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POLICE SCIENCE EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES: A NATIONAL NEED

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EDITOR.

Some of the best legal minds in the United States are wrestling with recent United States Supreme Court, and various State Supreme Court, rulings concerning the IV, V and VI Amendments. Needless to say, law enforcement will probably be affected more by these interpretations than any other agency of justice. In fact, it may be so affected that ten years from today, the present officer will be overwhelmed in comparing the changes which took place in his duties, his career, and in the American attitude toward law enforcement. The significant portions of these Amendments for our present consideration are:

Amendment IV

... the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures . . . but upon probable cause . . .

Amendment V

... be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law . . .

Amendment VI

... and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him . . . and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

Contrary to much popular opinion, recent federal and state interpretations of the above amendments, turning loose confessed killers, rapists, etc. due to the violation of their rights by law officers, will serve as a final result, to do more good for local law enforcement, than harm. These decisions make it imperative that city, county,

and state police nationally become professional persons, professionally-trained in crime detection, crime prevention, the individual right of the innocent as well as the guilty, etc. The harm done, of course, is the returning to society of confessed wrong-doers who are free to commit the same, or more serious crimes, in addition to wasting the efforts of the community and the officer. The seemingly worthlessness of apprehending the guilty, only to see them released because of some technicality not understood or adhered to by the officer, serves to dishearten the law enforcement community. However, the amount of harm done to local law enforcement is negligible compared to the benefits which will be derived by realizing that the day of the non-trained or ill-trained officer is over, and the day of the professionalization of local law enforcement must soon begin. Society cannot afford nonprofessional persons attempting to do professional work, but it has been at fault because of its indifference to local law enforcement, and the plight of the policemen.

One of the most important, and most neglected, areas of professional education in this nation is that of police science. For too many years we have expected local law enforcement to recruit its manpower from the ranks of the unqualified due not only to public disinterest and neglect, but also to a serious lack of communication between law enforcement and the citizenry. The time has certainly arrived where the social scientist, and the police rank and file, must acquaint the public with the deep need for police science education in every public junior college, college, and university in this land. California's emphasis on police training at this level must become a national emphasis with the other states instituting this type of education in their tax-supported schools.

WHY TRAIN LOCAL LAW OFFICERS?

A local officer must enforce the law on a split second, many times, whereas the district attorney or the judge may have hours, weeks, or even months to ponder over an eventual decision in a given matter. Hence the officer stands a better chance of making serious errors of judgment which may result in a ruined career for an innocent person, or an unwarranted serious charge for a petty violator. Since the policeman is the legal enforcement arm of the state, and the state representative who enforces the law on a face-to-face relationship, he must be as familiar with the laws he enforces as the district attorney who prosecutes the offender, or the judge who eventually either releases, fines, or commits him.

When one witnesses the extremely complicated scientific methods of crime detection with which the local officer must be thoroughly familiar if he is to apprehend the criminal, he certainly cannot agree with the shallowness of some public reasoning, "it takes a crook to catch a crook", "ex-wrestlers and boxers make the best police officers", or, "he cannot earn a living in any other manner so he became a policeman". For too many years the standards of police work have lagged far behind those of sister agencies of probation, parole, and social work even though the duties of those agencies are no more complicated, and certainly not more important, than policing.

Some of the benefits to be realized from an academic training in police science as a pre-requisite to enforcing laws and ordinances on a face-to-face relationship would be:

1. A knowledge of the fundamentals of fingerprinting, ballistics, handwriting identifications, microscopic evidence, spectroscopic evidence, and interrogation is imperative to the modern policeman. Thus he would be better prepared to apprehend criminals.
2. Deterrence of criminal behavior through the training in mob psychology, social disorganization, delinquency control, etc.
3. More respect for the law and the law officer by the public in that not only will academic training in police science make the officer more proficient in criminal detection and crime prevention, but it will make him more aware of public relations, and in turn the public more aware of his community contribution.
4. Professional pride for police officers, in ad-

dition to higher economic social status, and community respect.

5. A guarantee of more adequate protection of the individual rights of each citizen. Through education of the national and state constitutions the officer will better understand those rights guaranteed each citizen to be secure in his person.

A profession is so labeled because it sets standards and regulates its membership. Local law enforcement has professional duties, even though a national set of standards have not been established. It should be encouraged to set minimum educational training standards so that in the near future the local law officer will enjoy the prestige, will fulfill his duties, and will develop the "esprit de corps" so evident in the FBI, Treasury Dept. and other federal law agencies.

For many years it has been said that if high academic and other standards were required they would exclude so many persons that local law enforcement would not be able to recruit enough officers to function properly. Further, it has been long argued that salaries must be raised before qualified persons will apply. The above arguments cannot stand up to the fact that for years the FBI has required high academic, physical, and moral qualifications and at present does not have a serious lack of applicants. In addition if economic regards of law enforcement are advanced before academic standards are required, more of those who lack training and ability to become proficient officers will seek a career in law enforcement. We have long been aware of those unqualified persons who seek police positions for self-enhancement. The long-standing, excellent leadership in police science in California public institutions, Michigan State University, University of Louisville, Northwestern University, among others, has demonstrated that police science education can be as profitably instituted in the higher institutions as any other curriculum and can be as adequately taught, if not far more so, than any in-service training given by the local law enforcement departments. The importance of in-service education is acknowledged, but a few weeks of recruit training or quarterly and yearly police science seminars cannot serve as a substitute to the long-term curriculum which can only be taught over a period of years in an institution designed for police training. A three-day session, for instance on mob psychology, is far less effective

to the policeman than would be a quarter's course in the psychology of human behavior with mob psychology included. In addition, a short in-service seminar cannot replace the quarter's police science course in laws of search and seizure.

Another argument against professional police training has been the old-standby, "experience is the best teacher." Certainly experience can teach much, but one wonders how many of our citizens have had their individual rights tread upon by policemen who received all of their education in this manner? The rights of a citizenry in a democracy are so important we cannot afford to long allow our police officers to be so "trained." We do not allow aspirants to the medical profession, nor legal profession, to practice upon the populace without professional preparation, nor should we expect police officers to learn to be police officers solely by "practice." Again, it is odd that this social order has long expected its lawyers to be highly trained, although we are aware alleged violators are accused, arrested, and brought to justice by a police officer, who in many cases, probably knows very little more about the law he just enforced than does the person in his custody.

The old, worn-out argument that we cannot afford to pay higher wages to attract more qualified applicants is very shallow indeed, when one realizes that the officer must: 1. deter crime, 2. apprehend law violators, and 3. protect the innocent. Duties of law enforcement embody all those principles so dearly held in a democratic society, yet *we cannot afford not to obtain the funds to hire trained personnel* to guarantee those hallowed principles. Furthermore, it is generally known that an adequately trained officer will probably deter more crime and apprehend more violators than an untrained officer; hence, he will probably save the community several times more money than he earns per year.

SUGGESTED METHODS OF PUBLIC ENLIGHTENMENT

Those of us who teach in law enforcement curriculums and those who enforce the law must take it upon ourselves to enlighten the public of the great need for police education. It has been said, and it is probably true, that we have not been too interested in keeping the public informed as to our goals, objectives, interests, and needs. In addition, social scientists have pointed out that neither the public, nor in fact many local law

enforcement officers actually, know what the duties of the officer are, what his authority embodies, and what the citizen's individual rights guarantee that police officers shall, and shall not do in the course of an arrest for an alleged violation of the law. We must become more aware of our duties and responsibilities.

It is suggested that:

1. City, county, and state police organizations take immediate steps to create public-police public relations bureau (where they are non-existent) to inform the citizenry of police goals and duties.
 - a. The various agencies might have a weekly radio, a TV program or newspaper column outlining the police responsibilities, citizens responsibilities, criminal detection methods and problems, request for parental, community cooperation etc.
 - b. The various local police agencies might decide to send officers on speaking engagements to public functions, which has been an important area of public-police relations long neglected by many officers who feel that their duty is crime detection alone. This type of community program can bring about much community support for the law agency.
 - c. School safety programs sponsored by the police.
 - d. Service and professional club speaking engagements.
2. National professional police groups should sponsor more national programs of public education for the need for the development of police science education in state supported junior colleges, colleges, and universities.
 - a. Through speakers bureaus.
 - b. Through statistical data available from departments with trained officers showing reduction of crime through detection and prevention.
 - c. Through studies of community responses of citizens with trained police compared with those whose police are nontrained (anonymous).
 - d. Sending police science training materials and training syllabuses to institutions who lack a police training program and encouraging the adoption of same.
3. The elected state senators, representatives,

and state superintendents of education should be informed of the great need for police science in the higher institutions. In addition, the local, county, and state teachers organizations should be made aware of the need of police science education in each state. Furthermore, local, regional, and state police organizations should solicit the assistance of service clubs, PTA's, churches, etc. to petition the State Boards of Education and the higher institutions to institute police science curriculums.

SUMMARY

One of the authors has written articles for this journal in the past where he gave what he felt were minimum academic, psychological, mental, moral and physical qualifications for local law officers.¹ In addition, he suggested at that time two years of police science education be a minimum requirement for those who enforce laws on a face-to-face relationship (since then he has reason to feel four years of education should be a minimum). Furthermore, he believes that a minimum four years of education in law enforcement would be necessary for Police Administrators, and Police Specialists, and even the bare minimum of two years preparation would have to be raised in the future, but is a good starting point. His suggested proposal for the certification of local law officers was designed as one way that a framework for eventual pro-

¹ MIRICH, JOHN J. Certification of Local Law Enforcement: A Must, *JOURNAL OF CRIMINAL LAW, CRIMINOLOGY, AND POLICE SCIENCE*, Vol. 49, pp. 92-95, May-June 1958. MIRICH, JOHN J. The Qualified Policeman: The Backbone of Society, *JOURNAL OF CRIMINAL LAW, CRIMINOLOGY AND POLICE SCIENCE*, Vol. 50, pp. 315-317, 1959.

fessionalization could be devised, however, he felt that others were available and possible.

This paper is written in the hope of encouraging local police enforcement officials in petitioning their elected officers, and community and state leaders to institute police science curriculums in state supported higher institutions. Although one of the most important phases of police science education would be for the education of local enforcement officials, these programs can easily be expanded to include probation, parole, penology, and social work among others. In addition, the two year police science program in the junior colleges should be coordinated with the four year programs in the degree-granting four year institutions so that a person who cares to receive a B.A. or B.S., M.A., or even a Ph.D. degree may do so.

If local law enforcement is ever to become a true profession it must develop academic and other standards and must regulate its membership. In order to develop academic standards it must have curriculums designed for these standards. If schools do not exist, it is imperative that they be set-up. Since leadership must always originate from those who have a need, our work is cut out for us—there is a great national need to educate local law officers.

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