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Questions and Answers

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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On the 9th, 10th and 11th of August of this year at Detroit, Michigan, the International Association of Chiefs of Police held their Fiftieth Annual and Second War Conference. It was essentially a war meeting and its moving purpose was the intensive evaluation and discussion of enforcement problems of critical concern to the nation during these war years and their aftermath. There were six general sessions and in addition to these a number of special conferences. The opening session was devoted to general considerations of the war problem as it affected enforcement; the second, to the subject of police emergency procedures; the third, to police responsibility in highway transportation; the fourth, to traffic enforcement and wartime problems; the fifth, to the effects of War on social standards; and the sixth, to the subject of industrial and civil police. Such is the importance of the many subjects discussed that this issue of *Questions and Answers* is devoted to the Second War Conference with particular reference to five topics of interest to readers of the JOURNAL.

Question 1: Highlight of the first general session was the address of Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, who spoke on the subject: *The Battle on the Home Front*. What are the principal enforcement problems described in his address?

Answer:

These are the enforcement difficulties which he highlighted:

(1) *The handicap of manpower:* "Law enforcement, handicapped by the fact that there are fewer police officers today than a year ago, has been able to keep the home front secure, is a tribute to its courageous men and women. . . I believe the danger point has been reached and some real understanding and appreciation of the strain and stress already placed upon law enforcement must be shown if the internal security of this country is not to be imperiled."

(2) *Vilifying weaknesses in parole and other practices:* "You know and I know that human lives are taken daily, homes are plundered, hard-earned life savings are stolen, and crimes by the score occur only because some gullible parole board or pardon dispenser has released upon society some unreformed criminal; or because some politically expedient prosecutor lacks the fortitude to prosecute, or compromises with defense counsel to allow the criminal to plead to a lesser offense though definitely guilty of the major crime; or because technical and capricious interpretation of statutes and rules of procedure theoretically takes the handcuffs from the

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criminal and places them upon law enforcement. . . I submit it is an obligation of judicial administration to see that justice is done, rather than an obligation looking toward preferential treatment of the criminal."

(3) *Prison administration as a problem*: "It is no secret that hardened convicts in many instances leave prison at will; others enjoy the privileges of a 'sob-sister' prison closely akin to a country club atmosphere, with money, guns, and the comforts of life to be had for the asking. Likewise, it is no secret that criminals have bought their way to freedom from slimy renegades who slander the good name of law enforcement."

(4) *Problems of the press*: "The American daily press and magazines worthy of their name have performed a great service for law and order. For the most part, they have made a serious, sincere effort to focus the healing rays of the spotlight of public opinion on law enforcement problems. But there still remains, to besmirch the good name of journalism, certain psychopathic canard purveyors and others who, from motives best known to themselves, are constantly seeking to undermine public confidence in law enforcement agencies."

(5) *The moving picture problem*: "Another trend which is again manifesting itself is the tendency on the part of some motion picture producers to return to the formula which glorifies the criminal and ridicules the law enforcement officer. This, combined with the gross distortion of historical facts indulged in by certain segments of the motion picture industry, should receive the serious thought of the mothers and fathers of this nation."

(6) *The specter of civil violence*: "Another problem, which is rapidly reaching flood tide proportions involves civil violence, race riots, and insidious campaigns against minority groups. It is a national disgrace and a reflection upon all Americans that altercations between individuals can touch off community-wide conflagrations, which are often seized upon, by young teen-age hoodlums, of both sexes, to indulge in depredations of all kinds against property and persons. . . . Prosecution or discrimination that takes place far away is often much easier to recognize than that which occurs in our own community, yet sane tolerance and democracy, like charity, ought to begin at home."

(7) *The vice problem*: "Among the enemies of society, we must include those operators of dens of iniquity, debauchery and crime, whose love of money eclipses their sense of decency. Then, too, there are the unethical physician and the shyster lawyer, both of whom are driven by the mad desire for money and give aid and assistance to our sworn enemies in this conflict."

(8) *Subversive elements*: "Another element that is just as dangerous, yet less apparent until brought into bold relief by the spotlight of public attention, is the subversive group—those termites of discontent and discord, always alert to seize upon racial differences, economic stresses and political difficulties to advance their selfish and venal purposes. These 'ism' termites scoff at our democracy and belittle the cherished freedom, liberty and fair play that characterize America. The threat against the American people from within is not merely a Nazi threat. It is the insidious infection of other foreign 'isms' creeping up the pillars of the Republic under the false guise of Democracy."

(9) *Juvenile delinquency*: "I am sure you will agree that delinquency and thoughtless parents are another problem facing us today. Some are victims of circumstances, but others, by their disregard of parental responsibilities and their frenzied chase after the extra pleasures or dollars available in these extraordinary times, forget the most sacred duty of all—that of rearing their children as self-respecting, law-abiding citizens who truly are

worthy of the name American. The facts are stark and revealing, and possibly hold the key to this sad situation. Time and time again, children have admitted they did not consider their fathers as representative of honorable manhood, or that they were ashamed of them; and some have even said they were ashamed of their mothers. What is needed above all else is more enlightened parents, to create better homes and take proper care of their children. Keep boys and girls from becoming criminals when they are young, and you can keep most them from becoming criminals later in life."

Question 2: The importance of establishing effective police protection of our war industries is recognized by all. How and in what manner have our war plant protection facilities been developed?

Answer:

This is a subject which was discussed at length in the Sixth General Session which had as its topic: "Industrial and Civil Police." As one of the speakers—Col. Pelham D. Glassford² pointed out, it had been apparent long before Pearl Harbor that if war came, it would be won as much by production and transportation as by armies in the field. In consequence, security of our war plants against all hazards and the safeguarding of any information which might be of use to our enemies was made a first consideration. Less than a week after Pearl Harbor, the machinery of plant protection was put under way by the President in his Executive Order No. 8972 which directed the Secretaries of War and of Navy to establish military guards and patrols and to take other appropriate measures to protect strategic materials, premises and utilities from injury and destruction. For some months after the declaration of war, the military were used as sole defenders. Soon, however, the basic principle of war plant protection, originated by Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, during the first world war, was adopted. In essence it provided that plant protection should be the responsibility of the plant and of local enforcement officials.

It was felt, however, that some reasonable degree of control by the War and Navy departments should be exercised over local guard forces in order to effectuate the national security as fully as possible. In consequence, the Secretary of War on July 2, 1942 by order directed that plant guard forces should be trained as military units subjected to the Articles of War, and that they should be enrolled as civilian auxiliaries to the Military Police. Guards of war plants are under supervision of the military who assist in training and drilling the guards. In such manner, about 200,000 guards at some 10,000 critical war production plants are now available as well equipped and well trained forces. Located as they are in all important industrial areas of the country they form an able supplement to the Army should wartime emergency threaten.

As may be anticipated, defense industry guards have a number of vital functions to perform. These can be classified according to two broad categories: security of the plants against all hazards, and second, preventing of information of value to the enemy from falling into their prying hands. Such responsibilities require the control of alien employment, removal of potential subversivists, investigation of employees, the fingerprinting of all employees, protection of plants against unlawful entry, control of visitors, controls over restricted areas, protection of confidential and secret information and materials, safeguarding plants from fire and accident, the establishment of controls over traffic flow both within and without the plant, the

²Director of Internal Security Division, Office of the Provost Marshal General.

prevention of riots and disorders, and an over-all protection in the event of air raids, paratroop attack, fifth column activity and other enemy-inspired action. It is interesting to observe that the number of war plant guards now more than doubles that of the combined civilian police forces of all the state and local governments in the United States.

Question 3: Much has been said about the serious manpower situation in our police forces. The question is: just how serious have been these withdrawals and why have they occurred?

Answer:

About two months ago, the Northwestern University Traffic Institute launched a nationwide study of the manpower situation in state and local police departments. Questionnaires were sent to some 700 police departments. Replies to questionnaires described a situation which warrants the most instant attention and was discussed at length by Daniel G. Reynolds³ in his address, "Personnel Losses and Traffic Law Enforcement." First as to the situation in the state police and state highway patrol departments. At the beginning of the year 1942, thirty of the forty-eight departments for which information is available had a uniformed police strength of 5,340 men. Almost immediately after Pearl Harbor, drain of manpower began. During 1942, 1,100 of the 5,340 men left their department, or about 20 per cent. Some were drafted, some were given commissions in the armed services, some accepted posts in other governmental services, some were employed in private police capacities in war plants, some began work in defense industries. During the first six months of 1943, the exodus continued, 396 more men having left their departments. Summarized, the situation is this: in the year and a half since January, 1942, the thirty departments lost the services of 1,496 of their men or approximately 28 per cent.

What has been the loss in respect to municipal police? Replies were received from over 200 departments which have the responsibility of protecting more than fifty million people. Responding departments listed uniformed personnel as of January 1, 1942, at 37,290 men. Of this number, 3,050 left their departments during 1942 for military service alone and 1,060 during the first half of 1943. Departures during the year and a half totaled 4,110, or a total of about 11 per cent of their uniformed police strength. To these losses must be added loss of manpower to defense industry employment, and other activities. Advises indicate these losses approximate 10 per cent or more of police strength. Thus, losses aggregated very nearly 25 per cent.

Many factors appear responsible for the drain. Many policemen, because of their above-average physical condition and the fact that so many of them are within the age bracket desired for military service, have been called to the defense of their country. The high salaries and wages offered by war industry is a second factor. Salaries paid in the average police department are notoriously low and in most instances could not compete for a moment with war wages prevailing today. Lack of clarification of selective service procedures in respect to police officers and men appears as a third factor. Without question, the police manpower situation is acute and unless stabilizing procedures are effectuated we can count upon serious difficulties ahead.

Question 4: As may be anticipated, the subject of juvenile delinquency was one which received searching consideration at the Conference. A highlight of the discussions on this subject was the address of Judge

³Acting Director of Field Service, International Association of Chiefs of Police, Evanston, Illinois.

Camille Kelley of the Memphis Juvenile Court. What are her conceptions as to the impact of the war on the juvenile problem?

Answer:

"Some times," remarked the Judge, "I think everyone, old and young, is actually 'two jumps ahead of a fit.'" In graphic language she describes the impact of war on our living conditions. "War production and mobilization of man and woman have dramatized a new world to our children. . . War news meets them from every direction. Everybody but the children is enlisted for service. . . These teen-age boys and girls are caught in the midstream of world confusion, while their parents have gone to put out the fire. In the absence of their elders, while the neighbors and officials were not at attention, youth began to let off the steam of their seething emotions, and to direct their own behavior. And, when youth, unsupervised and inexperienced directs its own behavior, it usually ends up in delinquency, violence, and, all too often, crime."

But as the Judge pointed out, there are many other factors which have stimulated the quest toward delinquency. "One of the many causes of the smoking embers has been our failure to place obedience in our code of good behavior. A foolish fad or fashion for children swept the country; we called it 'freedom of expression for youth,' and somewhere in the experiment, parents lost their place in the pilot's seat, and what was meant to be 'freedom of expression' turned out to be plain, old-fashioned delinquency. I believe in real 'freedom of expression' but there is no freedom without control." Then she reiterated the age-old nemesis—the broken home—as the great contributing cause of juvenile delinquency and recalled the tragic story of a small girl sent to a home for abandoned children who resisted being called an orphan because as she said: "How can they call me an orphan. Why, I have three papas and two mamas." Then, lastly, the Judge counted poverty as another formative factor: "Poverty drives countless little children into temptation, desperation, and, sometimes, violence. Neglect towers high in the causes of delinquency—parental neglect, inadequate education, community neglect, and government neglect, few and poorly paid officials, and little or no financial assurance."

What can we do about it? challenges Judge Kelly. First step is the formulation of a program for salvaging our broken children by classifying them according to capacity and talent and to provide effective supervision, care and training. Necessarily, she pointed out, care of the feeble-minded and the insane is the definite responsibility of Government. But we must begin to take over the borderline or subnormal children, who are the background for many of our most violent and vicious crimes. Their care, or a program of education adapted to them, is clearly the job of Government—State and National—to take over the responsibilities when citizens universally make such demands. It is the community's job to house where necessary, and train these unfortunate people, and protect society from their disastrous behavior. "We have progressed," she said, "with the times in health, electricity, travel and industry, but in behavior, we are still in the Asafoetida age. We are still treating sick and dangerously ill emotions with a lecture or punishment, and in many places we have exacted penalties for exact offenses—uniformity of law for uniformity of crime is about as practicable as uniformity of shoes for uniformity of feet. . . More than two-thirds of juvenile delinquency will disappear when behavior is reckoned with—humanely, intelligently, and scientifically. . . The time has come when we must study the offender instead of the offense. Then we shall learn that the law does not demand its pound of flesh, but is the bulwark of protection."

Question 5: Along what lines have the most signal developments in venereal disease control occurred during the present war years?

Answer:

The subject of venereal control was given important consideration at the Conference, particularly during the Fifth General Session. Col. Turner⁴ in his address pointed out that improvements have proceeded along four principal lines. First, there has occurred marked improvement in the treatment methods adopted. It is now possible, he said, to halt the inroads of venereal disease in 99 out of a 100 cases if the victim can be identified during the early stages of the disease. Second, a very large number of infection centers have been removed. There are now some 3,700 venereal clinics in the United States and their use has been greatly abetted by Public quarantine service in many cities. Military induction has proved an exceptional method of infection removal. Dr. Heller,⁵ another of the speakers on the program estimated that selective service has uncovered over 700,000 cases thus far. Then third, improvements in prophylaxis methods was advanced as another important channel of control. And fourthly, it was pointed out that the rapid trend away from punishment to that of rehabilitation had already proved of excellent worth. Treatment and rehabilitation centers have already been established in some thirty critical areas and through these and others in process of establishment it is anticipated that as many as 100,000 individuals can be treated within the next year.

Discussion of many other interesting and provocative subjects heard at the Conference must wait. As other inquiries reach this Editor from readers of the JOURNAL, views and opinions voiced at Conference will be used as bases of reply.

⁴Chief, Subdivision of Venereal Disease Control, Office of the Surgeon General, Navy Department.

⁵Assistant Surgeon General, United States Public Health Service.