run-of-the-mill vehicle accidents; in these cases, the troopers would notify the Trenton Police Department, wait for a regular patrol unit to arrive, and turn the case over to the patrol officers. The Trenton officers were virtually unanimous in saying that the troopers should have handled the on-scene cases themselves. They viewed the issue primarily in terms of efficiency: Most of them thought that the troopers could have dealt with these cases easily during the time they spent waiting for the Trenton officers to arrive.

The subject of routine calls for service elicited the most insight about how the regular Trenton patrol officers viewed the role of the MTF within their department. They recognized that responding to calls for service constituted the bulk of their duties, and they voiced a great deal of pride in their abilities to handle complaints and conflicts. When asked about whether the troopers should have responded to routine calls, the officers' responses were divided almost evenly. About half said that exempting the MTF troopers from service calls was a good idea because the Trenton Police Department had guidelines for dealing with certain situations (such as domestic disputes) and the officers themselves had developed ways of dealing with other situations. They were concerned that the troopers would handle situations differently, upsetting the understandings and expectations they felt had been constructed in the community. Even among the officers who said that the MTF troopers should have responded to service calls, the prevailing opinion was not that the troopers could have helped them a great deal in performing the jobs; rather, the belief was that the troopers would have learned much more about urban policing if they had been exposed to the tasks that occupy most of an urban police department's time.

The regular Trenton patrol officers also viewed the MTF tactics--high visibility, proactive patrol--from the perspective of their own duties. The predominant orientation among Trenton's vehicle patrol officers was that the MTF was cracking down on the overt, low-level criminality (particularly sales of small

quantities of drugs) that was prevalent in some areas of the city and that the troopers were effective in harassing the "bad actors" who congregated in certain areas. These were tasks that the regular patrol officers felt they could not deal with adequately because of a shortage of manpower and the demands of their routine work: "The regular patrolmen answer calls all shiftlong, so when they get a break they ignore a lot of violations occurring in view. They [the troopers] had the energy to enforce these violations because they didn't answer service calls."

Opinions of the Trenton foot patrol officers about the MTF tactics differed noticeably from the opinions of the vehicle patrol officers. Most of the foot patrol officers thought that a lot of the MTF arrests were unnecessary. Noting that the MTF was announced initially as a way of dealing with major crimes, one foot patrolman commented: "They weren't finding these types of crimes, so they strayed from their purpose and began concentrating on petty violations for statistics sake." Another complained that it was easy for the troopers to come in and then leave everyday, but he had to walk the same streets where the troopers would make people angry and then drive away.

We interpret the reservations and disagreements discussed in the preceding paragraphs as stemming primarily from the fact that the MTF troopers were not integrated into the day-to-day operations of the Trenton Police Department. There was a slight current of underlying resentment among the regular patrol officers based on a perception that the troopers were getting all

the glory while they were carrying the real burdens of urban police work. But, our interviews indicate that, over time, the regular Trenton patrol officers began to accept the MTF as a special, temporary operation that had little direct bearing on their own functions. There was hardly any animosity toward the troopers themselves. In fact, most of Trenton's regular patrol officers were very impressed by the professionalism and discipline of the individual troopers; several said that it was nice to know that the troopers would be around to help in potentially dangerous situations. These views are consistent with the generally high regard in which the New Jersey State Police are held by local law enforcement officers throughout the state.

It is interesting to note that one aspect of MTF functions, which many of the regular patrol officers saw as being very useful, was grounded in the fact that the MTF consisted of a special unit of "strangers" who were not integrated with the local force. Thus, a number of Trenton's regular patrol officers pointed out that the "outsider" status of the MTF allowed the troopers to deal with street "troublemakers"--particularly teenagers--more firmly and with less discretion than would be possible for the local police.

What is perhaps more telling is a comparison of the opinions about the MTF held by the regular Trenton patrol officers with the opinions of the same officers about their own back-up units. Realizing that many of the MTF functions were similar to the functions of the back-up units, we asked the regular patrol officers for their views on the back-up units. Of the 27

officers interviewed, 25 offered opinions. Seven of the 25 expressed positive opinions of the back-up units, with only minor qualifications (e.g., the back-up units need more personnel, additional training). Ten of the 25 expressed opinions that were unambiguously negative (e.g., the back-up units are an inefficient use of manpower, they are unnecessary, they are used for "petty" things). The remaining eight gave replies that can best be characterized as: "the back-up units are necessary, but..." The qualifications added to these replies focused on the independence of the back-up units from the rest of the patrol operations (e.g., "they have developed into their own little department") or on the tactics used by the back-up units (e.g., they are "too gung-ho," they are "over-zealous," they "show no discretion").

Apparently, the regular Trenton patrol officers were more accepting of specialized units conducting aggressive, proactive patrol while being exempted from routine service calls when the units were manned by State Police troopers rather than by officers from within their own department. Several factors could explain this preference. First, because the troopers represented additional manpower for the Trenton Police Department, regular patrol operations were not short-changed by the formation of the MTF. Second, the MTF was temporary, not a permanent feature within the department. Third, use of troopers on special patrols did not involve the potential jealousies and bad feelings that can accompany the selection of people from within the department for special duties. A fourth factor, related to the third, is

the high esteem granted to the New Jersey State Police by local law enforcement agencies--a point that has been mentioned previously. The special "aura" of the State Police, which was mentioned by several of the Trenton officers we interviewed, evidently made it seem natural for them to be conducting an aggressive, proactive operation like the MTF.

All that has been discussed in this section seems to lead to two conclusions: The MTF troopers were not highly integrated into the routine activities of the Trenton Police Department, and this "outsider" status may have actually helped make the MTF operation more acceptable to the regular Trenton patrol officers. One might infer further that bringing in outsiders from a highly regarded law enforcement agency for a temporary "strike force" type of program is preferable to forming a more permanent internal unit to engage in similar tactics. However, this inference ignores a point we have made several times previously; namely, implementation of the MTF program was facilitated greatly by the fact that the Trenton back-up units were already in existence. The importance of the Trenton back-up units to the smooth implementation and operation of the MTF program was stressed time and again by the troopers we interviewed, and it was even recognized by some of the regular Trenton patrol officers who held negative opinions about the back-up units.

Obviously, these considerations present a dilemma: How can an "outside" unit be judged as preferable when its success may hinge, to a great extent, on the prior existence of an "inside" unit that performs similar functions? Our study of the MTF cannot provide solutions to this dilemma; solutions will be

forthcoming only if operations similar to the MTF are attempted in contexts unlike the one that existed in Trenton in March of 1981.

MTF and Other Local System Components

Our main purpose in examining the process issues in the MTF program was to determine the ways in which two law enforcement agencies, at different governmental levels, could coordinate their activities in carrying out a joint operation. In the course of our interviews, however, it became apparent that some of the most frequently mentioned problems in the MTF program related to the interface between the MTF and the prosecution and adjudication functions of the local criminal justice system. In this section, we will discuss those problems briefly because they do pertain to factors that should be taken into account in the planning and implementation of MTF-type programs in the future.

Trenton is the largest city in, and the county seat of, Mercer County, New Jersey; thus, the largest share of the cases handled by the prosecutor's office comes from Trenton. For this reason, the prosecutor's office has a systematic procedure for initial screening of arrests. Each morning, a representative from the prosecutor's office goes to the Trenton Police Department to screen arrests from the preceding night. The screening office has the authority to administratively dismiss or downgrade arrests on minor charges; primarily, this involves the downgrading of misdemeanors to municipal violations.

A large proportion of the arrests made by the MTF troopers were for criminal charges at relatively low levels of

seriousness, and their cases often involved searches that produced small quantities of drugs. Apparently, sizeable numbers of the troopers' cases were downgraded or dismissed, either because it was common prosecution practice to downgrade certain charges under certain conditions or because the prosecutor's office thought that the search involved in the arrest would create evidentiary problems. We say that this was apparently the case because we did not have the resources to track the outcomes of the troopers' arrests. Nevertheless, interviews with the troopers, Trenton police officers, and representatives of the prosecutor's office all produced a similar impression.

Of course, the Trenton police officers were accustomed to the screening and charging practices of the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office--the MTF troopers were not. And the situation was aggravated in late August of 1981 when a local newspaper published a major article on the MTF in which representatives of the prosecutor's office and some local defense attorneys cast doubt on the quality of MTF arrests. Because of both the lack of familiarity with the normal procedures of the prosecutor's office and the relatively critical press reports, it is not suprising that the MTF troopers we interviewed were not favorably disposed toward the prosecutor's office. Of the 29 MTF troopers who voiced their opinions, 12 gave very negative replies, often questioning the competence of the prosecutors or their willingness to cooperate with law enforcement in fighting crime. Another 8 troopers expressed anger or annoyance about statements from the prosecutor's office that appeared in the press, even though they had experienced few direct problems with

the prosecutor's office themselves. The remaining 9 troopers indicated that they had no personal complaints against the prosecutor's office, but even they were aware of the dissatisfaction among their peers.

We did ask our respondents in the Trenton Police Department and in the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office about the problems between the MTF and the prosecutor's office. Among those who gave their views, there was a tendency to downplay the conflict. The press reports were often characterized as "overblown", and disagreements about charging and other procedures were attributed mostly to the troopers' lack of familiarity with the processes worked out by the prosecutor's office and the Trenton Police. There was a strong minority view, however, that the MTF program was simply producing a lot of "bad busts". Nevertheless, adherents of both positions suggested that problems could have been avoided if the prosecutor's office had been brought more fully into the pre-implementation process.

A few of the MTF troopers also expressed some dissatisfaction with the municipal courts. However, very few expressed decidedly negative views. In some cases, the complaints dealt with specific judges; in others, problems with the scheduling of appearances were mentioned. Among those who did mention problems (18 of the 30 who gave opinions), the major issue appeared to be the fact that two new municipal court judges had been appointed during the MTF program, and because of the increased workload stemming from the MTF, it took some time for these new judges to adapt to the routines of the court.

Several MTF troopers offered opinions about the Mercer County Courts, but not many of them had had extensive exposure to those courts during the program. Therefore, we don't have enough information to comment with any degree of confidence about interactions between the MTF and the County Courts.

Observations

In this chapter, we have seen that specific operational issues involved in a joint law enforcement program--such as communications and processing arrestees--were worked out by the Trenton and State Police relatively smoothly during the MTF program. But further examination reveals one possible explanation for the absence of problems in coordination of the activities of the two police forces: The MTF troopers were not really integrated into the major patrol activities of the Trenton Police Department. They worked very closely with Trenton's back-up units, and like the back-up units, they did not respond to routine calls for service, and they had little contact with the regular Trenton vehicle and foot patrol officers.

The regular patrol officers recognized the separateness of the MTF and had mixed feelings about the troopers being exempted from routine patrol work. Some felt that the troopers should have engaged in the full range of urban activities; because the troopers did not, these regular patrol officers saw the MTF as being of little help or relevance to their jobs. Other patrol officers felt that exempting the troopers from routine patrol activities was appropriate; they viewed the troopers as outsiders, whose lack of familiarity with the accepted ways of

handling disputes and other citizen complaints in Trenton would create problems that would add to--rather than alleviate--their workload.

It was somewhat surprising that the regular Trenton patrol officers expressed more negative opinions about their own back-up units than about the MTF troopers. In fact, regardless of their opinion about the value of the MTF program, the regular Trenton patrol officers generally expressed high regard for the professionalism of the troopers. Apparently, local police officers engaged in routine patrol will find a special proactive operation more acceptable if it is temporary and staffed by outsiders. The creation of a permanent, internal unit to perform similar functions is perceived by the regular patrol offices as a form of elitism and as a drain on the manpower assigned to routine patrol duties.

But the preference of the regular officers for a special force of outsiders raises a dilemma, because our assessment has also concluded that the implementation and operation of the MTF in Trenton was facilitated greatly by the presence of the back-up units within the Trenton Police Department. Experience with similar types of programs in contexts different than the one that existed in Trenton in 1981 will be necessary to resolve this dilemma.

We saw another indication of the "outsider" status of the MTF troopers in their relationship to the county prosecutor's office. The problems that developed between the MTF and the prosecutor's office were partly a function of the types of

arrests that predominated in the MTF program. But another factor was misunderstanding; apparently, the troopers were unaccustomed to the routine ways of handling cases that had been developed over the years by the prosecutor's office in conjunction with the Trenton Police Department.

In Chapters 2, 3, and 4, we have focused our attention almost exclusively on the criminal justice system, particularly on the two law enforcement agencies involved in the MTF. In the next chapter, the focus broadens to examine the reactions of Trenton residents to the MTF and to law enforcement more generally.

CHAPTER 5

REACTIONS OF TRENTON'S RESIDENTS

In Chapter 2 we noted that the MTF program began in the midst of great distrust by leaders of Trenton's minority communities. However, during the course of our interviews with troopers who had served in the MTF and with Trenton police officers, it became apparent that law enforcement personnel perceived a great deal of support for the MTF among virtually all segments of Trenton's population.

There was a tendency among both the troopers and the Trenton offices to dichotomize the Trenton population into the "good people" and the "troublemakers". The latter group included all of the (mostly young) people involved frequently in various deviant street activities--drug use, public intoxication, bar fights, gambling, boisterous behavior in street-corner groups and so forth--who were also viewed as being responsible for most of the serious crimes in the city. The "troublemakers" were seen as a relatively small proportion of the population, concentrated in a few areas of the city. In general, the law enforcement personnel thought that the MTF was popular among the "good people" because the MTF troopers were keeping the "troublemakers" under control and making the streets less threatening to the "good people".

An emphasis on driving the "troublemakers" off the streets so that the "good people" would feel more secure came through strongly when we asked the troopers about what they saw as the goals of the MTF program. Alleviating citizen fears was mentioned only slightly less often than deterring street crimes.

The issue of public perceptions also came to be incorporated into the officially stated goals of the MTF. Recall, from Chapter 1, that the Attorney General's recommendations to the Governor--in which the MTF was first proposed--stated that the objective of the MTF would be "limited to suppressing violent street crimes and armed robberies of certain commercial establishments". In a letter to the editor of the Trenton Times published on Sept. 1, 1981, the Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police replied to a newspaper article critical of the MTF that had appeared five days earlier. He virtually quoted the Attorney General's report saying that the primary goal of the MTF was "to suppress violent street crimes and armed robberies of commercial establishments". But instead of being limited to this goal, the MTF now had a "secondary goal": "to ease the fears of citizens and to buoy their confidence that government can have a positive impact on crime in our major urban centers".

In the same letter to the editor, the Superintendent stated that both the primary and secondary goals had been met, claiming that crime rates had decreased while feelings of safety among Trenton residents had increased. These claims are particularly important because they came near the end of the MTF program; within a month after the Superintendent's letter was published, the MTF troopers had begun their phased withdrawal from Trenton.

The issue of whether the MTF program led to a decrease in crime rates will be addressed in Chapter 6. In this chapter we will examine the attitudes of Trenton residents about the MTF program.

Sources of Data

The primary source of data for this chapter is a telephone survey of Trenton residents conducted during July and August of 1982 as part of the MTF evaluation.

The sample for the survey was selected using the random-digit dialing (RDD) method. All three-digit telephone number prefixes in use in Trenton were identified, and the few prefixes used exclusively by government offices were excluded. Then, four-digit numbers were selected from a table of random numbers. The four-digit numbers were used as suffixes and were matched successively with the three-digit prefixes to generate a random list of telephone numbers. Duplicate telephone numbers were then deleted from the list.

The RDD method ensures that all operating telephonenumber numbers in the area surveyed have an equal chance of appearing in the sample. The final sample will include even those telephone numbers that were put into service since publication of the most recent telephone directory as well as those that are unlisted by choice of the customer. At the same time, many of the phone numbers on the list generated by the RDD method will be irrelevant to the survey. In this case, we had set a target of at least 400 completed interviews for our survey; when we halted interviewing, 444 interviews had been completed, but a total of 3,212 telephone numbers had been tried.

Only about half (52 percent) of the 3,212 telephone numbers produced contacts with telephone users; 42 percent were not in service (not assigned to any user) at the time of the survey; the

remaining 6 percent were evidently in service, but no one answered the line after five attempts by our interviewers to call at different times on different days of the week.

Among the 1,667 telephone numbers that produced contacts, only 614 were being used by eligible households--that is, households within the city limits of Trenton that contained at least one person 18 years old or older. For a few of the other numbers, the person answering the phone did not cooperate enough to determine whether the number was being used by an eligible household, but the overwhelming majority (about 90 percent) were numbers in use by commercial establishments, city and county governmental offices, private non-profit agencies, and public telephones.

Thus, 614 of the telephone numbers were determined to be in use by eligible households. Once an eligible household was reached, and the purpose of the survey had been explained, the interviewer asked for the age and sex of each person 18 and older residing in the household. From this list of persons (three or fewer persons in almost 90 percent of the households), the interviewer randomly selected one person as a respondent and asked to speak to that person. If the selected respondent was not available, arrangements were made to call back.

The 614 eligible households produced 444 completed interviews--a completion rate of 72 percent. Among the 170 for which a completed interview was not obtained, there were 137 refusals before the interview with the selected respondent began, 24 cases in which a selected respondent who was not at home could not be reached after repeated callbacks, and nine cases in which

the respondent refused to continue after an interview had started.

The final sample of 444 respondents proved to be broadly representative of Trenton residents. When compared with the 1980 Census figures supplied to us by Mercer County, our sample showed an overrepresentation among the youngest (18 to 24) age group and a corresponding underrepresentation among the oldest (65 or older) age group. Our sample also had a greater proportion of female respondents (63 percent) than did the Trenton population 18 or older (54 percent). Comparisons of household income categories were complicated by our decision to code responses as "on welfare or retired" when those replies were volunteered by respondents; nevertheless, it appears that lower income groups were underrepresented by a few percentage points in our sample. Finally, there is also some difficulty in comparing the racial distributions in our sample with Census data because we used a separate category for Hispanics (4 percent of sample) while the Census Bureau does not consider this a racial category. Thus, in Census data, Hispanics are distributed among the White and Black racial categories. However, the distribution in our sample (54 percent White, 41 percent Black, 4 percent Hispanic, 1 percent Other) does not appear to differ markedly from the Census data for Trenton (50 percent White, 46 percent Black, 4 percent Other).

In addition to the results of our own survey, this chapter will draw on some of the results from a pair of surveys conducted by the Eagleton Institute of Politics for the New Jersey State Police. The first Eagleton survey was conducted in April 1981,

as the MTF program was just getting underway. This survey involved telephone interviews with a sample of 394 Trenton residents 18 years of age and older. The second survey was conducted in September 1981 when the MTF program was nearing its end. In the September survey, the Eagleton interviewers recontacted the same households that were contacted in April and tried to interview the same person in the household who responded to the questionnaire in April. The September survey produced 324 completed interviews.

We tried to construct some of our questionnaire items so they would be comparable with items used in the Eagleton surveys. This was not always possible because we were interested in somewhat different issues. Where it was possible, we have comparable data from three points in time: (a) April 1981, when the MTF operation was just being implemented, (b) September 1981, when the MTF operation was drawing to a close, and (c) July/August 1982, one year after the MTF operation was at its height and about nine months after it terminated.

Overall Perceptions of MTF

In this section, we discuss the univariate distributions of responses to survey items bearing on exposure to and evaluations of the MTF operation among Trenton's residents. Variations in responses across subgroups of Trenton residents are examined in the next section.

Exposure to MTF

The September 1981 Eagleton survey and our July/August 1982 survey contained comparable sets of questions about varying

degrees of contact between the respondents and the MTF troopers. Results from these sets of questions are summarized in Table 5.1

There is a very high level of agreement between the two surveys in the proportions of respondents who reported varying levels of exposure to the MTF troopers, despite the fact that the surveys were separated by almost one year. This level of agreement is consistent with our assumption that the passage of time between the end of the MTF operation and the July/August 1982 survey had little effect on the perceptions of survey respondents who had been living in Trenton during the MTF operation.

Table 5.1 shows that more than three quarters of the respondents in both surveys reported having seen a State Policeman on duty in the city of Trenton during the MTF operation. It is likely that some of these responses are based on seeing troopers who were not involved in the MTF operation. However, this probably accounts for only a small portion of the positive responses. Except for some duties in and around the state office building complex in downtown Trenton, the State Police have relatively few occasions to enter the city limits of Trenton. Furthermore, additional analyses of the 1982 survey data show that the proportions of respondents reporting that they had seen a State Policeman on duty were lowest for residents of the two Trenton patrol zones with low crime rates, in which the MTF troopers rarely patrolled.

The next two rows in Table 5.1 indicate that, for most Trenton residents, seeing a State Policeman was their only form of exposure to the MTF. Somewhere between 10 and 15 percent of

TABLE 5.1

Exposure to Metro Task Force Among Trenton Residents
Surveyed in September 1981 and in July/August 1982

Question	Percent Responding "Yes" in:	
	Sept. 1981	July/Aug. 1982
During Metro Task Force operation, respondent:		
1. Saw a State Policeman on duty in Trenton	79%	77%
2. Talked to a State Policeman on duty in Trenton	11%	15%
3. Was stopped by a State Policeman on duty in Trenton	5%	7%
Number of respondents	(324)	(416) ^a

^aExcludes survey respondents who had not been living in Trenton during the summer of 1981 (n=29).

the respondents said that they had actually talked to an on-duty trooper during the MTF operation, and only about 5 percent said that they had been stopped by a trooper. Even the 5 percent figure might be a slight overestimate of the proportion of residents stopped by MTF troopers, because some of these respondents may have been referring to traffic stops on the highways just outside of Trenton. (More than one-third of the respondents in the 1982 survey who said they were stopped by troopers said that the stop related to a traffic violation).

Despite the possibility that the percentages in Table 5.1 may be slightly inflated by unintentional counting of exposures to State Policemen who were not involved in the MTF operation, the general pattern of responses is consistent with both the officially stated goals of the MTF and the approach to the operation revealed in our interviews with MTF troopers and Trenton back-up unit officers. The goal of deterrence via high-visibility patrol cannot be achieved unless the patrols are, in fact, highly visible; the high proportions of Trenton residents who reported seeing on-duty troopers during the MTF operation indicates that high visibility was achieved. On the other hand the proactive, stop-and-question aspect of the operation was meant to be highly focused on those individuals perceived by the troopers as being among the relatively small number of chronic "troublemakers" in the city. The relatively small proportion of Trenton residents who reported being stopped by the troopers indicates a high degree of selectivity in the stop-and-question aspect of the operation.

One other indicator of exposure to the MTF was included in the 1982 survey. Respondents who were aware that the troopers had been in Trenton (85 percent of those who had lived in Trenton during the MTF) were asked to estimate how many State Police troopers were involved in the MTF operation. Half of those asked could not make an estimate. Of those who did make an estimate, more than three-quarters estimated that there were more than 10, but no more than 50, troopers involved. Given the relative accuracy of the estimates and the presumed difficulty of making an estimate on the basis of casual observation on the street, it is concluded that those who made reasonable estimates were basing their responses on what they remember having seen, heard, or read about the MTF operation the media.

Evaluations of the MTF

Table 5.2 displays the overall approval/disapproval ratings given to the MTF operation at three points in time. Despite very slight differences in how the questions were worded, the ratings are uniformly positive across the three time periods -- at the beginning of the operation, near its conclusion, and about nine months after it was terminated. In all three time periods, more than two-thirds of the respondents approved strongly of the general concept of the MTF; when respondents who expressed mild approval are taken into account, the overall approval rating rises to about 90 percent in each of the time periods.

Trenton residents not only voiced a great deal of approval for the general concept of the MTF, they were also quite pleased with the job the State Police had done while they were in Trenton. Table 5.3 shows responses to similarly worded questions that were

TABLE 5.2
Approval/Disapproval of Metro Task Force Among Trenton Residents
Surveyed in April 1981, September 1981, and July/August 1982

Question and Response Categories	April 1981	Sept. 1981	July/Aug. 1982
Do you approve or disapprove of the State Police helping in Trenton? ^a			
Strongly approve	73% ^b	71% ^b	68% ^b
Mildly approve	16%	20%	21%
Mildly disapprove	3%	3%	5%
Strongly disapprove	3%	3%	4%
Don't know/no opinion	6%	3%	1%
Number of respondents	(394)	(324)	(349) ^c

^aThe July/Aug. 1982 survey asked about "the State Police helping to patrol the streets of Trenton" rather than about "the State Police helping in Trenton".

^bColumn percentages may not total to 100 because of rounding.

^cExcludes survey respondents who had not been living in Trenton during the summer of 1981 (n=29), and among respondents who had been living in Trenton, those who were unaware that the MTF operation had taken place are excluded (n=67).

asked in the September 1981 and the July/August 1982 surveys. Although a somewhat higher proportion of the respondents in the later survey rated the performance of the State Police as "excellent", the response distributions from both surveys show virtually identical patterns. The most frequently given rating in both surveys was "good", followed by "excellent".

Responses to a question asked in our 1982 survey reveal what is perhaps the primary reason for the high job performance ratings given to the troopers by Trenton residents. Of the 349 respondents who had resided in Trenton during the MTF operation and who were aware of the MTF operation, 86 percent thought that the State Police patrols had reduced crime. Regardless of whether crimes had, in fact, been reduced (an issue that will be explored in Chapter 6), the residents of Trenton believed that the MTF patrols had had an effect. For the program goal of reducing fear and bolstering citizen confidence in the system, the perceptions of the residents are, ultimately, what count.

Despite solid expressions of approval for the MTF idea and for the performance of the troopers, Trenton residents still appear to have a preference for local law enforcement. When asked if they thought that the Trenton Police Department needs more officers, 85 percent of the respondents in the 1982 survey said "yes". Furthermore, when given a choice between adding more officers to the Trenton Police Department and having State Police patrols back in the city, 51 percent favored bolstering the local force and 41 percent preferred a return of the State Police; the remaining respondents wanted both forms of police protection or rejected both options.

TABLE 5.3

Ratings of MTF Performance Among Trenton Residents
Surveyed in September 1981 and July/August 1982

Question and Response Categories	Sept. 1981	July/Aug. 1982
Overall, how would you rate the job the State Police Metro Task Force has done in Trenton during the last 6 months? ^a		
Excellent	29%	39%
Good	46%	45%
Only fair	12%	7%
Poor	2%	2%
Don't Know	11%	7%
Number of respondents	(324)	(349) ^b

^aWording in July/Aug. 1982 survey was: "Overall, how would you rate the performance of the State Police while they were in Trenton last year?"

^bExcludes survey respondents who had not been living in Trenton during the summer of 1981 (n=29), and among respondents who had been living in Trenton, those who were unaware that the MTF operation had taken place are excluded (n=67).

Now that overall levels of exposure to the MTF and evaluations of the MTF among Trenton residents have been discussed, attention can turn to the issue of how perceptions varied across subgroups of the Trenton population.

Variability in Perceptions

Patrol Zones

The Trenton Police Department divides the city into nine patrol zones. Because the MTF concentrated its efforts in particular parts of Trenton, we expect to find differences among residents of different patrol zones in their exposure to and evaluations of the MTF.

Some of the patrol zones are more heavily populated than others, and since our 1982 survey was aimed at a representative sample of the entire city, there are not enough respondents in some of the zones to support analyses with each zone separately. Therefore, it is necessary to group the zones into a few categories. One category contains patrol zones 8 and 9; by virtual consensus of the troopers and Trenton officers that we interviewed, these two zones have the fewest crime problems and were rarely patrolled by the MTF. The officers we interviewed were also in substantial agreement that zones 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 received the greatest patrol attention from the MTF; therefore, these five zones are grouped into a second category. The remaining two zones -- 1 and 2 -- are placed in a third category, almost by default. Residents of zone 1 reported relatively high levels of fear and concern about crime in our survey, while residents of zone 2 reported relatively high rates of robbery and

assault victimization in our survey. Nevertheless, the interviews with MTF troopers and Trenton back-up unit officers indicated that zones 1 and 2 received less patrol attention than did zones 3 through 7.

The three-category scheme does capture the geographical layout of Trenton's patrol zones nicely. Zones 8 and 9 are tucked into the southeast corner of the city, while zones 3 through 7 comprise the central core of the city. Zones 1 and 2 are long and narrow, and extend parallel to each other. They border on two high-crime zones (3 and 4) at one end, but then extend away from the city center in a generally westward direction. In the discussion that follows, zones 8 and 9 will be referred to as Zone Group I, and zones 1 and 2 as Zone Group II, and zones 3 through 7 as Zone Group III.

Table 5.4 shows responses to the three questions about exposure to the MTF that were presented in Table 5.1. However, in Table 5.4, only data from the 1982 survey are presented, and responses are broken down by the Zone Groups in which the respondents lived. Results on the first item are consistent with the patrol strategies used by the MTF troopers: The proportion of respondents who saw a State Policeman on duty during the MTF is highest (84 percent) in the group of zones that received greatest patrol attention, and it is lowest (69 percent) in the zones that received the least patrol attention.

TABLE 5.4

Exposure to Metro Task Force Among Trenton Residents
by Zone Group^a in Which Respondent Lived; July/August 1982

Question	Percent Responding "Yes" in:		
	Zone Group I	Zone Group II	Zone Group III
During Metro Task Force operation, respondent:			
1. Saw a State Policeman on duty in Trenton	69%	78%	84%
2. Talked to a State Policeman on duty in Trenton	15%	16%	15%
3. Was stopped by a State Policeman on duty in Trenton	6%	10%	6%
Number of respondents ^b	(126)	(119)	(157)

^aZone Group I = patrol zones 8 and 9; Zone Group II = patrol Zones 1 and 2; Zone Group III = patrol zones 3 through 7

^bExcludes respondents who had not been living in Trenton during the summer of 1981 and those whose residence in a specific patrol zone could not be determined (n=43).

However, the rest of Table 5.4 does not indicate substantial inter-zone differences in exposure to the MTF. Even the somewhat higher proportion of respondents in Zone Group II who indicated that they had been stopped by a State Policeman during the MTF operation (10 percent) does not constitute a major finding because of the small numbers of cases involved for this item. It is difficult to draw conclusions about the lack of inter-zone variation in responses to the second and third items for several reasons. First, talking to a State Policeman (the second item) could have been a negative or positive experience; for example, in our interviews, the MTF troopers indicated that in some areas of the city, residents would approach them and express approval about the presence of the troopers. Second, as noted earlier, many of the stops reported by respondents (the third item) were for traffic violations. Third, the figures in Table 5.4 apply to the zones in which the respondents resided and do not indicate where the contacts between the respondents and the troopers occurred.

When evaluations of the MTF are examined, it is apparent that residents of Zone Group III (patrol zones 3 through 7, in which the troopers were most active) held the most favorable attitudes. They were at least slightly more likely than residents of the other two Zone Groups to approve strongly of the State Police presence, to rate the performance of the State Police as excellent, and to believe that the State Police patrols had reduced crime in Trenton. However, the largest difference between Zone Groups occurred when respondents were asked whether they would prefer to have the State Police patrols back or to

have the Trenton Police Department expanded. Results are displayed in Table 5.5.

The response distributions in Table 5.5 show clearly that residents of Zone Group III were more likely than residents of the other patrol zones to prefer a return of the State Police over an expansion of the local police department. Only about one-third of the respondents in Zone Groups I and II preferred bringing the MTF back, while more than one-half of the Zone Group III respondents expressed this preference. Evidently, the concentration of the MTF presence in patrol zones 3 through 7 (zone Group III) was well received by residents of those areas.

Respondent Characteristics

Prior research often shows that attitudes toward the police vary along age, race, and gender lines, with younger people, blacks, and males generally showing less favorable attitudes than their older, white, female counterparts.

During the MTF operation, exposure to the troopers certainly varied along age, gender, and racial lines. In the youngest age group (18 to 24), 90 percent reported seeing a State Policeman on duty during the MTF operation; the figure was slightly lower, 80 percent, in the middle age range (25 to 54), but was substantially lower, about 55 percent, among the oldest respondents (55 and older). Only 70 percent of the females surveyed, but about 90 percent of the males, reported seeing a trooper on duty. Similar differences occur for racial groups: 70

TABLE 5.5

Preference for Metro Task Force or Trenton Police Department
By Zone Group^a in Which Respondent Lived; July/August 1982

Question and Response Categories	Zone Group I	Zone Group II	Zone Group III
Would you like to see the State Police patrols back in Trenton, or would you rather see more officers added to the Trenton Police Department?			
State Police back	36%	33%	54%
More officers for Trenton	54%	62%	43%
Other ^b	11%	5%	4%
Number of respondents ^c	(104)	(100)	(134)

^aZone Group I = patrol zones 8 and 9; Zone Group II = patrol zones 1 and 2; Zone Group III = patrol zones 3 through 7.

^bIncludes respondents who didn't want either option or who wanted both options.

^cExcludes respondents who had not been living in Trenton during the summer of 1981, those who did not know that the MTF operation had occurred, those whose residence in a specific patrol zone couldnot be determined, and those who had no opinion on the attitude item (n=107).

percent of the white respondents, but almost 90 percent of the respondents from other racial groups, reported seeing a trooper on duty.

Surprisingly, the differences in exposure did not carry over into differences in evaluations of the MTF across age, gender, and racial categories. Generally, responses of young and old, males and females, blacks and whites differed by only a few percentage points on the relevant questions: approval of State Police presence in Trenton, evaluation of MTF performance, whether the MTF succeeded in reducing crime, and whether the respondent preferred to have the State Police return or to have the Trenton Police Department expanded.

It appears that where one lived in Trenton had a major impact on one's evaluation of the MTF operation. Residents of the patrol zones that received the greatest attention from the troopers had the most favorable views of the MTF. In contrast, the demographic characteristics of age, gender, and race were not associated strongly with evaluations of the MTF, even though they were associated strongly with exposure to MTF patrols.

Other Attitudes

It is reasonable to assume that some other attitudes that people hold -- such as their fear of crime and their general views of police work -- would shape their evaluations of the MTF operation.

Respondents in the 1982 survey were asked three items to tap their opinions about general police work. Each item presented respondents with a choice: It is more important for police to

(A) keep troublemakers from hanging around on the streets OR respond quickly when someone reports that a crime has been committed, (B) catch the offender after a crime has occurred OR try to prevent crimes by patrolling the streets, (C) patrol in cars so they can cover large areas OR patrol on foot in smaller areas so they can get to know the people in the neighborhood.

MTF operations, compared to general Trenton Police Department operations, are more aptly described by the first option in Item A, the second option in Item B, and first option in Item C. However, differences among respondents in their views about the appropriate emphases of police work showed only slight associations with evaluations of the MTF. The strongest association occurred for Item A: When asked whether they would prefer to have the State Police return or have more officers added to the Trenton Police Department, respondents who thought that it is more important for police to keep troublemakers from hanging around on the streets were more likely to opt for a return of the State Police (54 percent) than were respondents who thought that it is more important for police to respond quickly when a crime is reported (39 percent).

Fear of crime was measured in the 1982 survey by summing the responses to two items: How safe do you feel, or would you feel being out alone in your neighborhood at night? and How safe do you feel, or would you feel, alone in your home at night? For both items, the response categories were very safe, reasonably safe, somewhat unsafe, and very unsafe. When respondents are categorized along the fear of crime scale, substantial differences in evaluation of the MTF appear only among those

respondents with the very highest fear scores. These respondents were more likely than others to approve strongly of the MTF operation and to rate the job performance of the troopers as excellent. However, they were no more likely than other respondents to prefer a return of the State Police over an expansion of the Trenton police force.

Of course, there may be many specific concerns underlying the global measure of fear used in our survey. For example, prior research has shown that overall fear is related to perceptions of signs of deterioration or disorder in a neighborhood. In the 1982 survey, five signs of deterioration/disorder were described, and respondents were asked whether each one was a big problem, some problem, or almost no problem at all in their neighborhoods. In general, but not in every case, respondents who thought that the signs of deterioration/disorder were big problems in their neighborhoods gave more positive ratings to the MTF operation -- in terms of approving strongly of the operation, saying that the troopers did a good job, and expressing a preference for a return of the troopers over an expansion of the Trenton Police Department. An example is presented in Table 5.6.

As Table 5.6 shows, bringing back State Police patrols was favored over adding more officers to the Trenton Police Department by 54 percent of the respondents who saw the public use and sale of drugs in their neighborhoods as a big problem, but by 44 percent of those who saw it as some problem and by only 37 percent of those who saw it as almost no problem in their

TABLE 5.6

Preference for Metro Task Force or Trenton Police Department
by Perception of Public Use/Sale of Drugs In Neighborhood;
July/August 1982

In this neighborhood, people using or selling drugs in public is:	Respondent Preference			Number of Respondents ^a
	Return of State Police	More Officers for Trenton PD	Other	
A big problem	54%	41%	5%	(87)
Some problem	44%	45%	11%	(75)
Almost no problem	37%	59%	4%	(142)

^aExcludes respondents who had not been living in Trenton during the summer of 1981, those who did not know that the MTF operation had occurred, and those who had no opinion on either or both of the attitude items (n=141).

neighborhoods. This type of association between perceptions of neighborhood deterioration/disorder and evaluations of the MTF is not surprising, given the role that the MTF troopers played. The emphasis of the MTF on "troublemakers" who congregate in public apparently found a receptive audience among persons who felt concerned about public order problems in their neighborhoods.

It is also not surprising that the signs of neighborhood deterioration/disorder were perceived as bigger problems by respondents living in the patrol zones that received the greatest attention by the MTF: patrol zones 3 through 7. Thus, there appears to have been a neat dovetailing of public concerns, the allocation of MTF resources, and the particular patrol strategy of the MTF. Citizen concerns about neighborhood "troublemakers" are concentrated in the areas of the city which received the most patrol attention by the MTF. Furthermore, the highly visible, proactive, stop-and-question approach taken by the MTF troopers were directed primarily at the "troublemakers" on the streets. Thus, the MTF operation was responsive to the concerns of the residents of the neighborhoods in which it concentrated its efforts -- and this responsiveness is reflected in the attitudes of those residents toward the MTF.

Observations

The evidence presented in this chapter is consistent with the conclusion that the MTF operation was a success in the eyes of Trenton's residents. The goal of high visibility for the MTF patrols was achieved, and the public response was overwhelmingly favorable. By large margins, Trenton residents approved of the

MTF concept, thought that the troopers did a good or excellent job during the MTF operation, and believed that the MTF program had reduced crime in Trenton; and these results proved to be quite stable across age, gender, and racial subgroups in the Trenton population.

Furthermore, our survey provides indications that the patrol techniques used by the MTF were most appropriate for those areas of the city in which the troopers spent the most time. Residents of those areas were very concerned about problems associated with visible "troublemakers" on their streets -- the very types of problems that the MTF's highly visible, proactive patrols seem to address effectively. We can infer that the match between citizen concern and MTF response was recognized and appreciated by those residents most affected; Trenton residents who were most concerned with problems of neighborhood deterioration/disorder and who lived in the areas where MTF patrols were concentrated tended (in contrast to other Trenton residents) to prefer a return of the MTF over an increase in the size of the Trenton Police Department. Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that the citizens of Trenton noticed the differences between MTF tactics and the tactics of their local police department.

There is one caveat to these findings. The data in this chapter do not directly address the issue of whether the MTF operation had any effect on the level of the fear of crime among Trenton residents. Although we were able to draw on some findings from surveys conducted at three different points in time, there were no comparably worded questions that would allow

us to detect changes over time in the level of fear.

Our attention now shifts, in Chapter 6, to crime and arrest trends before, during, and after the MTF operation.

CHAPTER 6

CRIME AND ARREST TRENDS

In the preceding chapters, we have discussed how the MTF operation was implement, how it functioned vis-a-vis the Trenton Police Department, and how it was perceived and rated by the citizens of Trenton. Now attention shifts to what many would consider to be the "bottom line" issue: Did the MTF achieve its primary objective of reducing the incidence of crime in Trenton?

Available Data

Unfortunately, this "bottom line" question is also the most difficult to answer because of the problems involved in measuring the incidence of crime. The most usable data available to us consist of crimes known to the police (those crimes that come to the attention of and are officially recorded by the police) and arrests. It is, of course, common knowledge that large numbers of crimes do not come to the attention of the police and that the proportions of crimes cleared by arrest vary widely across different types of crime. Thus, any change in the number of crimes known to the police can stem from a change in the actual numbers of crimes occurring, but it can also result from a change in the proportion of crimes reported to the police by victims and witnesses or a change in police recording practices (or some combination of factors). Likewise, a change in the number of arrests can result from a change in the amount of crime occurring or from a change in the proportion of crimes resulting in an arrest (or some combination of factors).

Nonetheless, the use of data on crimes known to the police and on arrests appears to be justifiable in this analysis for a number of reasons. In the first place, we did not uncover any indication that the recording practices of the Trenton Police Department underwent any major changes during the period of interest. Second, we compare Trenton data with data from other New Jersey cities; divergent patterns should emerge in these comparisons if Trenton was experiencing unique changes in victim reporting of crimes to the police or in police recording of incidents reported to them. Finally, regardless of their limitations, arrest data represent a useful indicator of police activity. And, in specific data sets used in this chapter, it is unlikely that increases in arrests resulted simply from increases in the numbers of crimes occurring because -- as will be seen later -- the numbers of crimes apparently decreased during the period examined.

The data actually available for this portion of the evaluation come from several sources. The primary source consists of information about crimes known and arrests that are reported by local police departments to New Jersey's statewide Uniform Crime Reporting system. We obtained monthly counts of crimes known and arrests for the seven index crimes (murder, forcible rape, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, larceny-theft, and vehicle theft)* and for simple assault. In addition, monthly arrest counts were obtained for three public order offenses: possession and use of narcotics, weapons possession,

*The newly added index crime of arson was excluded.

and disorderly conduct. The data cover all of calendar year 1980, all of 1981, and part of 1982. The data pertain to Trenton and to three other New Jersey cities that are similar in size to Trenton: Camden, Elizabeth, and Paterson.

Additional data from Trenton only were available from special analyses undertaken by the State Police's Uniform Crime Reporting Unit. These data consist of monthly counts of a subset of crimes known defined as "street crimes" (which are also broken down by the patrol zone in which they occurred), monthly counts of arrests made by the MTF troopers, and a general analysis of the criminal histories of the persons arrested by the troopers. The "street crime" data cover January through September of 1981 and the same months in 1980; of course, the MTF arrest data pertain only to the period during which the MTF was operating in Trenton: March through September of 1981.

Crimes Known to the Police

In New Jersey State Police reports and press releases, the MTF operation has been deemed a success primarily because there were fewer index crimes known to the police during March-September 1981, when the operation was in place, than there were during the same seven-month period of 1980. Public survey data seem to indicate that this decrease in crime was noticed by the residents of Trenton. Table 6.1 displays responses to similarly worded questions that were used in the September 1981 Eagleton survey and in our July-August 1982 survey.

TABLE 6.1
Perceptions of Crime Trends by Trenton Residents;
September 1981 vs. July-August 1982

Response	Sept. 1981: "In the last 6 months, do you think crime has gone down, or stayed about the same in Trenton?"	July-Aug. 1982: "Compared to last year at this time, do you think that crime in Trenton has gone up, gone down, or stayed about the same?"
Gone up	23% ^a	44% ^a
Gone down	24%	15%
About the same	47%	37%
Don't Know	5%	3%
Number of respondents	(324)	(416) ^b

^aPercentages do not sum to 100 because of rounding.

^bExcludes 29 respondents who were not living in Trenton during the summer of 1981:

In September 1981, responding to the period during which the MTF was operating, less than one-quarter of the residents surveyed thought that crime had gone up, while a similar proportion thought that crime had gone down. The most common response -- by almost half the sample -- was that the level of crime had stayed about the same during the preceding six months. These results do not appear to be very impressive until they are contrasted to the results obtained in the survey conducted almost a year later. In that survey, respondents were asked to compare the level of crime in the summer of 1982 with the level in the summer of 1981, when the troopers were in Trenton. Just less than half of these respondents thought that crime had gone up, while only 15 percent said that crime had gone down, and more than one-third saw no change in the level of crime.

We can now turn to an examination of the crime figures themselves, as they were recorded by the police.

Trends in Crimes Known

As noted above, claims about the success of the MTF have been based primarily on the lower crime level recorded in the March-September 1981 period compared to the level in the March-September 1980 period. The data we obtained from the Trenton Police Department show that crimes known did in fact decrease. Index crimes involving violence or threats (murder, forcible rape, aggravated assault, and robbery) were 5 percent lower in March-September 1981 than in the same seven-month period of 1980; there were also 3 percent fewer simple assaults. Index property crimes (burglary, larceny-theft, and vehicle theft) showed a similar decline of 4 percent. The changes in individual crime

types varied from a 21 percent decrease in aggravated assault to a 6 percent increase in robbery.

But an evaluation of the MTF operation has to go beyond this simple noting of a general decrease in the amount of crime. The key issue is the extent to which the decrease in crime can be attributed to the MTF operation rather than some other, unrelated factor or factors. One way to phrase the issue is to ask whether the decrease would have occurred even if the MTF had not been present in Trenton.

The problem is one of causal inference, and experimental research designs exist which allow the drawing of causal inferences with a high degree of confidence. But these designs require random assignment of "subjects" to treatment and control groups -- a procedure that is extremely difficult to implement for public policy programs. In the present context, the best we can do is to approximate an experimental design by comparing the crime trends in Trenton with other cities to determine if the Trenton trends were unique or if they were part of a more general trend. The more similar the other cities are to Trenton -- with the exception of having the MTF operation -- the more confidence we can have in the results of our analyses. Therefore, only New Jersey cities were considered; thus, each of the cities should have been affected similarly by any statewide trends or changes that might have occurred during the period of interest. In addition, population size was considered important because many important social and economic factors (including crime rates) are related to population size; thus we wanted cities with population

sizes roughly similar to the 91,000 in Trenton. Using these criteria, the three cities selected for comparisons were Camden (pop. 85,000), Paterson (pop. 138,000), and Elizabeth (pop. 105,000).

Table 6.2 contains the percent changes in numbers of crimes from the March-September 1980 period to the March-September 1981 for Trenton and the three comparison cities. Percent changes are shown for the individual index crimes (except for murder and forcible rape, which are grouped together because of the small numbers involved), for the aggregated violent and property index crime categories, and for simple assault.

Trenton had fewer crimes in March-September 1981 than in March-September 1980 in five of the seven individual crime types presented in Table 6.2. However, with one major exception, these decreases were generally matched or even exceeded by the three other cities; the major exception is Paterson's 18 percent increase in larceny-theft compared to Trenton's 7 percent decrease. For two of the seven crime types, Trenton showed slight increases between the two time periods. But, again with one major exception, the other cities showed either decreases or an increase that was smaller than Trenton's for these two crime types; and again, the major exception involved Paterson, which showed a 41 percent increase in robbery compared to Trenton's 6 percent increase.

TABLE 6.2
Percent Increase or Decrease in Numbers of Crimes Known
March-September 1981 vs. March-September 1980

Crimes	Percent Change in			
	Trenton	Camden	Elizabeth	Paterson
Murder/forcible rape	-18%	-7%	-33%	-17%
Robbery	+6%	-21%	-18%	+41%
Aggravated assault	-21%	-17%	-34%	-25%
Burglary	+5%	+2%	-17%	-7%
Larceny-theft	-7%	-9%	-2%	+18%
Motor vehicle theft	-16%	-24%	-14%	-16%
Simple assault	-3%	-32%	-17%	-7%
Index violent crimes ^a	-5%	-19%	-27%	+3%
Index property crimes ^b	-4%	-7%	-9%	+1%

^aMurder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault

^bBurglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

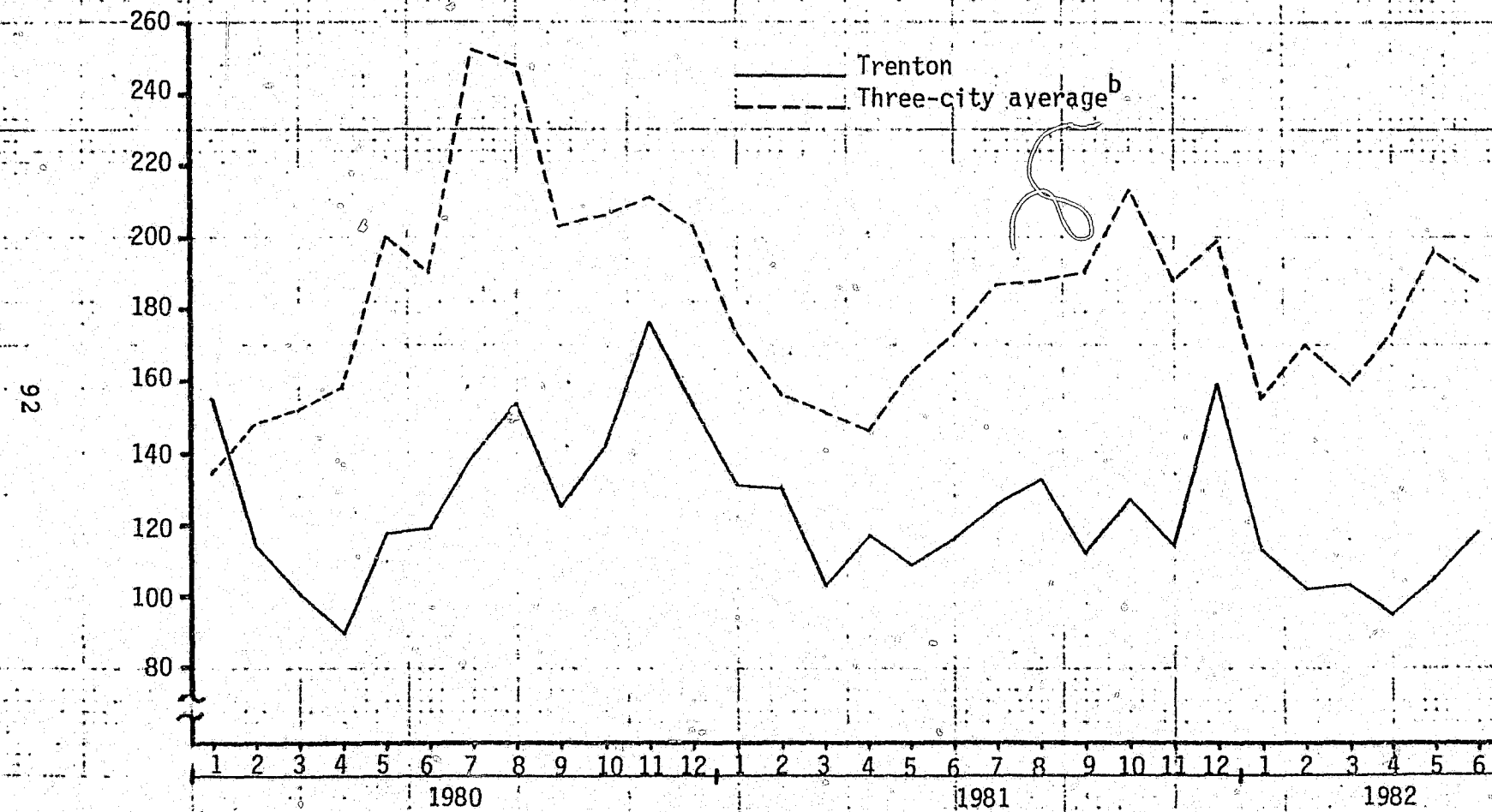
The crime trends are illustrated more fully in Figures 6.1 and 6.2. In both graphs, the numbers of crimes in the three comparison cities are averaged for ease of presentation, and the time period covered extends from January 1980 through June 1982, the last month in which data were collected for the three comparison cities. Trends for index violent crimes appear in Figure 6.1, and trends for index property crimes appear in Figure 6.2. Note that, in both graphs, numbers of crimes rather than crime rates are displayed. This is done solely to enhance the visual presentations of the data. It is unlikely that the populations of the four cities of interest increased or declined much during the time period reflected in Figures 6.1 and 6.2; and if population changes did occur, the changes probably would have been similar for all of the cities. Thus, if the numbers of crimes had been converted to rates per 100,000 population, the trend patterns of the cities vis-a-vis each other would have remained unchanged. However, Trenton has a somewhat smaller population than the average for the other three cities, so conversion to rates would have brought the trend lines in Figures 6.1 and 6.2 closer together -- even intersecting at times -- making the patterns less clear visually.

CONTINUED

1 OF 2

FIGURE 6.1

Monthly Numbers of Violent Index Crimes^a known to the Police
In Trenton and Three Other New Jersey Cities; January 1980-June 1982

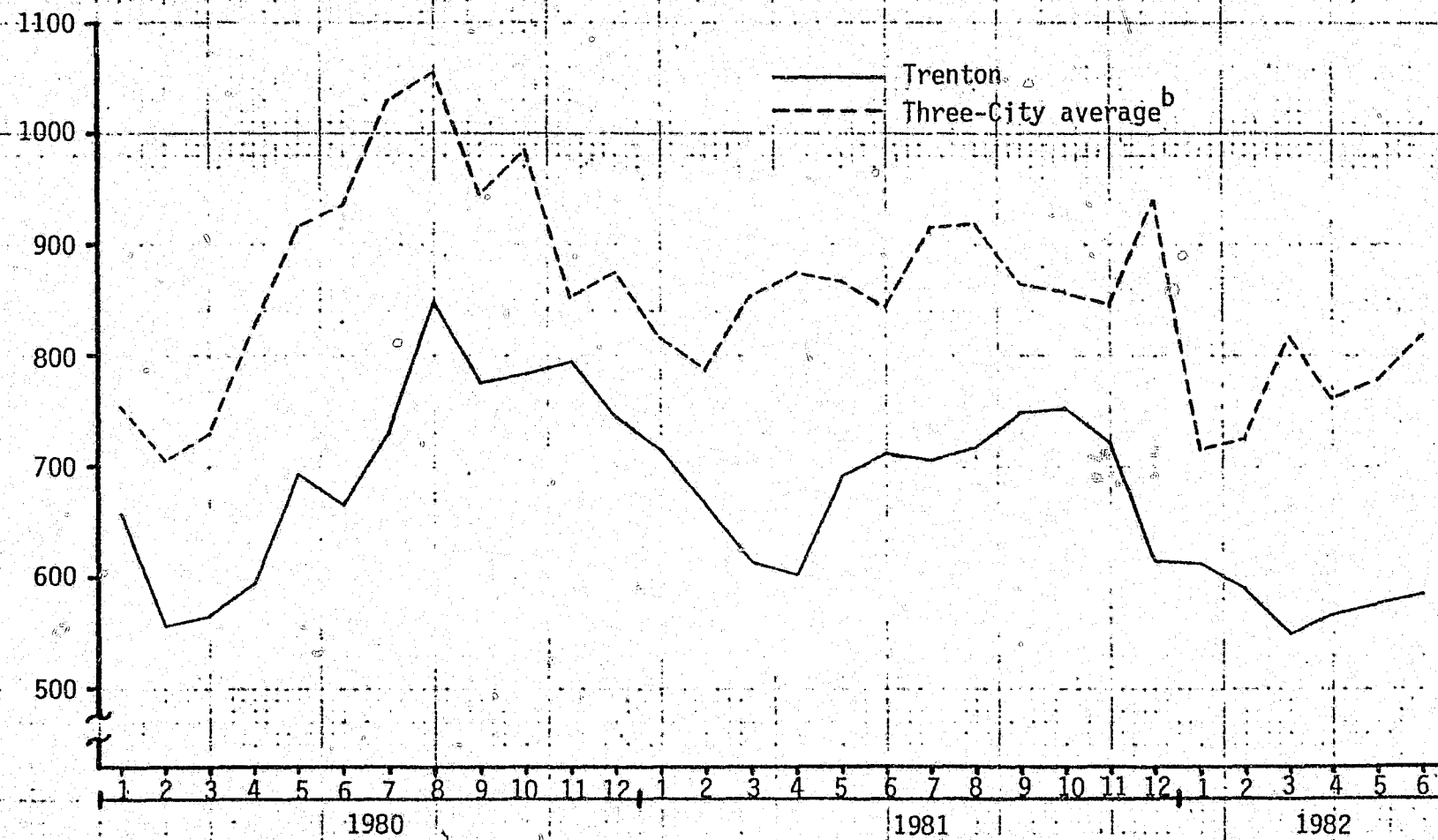


^aMurder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

^bAverage monthly numbers of crimes known in Camden, Elizabeth, and Paterson.

FIGURE 6.2

Monthly Numbers of Property Index Crimes^a known to the Police
In Trenton and Three Other New Jersey Cities; January 1980-June 1982



^aBurglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

^bAverage monthly numbers of crimes known in Camden, Elizabeth, and Paterson.

All four of the lines in Figures 6.1 and 6.2 seem to show overall downward trends through the two-and-one-half year period, but there are really not a sufficient number of data points to make that conclusion with a high degree of confidence. Of more relevance for the present purpose is what happens in all four trend lines with annual peak crime periods.

Looking first at violent index crimes in Figure 6.1, we see that, in Trenton, these crimes peaked during August and November in 1980 and during August and December in 1981. But the peak months show fewer crimes in 1981 than do the peak months in 1980. A similar pattern is evident in Figure 6.1 for the average numbers of crimes in Camden, Elizabeth, and Paterson. Violent index crimes for these cities (taken together) reached their highest points during July/August and November in 1980 and during October and December of 1981. But again, the peaks were attenuated in 1981 compared to 1980.

In Figure 6.2, similar patterns occur for index property crimes. These crimes peaked during August of 1980 and during September/October 1981 in Trenton, but again, the peaks were attenuated. Similarly, in 1980, average three-city index property crimes reached high points in July/August and October; in 1981, high points were reached in July/August and December, but at lower levels than in 1980.

Thus, if the MTF operation had an impact on the amount of index crime in Trenton, the impact cannot be detected with the data presented in Table 6.2 and in Figures 6.1 and 6.2. What those data indicate is that, in terms of crime, 1981 was a

somewhat better year than 1980 for New Jersey cities with populations of about 100,000 -- Trenton included, but not an exceptional case. Amounts of crimes reveal seasonal fluctuations every year, with different types of crime tending to peak and bottom out at different points in the year. What Figures 6.1 and 6.2 illustrate is that, in the cities examined, the high points in these monthly fluctuations were attenuated in 1981, relative to 1980. The low points on the other hand, were not as low in 1981 as they were in 1980. Taken together, these changes produced a crime trend that did not fluctuate as wildly (especially upward) in 1981 as it did in 1980. But again, these patterns were present in cities that did not have an MTF operation as well as in Trenton.

Street Crime Analysis

Although the index crimes that have been examined so far can be broken down into categories (as was done in Table 6.2), a great deal of heterogeneity within those categories remains. For the present purpose, the major problem is that each category contains some kinds of crime that an operation such as the MTF would be expected to deter and other kinds that would seem to be impervious to a proactive, highly visible patrol strategy. For example, the aggravated assault category contains a large number of events that occur indoors -- invisible to street patrols. The same is true for shoplifting and other forms of indoor theft-by-stealth that are included in the larceny-theft category. It is possible that using the index crime categories to assess the MTF operation would mask effects that the operation had on some kinds of crimes within the categories.

Recognizing this problem, the New Jersey State Police Uniform Crime Reporting Unit delved more deeply into the records of crimes known in Trenton to identify "street related crime index offenses". The crimes subsumed in their definition are: highway and commercial robberies, aggravated assaults that occurred outdoors, four forms of larceny (purse-snatching, pocket-picking, thefts from autos, and thefts of auto parts and accessories), and all motor vehicle thefts. Data on these street crimes were available to us on a monthly basis for two time periods, January through September of 1980 and 1981. Unfortunately, comparable data from other New Jersey cities were not available, so we are unable to conduct the types of comparisons made in the preceding section. The Trenton street crime data were, however, broken down by patrol zone, and we will examine that information in the next section.

The data on street crimes in Trenton are presented in Table 6.3 in a form that is comparable to the presentation of index crime data in Table 6.2. In general, the street crimes showed a somewhat greater decrease than did the index crimes when the period of the MTF operation (March through September 1981) is compared to the same seven months of 1980.

The major difference between changes in street crimes and index crimes appears to be in the robbery category. According to Table 6.2, there were 6 percent more index robberies in March-September 1981 than in March-September 1980, while Table 6.3 indicates that there was virtually no change in the numbers of street related robberies (actually, there was a decrease of less than one percent) between the same two time periods. However,

TABLE 6.3
Percent Increase or Decrease in Numbers
of "Street Related" Crimes
Known to the Police in Trenton
March-September 1981 vs. March-September 1980

Crimes ^a	Percent Change
Robbery	^b
Aggravated Assault	-26%
Larceny	- 4%
Motor vehicle theft	-15%
Street related total	- 8%
(Violent) ^c	(- 7%)
(Property) ^c	(- 7%)

^aSee text for definition of crime types.

^bLess than one percent change.

^cIncludes robbery and aggravated assault.

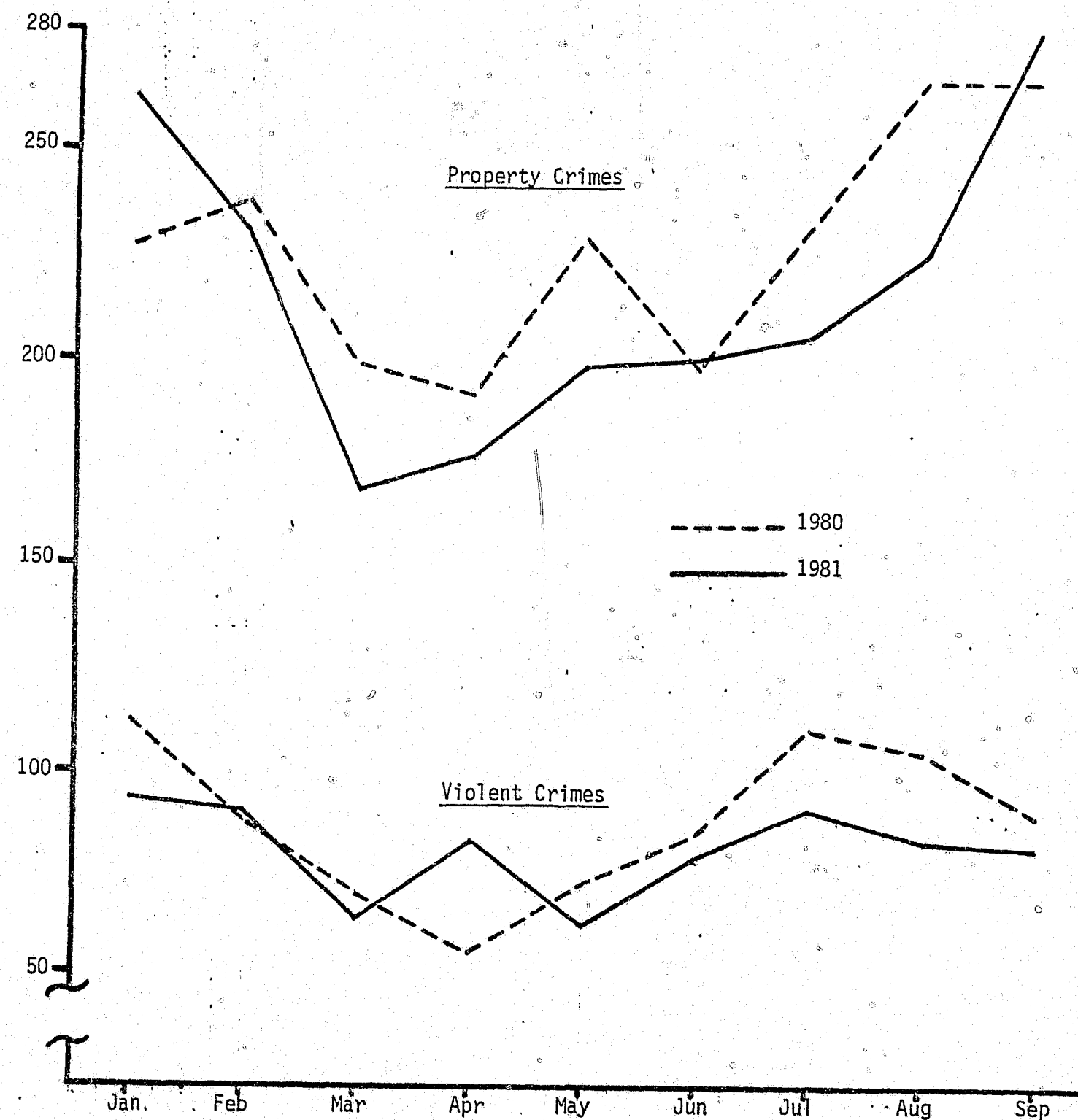
^dIncludes larceny and motor vehicle theft.

this difference between Tables 6.2 and 6.3 may not be very meaningful because the tables are based on data from two different sources which do not appear to be in perfect agreement. The numbers in Table 6.2 are based on data obtained directly from the Trenton Police Department; the numbers in Table 6.3 are based on State Police data. Even when the same categorization of crimes is used, the two sources of data differ somewhat. For example, State Police figures show no change in the numbers of index robberies between March-September 1980 and March-September 1981, while Trenton Police Department figures show a 6 percent increase (as shown on Table 6.2). Likewise, note that the State Police figures show a 15 percent decrease in motor vehicle thefts among the street related crimes (Table 6.3) and the Trenton Police Department figures show a 16 percent decrease (Table 6.2), even though these crimes are defined similarly in both sets of data.

Despite the disparities between the two data sets, the changes in the numbers of street crimes from March-September 1980 to March-September 1981 do not provide much basis for attributing crime reduction to the MTF operation, especially when the figures are viewed in light of data from other New Jersey cities presented earlier. In fact, the trend for street crimes appears to be very similar to the trend for index crimes that we have already discussed.

A slightly different perspective on the street crime data is presented in Figure 6.3. In the upper portion of Figure 6.3, the January through September trends in Trenton's street related

FIGURE 6.3
Street Related Property and Violent Crimes^a
Known to the Police in Trenton; January-September, 1980 and 1981



^aSee text for definitions of crime types.

property crimes are shown for 1980 and 1981; corresponding trends in street related violent crimes are shown in the lower portion of the figure. The violent street crime trends are similar to what was found for index violent crimes in Trenton and other New Jersey cities (see Figure 6.1) -- namely, numbers of crimes in 1980 fluctuated within a wider range than they did in 1981. The trends for street related property crimes in the upper portion of Figure 6.3 show somewhat different patterns. In 1981, these crimes dropped substantially below 1980 levels in March, when the MTF operation began. With the exception of June, the 1981 levels remained below the 1980 levels until the troopers began their withdrawal in September. Thus, there is at least some indication of the suppression of levels of street related property crimes in Trenton during the MTF operation. However, the fact remains that index property crimes -- which contain the street related property crimes -- were lower in 1981 than in 1982 in similar size New Jersey cities that did not have the MTF (see Table 6.2 and Figure 6.2). This makes us unable to conclude that the MTF had a major effect on the overall amount of crime in Trenton, independent of the effects of other crime-reducing influences that were apparently operating in New Jersey cities during 1981.

Analysis by Patrol Zone

Although the analyses above do not provide much evidence to support a claim that the MTF operation reduced crime in Trenton, it is possible that the differential presence of MTF patrols in Trenton's police patrol zones resulted in the redistribution of crime within the city. To address this issue, we examine data

collected by the State Police in which street related crimes are categorized by patrol zone of occurrence during the period of January through September 1981. We also had access to Trenton Police Department data in which index crimes were categorized by zone during the months of 1980 and 1981; these data are not used because it is our understanding that the patrol zone boundaries were changed in the summer of 1980.

In Chapter 5, some responses to the survey of Trenton residents were broken down according to the patrol zones in which the respondents lived. At that time, the nine patrol zones were categorized into three zone groups. Zone Group I contained patrol zones 8 and 9, which were characterized by low crime levels and relatively infrequent MTF patrols; Zone Group II, consisting of patrol zones 1 and 2, had medium levels of crime and MTF patrol presence; Zone Group III contained the five patrol zones in the center of Trenton (3 through 7), which had high crime levels and which received the greatest attention from the MTF patrols. Street crime data for January through September 1981 are presented in Table 6.4, with the Trenton patrol zones divided into groups similar to those used in Chapter 5, except that the high-crime zones receiving the greatest patrol attention (3 through 7) are subdivided into two groups.

Table 6.4 shows the percentages of street related violent and property crimes known to the police that occurred in the four patrol zone groups for January through September 1981. A reasonable prediction would be that -- regardless of whether total street crime in Trenton went up, went down, or remained the

same -- the proportions of street crimes should decrease in those zones where the MTF concentrated its patrols, once the MTF got into full operation. Concomitant increases in the proportions of crimes in the other zones should be expected.

There is very little information in Table 6.4 to support the prediction. For example, the proportion of street related violent crimes in the zones that received the most intensive MTF patrol attention (zones 3 through 5) did reach its lowest level (40 percent) during June, but the proportion began to rise again thereafter. In the other patrol zones receiving a great deal of MTF patrol attention (6 and 7), the lowest percentages of street related violent crimes were reached in February (before the MTF started) and in September (when the MTF began to withdraw from Trenton). The distribution of street related property crimes across patrol zones, displayed in the right side of Table 6.4, shows a similar absence of systematic change during the period.

We recognize the limitations of the data used for Table 6.4. It would have been preferable to have comparable data on the distributions of street crimes among patrol zones for the same months of 1980, and even 1982. However, limited as the data are, they show no indications of a shifting of street crimes across areas of Trenton in response to the MTF patrols.

TABLE 6.4

Percent Distributions of Street Related Violent and Property Crimes Among Groups of Trenton Police Patrol Zones, by Month January through September, 1981

Month in 1981	Street Related Violent ^a Crimes in Patrol Zones				Street Related Property ^b Crimes in Patrol Zones:			
	1-2	3-5	6-7	8-9	1-2	3-5	6-7	8-9
January	20%	45%	33%	3%	23%	43%	21%	13%
February	19%	51%	19%	10%	26%	39%	17%	18%
March	18%	52%	23%	8%	29%	32%	20%	19%
April	18%	53%	21%	8%	17%	38%	25%	20%
May	21%	42%	31%	5%	29%	33%	22%	16%
June	22%	40%	28%	10%	21%	33%	22%	24%
July	25%	45%	24%	6%	23%	34%	29%	15%
August	23%	48%	26%	3%	27%	34%	22%	17%
September	23%	51%	17%	9%	23%	40%	27%	10%

^aIncludes certain types of robberies and aggravated assaults.
See text for definitions of crime types.

^bIncludes motor vehicle thefts and certain types of larcenies.
See Text for definitions of crime types.

Arrest Data

The data about crimes known to the police that have been presented in this chapter fail to indicate any changes in the amount of crime in Trenton attributable to the MTF operation. However, we know that the troopers were active on the streets of Trenton. The analyses in Chapter 5 revealed awareness and appreciation of the MTF among Trenton residents, and our interviews with participants in the operation elicited many comments bearing on the high level of activity among the MTF troopers (for example, the frequent back-ups in docketing created by the numbers of arrestees brought in by the troopers). In this section, we examine arrest data, which constitute a more direct indicator of MTF activities.

As was done with crimes known to the police in Table 6.2, Table 6.5 presents percent changes in numbers of arrests for index crimes (plus simple assault) between the March-September 1980 period and the March-September 1981 period for Trenton and three similar sized New Jersey cities. A comparison of changes in crimes known and arrests for the seven crime types listed in Tables 6.2 and 6.5 shows that the direction of change is the same for both indicators in the majority of the 28 instances (seven crime types times four cities). When differences do occur, it is most often the case that arrests increased (or remained about the same) even though the numbers of crimes decreased. In only two instances -- robbery in Trenton and larceny-theft in Paterson -- did numbers of arrests decrease while the numbers of crimes known increased. Overall, it appears that, in terms of making arrests

TABLE 6.5

Percent Increase or Decrease in Numbers of Arrests
March-September 1981 vs. March-September 1980

Arrest charge	Percent Change in:			
	Trenton	Camden	Elizabeth	Paterson
Murder/forcible rape	-36%	NC ^a	+59%	-27%
Robbery	-35%	-10%	-22%	+24%
Aggravated assault	-39%	-18%	+29%	+ 4%
Burglary	+12%	+13%	+20%	- 9%
Larceny-theft	- 4%	+13%	-14%	-10%
Motor vehicle theft	a	-25%	+ 3%	+194%
Simple assault	a	-32%	a	-16%
Index violent crimes ^b	-38%	-13%	+ 9%	+ 8%
Index property crimes ^c	+ 1%	+12%	- 4%	- 4%

^aIndicates change of less than one-half of one percent.

^bMurder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

^cBurglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

for index crimes and simple assault, the police in all four cities were more than keeping pace with changes in the amount of crime -- and Trenton does not stand out as a special case.

The activities of the MTF troopers are not apparent when arrests for index crimes in Trenton (and other New Jersey cities) are examined. This is not surprising: Of the 965 arrests for index crimes recorded in Trenton from March through September 1981, only 32 (3 percent) were made by the MTF troopers. However, of the 3,989 arrests for Part II crimes in Trenton during the same period, 868 (22 percent) were made by the troopers. In addition, the troopers made 564 arrests of people who had warrants outstanding (contempt of court). A full listing of MTF arrests in Trenton during each of the operation's seven months is presented in Table 6.6

As the figures in Table 6.6 show, the MTF arrests were highly concentrated in a few categories. Of the 1,464 total arrests, 1,206 (or 82 percent) involved drug or weapon charges or contempt of court citations. Although not shown separately in Table 6.6, most of the drug arrests (more than 70 percent) were for possession of less than 25 grams of a controlled substance. When one considers the tactics used by the MTF, the distribution of arrests reflected in Table 6.6 makes a great deal of sense. Most arrests of these types result from stopping, questioning, and searching suspicious persons -- which describes the primary activity of the MTF troopers. On the other hand, arrests for index crimes generally result from responding to calls and conducting follow-up investigations -- the activities from which the MTF troopers were exempted.

TABLE 6.6

Types of Arrests Made by State Troopers
In the Metro Task Force Operation; March-September 1981

Arrest Charges	Month in 1981							Row Totals
	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	
Part I Index Crimes	3	4	7	7	5	5	1	32
Part II Crimes ^a	51	163	134	154	177	124	65	868
Simple assault	3	1	4	5	--	3	--	16
Fraud	--	--	--	--	3	1	--	4
Stolen property	3	7	3	3	1	10	6	33
Malicious mischief	--	--	--	--	11	--	--	11
Weapons	2	16	11	9	13	13	4	68
Drugs	33	105	95	108	107	80	46	574
Driving under the influence	4	8	5	1	9	3	3	33
Liquor laws	--	--	--	4	9	2	--	15
Disorderly conduct	1	9	5	12	11	6	2	46
Local ordinances	4	15	5	11	12	6	4	57
Other ^b	1	2	6	1	1	--	--	11
Contempt of Court	36	116	107	112	92	51	50	564
Column Totals	(90)	(283)	(248)	(273)	(274)	(180)	(116)	(1,464)

^aSubcategories include only those types of Part II crimes for which arrests were made by the MTF troopers.

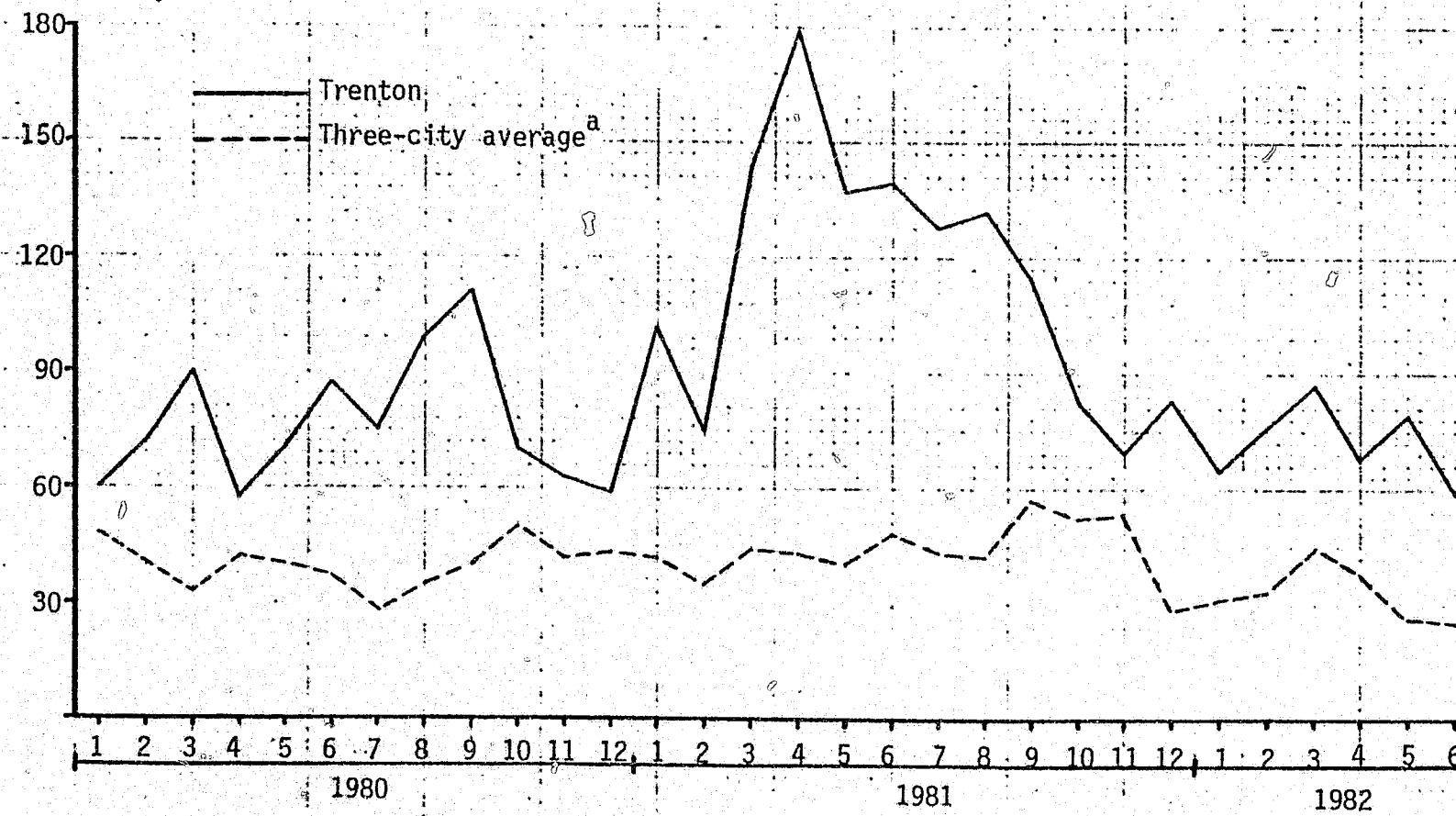
^bIncludes one arrest for a sex offense in March, one for gambling in June, and one for arson in July; two arrests in April and six arrests in May were not categorized in the state police data.

The impact of the MTF tactics on arrest statistics is very evident when one focuses on the crimes that most often came to the attention of the troopers. This is illustrated in Figure 6.4, where numbers of drug arrests by month are plotted for Trenton along with the average number of drug arrests in the three New Jersey cities we have been using for comparisons: Camden, Elizabeth, and Paterson. Figure 6.4 covers the period from January 1980 through June 1982, and it is apparent that, on average, more drug arrests are made in Trenton than in the other three cities, even in the absence of the MTF. But the rather spectacular increase in Trenton drug arrests during the time of the MTF operation is also quite evident, especially in comparison to the relatively stable trend in numbers of drug arrests in the other three cities.

Before ending this section, one other aspect of the arrest data will be discussed briefly. The Criminal Justice Records Bureau of the New Jersey State Police checked the computerized criminal history records of the persons arrested by the MTF troopers. The Bureau found that in 920 (63 percent) of the 1,464 arrests made by the MTF troopers, the person had a prior arrest history. These prior arrest histories contained a total of 5,713 previous charges. A large proportion of the previous charges (36 percent) were for drug offenses, but not an insignificant proportion (25 percent) involved murder, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft.

FIGURE 6.4

Monthly Numbers of Drug Arrests in Trenton
And Three Other New Jersey Cities; January 1980-June 1982



^a Average monthly numbers of arrests in Camden, Elizabeth, and Paterson.

However, it is unclear from the Bureau's report whether the information about previous arrests pertains to individuals or to arrests. Undoubtedly, the 1,464 arrests made by the MTF troopers did not involve 1,464 different individuals. If the Bureau's analysis included the arrest history of the person arrested in each of the 1,464 MTF arrests, regardless of who the person was, then the criminal histories of people arrested more than once by the MTF troopers would be counted each time they were arrested -- in which case, the 5,713 previous charges would include some duplicate counting of the same charges. Likewise, under the assumption that people with prior arrest histories were more likely than others to be arrested more than once by the troopers during the MTF operation, the figure of 63 percent with prior arrest histories is likely to be an overestimate of the proportion of individuals who had prior arrest histories. Thus, it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions from the analysis conducted by the State Police Criminal Justice Records Bureau. It is obvious that the people arrested by the MTF troopers were not saints; certainly many of them had rather lengthy criminal careers. But we are limited in what we can say about the exact nature and extent of those careers.

Observations

Anyone familiar with prior research investigating the effects of increased police patrols on numbers of crimes will not be too surprised that we were unable to discern any change in Trenton's index crimes (and simple assaults) known to the police that could be attributed to the MTF operation. The Trenton crime trends during and preceding the MTF operation were very similar

to those occurring in similar sized New Jersey cities at the same time. More finely tuned analyses, focusing on street related index crimes and the distribution of those crimes among Trenton patrol zones, also failed to provide convincing evidence of substantial crime suppression or of redistribution of crimes within the city.

However, arrest data for the city of Trenton show clearly that the MTF troopers were doing what was expected of them on the streets of Trenton. They were making rather large numbers of arrests for those offenses that become visible in a proactive, stop-and-question operation: possession of small quantities of drugs, possession of weapons, and being the subject of an outstanding warrant for contempt of court. Furthermore, despite apparent limitations of the available data, the criminal history records of people arrested by the MTF troopers suggest that the troopers were concentrating their efforts on the relatively small number of Trenton "street people" who are repeatedly in trouble with the law.

The lack of any indications of a deterrent effect by the MTF patrols on the amount on index crimes can best be taken as further evidence of the limited impact that can be expected from simply adding patrols and making them more visible -- unless, of course, the presence of the patrols is virtually constant and overwhelming, an approach that is neither fiscally possible nor philosophically justifiable. Likewise, the absence of decreases in index crimes attributable to the MTF operation leads to the conclusion that the arrests made by the MTF troopers did not

create some sort of incapacitative effect that might be associated with removal of repetitive offenders from the streets. This is not to say that the incapacitation of repetitive offenders would have little or no effect on the total amount of crime; the issue of the effects of incapacitation is still an open one that is not addressed by this evaluation. In fact, the relatively minor charges involved in most of the arrests made by the MTF troopers probably resulted in very little loss of "street time" by the people arrested.

In Chapters 2 through 6, we have examined the implementation of the MTF, its operation on the streets of Trenton, relationships between the MTF and local law enforcement, reactions of Trenton's residents to the MTF, and effects of the MTF on the numbers of crimes and arrests in Trenton. At the end of each of those chapters, some brief observations were presented, mostly to summarize findings. In the next chapter, the findings of the evaluation are pulled together to form some conclusions about the MTF and to make some recommendations about possible future attempts to initiate similar programs.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, the entire range of information collected for the evaluation -- from interviews, documents, crime and arrest statistics -- is synthesized to make some statements about what we have learned. First, conclusions about the actual MTF operation as it unfolded in Trenton during 1981 are presented. Then, recommendations that pertain to how the MTF concept might be put into practice in the future are given.

Conclusions

Of course, the basic question that everyone wants an evaluator to answer is: "Was the program successful?" Usually, evaluators reply with a question of their own: "Successful at doing what?" The evaluator's reply is not meant as an obfuscation; rather, it is meant as a way to make the point that all programs have multiple goals and objectives, some explicit and some implicit. The MTF operation is no exception. Thus, in this section, conclusions are presented about four objectives that were (or should have been) central to those who planned, implemented, and conducted the MTF operation.

Implementation and Execution of Assigned Tasks

The most basic objective of any program is to perform the planned activities in the manner in which they were planned. In this case, the issue is whether the MTF patrols were implemented and conducted in ways that were consistent with the description

of what the participants in the operation were supposed to be doing. By virtually any standard, this aspect of the MTF operation must be deemed a success.

The State Police selected a group of highly motivated troopers and introduced them into Trenton in an expeditious manner. The pre-operational training received by the troopers was not as explicitly relevant to their assignment as might have been hoped because of the very brief period between the initial development of the MTF idea and its implementation in Trenton; but the troopers, with assistance from the Trenton Police Department back-up units, showed an ability to adapt quickly to the demands of urban patrol.

Once in Trenton, the MTF troopers established and maintained a schedule of patrols, closely coordinating their activities with those of the Trenton Police Department's back-up units. On the streets, the troopers performed very much as expected. They were highly visible, and they took an aggressive, proactive approach, stopping and questioning persons who aroused their suspicions. Their visibility is born out by the very high proportions of Trenton residents -- especially in the patrol zones where MTF activity was concentrated -- who reported seeing the troopers on duty during the MTF operation. That the troopers carried out their assignment of stopping and questioning suspicious persons is indicated by the nearly 1,500 arrests they made during the seven-month operation, arrests of the types that one would expect to derive from the proactive tactics. Most of the arrests involved people who had outstanding warrants (contempt of court) or who were in possession of drugs or weapons.

The aggressiveness of the troopers is attested to in the interviews we conducted with Trenton police officers; the troopers' direct, no-nonsense style of dealing with the people they approached on the streets was described similarly to us by Trenton officers who approved of the style as well as by those who did not. Our interviews with Trenton police officers not only indicated that the troopers had engaged in the activities that they were supposed to engage in, but the interviews also showed that the troopers had avoided the activities that they were supposed to be exempted from. That is, the troopers did not respond to routine calls for service, and with few exceptions, they did not conduct follow-up investigations of crimes that came to their attention.

Integration of State and Local Crime Control Efforts

One of the major factors making the MTF an attractive program for an evaluation was its attempt to integrate and coordinate the activities of state and local agencies in a crime control endeavor. The possibility of bringing a group of troopers into a city to supplement local police during periods of particularly high -- but temporary -- demand on police resources seemed sensible from a cost-effectiveness viewpoint; the troopers could help out until the period of high demand ran its course, and the local department would not have to undergo costly, permanent expansion. At the same time, the introduction of a police force that is organized under an entirely different level of government into a local criminal justice "culture" -- with its understandings and operating procedures that have been worked out over years -- is fraught with the potential for disruption and

conflict. Our conclusions about the MTF's success as an attempt to field an integrated, joint operation by the state and the city are mixed.

The primary reason for tempering conclusions on this issue is that the MTF troopers were not brought fully into the operations of the Trenton Police Department. As has been discussed earlier, particularly in Chapter 4, the MTF worked closely with Trenton's back-up units, which were, in many ways, separated from the regular patrol duties and personnel within the Trenton Police Department. Because the back-up units provided the point of interface between the MTF and the Trenton Police Department, the troopers themselves had only minimal contact with the regular vehicle and foot patrol operations in the city. Thus, the MTF does not represent a complete test of the problems that might arise in an attempt to introduce an outside police force into the routine activities of a local police department.

Nevertheless, there were issues of coordination that arose during the MTF. As has been discussed, the processing of trooper offense and arrest reports was facilitated by the high degree of correspondence in the forms used by the State and Trenton police, and the troopers adapted quickly to Trenton's procedures of the processing of arrestees, despite occasional overloads that occurred because of the increased numbers of arrests. A communication system was developed for the MTF that allowed the troopers on patrol to monitor all relevant channels of communication, and the placement of a state police dispatcher in close proximity to the Trenton dispatcher allowed relatively easy

coordination of tasks such as checking for warrants on suspects and moving patrols toward areas where assistance might be needed by other officers. One potentially touchy issue that did not have much of an opportunity to surface was how to handle complaints by citizens against members of the visiting police force. According to those we interviewed, there were only two complaints lodged against troopers during the operation, both of which were handled expeditiously by the State Police.

Apparently, there was agreement among state and local law enforcement officials about the nature of the MTF operation. Once the operation was implemented, smooth working relationships developed between sergeants and patrol officers in the MTF and the Trenton back-up units. As noted, there were few opportunities for working contact between the MTF and the regular Trenton patrol force. Trenton's regular vehicle and foot patrol officers received little information about the MTF and, therefore, were a bit skeptical of the motives behind the operation. However, once they determined from experience that the activities of the troopers did not have much bearing on their own day-to-day activities, the regular patrol officers developed a "live and let live" attitude toward the MTF. There were some disagreements voiced by the regular patrol officers about MTF tactics, but for the most part, the Trenton patrol force respected the troopers as police officers. This common base of experience and interest allowed the regular Trenton patrol officers to view the troopers, at the personal level, as "just other cops" who were doing the jobs they were assigned to do. At an organizational level, the regular Trenton patrol officers were

not overly concerned about the MTF once they determined that the operation was temporary and would have minimal involvement with their own duties.

Perhaps the greatest problems of coordination arose, not within the police forces themselves, but in the nexus between the police and the county prosecutor's office. Many of the troopers' arrests involved either local ordinances, with which the troopers were not initially very familiar, or minor criminal charges, many of which the prosecutors administratively downgraded or dismissed during routine case screening. We found no evidence that the prosecutor's office handled the MTF arrests differently than it had been handling similar types of arrests made by the Trenton police. However, the Trenton police and the prosecutor's office had developed understandings about how cases would be handled over years of working together; the MTF troopers were not parties to these understandings, and a degree of distrust toward the prosecutor's office developed among the troopers.

The issue of "outsiders" entering situations in which they are unfamiliar with understandings and routines that have been worked out over time has arisen elsewhere in our discussion. Some of the Trenton vehicle patrol officers expressed agreement with the idea that the troopers should not respond to routine calls for service; these officers were concerned that the troopers would create conflicts by not handling common situations in accordance with the procedures that had been developed by the local department. Some of Trenton's foot patrol officers expressed displeasure with the troopers' direct, aggressive

handling of people on the street; they felt that the troopers were stirring up bad feelings unnecessarily. Yet these perceptions of the troopers as lacking an understanding of local practices did not lead to the same kind of bad feelings that developed between the troopers and the prosecutor's office. There are probably several reasons for this.

First, the troopers had little involvement with the situations of concern to the regular Trenton patrol officers. Because the troopers were exempted from routine calls for service, there were few opportunities for the concerns of the vehicle patrol officers to materialize. Even the incidents that seemed to disturb some of the foot patrol officers were relatively infrequent. In contrast, every one of the troopers' arrests had to be dealt with by the prosecutor's office, so the opportunities for conflict were numerous. Second, the Trenton officers and the troopers were peers; they were not in positions to pass official judgments on each others' performance. The prosecutor's office, on the other hand, screened and evaluated the troopers' arrests, and the decisions were seen -- by the troopers at least -- as a judgment on the troopers' performance. Finally, it might be useful to say simply that: "Cops are cops and lawyers are lawyers". By this we mean that police officers and prosecutors generally come from very different backgrounds and operate in very different professional cultures; furthermore, the immediate needs and concerns of the organizations they serve are not isomorphic. It is not uncommon or suprising to find more misunderstanding and distrust between people from different agencies of the criminal justice system than among people from

within the same agency.

More will be said about the relationships between police and prosecutors in the recommendations section of this chapter.

Increasing the Public's Sense of Safety

Our evaluation does not provide much direct evidence that the MTF operation led to an increase in the public's sense of safety. Table 6.1 (in Chapter 6) did suggest that residents of Trenton were more likely to believe that crime had gone up during the period after the MTF left Trenton than during the period of the MTF operation. However, differences in question wording among the three surveys conducted in Trenton made it impossible to compare direct questions about feelings of safety across time periods.

What can be concluded with a great deal of confidence, however, is that the MTF operation was well received by Trenton's residents. The data presented in Chapter 5 show that the people of Trenton, by wide margins, approved of the MTF operation, thought that the troopers had done a good or excellent job, and believed that the State Police patrols had reduced crime in Trenton. Furthermore, residents who lived in the city patrol zones that received the greatest attention from the MTF and residents who thought that various signs of public disorder were big problems in their neighborhoods tended to give more positive ratings to the MTF operation.

Evidently, the MTF operation was responsive to at least some of the concerns experienced by a large segment of Trenton's population. This does not mean that the residents were

dissatisfied with their local police and saw the troopers as a preferred alternative. In fact, when given a choice between a return of the MTF and an expansion of Trenton's police force, a higher proportion of the respondents in our survey opted for the latter. Our inference is that the MTF was perceived as something extra that the government was doing to make Trenton safer. This "something extra" was appreciated, especially in areas where the residents were uncomfortable with the degree of rowdiness and disorder in the streets of their neighborhoods. However, the people of Trenton also seemed to recognize that the MTF could only be a temporary remedy -- that in the long run, they had to rely on their local police department to deal with behaviors that break the bonds of informal neighborhood social controls.

Reducing Crime

The idea for the MTF was introduced in the New Jersey Attorney General's report to the Governor on what state government could do in the area of crime control. In that report, the objective of the State Police patrols was seen as being "limited to suppressing violent street crimes and armed robberies of commercial establishments". If this were taken as the sole criterion on which the success or failure of the MTF was to be judged, then the data presented in Chapter 6 of this report must be viewed as evidence of failure. Our analyses did not detect any changes in levels of index crimes that could be attributed to the presence of the MTF; rather, Trenton's patterns of somewhat lower levels of index crimes in March-September 1981 than in March-September 1980 were consistent with the patterns in three similar sized New Jersey cities (with no MTF operations)

during the same time periods. Even when the analyses focused on street related index crimes -- those that occur in public -- no effect of the MTF on violent crimes was detected, and there was only weak evidence of slight suppression of street related property crimes (motor vehicle thefts and some forms of larceny) that might be attributable to the MTF. The analyses also failed to detect any systematic geographic shifting of street crime levels (displacement) away from patrol zones in which the MTF troopers spent most of their time.

However, to say that the lack of detectable impact on levels of index crimes represents a failure of the MTF would be a gross misstatement. We have already presented our conclusions that the MTF was implemented and operated as planned and that it was well received by the citizens of Trenton, who believed that the MTF did reduce crime in Trenton. The problem inheres in the premise which leads one to predict that an operation like the MTF will suppress certain types of index crimes. The Attorney General's report to the Governor, for example, describes the proposed MTF as "establishing a patrol presence which would inhibit the commission of armed robberies, muggings and assaults." The patrol presence was established (most of the Trenton residents knew about the MTF and had seen troopers on patrol during the operation), but suppression of these types of crimes apparently did not occur. Our conclusion is that it is unreasonable to expect significant suppression of these types of (relatively rare) crimes without virtually constant, overwhelming police presence. This type of presence might be attainable (whether or

not desirable) in small, delimited areas -- a few city blocks, a small park, a subway station, for example. But such omnipresence would be prohibitively expensive to implement in large segments of a city.

Does all of this mean that the MTF was futile as a crime control strategy? We think not. The high-visibility, proactive, stop-and-question tactics used by the MTF probably disrupted the "troublemakers" on Trenton's streets and drove disorderly activities off the streets. We say "probably" because we do not have direct measures of the levels of public order offenses occurring on the streets, and we must infer the MTF's effect from other evidence: the numbers and types of arrests made by the troopers, the impressions of the troopers and Trenton officers that were communicated to us in interviews, and the responses of Trenton residents to our survey questions.

Thus, if one accepts the notion that the population in Trenton (or in any other city) can be divided into the "good people" and the "troublemakers", then it is fair to say that the MTF troopers helped the "good people" to exercise some control over the disorderly street behavior of the relatively small numbers of "troublemakers". The "good people" are generally upset by groups of boisterous young people hanging out on the streets, drinking, using drugs, and gambling more or less openly. Such behavior threatens the sense of public order in a neighborhood; it appears that no one is enforcing standards of right and wrong public behavior. The MTF troopers provided this enforcement, with the strong approval of the overwhelming majority of Trenton's residents.

However, one must recognize that targeting the supposed "troublemakers" on the street for special attention and enforcement is a potentially dangerous strategy. Remember, most of the arrests made by the troopers involved relatively minor violations of the law. It is conceivable that such a strategy could evolve into the harassment of unpopular groups, with minor law violations providing only the excuse to disrupt behaviors that are visually and morally offensive, but otherwise legal. We have no evidence that this occurred during the MTF operation. In fact, the strong public support for the MTF across all demographic subgroups of Trenton's population and the virtual absence of formal citizen complaints against the troopers indicate that the troopers managed to keep their activities within the bounds of propriety. The New Jersey State Police are a well trained, well disciplined, highly professional force of officers. These characteristics almost certainly mitigate against the evolution of targeted enforcement into harassment.

Recommendations

The following recommendations deal with issues that should be considered if any operation similar to the MTF is to be undertaken in the future. The recommendations are based on the evidence derived from the evaluation and on the first-hand experiences of those who participated in the operation. The fact that recommendations about future operations are being made implies two things: (a) that the MTF operation in Trenton did serve some useful purposes, and (b) that the Trenton situation

was not so thoroughly unique that we would expect completely different outcomes in other places at other times.

The question of whether the MTF served useful purposes has been addressed in the preceding section. Although the MTF may not have had the effects on violent street crimes that were envisioned by the people who first introduced the MTF concept, there is strong evidence that the operation helped to maintain public order and had widespread citizen support and approval in Trenton.

The question of whether an MTF-type operation would work similarly elsewhere can never be answered with 100 percent confidence. Every possible time-place intersection has unique qualities, so even if the operation were to be replicated successfully several times, it is always conceivable that it will not work in some other situation. Nevertheless, we can identify factors that appear to have been critical to the planning, implementation, and operation of the MTF and ask whether these factors would be unlikely to occur elsewhere, and if so, whether their absence would change an MTF program drastically. Three general factors will be addressed before moving on to specific recommendations, although some of the recommendations themselves will deal with issues that might affect how well the MTF approach could be used elsewhere.

First, we can recall -- from Chapter 2 -- that the birth of the MTF concept was facilitated by political considerations; at least, that was the opinion of virtually everyone we talked to during our evaluation. However, the initial driving force behind an idea does not have a necessary connection with how the idea

works out in practice, and as was pointed out in Chapter 2, the original political motivations had become moot by the time the MTF got into full operation in Trenton. Political considerations probably influenced the statement of an unrealistic, sole objective for the MTF (suppression of violent street crimes), but the results of this evaluation should help to frame more realistic objectives in the future. The selection of Trenton as the first site for the MTF was also influenced by political considerations. Whether this affects the transferability of the MTF approach depends on the uniqueness of Trenton itself.

The second factor, then, involves the characteristics of Trenton, the most obvious of which is its status as a state capital. It seems likely that local officials in a capital city are more accustomed to working with state officials, and many of the people we talked to agreed that a program such as the MTF could not be implemented successfully without a willingness to work together by the upper echelon officials in the relevant state and local agencies. But working relationships between state and local officials are not always good in state capitals; the key to a cooperative venture such as the MTF is the quality of the relationships, not that the program be situated in a capital city.

State capitals can also differ from other similar sized cities on such factors as land use patterns, distribution of occupations in the work force, degree of suburbanization, and so forth. However, these types of characteristics do not appear to have had much influence on the MTF operation, which was

concentrated in the run-down core areas of Trenton. The types of areas patrolled by the MTF troopers are common in cities of any substantial size.

Size is the other characteristic of Trenton that might be important in determining the transferability of the MTF. Trenton is a relatively small city, with a population of slightly more than 90,000, and the key question is whether a MTF operation would work in larger cities that --presumably--have more severe and complex crime problems. Of course, trying to implement a MTF-type program throughout a large city would require many more personnel than the 35 troopers used in Trenton, and the expanded scope would increase problems of coordination and communication substantially. But there seems to be no reason why a similar operation could not be conducted in one or more segments of a large city.

The third general factor that might influence attempts to use the MTF idea elsewhere involves the qualities of the New Jersey State Police. At several points in this evaluation, comments have been made about the importance of the training, discipline, and motivation characteristic of the troopers in the MTF -- traits that helped earn the respect of both the Trenton police officers (even those who did not think too highly of the MTF as a program) and the residents of Trenton, that probably minimized the potential for selective enforcement tactics deteriorating into the harassment of unpopular groups, and that allowed the troopers to sustain their aggressive level of activity throughout the seven months of the program. Certainly, the New Jersey State Police is not the only state police force

characterized by these traits. What appears to be important is not only that the personnel of the visiting agency have these traits but that the agency itself has a widely recognized image as a highly professional, well trained and disciplined police force.

In sum, the three general factors discussed -- the political motivations behind initiation of the MTF, the characteristics of Trenton, and the qualities of the New Jersey State Police -- had definite effects on how the MTF program was planned, implemented, and operated. But none of the three appears to be so unique or determinative that it would prevent the application of the MTF approach elsewhere. We can now turn to specific recommendations about ways that might help to increase the chances of success in future MTF-type programs.

When to Use the MTF Approach

The MTF approach -- defined basically as bringing in a group of officers from another police force to conduct proactive patrol duties -- is certainly neither necessary nor appropriate in every city at all times. Calling on outsiders always runs the risk of generating resentment among officers in the local police force, so the decision to conduct a MTF-type operation should be based on a conscious assessment of the risks to internal morale versus the advantages to using outsiders. The primary advantages are that (a) outsiders, who don't live in the city and who don't have to deal with the same people indefinitely, can often deal with public order problems in a more direct, aggressive manner, and (b) the use of outside assistance demonstrates, to all segments

of the city's population, that the local department is willing to take creative, direct actions to enforce public order.

The very advantages of the MTF approach dictate that it be used sparingly. Thus, it should be implemented only during times when local officials believe that dramatic, highly visible action is necessary. And when it is used, every effort should be made to dispel any implication that outsiders are being used because the local police force is ineffective. If the local police force is ineffective, an operation like the MTF will do little to solve internal problems; in fact, it might aggravate them. Our conclusion is that the MTF approach will be most effective when public order problems seem to be at the point that concentrated action is needed but when the local police force is so overburdened with necessary, routine tasks that it cannot afford to spare the personnel needed for the concentrated action.

Cost Considerations

From time to time, we have mentioned that the MTF approach might be cost-effective in one sense: It can be used to handle short-term problems without committing the locality to an expensive, permanent expansion of the local police force. However, the cost-effectiveness of the MTF should be tempered by two considerations.

First, a MTF-type operation is not without costs. The Fiscal Control Bureau of the New Jersey State Police estimated state costs for the seven-month operation in Trenton at almost \$400,000, most of which (about \$300,000) was attributed to personnel costs. The Bureau's document indicates that "administrative and logistical costs were minimized" because

Trenton is located centrally within the geographic boundaries of State Police Troop C. Although we have no dollar estimates, one must also consider as costs: (a) the tasks that had to be fore gone by State Police Troop C, which diverted a substantial proportion of its personnel into the MTF, and (b) the extra workload placed on the rest of the Trenton/Mercer County criminal justice system by the additional arrests that the MTF troopers generated.

Second, it is unlikely that an outside police force can be brought in for a short period of time and be integrated efficiently into the routine activities of a local police department. The outside force can be used most effectively to concentrate on tasks that the local police do not have sufficient time to perform.

Thus, our recommendation is that the MTF approach not be viewed as a money saving way to defer adding officers to a local police department that really needs expansion to perform its basic functions.

Realistic Expectations

Unless a MTF-type program is implemented in such a way that the police are constantly present and visible in a given geographic area, it is unrealistic to expect the program to achieve substantial reductions in serious street crimes within the area (even ignoring the issue of crime displacement). And, if the program were implemented in that way, it would be quite different than the one implemented in Trenton; the visiting officers would have had far less mobility or, to cover the same amount of territory, an enormous increase in the number of

visiting officers would have been required.

We recommend, quite simply, that the evidence bearing on the outcomes of increased and specialized patrol programs -- including this evaluation -- be considered before establishing the objectives of a MTF-type program. If the only, or most important, goal is to reduce the level of index street crimes, other approaches should be considered.

Diversity of Tactics

Many of the MTF troopers we interviewed indicated that, after a few months in Trenton, they felt constrained by exclusive use of proactive, stop-and-question tactics. In their opinion, the street "troublemakers" adapted to the rhythm of the MTF patrols and began to conceal their illegal activities more effectively. They also thought that they could have made a bigger dent in activities such as the drug trade if they had been allowed to follow up some of the leads they developed during their encounters on the streets.

It is not surprising that the amount of overt illegal behavior on Trenton streets decreased as the MTF got into full operation -- that was one of the successes of the program. It is also reasonable to believe that impact on the illegal drug trade requires follow-up investigation work that is based, at least in part, on information developed from street arrests of low-level users and sellers. However, we are not convinced that the MTF should have switched to tactics more suited for these problems. In the first, place, investigations and undercover operations are time consuming and, by design, not very visible to the general public. Allocation of MTF personnel to these roles would have

detracted from the street visibility of the MTF, which appears to have been the basis of its popularity with Trenton residents. Second, involvement of the MTF in these roles would require much greater coordination and overlap with the activities of the local police department (and other state and Federal investigators, especially in the drug area). As we have pointed out several times, one of the major reasons why the MTF could be implemented and operated so smoothly was because it did not require a high degree of integration with the major, routine activities of the Trenton Police Department. And this separateness allowed most of the regular Trenton police force to view the MTF as a non-threatening, temporary presence. A greater penetration of the MTF tactics into the roles and activities of the local police force could have major negative consequences for the smoothness of a MTF-type operation.

With an awareness of the problems that might be created, diverse tactics could be tried on a limited basis in future MTF-type operations. A more useful approach might be to structure ways for the information developed by proactive patrols to be passed on to and utilized by the relevant existing units in the local department. One of the complaints that came up in our interviews with MTF troopers was that -- at least initially -- the information about Trenton drug traffic that they passed along to their own State Police investigative units was not receiving follow-up attention.

The issue of street lawbreakers adapting to the rhythm of MTF patrols could be handled by either shortening the program or varying the rhythm after the first few months. These

modifications would not require any departures from the basic nature and tactics of a MTF-type operation.

Training

In our interviews and in the debriefing sessions held when the MTF pulled out of Trenton, many of the troopers noted shortcomings in the special training they received just prior to entering Trenton. Most of the shortcomings are directly attributable to three factors: (a) the Trenton operation was the first of its kind, so there was little prior experience on which to base the training, (b) the relatively brief amount of time between announcement of the concept and implementation of the program did not permit much time to prepare training sessions, and (c) the exact location of the first MTF operation was not known until just before the training began, so there was not much opportunity to assemble site-specific information for the training. Drawing on the Trenton experience and allowing a sufficient amount of time to prepare training materials should enhance the relevance of the training experience in future MTF-type operations.

Among the specific suggestions made by the troopers, the following appear to be most important:

- * Involve officers from prior MTF operations and from the local police department in training.
- * Expand treatment of arrest, search and seizure topics, with specific attention to what practices are and are not acceptable to local prosecutors and courts.
- * Explain content of local ordinances and how those ordinances are enforced locally.
- * Expand instruction on "stop and approach" to include practical exercises in the justifications and procedures for stopping and frisking pedestrians.

* Expand treatment of drug enforcement.

Coordination with Others

Throughout the interviews conducted for this evaluation, many examples of misunderstandings were voiced. For example, 18 of the 27 regular Trenton patrol officers that we interviewed said that questions they had about the MTF operation were not answered adequately. Also, we have seen that many of the troopers were disappointed with the ways in which some of their arrests were handled by the prosecutor's office. It is true that there was a great deal of communication and coordination between the troopers and the Trenton back-up units and that all the parties involved made adaptations to each other as the operation continued. However, misunderstandings would have been avoided -- or minimized -- by devoting more time to explanations of what the MTF would and would not be doing.

Coordination with the local prosecutor's office seems to be particularly important. The most frequent types of arrests generated by the MTF were viewed by the troopers as important for keeping the streets safe, but they were seen as minor, relative to other cases being handled, by the prosecutors. There are two possibilities; prosecutors can agree to enhance the treatment of the types of arrests made by MTF personnel while the program is in operation, or the MTF personnel can begin their operation with a thorough understanding of the outcomes they can expect from the arrests they make. Regardless of which arrangement is worked out, the important point is that both the MTF personnel and the prosecutors have a good idea of what to expect from each other.

A final point about coordination pertains to community

groups. As noted in Chapter 2, state and local police officials held a series of meetings with Trenton community groups primarily to deal with the negative image of the State Police existing among minorities -- an image developed in New Jersey through past confrontations between troopers and minority groups during urban disorders. It seems likely that, if future MTF-type operations occur, they will also take place in cities with substantial minority populations and be conducted by state police forces with few minority personnel. Thus, we recommend that such meetings be held prior to future programs. Although the meetings held in Trenton certainly did not dissipate concerns among minority groups, it is likely that the meetings imparted some useful information and demonstrated an openness by the State Police, factors which probably facilitated later acceptance of the MTF by virtually all groups in Trenton after they saw it in operation.

Interface Between State and Local Police

In Chapters 2 and 4, we discussed at some length the finding that implementation and operation of the MTF in Trenton was facilitated greatly by the existence, within the Trenton Police Department, of the specialized back-up units. The back-up units were already performing duties similar to those planned for the MTF troopers, so the troopers were able to work closely with the back-up units and adapt quickly to Trenton while not getting involved in the routine patrol duties of the rest of the Trenton police force. We have also pointed out that the regular Trenton patrol officers had generally more positive opinions about the MTF than about their own back-up units, suggesting that the idea of bringing in extra outsiders to perform proactive patrol tasks

temporarily may be more accepted within a department than taking some of the department's own personnel away from routine patrol to form a permanent, elite unit for specialized patrols. Note that our findings suggest this conclusion. The relative acceptability of the MTF and the back-up units was not planned as a major focus of our evaluation, so we may have overlooked factors that would lead to a different conclusion; in addition, there may be more acceptance of internal, specialized patrol units, which are exempted from routine calls for service, in departments other than Trenton's.

Nevertheless, the use of the back-up units as the point of interface between the MTF and the Trenton Police Department was apparently such a powerful facilitating factor in the smooth implementation and operation of the Trenton MTF that it deserves to be stressed. We make no recommendation about whether internal, proactive patrol units should be established in police departments that do not have them; that issue is beyond the scope of this evaluation. However, where such units exist already, we suggest that they be used as the points of contact for any future MTF-type operations. We recognize that this approach will limit the amount of contact between MTF personnel and local officers engaged in routine departmental operations; it will limit the degree to which the MTF is integrated with the primary activities of the department. But these limitations are consistent with our view that a MTF-type operation is best conceived of as a temporary, specialized effort to deal with public order problems and that it not be integrated with the routine patrol functions of the host department.

What about local departments that do not have units similar to Trenton back-up units? In our interviews with MTF troopers, there was virtually unanimous agreement that, other things being equal, it would be much more difficult to implement the program in a city that did not have something akin to Trenton's back-up units. Therefore, where such units do not exist, we suggest that a small number of patrol officers in the host department be released from their routine duties and be assigned temporarily to work with the visiting patrol force. This would require fewer officers than would be needed to establish a permanent, internal proactive patrol unit, and the temporary nature of the assignment might alleviate the potential for resentment among the rest of the patrol force about elitism and the shortchanging of routine patrol functions.

In any event, it is necessary to have some relatively defined group of experienced patrol officers available in the host department to help the visiting officers learn the geography and culture of the local streets. Our recommendation is that this group of officers not be involved with calls for service, follow-up investigations, or the other day-to-day duties that characterize the bulk of police work. We think it would be inefficient to try to integrate MTF personnel into these duties, and the point at which the MTF interfaces with the local police force should also act as a buffer, separating the MTF from routine departmental activities. If the local department should be expanded, then the MTF approach is not the answer; it does not appear suitable for shoring up the number of officers assigned to routine duties.

Miscellaneous

There are a few narrower recommendations we can make, based on our interviews and the suggestions made by the MTF troopers during their debriefing sessions.

- * A MTF-type program should have a specified length. Uncertainty about exactly when the Trenton operation would end created some dissatisfaction among the troopers. The comments we received from the MTF troopers indicate that future operations should not last any longer than the seven-month Trenton operation. There was strong sentiment among the troopers for a maximum length of six months, unless personnel were to be rotated in and out.
- * Plans should be made to enhance arrest processing functions in the local department to handle the substantial increase in numbers of arrests that can be expected from a MTF-type operation. Backlogs at booking are very detrimental to the primary purpose of the MTF: increased patrol presence on the streets.
- * A compendium of local ordinances should be provided to the visiting officers. As we have already noted, the nature of these ordinances and the ways the local police department enforces the ordinances should be covered in pre-operational training.
- * Some thought should be given to the suitability of the equipment normally used by the visiting officers to the new tasks they will be performing. Previously we mentioned that the troopers found hand-held walkie-talkies, which are not normally used by the State Police, to be very useful in their MTF duties. The troopers also suggested that MTF personnel be issued smaller batons and rubber sole shoes and that their vehicles be equipped with special spotlights ("alley lights").

Closing Observations

We have tried to present data gathered from a variety of sources in an objective fashion throughout this report. However, ~~data do not speak for themselves, and an evaluation is only~~ useful when the data that have been collected are combed thoroughly, pieced together, and used as a basis for answering the types of questions that evaluations should ask.

Formal standards of scientific proof always preclude answering questions with 100 percent certainty. In addition to the constraints of these standards, we recognize that there are limitations in some of the data available for this particular evaluation, limitations that have been noted throughout the report. However, despite these constraints and shortcomings, the evaluation has produced information and insights that can be useful to law enforcement policymakers. We know much more about the MTF now than we did before the evaluation began. Its strengths and limitations are more apparent, so future programs can be devised with a clearer idea of what can be accomplished and what should be done to accomplish the goals.

The MTF, as it operated in Trenton during 1981, has been shown to be an effective approach to some types of public order problems in an urban area. Like any other law enforcement innovation, it should not be expected to solve "the crime problem", however that is defined. But the MTF does provide another option to policymakers, and the knowledge developed in this evaluation of the MTF, when applied with a well-developed understanding of public policy goals, can assist in making informed choices about law enforcement strategies.

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