THE POLICE AND POLITICAL CHANGE IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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The subject of the police is a neglected issue among political scientists. The police are rarely viewed from perspectives natural to political science, nor are they studied comparativly among countries. The few studies that have been done are written largely from the point of view of public administration; they tend to be wholly descriptive and to deal largely with matters of formal organization and management. The neglect of the police is not unique to political scientists; the record of other social sciences is hardly better. Even in sociology there has been surprisingly little. Historical monographs on countries rarely refer to the police at all; inspection of indexes of basic histories of most foreign countries will reveal very few references to the police. Unrest in American cities and violence between police and minorities, as well as between police and students, is beginning to convince the scholarly community that the police are crucial social actors. The impetus so far for empirical study has come largely from government, in the form of various national study commissions (President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Criminal Justice, 1967; National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1967; National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, 1969). The kindling of interest in the police is new; it may be dated from 1965.

The neglect among political scientists is particularly curious considering the attention that has been given to other aspects of rule-enforcement in society. The judicial system, for example, has long preoccupied many political scientists. Moreover, students of comparative politics have developed perspectives into which police might fit. Students of comparative political development have lavished considerable time and energy on the study of bureaucracies, armies, courts, and many kinds of inter-

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est groups. Yet they have not asked whether the police might be at least as worthy of study.

The purpose of this essay will be to present some findings about the relation between police and political change in six nations representing three continents. The nations studied are Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, India, and the United States. The hypotheses presented here are tentative. Some questions will be raised that cannot be answered with the data at hand. Specific note will be made of information that should be collected in order to advance more rapidly the study of the police from a political perspective.

The word police has many usages; it is attached to a wide variety of agencies and activities in different countries. When "police" is used in this paper it will refer to the function of regulating social conduct within a community through the use of physical force authorized in the name of the community. This formulation distinguishes the police function from those of an army, a private person acting in self-defense, or non-coercive agencies of social regulation.

In examining the relation between the police and political change, two distinct questions may be asked: First, what is the political context of police development? and, second, what is the influence of police upon political change? In the one case police are the dependent variable and one seeks to determine what factors have shaped them; in the other case political events are the dependent variables and one seeks to determine the role the police have played in shaping them. The perspective of each of these questions will be taken up in turn below.

Police in Political Context

The number of dimensions along which police may be analyzed is manifold. Three have been selected for brief discussion here: (1) structure of the national system; (2) manner of exercising accountability over the police; and (3) professional image. These aspects represent three questions which are most frequently asked about the police of any country: namely, how are they organized? how are they controlled? and how do they behave?

Contemporary police systems come in a remarkable variety of forms, even when only these three dimensions are considered. In some countries there are unified national systems in which command responsibility is exercised from a single point. France and Italy have such systems. In other countries—such

as Great Britain—command authority is dispersed and cannot be exercised by the central government, though regulations applicable to the whole country ensure uniformity of organization and practice. The United States presents the most extreme case of decentralization: It has been estimated that there are about 40,000 separate forces in the country. India and Germany represent intermediate positions. Police authority there is concentrated in the major sub-national political units; this means the constituent states of these federal systems. Nations differ also with respect to whether police agency in any geographical area is singular or plural. Though Britain has 49 separate forces, it has only one police force in each jurisdiction. Italy, on the other hand, has two forces, sometimes three: the *Guardia de Pubblica Sicurezza* (P.S.), the *Carabinieri,* and in some cities the *Vigili Urbani.* In France there are two forces — the *Sûreté Nationale* and the *Gendarmerie* — though coordination has been assured by firm control through the Ministry of the Interior and by a division of labor between the two forces. The *Sûreté* has general jurisdiction; the *Gendarmerie* is used almost exclusively in rural areas or as an armed reserve posted to each Department. In India and Germany the civil constabulary is singular, though both have an armed police reserve.[1] The United States has a tangle of overlapping police jurisdictions involving national, state, and local forces.

The variety in modes of control is equally bewildering. Uniformed command officers in Great Britain are not generally supervised by a civilian bureaucracy; they are in close touch with representative political bodies — Watch Committees in towns and Standing Joint Committees in counties.[2] French uniformed command personnel are subordinate to an extensive bureaucracy; they are not in direct touch with representative political bodies. Relations in Italy are like those in France. American and Indian senior command officers are responsible at most to a single civilian superior, such as a mayor in the United States or a Collector at district level in India; they are not far removed from close scrutiny by representative bodies.

In all countries some form of legal responsibility is enjoined. In India, Great Britain, and the United States it is to the unified criminal and civil law; in France, Germany, and Italy it is to administrative law. How closely policemen are held accountable to law is not a function of whether the legal system of a country is unified or bifurcated. It is a function of the spirit which infuses the legal system. Administrative courts may exert

stern discipline; courts in unified legal systems may be lax or powerless to take action.

The image of the policeman differs dramatically from country to country. It also varies considerably within countries, from region to region or social group to social group. Stereotypes exist in each country, and it is fair to contrast them among nations, but they are not homogeneous anywhere.

In Great Britain the image is one of honesty and trustworthiness. The policeman is often called upon to mediate informally or to give friendly advice. The policeman is not armed, works by and large individually, and does not emphasize martial qualities. In Germany the policeman is very military indeed, both in training and bearing. He is viewed as honest, rigid, and unapproachable. French policemen are distrusted, though admired for their efficiency, which also breeds a kind of fear. They are thought to be unpredictable and somewhat unscrupulous. Italian policemen are disliked, distrusted, and avoided. They are seen as being punitive and dishonest.

Thus, along several dimensions, national police systems display considerable variety. Though the police function is singular, the way in which it is carried out shows great diversity. These differences require explanation in any attempt to understand the relation between police systems and political environment.

Police authority and political power are generally concentrated at the same points in the political system. When there is a discrepancy between them, pressures are created for bringing the police system into accord with the organization of the larger political system. In both France and Italy police authority is concentrated at the center; local government is weak and unorganized. In Great Britain, police power is vested in local areas, where units of government have been vital for centuries. In avoiding centralized, bureaucratic absolutism, Great Britain avoided a centralized police force. It is no accident that Great Britain predicated its modern police forces on boroughs and counties, in effect the successors to parishes. It is also no accident that after the rise of an efficient central bureaucracy in the 19th century, a greater degree of control began to be exercised over the police. Indian political authority is split between center and states, though many observers would argue that movement since the late 1950s has been in the favor of the states (Kochanek, 1968). Vesting police authority in the federal sub-units is an indication of the strength of forces pressing for

regional aggregation of political power in India. The German tradition divided police power between *Länder* and seigneurial powers of landed aristocrats. The latter were abolished in 1872, but the central government of the Second Reich was not their successor. Police authority was collected by the states, a practice that continued through Weimar and the Bonn Republic. Hitler's unification of police services in 1936 outlived the cataclysm of World War II only in East Germany, where the practice was congruent with Soviet practice at home.

In America the situation is complex and, I would argue, fluid. There is a vigorous tradition of local government in the United States. At the same time, the federal government, and to some extent the states, appear to be growing in power *vis-à-vis* local units; so many policy problems seem to require resources or coordination that myriad small units cannot manage. Police and political power are discrepantly organized in the United States, with the result that considerable pressure exists for amalgamation of police jurisdictions and expansions of federal or state police powers. As with Britain in the early 19th century, however, the weight of hallowed tradition is against such supercession. Practical needs and custom stand in opposition.

The manner in which police accountability is assured fits national political systems. In Anglo-Saxon countries the essence of government is considered to be legislation, not administration. Great Britain and the United States define police functions narrowly and delegate no ordinance-making power to the police. The senior command personnel are in close touch with political leaders. In France and Germany, by contrast, the essence of governance is considered to be impartial, honest, efficient, and intelligent administration. Democratic accountability in an immediate way would be seen as opening the floodgates to parochialism and special interests. Police must be responsive to the mandate to govern, and that is centrally and bureaucratically articulated in many European countries. In India a compromise has been reached between Anglo-Saxon and Continental precedents, though not because the issue was seen in these terms. Imperial administration imposed an extensive civilian bureaucratic machinery upon India. This system persists in the center-state-district organization today, presided over the elite of the Indian Administrative Service. A police official is accountable both to the I.A.S. chain of command, operating through the prefect-like Collector in each district,

and also to the police establishment, terminating in the state Inspector-General of Police. Both chains of command are responsible to the state Home Secretary and through him to the state legislature.

Where police forces, as well as tasks, have grown out of the needs of governance, the police system tends to be centralized and supervised by a civilian bureaucracy. Where police forces and tasks have grown out of private needs, police systems tend to be decentralized and to have little civilian bureaucratic supervision.

The characteristics of contemporary police systems, such as their structure, manner of control, and image, change very slowly; they show a striking persistence over time. Events as supposedly formative as major wars, political revolutions, and social and economic transformations affect police systems surprisingly little. The British police system emerged in contemporary form during the period from 1829 to 1885.[3] Sir Robert Peel's controversial police experiment involved the creation of a full-time, paid police force, directed by non-judicial police executives, organized on the basis of substantial communities, and responsible to a representative political body (Critchley, 1967; Reith, 1938). The "Bobby" was also unique in personal demeanor, being unarmed and required to enlist public cooperation in a nonpunitive fashion. The experiment succeeded against enormous public hostility and was expanded to the rest of the country during the ensuing sixty years. The essential lines of the contemporary French system can be discerned in the late 17th century, a full century and a half before British reform. During the reign of Louis XIV Lieutenants-General of Police were created for Paris, beginning in 1667, and other major French cities (Stead, 1957: Ch. 1; Arnold, 1969: 14-23). In addition, the royal provincial *Intendant* emerged as the linchpin of national administration throughout the country (Gruder, 1968: 5-10). He was the predecessor of today's Prefect (Chapman, 1955: Ch. 1). Both the *Intendant* and the Prefect have been responsible for police affairs, acting for the central government in the major administration sub-divisions. Today's *gendarmerie* grows out of the *marechausée* of the *ancien regime*. Detectives, engaged primarily in political intelligence work, have existed since the time of Mazarin (Stead, 1957: 24). The nonmilitary *Gardiens de la Paix* — today's civil constabulary of the *Sûreté* — did not grow markedly until the 19th century, especially during the regime of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte

(Payne, 1966). They had as their immediate antecedents the "archers," watch, and military patrols of large cities under the *ancien regime*.[4] The revolution, though it promised to sweep aside the old police, failed singularly to refashion either the police or the organization of French adminstration. As de Tocqueville said: ". . . every time that an attempt is made to do away with absolutism the most that could be done has been to graft the head of liberty onto a servile body" (Tocqueville, 1955: 209).

The development of the contemporary German system was more attenuated than in France or Great Britain. The police functions of the *Landrat* began to be developed in the mid-18th century (Muncy, 1944: Ch. 5; Rosenberg, 1958: 166-167). It should be noted that the Prussian militarized state was not built on the back of centralized police power; the Boards of War and Domains, created by Frederick II in 1723, were preoccupied with taxation and the army. Police authority was divided until 1872 between the state governments, acting through either *Landrats* or municipal police commissioners, and aristocratic estate owners (Holborn, 1969: 401). Not until then did the squirearchy give up its right to be sheriff within its own domains; from this point on, police authority was a monopoly of state governments. German towns have never been centers of police autonomy. Even during the "Reform Era" of Stein and Hardenberg, towns were expressly denied the power to develop their own police forces (Dawson, 1914: Ch. 1). In short, the beginnings of the centralization of police authority are to be found in the mid-18th century, though consolidation in the *Länder* was not complete until 1872. This structure of authority has persisted through the Second Reich, the Weimar Republic, and the Federal Republic.

The Indian system has also resisted the effects of time, including the transitions from colonial to independent status. In structure, nature of forces, administrative organization, recruitment, and a great deal of individual behavior, the Indian police today are exactly what they were in 1861.[5] The only change independence brought was the substitution of popular for imperial accountability.[6]

The Italian system is the newest one of our sample, since it was not established nationally until unification was completed in 1870. During the early 1860s the statesmen of *Risorgimento* debated whether political power was to be centralized or decentralized (Smith, 1968; Fried, 1963: Ch. 1). The advo-

cates of centraliztion won the point, and with consolidation of territory police power was directed from Rome through Prefects and *Questores.*[7] The forces themselves — the P.S. and *Carabinieri* — are Piedmont inventions, dating from 1852 and 1816, respectively (Cramer, 1964: 327-329). Dating the emergence of institutions is not an exact science. Not all features of a system develop simultaneously and each specific characteristic takes time to become confirmed in practice. Nonetheless, it is clear that attributes of structure control and force units of contemporary police systems are not recent, even 20th-century, developments. Essential elements of the French system antedate industrialization, revolution, empire, and several major wars. The German system survived World Wars I and II as well as industralization. The Indian system was virtually unmarked by either the fact of independence or the years of struggle against the British. The Italian system has persisted in the face of dictatorship, war, and chronic governmental instability. National police systems are remarkably resilient institutions.

The emergence of contemporary national police systems is difficult to explain in terms of a single set of factors common to every country. One finds very different things going on in each country during the time that essential attributes of contemporary systems were fixed into place. I do not find that emergence of police systems can be explained in terms of population growth, urbanization, incidence of criminality, industrialization, political revolution, external threats, or ideological *démarche.* The argumentation of these points would require more detail than can be included in an essay of this scope. I shall illustrate the kind of reasoning that has led me to these conclusions.

There are and have always been substantial differences among cities and countries with respect to the ratio of population per policeman.[8] Europe experienced its greatest population increase in the last three centuries, during the same period in which modern police systems developed. But the relation is too general to be informative; there is no pattern of association between population growth or changes in rates of growth and the development of police institutions among the countries studied. Paris had a population of approximately 540,000 when the post of Lieutenant-General was established; London had a population of 1,500,000 in 1829 (Mulhall, 1903: 446); and Berlin had a population of from 50,000 to 100,000 in the middle of the

18th century (Emerson, 1968: 4; Mulhall, 1903: 446). Criminality is an even more difficult factor to put one's finger on. Criminal statistics are notoriously unstable and they were not consistently collected until relatively recently. The most striking demonstration of an absence of relation between personal insecurity and creation of a reformed police system is to be found in Great Britain. London was a sink of criminality, depravity, drunkenness, licentiousness, and cruelty during the 18th and early 19th centuries (Reith, 1948: Ch. 14; Pringle, n.d.; Critchley, 1967: 18-24; Royal Commission on the Police, 1962: 13-15). Seventeen Parliamentary Committees investigated the problem of law and order during the sixty years preceding the Police Act of 1829 (Royal Commission on the Police 1962: 20). Foreign travelers marveled at the unwilingness of London citizens to countenance reform of a decayed parish-constable system, especially when Paris, Berlin, and other continental cities presented such graphic contrasts. Yet the British did nothing; they thought the gain in security that might result from a new police organization was outweighed by the loss of cherished liberties. Sentiments of constitutional propriety were far more important than the inconvenience of practical circumstances.

The Industrial Revolution — a movement difficult to chronicle exactly — followed the establishment of the French police system, preceded that of Great Britain, followed that of Germany, and followed that of Italy. India's police system was a colonial importation and bears no relation whatever to industrial development. External threats also have not been particularly prominent when police systems have been established. Great Britain undertook police reform only after Napoleon had been defeated and the threat of Jacobinism had receded. Louis XIV was often at war in the late 17th century, but these adventures, though they strained the exchequer, did not represent a grave threat to country or dynasty. France expanded the police system markedly in the middle of the 19th century, but did so in relation to the domestic political fortunes of Napoleon III and not to the Crimean War. *Risorgimento* entailed expulsion of foreign powers — Austria from Venice and France from Rome — but it would be straining to separate the requirements of external defense from those of internal consolidation in the creation of the national police system. American and Indian police developments are entirely unrelated to external dangers.

At the same time, there are at least three factors which have played a role in the emergence of contemporary national

police systems. They are all "political" in some sense. They are (1) consolidation of national power, (2) general growth of governmental capabilities, and (3) a demonstration effect. Many police systems grew as part of the establishment of effective national government, utilizing centralized, bureaucratic administrations. This was the case in France, Germany, and Italy. It was true of most colonial impositions. In Britain in the early 19th century the need for efficient administration became harder to overlook. Municipal governments strained to undertake the work that their citizens required.[9] The development of the "new police" was in many ways the beginning of the "Age of Reform"; its development throughout the country proceeded with reform in municipal and county government and the growth of a merit-based civil service. Nations also learned from one another and were particularly willing to do so if they shared a way of life or an ideology. It is not a coincidence that Tsar Peter established an imperial police administration in St. Petersburg in 1718, Frederick II a police director in Berlin in 1742, and Maria Theresa a police commissioner in Vienna in 1751 (Emerson, 1968: 405). All were powerfully influenced by the French example.

In most of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East the roots of police systems are to be found in colonial policies. Once again the impetus may properly be called political, based upon the exigencies of rule. The Indian and most of the East African police systems are British importations, though this does not imply that the colonial systems were copies of English institutions. British administrators often worked out novel solutions to policing problems in far-flung lands.

The creation of police forces is to be understood in political terms; police forces are the creatures of politics. Undoubtedly social and economic events change environments and so throw up cues that may affect police development. But cues must be perceived and read. The lessons discovered in such signs vary from country to country, person to person, and time to time. The translation of social needs into public response is a political act.

The discovery of persistence in police forms over considerable periods of time and of congruence between police institutions and the encapsulating political system contains an implicit lesson. One cannot explain contemporary police systems without becoming involved in exploration of political development into remote reaches of history. German police development is

related to the decline of towns in the 16th and 17th centuries, to the dissolution of the Hanseatic League, and the bargain struck between Frederick the Great Elector and the landed nobles with respect to the maintenance of a standing army. British police development has been touched by the abolition of the Star Chamber during the Civil War, the rise of the common law, and the vigor of the shire. French police development has been conditioned by the importance of classes rather than geographical units in French government, the emergence of administrative law, and the lessons Louis XIV drew from the *Fronde*.

The fundamental question that has been asked in the preceding analysis is when and how did today's police systems develop as they have. It is important to note that the base line of comparison is contemporary systems. This procedure is sound, since few systems have undergone generic shifts in character in the recent past.[10] Explaining what currently exists ensures doing justice to the enormous variety of contemporary systems. At the same time, some people may object that this approach places all the emphasis on explaining diversity. Surely there may be similarities in development? This point is well taken. In my view, however, it is important in political analysis of historical change to keep quite distinct the question of why different, though functionally similar, institutions developed as they have from the question of whether their respective evolutions are converging. The great defect of couching historical political analysis in terms of traditional-modern or preindustrial-industrial terminology is that it presupposes convergence and thus forces empirical diversity into a procrustean mold.

Contemporary police systems are converging most strongly with respect to those features that relate to technical task-performance; they are converging least along those dimensions having to do with structure, control, and role behavior. Convergence is associated with those features where a standard of efficiency in the performance of function can be applied. Features involving the way in which political power is organized in a society are much less amenable to converging change. Thus, one finds that functional specialization has occurred within all the police systems studied in this paper. The need for skilled leadership has risen in all forces during the last 100 years and so one finds all police forces regularizing, extending, and upgrading the quality of training. They are also devoting

more attention to special training for senior command officers. The technology of police work is often exportable from country to country and there is considerable interchange of knowledge, technique, and equipment. Wireless systems and forensic laboratories have developed in all countries that can afford them.

There is even some degree of convergence with respect to structure and control of police systems, though it is not nearly as great as in the areas where efficiency measures are appropriate. The influence of the central government in Great Britain has been growing considerably during the last 100 years. The Police Act, 1964, fights just shy of vesting command authority in central government officials. However, Head Constables for the first time are responsible to both local authorities and the Home Secretary; Parliament may now debate matters of law and order everywhere in the country.[11] At the same time, deconcentration in France and other centralized systems may accord more local initiative in police affairs. There is some evidence that continental European countries are beginning to exercise sterner supervision over the police through administrative courts. In Great Britain, by contrast, there is strong sentiment for making the Crown liable for civil damages assessed against individual policemen for actions taken in the line of duty. Thus, the gaps in practice in various kinds of legal systems are being plugged to ensure more effective and citizen-responsive accountability.

Police Influence on Political Development

It is important to distinguish the police as a formative influence in politics from the police as an indicator of the nature of political life. Judgments about the nature of rule, the ethos of government, and the quality of political life can be enriched for any country by observing how the police act. Indeed, to ignore authoritative rule enforcement would be a profound mistake in evaluating how government is accomplished in any country.[12] The trouble is that the relationship between police and government is both conceptual and empirical. The police are part of government; what they do is therefore what government does. Government and police cannot be distinguished any more than knife and knife edge can be usefully distinguished in the act of cutting. But it is clear that the relationship can be viewed empirically as well. There can be a difference between the way in which police are organized and behave and the way other governmental actors are organized and behave. It is even possible that police attributes differ

substantially from patterns in the rest of the political system. One profitable line of future research will be to investigate the extent to which the police share dominant administrative values, political predilections, and values with respect to conflict and authority.[13] In order to use the police as indicators of the quality of political life, one needs to know a great deal more about the coincidence between how they act and how other output agencies act.

Turning to the police as a formative factor, there are four ways in which the police may influence political life: (1) by their activity directly upon political or politically related events; (2) by socializing citizens through their activity as authoritative governmental agents; (3) by the example the organization sets, the symbol it becomes, and the demands it makes on other parts of society; and (4) by socialization of individual policemen to fit within the political community.[14] In short, police forces may influence politics by what they do, how they do it, what they are, and what they do to each other. I cannot treat all these topics — each one is complex in itself — in this essay. Therefore, I shall present a few findings illustrative of the kind of analysis into which these questions lead. Emphasis will be given to the topics of overt political activity and socialization of citizens.

Police have not generally been independent political actors. They rarely act on their own in politics, but usually as instruments of others. Police organizations are not commonly avenues of upward political mobility. Men only occasionally make political careers for themselves through the police. Notable exceptions in Europe are Fouché, Himmler, and Beria. There have been none who have done so in Britain, the United States, or India. It would appear, then, that the more police become an independent source of political power, the more authoritarian becomes the political system.

Police influence politics by their activity both openly and clandestinely. All police forces engage in political intelligence activity to some degree; only some forces engage consistently in activity which touches politics openly. The Prussian police during the 19th century were used overtly for political repression. They enforced various laws curbing the organization of "liberal" political groups and censoring what could be printed in the press.[15] Press laws of 1869 and 1874 required all newspapers to be delivered to the police for inspection; they could be confiscated without judicial decree if they contained mate-

rial offensive to the Emperor or the ruler of any state, urged disobedience to law, or incited acts of class hatred (Fosdick, 1915: 76). Under the Second Reich a law was passed in 1879 giving the police power to destroy the Social Democratic press and to hound Social Democratic leaders from the cities of their residence. As late as 1908 clubs and societies had to present copies of their constitutions and lists of their officers to the police. In France the police have been heavily involved in politics since the time of the Marquis d'Argenson, Lieutenant-General of Police in Paris from 1697 to 1718. The political sensitivity of high police command is indicated by the fact that from 1800 to 1852 there were thirty-one Prefects of Police in Paris. From 1870 to 1913 the average tenure in office of the Prefect of Police was one year and nine months. By contrast, the average tenure of a Commissioner of Police in London from 1829 to the eve of World War I was fourteen years (Fosdick, 1915: 171-173). Italian Prefects and *Questores* were openly engaged in politics during most of the past 100 years. During the latter part of the 19th century they were directed to support particular candidates in parliamentary elections (Smith, 1969: 198-202; Fried, 1963: Ch. 3). They bribed, threatened, and used their power to arrest or detain candidates and influence supporters.

The police of India have had politics thrust upon them since independence in the form of violent threats to public order. They have been required to intervene between warring groups — especially communal ones — and to defend state and national governments from demonstrations, civil disobedience, and riots by political groups of the right and the left. By and large the Indian police have acted reflexively; they have not been directed to pursue a consistently repressive policy against any particular group. They have enforced the Preventive Detention Act and the Defense of India regulations from time to time against leftist and communal politicians, but the effect of these measures has been slight and the numbers involved small (Bayley, 1969: Ch. 10). The British police have been very restrained in politics; their politically relevant actions have been taken in defense of public order, situations in which they were confronted with politics not of their own making. They were sorely tried during the Chartist agitation and again during the periods of Irish unrest and I.R.A. violence.

At moments of great national political crisis the record of police forces is quite mixed. Sometimes they have been oppor-

tunistic, throwing their support to an apparent winner; sometimes they have defended the existing government, which is their bounden charge; and sometimes they have simply faded away, being no force to reckon with at all. The police of Paris disappeared during the climactic days of the revolution. So, too, did the Berlin police in 1918. Neither force rendered assistance to the dying political order to which they had sworn solemn oaths. Fouché supported the coup of Napoleon in 1799 when he was Minister of Police (Arnold, 1969). Again in 1852 police leadership supported Napoleon III, but the police did not play an active role in the coup; it maintained order in Paris, allowing the army to spearhead the overthrow. Perhaps the most glorious moment of political activism for the Paris police came in August, 1944, when the Perfecture became the rallying point for the Resistance and policemen fought the retreating German garrison in the streets of the city. In Italy, the police — both P.S. and *Carbinieri* — proved unreliable during 1921-22 against the growing violence and intimidation of Mussolini's Fascist gangs. Police ranks were filled with lower-class individuals and their officers were middle-class men of a nationalistic stripe — precisely the kind of people to whom Fascism appealed most (Fried, 1963: 161). The Berlin police at first defended the revolution of 1848 but later the same year welcomed back the army which was sent into Berlin to destroy the liberal government. During the Weimar period Berlin policemen were caught between the forces of the radical right and left in defense of a government they did not consider wholly legitimate. In 1932 they acquiesced in the supercession of the Prussian government by the Reich and in 1933 accepted Hitler without demurrer, as did most Germans. Subsequently they stood aside as Nazi party units repressed opposition political groups, but they did fight against cooption of regular police duties by such groups (Liang, 1970).

The police of India have given loyal service to whatever regime has been in power, whether it be British Raj, Congress, or Communist. Their loyalty and patience will be increasingly strained in the years ahead as politics becomes more frenetic, more confrontational, and radical politicians come to power demanding an active police policy supportive of ideological and partisan programs. This has already occurred in Kerala between 1957 and 1959 and is happening today in West Bengal.

American and British police have not been forced to choose sides during dramatic moments of national political unrest. They have been spared the most searing experience to which police may be subjected.

Extensive political intelligence work has been associated with the French police since their formation. Sartine boasted to Louis XV in the middle of the 18th century that if three people gathered together to talk anywhere in Paris, Sartine could recount the conversation the following morning. The French reputation for ubiquitous surveillance, through "mouchards" (spies), became legendary. Dossiers were supposedly kept on anyone of any political importance. During the 19th century the practice was openly admitted (Payne, 1966: Ch. 8). Prussian and German police forces did the same thing but evidently less extensively. Frederick II was critical of the expense and subterfuge of the French system. (Emerson, 1968: 6).[16] British officials have collected information on political activities since the Civil War and probably before. Intelligence agents were employed directly by Secretaries of State and later by the Home Office; parish-constables do not seem to have been utilized. Even after an effective police instrumentality was created, the central government did very little coordinating of political intelligence. During the Chartist movement initiative was left to local officials who had to support intelligence activity out of their own funds (Mather, 1959: 225). The Commissioners of the London police were well aware of the deep antipathy of the British people to plain-clothes work of any kind, even criminal investigation. A full-fledged C. I. D. division was not created until 1878.[17] The Special Branch of the C. I. D., entrusted to this day with gathering political intelligence, was created in 1884, largely as a result of Irish activity. The Indian police, too, has its Special Branch, while American political surveillance is handled by the F.B.I. nationally, with its local units throughout the country.

Three factors account for the extent to which police forces are engaged in political activity, whether open or clandestine: (1) the manner of their creation, (2) the location of police authority with respect to political power, and (3) the exigencies of political life. Some police forces have been involved in politics from their inception. This is true of the German, Italian, and French police. In these cases the police were created to serve the purposes of the state. Unlike the

British police, they did not grow primarily as a response to the needs of private individuals. They were created as instruments of governing; police power in the Absolutist states was indistinguishable from the authority to rule. This accounts for the wider range of functions that was entrusted to the police in Germany and France. In Britain, on the other hand, governing and policing were separately conceived. Policing was a function government might take on but was not obliged to; police were established by government in response to needs predicated on private individuals. This was true as well in the United States.

Political activity is also a function of the location of police authority. British police were based on local government units. Except in London after 1829, those British politicians who directed the fortunes of large parties did not have police forces at their disposal. There was a disjunction between partisan political power and police power. This is not true in most continental police systems. It has generally been true in the United States, though the growth of the F.B.I. since the 1920s represents a major departure.[18] It is also clear that prolonged political turmoil can thrust the police into a more active role in national life. Would the British police have been able to define their tasks so circumspectly if the Irish campaign for independence had been violent earlier and continued longer? American policemen have been overwhelmed by politics in the mid-1960's. For the first time in a generation they are being called upon to mediate deep social and political cleavages in the streets of the country. The result is a marked politicization, both in the nature of their duties and in their own individual engagement with politics. Police units are now political forces to be reckoned with in several American cities.

There is another factor — a variation on the point about manner of creation — that has conditioned the political proclivities of a special sub-set of the world's police force: that is colonialism. Police forces created by colonial regimes, no matter the heritage of the metropolitan country, have been closely tied to political purposes. The Indian police were used continually by the Raj to watch, control, and resist politicians espousing the cause of independence. Colonial regimes, like European Absolutist states, could not help conceiving of the police in political terms. At the same time, the ethos of the police forces with respect to politics may have been shaped

powerfully by the political culture of the metropolitan power. It would be worth contrasting this aspect of police development in new states. It is possible that colonial conditioning in the metropolitan model is more of a continuing restraint than has generally been recognized. Certainly in the Indian case, police officers have a deep reluctance to become involved in partisan politics; they shrink, as generally do army officers, from assuming political power. The political restraint of Indian civil servants of all sorts, at least so far, and their loyalty to political superiors is persuasive evidence of the power of colonial teaching in the face of partisanship by the colonial government itself and, as in so many new nations, continued unrest after independence.

Policemen affect political life not only directly through their actions, but by the manner in which they handle their duties. Though the proposition has yet to be empirically demonstrated, it is reasonable to expect that policemen are among society's most influential agents of political socialization. They are ubiquitous in their presence; they are uniformed, hence particularly visible, and are clothed with authority to use force. Their activities touch the most sensitive areas of human life and well-being. They may protect or they may threaten, but in each case because they possess a monopoly of force they are symbols of enormous emotional significance. In the most profound of life's social crises, policemen are often participants or primary observers. The way in which policemen behave may affect attitudes not only toward themselves, but toward law, authority, government, and conflict.

The peculiar potency of the police in political socialization has been recognized by only a handful of scholars. This situation may be changing. Charles Reith has suggested that the operations of the new police in England remade age-old habits of social interaction. The low-key, nonpunitive demeanor of English policemen is not a product of English temperament, rather English temperament is a product of police demeanor. The English were not law abiding at all in the 18th and 19th centuries; they became so because the police inculcated a new standard of public conduct with respect to the law (Reith, 1948: 83-84). Another scholar has suggested that the British policemen have played as important a role in socialization there as the American schoolteacher did in the United States (Gorer, 1955: 38). Students of the Weimar period have noted the incongruity between authority patterns in society, especially

family and school, and those required of democratic government (Eckstein, 1966). Only one, however, has noted this conflict in the lives of policemen, demonstrating how ineffectual were the measures taken during the 1920s to make the police force supportive in behavior and commitment to democratic political institutions (Liang, 1970). Samuel Eldersveld, *et al.*, have explicitly examined the bureaucratic culture of Indian civil servants, among them the police, in order to determine the nature of authoritative contact between ruler and ruled (Eldersveld, Jagannadham, and Barnabas, 1968). David Easton and Jack Dennis have shown the saliency of the police as an authority symbol among primary school children in America (Easton and Dennis, 1969: Ch. 10 & 11). Finally, in India and the United States there is evidence of pronounced differences in attitudes toward the police among various social groups; the effect of negative experiences upon personal attitudes is also clear and it colors evaluations of other aspects of police behavior (Bayley and Mendelsohn, 1969: Ch. 5). It is a short step to the conclusion that lessons taught by police to different sections of a populace may affect more than attitudes toward the police; they may help to differentiate basic political attitudes among social strata.

Unfortunately, there has been on study so far which has proven the vitality of the police as socializing agents. The linkage, while strongly indicated, remains to be demonstrated empirically.

Conclusion

The neglect of the study of the police in political perspective, whether in a single country or comparatively, is puzzling and disturbing. During the 1960s public events thrust the police into new prominence. Abroad, the dramatizing force was experience with political subversion, "wars of national liberation," and insurgency; in America it was violent urban riots and confrontations between young people and the police. Neither the promptings of theory nor sheer empirical contiguity (police to courts, for example) led more than a handful of political scientists to study the police. It may have been that the police were thought to be the preserve of sociologists, especially criminologists. It may have been that the police were thought of only as another organization to be studied as an instance of public administration. Whatever the reason, fashion or oversight, the police were an unworthy item of study for political scientists.

Now that the salience of the police has been so dramatically shown, there is a quickening of interest. Theories will undoubtedly be extended to fix the police function in the intellectual firmament; empirical studies will multiply rapidly. But there is now another constraint developing that may be no less limiting of profitable study than former ones. New-found interest may evaporate in the heat of ideological conflict. Police, like the military, are controversial bodies; it is increasingly difficult to approach them without having, or being required to have, a point of view about their use. Individuals who study them are beginning to find themselves contaminated by association. The question is even now being asked on several campuses whether money and university facilities should be allocated to the study of the police — let alone the training of them — rather than to the alleviation of basic social problems that would reduce the need for police.

In short, the years of disinterest are over, but the years of productive study may not yet have arrived. Ideological fashions may be no less destructive than professional ones of serious research into the relation between the police and politics.

FOOTNOTES

[1] The District Armed Police in India and the *Gendarmerie* in Germany which is used for rural policing.

[2] London is an exception. There, uniformed officers — Superintendents — are supervised by the Commissioner and his staff. The Commissioner is accountable to the Home Secretary.

[3] The Metropolitan Police Act and the Local Government Act, respectively.

[4] For an excellent short discussion of the police of the *ancien regime* see Radzinowicz (1957: Vol. 3, Appendix 8).

[5] This is the date of the Police Act, which regularized policing after the Mutiny and the Government of India Act, 1858.

[6] This point is discussed at length in Bayley (1969: Ch. 2).

[7] The *Questore* is deputy to the Prefect. In effect he is provincial chief of police.

[8] Information on force strengths is very difficult to obtain. Statistical information in American libraries on foreign police forces, whether in English or foreign languages, is meager. One of the most urgent tasks facing the study of comparative police development is to gather adequate statistics on force strengths, especially in the period before the 20th century. This will require archival research in foreign countries.

[9] Many Improvements Acts were passed in the 18th century under which specified towns were permitted to undertake to provide services, including policing.

[10] This may not be true for countries not examined in this paper.

[11] Hitherto Parliament could only debate police matters involving London, for only London's police were responsible to the central government.

[12] Almond and Verba (1963) questioned respondents in Italy, Mexico, Germany, and Great Britain about their relation with the police. They used this information to determine whether citizens had a sense of political efficacy and of being fairly treated by government.

[13] Eldersveld, Jagannadham, and Barnabas (1968) have done such a study for India. They found important differences among civil servants in the

police, health services, community development, postal services, and the Delhi municipal bus company.

[14] For a detailed discussion of these modalities see Bayley (1969: Ch. 1).

[15] For example, until 1847 a law prohibited newspapers from discussing Prussian or German political affairs. See Eyck (1950: 18).

[16] Information on the extent of intelligence activity is impressionistic and somewhat contradictory (Holborn, 1969: 110; Jacob, 1963: 141). One study done by the British in 1917 found that the Berlin police intelligence unit numbered only 17 men. That is not a great many considering the turbulence of Berlin at the time (Liang, 1970: 120-121).

[17] Though there was an investigation unit composed of two inspectors and six Sergeants since 1842 (Critchley, 1967: 57).

[18] The temptation to use such power by national politicians is irresistible. Jamie Whitten, chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, sent out the F.B.I. in 1968 to disprove the existence of hunger in America, especially in the South. F.B.I. agents called upon people who had given testimony in reports that appeared before Congress on malnutrition in the South. While the F.B.I. double-checking could be portrayed as concern with accuracy, the effect on many people, especially poor blacks, was intimidation (Kotz, 1969: Ch. 6).

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