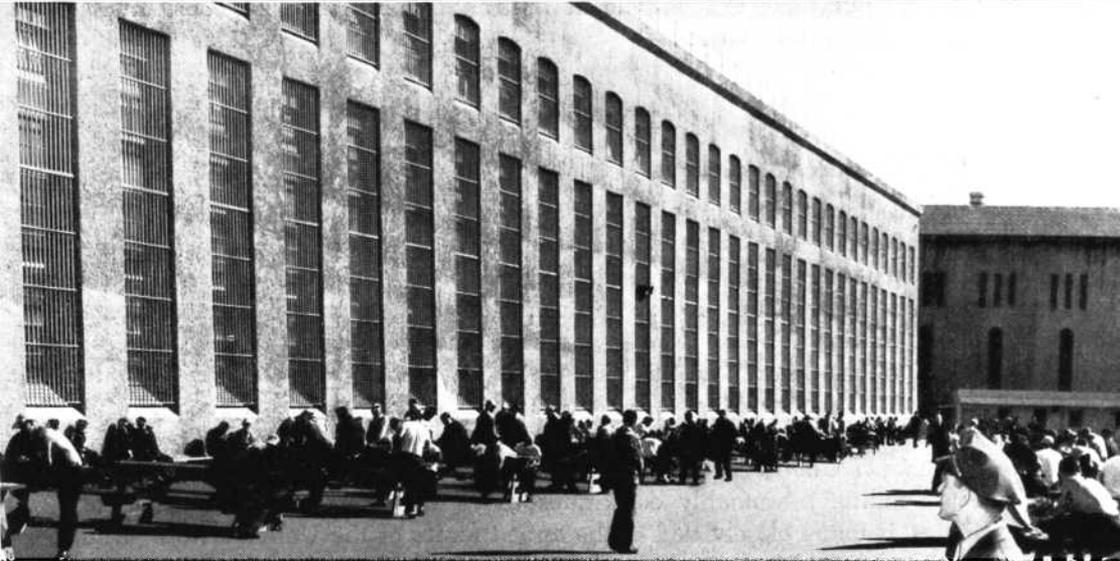


58. Protective Services



"Palo Alto Times," March 28-29, 1950. Photos by Gene Tupper

PROTECTIVE services, as the term shall be used in this chapter, comprises the activities of only two agencies of government and the bodies associated with them: police forces and fire departments. The fact is that governments carry out myriad tasks clearly "protective" by nature; as illustrations, governments block the distribution and sale of impure food, outlaw financial dishonesty on the part of businessmen, and reduce excessively high public utility rates. All these functions are obviously protective. However, the

protective services that will be treated in this chapter have one distinguishing trait: they have to do chiefly with shielding people and things from overt violence and physical harm.

Police and fire protective services traditionally have formed separate departments in a government. There are, it is true, a number of jurisdictions in which the two have been combined, for administrative purposes, under a single heading such as "Department of Public Safety." Usually, however, where this situation has prevailed the department has contained two subdivisions, one of police and one of fire.

A few governments have experimented with an organization that united the two services not only administratively but also functionally. Sunnyvale, California, a city of 25,000 people, has provided a laboratory for such an experiment; there, members of the organization are trained as both policemen and firemen, and may serve as either according to the needs of the moment. A study of the performance of this system during the past few years reveals that the community in general is well satisfied with it; apparently it is possible with this arrangement to have exceptionally large numbers of either policemen or of firemen at times of crisis, and there are considerable monetary savings as well.

POLICE SERVICES

Administrative structure

Police services are supplied principally by local governments. However, federal police officers may share in the investigation of crimes under State law when asked to do so by local officials; too, on application of local officials the federal agencies provide technical information such as personal data about criminals. Also, State governments have two bodies of police forces: the National Guard, and the State police, or highway patrol. Nevertheless, the police officer with whom citizens have by far the most frequent dealings is an agent of the local government.

National Guard: The National Guard, which, as the descendant of the State militia presumably constitutes the armed forces of the individual States, is today closely tied to the armed forces of the United States. The National Guard is supported primarily by funds from the national government, and in time of war may be called into national service by the President. Thus it amounts to a trained reserve for the standing army of the United States.

In peacetime, however, the National Guard is under the authority of the State governments. The commander in chief in each State is the Governor; actual leadership is in the hands of the adjutant general, who is a military officer of high rank. Its organization is patterned after that of the United States Army, with various types of units: infantry, armored, engineer, signal, and the like. The National Guard also has an air component resembling

San Quentin, California State Prison. Over 4000 "residents" make "Q," as they call it, a little city under totalitarian rule, but with industrial and cultural activities resembling those found in communities outside.

the Air Force. The personnel of the Guard in each State are volunteers from that State, who serve a certain period during each year.

In peacetime, the National Guard is employed chiefly for quelling disorders and coping with disasters, acting under the command of the Governor in situations that he has proclaimed to be emergencies.

State Police: In every State there is a police force known most commonly as the State police but also termed highway patrol, motor patrol, and State patrol. As a State administrative agency, the State police are subordinate to the Governor. In some States the personnel are recruited and appointed through a career civil service system; in some others, appointment is based on party membership. In most States, regardless of the basis of appointment, the recruits undergo one of the most rigorous courses in police training that has been established in any American jurisdiction. The membership of State police forces in July, 1953, ranged from thirty-seven in South Dakota to 1,900 in Pennsylvania.

Authority of the State police also varies widely from State to State. In every State they are directed to enforce the laws of the highway. In twelve States this is their only function; in California and Florida they have only limited additional functions. In thirty-four States, however, officially the State police have general powers of law enforcement; in fact, only in a few States, among them New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, do they exercise these powers.

Rural Police: The chief rural police officers are the sheriff and his deputies. The functions of the sheriff have been outlined in a previous chapter. Another rural police officer is the constable; he is usually attached to the court of a justice of the peace, is elected to office from the same jurisdiction as the justice, and has little authority beyond that of serving legal papers upon defendants and witnesses commanding them to appear in court. Generally constables are paid by fees. Because they have shown themselves to have little effectiveness in police work, constables have been stripped of most of their powers. There have been a number of suggestions that the police authority of sheriffs and constables be transferred entirely to some other police body. One has been that the State police be given full powers of law enforcement in all unincorporated districts. This recommendation is of course opposed by sheriffs in particular, who do not want to see their offices deprived of any of their powers.

Municipal Police: Municipal police forces are responsible to the chief executive officer of the city government. In a typical large city police organization, the executive chief of the police forces is either a police commissioner or police commission, chosen by the mayor or city manager. Commissioners and members of commissions are not career police officers, and are not expected to manage the technical affairs of the police department. Rather, they are expected to handle broad administrative matters and to provide liaison between the police department and the municipal executive.

The principal officer of the police department is the police chief, a career official, who is appointed by the commissioner or commission. Where there is no commissioner or commission, the police chief is usually selected by the

mayor or city manager, and is directly subordinate to him. Exceptions to these general practices exist in Boston, Baltimore, Kansas City (Missouri), and St. Louis, where the chief is named by the State Governor. The personnel of the department are ranged in military fashion below the chief, from inspectors or majors through captains, lieutenants, and sergeants, to patrolmen.

Policemen today in most cities are recruited and appointed through a career civil service system; indeed, it is noteworthy that even though most employees of a city may not be career officeholders, policemen will be. Promotions in grade, too, are likely to depend upon performance in competitive tests. The salaries of policemen, although considerably larger than they once were, still seem low to many who point to the hazards policemen must face in the line of duty and the responsibilities they must assume. In 1956 the median entrance salary for policemen in cities of more than 500,000 population was \$4,080; that is, equal numbers earned less than \$4,080 and more than \$4,080. In cities of between 10,000 and 25,000 population, the median salary was \$3,450. The median maximum salary for the largest cities was \$4,925; for cities between 10,000 and 25,000, \$3,840.

There are comparatively more policemen in large cities than in small ones. In 1954 in all cities the ratio of police officers to population was 1.8 per 1,000. However, in cities with fewer than 10,000 people the ratio was 1.3 per 1,000, whereas in cities of more than 250,000 it was 2.3 per 1,000. One notable trend in police departments generally has been the increased employment of "civilians," that is, non-uniformed personnel. Of the more than 23,000 police employees in New York in 1956, over 1,000 were civilian technicians and clerks.

Functions

The patrol function of police departments, probably their most important task and the one demanding the largest number of police personnel, aims at both preventing crime and at the immediate detection of those who have committed a crime. The actual conduct of police patrols has greatly changed in recent years, owing largely to the development of automobiles and motorcycles. Today, it appears that the foot patrolman is vanishing, except in the largest cities.

A second important task of a police force is crime detection, which involves primarily discovering who has committed a particular crime. In large cities this task is the obligation of a specialized detective force; county police organizations that are well staffed, and State police forces, also have detective bureaus. Detectives sometimes are appointed from the ranks of uniformed policemen; on other occasions they are deliberately recruited. Crime detection today is in many respects a laboratory science. A fully equipped detective force has a large laboratory and extensive files.

The enforcement of traffic laws has become a leading function of both State and local police officers. The concern of the police with highway traffic has increased each year, as intrastate and interstate commerce by

automobile, bus, and truck have become more and more important to the national economy. The enforcement of traffic laws is closely related to the problems of highway engineering and area planning. For example, the police are under clashing pressures with regard to highway speed laws, one group demanding lax enforcement so that traffic may move quickly from place to place, and another group asking strict enforcement to reduce highway accidents.

Highway law enforcement is more and more buttressed by accident prevention undertakings. One form of accident prevention has to do with highway engineering and construction; such matters as speed limits, traffic signals, the elimination of grade railroad crossings, one-way streets, and limited-access highways fall in this group. Another sort of accident prevention undertaking involves the enforcement of traffic laws. Too, automobile inspection requirements aim at keeping from the streets and highways the cars whose condition makes them a traffic menace. Moreover, the licensing of drivers is designed to keep the incompetents from the road, and the suspension and revocation of licenses to get habitual law violators from behind the wheel. In the past two decades a large number of public school systems have established courses in driver education for high-school students, some areas making these courses mandatory.

Police in all parts of the country today are showing a great concern in juvenile delinquency. Statistics on juvenile offenses do reveal an increase in juvenile crime that many people find alarming. However, such figures must be interpreted with some care; part of this rise may be attributable to such factors as superior police detection of crime, expanded police reporting of crime, the practice of terming as a crime today an act that a century ago might have been simply shrugged off as to be expected of adolescents, and the sheer increase in the number of juveniles. Even taking all these factors into consideration, however, it is true that juveniles commit large numbers of crimes of violence.

Police handling of juvenile delinquency includes both detection and prevention. Today in all cities of more than 500,000 people, and in many that are smaller, there are special juvenile officers. In 132 cities policewomen are assigned to this field as well. Many cities have special buildings for detaining juvenile offenders, so that they will not mingle with adult criminals in the city jail, and special juvenile courts. Some cities also retain psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, and family relations authorities, for probing juvenile delinquency. In many jurisdictions special attention is accorded the juvenile who has been found violating the law for the first time, in efforts to keep him out of difficulty in the future. Schools and recreation areas are designed in part to lessen delinquency. Many city councils have enacted curfews requiring adolescents to be off the streets at a certain hour.

Correctional institutions

Correctional institutions include all institutions where those who have been found guilty of violating the law are for a time penalized by the loss

of their personal freedom. There are several principles underlying the establishment of these institutions. One is that the person who breaks the law must be punished; this is an ancient notion that is discredited in some quarters. Another principle is that offenders must be segregated from society for the protection of society. Yet a third concept, which is implicit in the term "correctional institution," is that in some way the civic training of criminals has been faulty or even entirely lacking, and that they must be rehabilitated with an eye to their finally assuming a proper role in society. This last principle is very important in the administration of these institutions today. It is associated with such practices as the indeterminate sentence and parole, two devices giving the authorities of these institutions some discretion in deciding whether or not an offender has been rehabilitated.

There are correctional institutions at all levels of government. Virtually every municipality has a jail. Municipal jails have two principal functions; they are places of detention for persons awaiting trial or transportation to a prison after being sentenced, and they house persons actually convicted of minor offenses—misdemeanors—who do not have the money to pay their fines. Most counties, too, have jails. These institutions have the same general functions as city jails, save that in counties where there is a municipality with a jail the county institution houses primarily individuals who have been convicted of misdemeanors and who serve out their terms there. In general, no one is sentenced to a county jail for more than one year, that being ordinarily the maximum term for a misdemeanor.

At the State level there are two general types of correctional institutions. Both of these are for the detention of those who have been found guilty of committing a felony, and who have been sentenced for a term of a year and a day, or more. One type, which may be termed the reformatory, is designed chiefly for adolescents and young first offenders who can take a normal place in society after a period of rehabilitation.

The second type of State correctional institution, termed the penitentiary, is designed for the imprisonment of adult offenders, particularly for those who have been convicted several times. Rehabilitation is much less emphasized in penitentiaries than it is in reformatories, because many of their inmates appear unable to adjust to the requirements of normal living. However, in some States there is a conscious program of rehabilitation in penitentiaries.

FIRE SERVICES

Fire services like police services are chiefly a function of local governments. The reason for this arrangement is in part purely physical, that is, the need to have equipment near every point where a fire may break out, so as to be able to go into action speedily. Another reason, of course, is political; local authorities who now have the power of appointing fire chiefs do not wish to yield this privilege to a larger unit of government. In recent years, however, State officials have taken increasing concern in the matter

of fire prevention, and carry on a good deal of study whose results they transmit to local fire fighting agencies.

In thirty-eight States there is a fire marshal, or similar functionary, who is the chief officer in the State for handling questions of fire prevention and extinction. This office in twenty States is in the insurance department; in four States it is connected with the State police; and in four States it is in the department of public safety. The tasks of the fire marshal have to do primarily with the investigation of arson and fire prevention; the marshal is not in charge of a fire department equipped to extinguish fires.

Urban fire departments are actually the nucleus of the fire fighting organization in the United States. The fire department in some cities is under a fire commissioner or board, chosen by the chief executive of the city. In some other cities the department is administratively united with the police forces under a board of public safety. Under any of these circumstances the commissioner or board carries out solely administrative tasks. The principal functioning executive officer is the fire chief, who may be selected by the commissioner or board, or by the mayor, the city manager, or the city council. The chief is a professional fire fighter who usually has advanced to this post after years of experience in the department; sometimes, however, he is chosen from the fire department of another city.

Under the chief are ranged the various operating personnel of the department. Some of these personnel are assigned to housekeeping or research duties such as purchasing and records; others perform the actual fire fighting tasks of the department. The smallest functional unit in the department is the company, which is made up of a single piece of equipment, such as a pumper or a ladder truck, along with the firemen needed to operate it. Companies are installed singly or in groups in the various fire stations that are scattered about the city.

Organization for protection against fire in rural areas, and in small municipalities as well, may take any of several forms. Protection may be supplied by the forces of some other government. In 1955 several hundred cities were providing fire protection for adjacent unincorporated areas, half of them without charge. Those that did charge for their services did so according to numerous arrangements, either a flat rate per call, an hourly rate for men and equipment, an annual contract, or some other basis. Sometimes rural areas and small municipalities depend upon the county government to furnish this protection; the government of Los Angeles County maintains a large fire department for this purpose. Small municipalities and rural areas may combine under the authorization of the State government to establish a fire district, which, as a quasi-corporation, may own equipment and employ firemen. Finally, many rural districts are protected only by volunteer forces; however, when these districts have invested in good equipment they may enjoy excellent service.

QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS

1. What are the several terms used to designate the State police force, and what are its roles in the several States?

2. Describe the personnel of rural law enforcement and their administrative organization.

3. Describe the mode of organization of municipal police departments and the functions that they perform.

4. What protective activities, in your opinion, require the services of different types of psychological workers?

5. Compare the salaries of police with the salaries of all American and of all national government employees (see the Index for location of this information).