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CENTRAL INSPECTION OF LOCAL POLICE SERVICES IN BRITAIN

JOHN S. HARRIS

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EDITOR.

Many and varied have been the administrative devices employed by central governments in the exercise of direction, supervision, and control over the activities of local authorities. In Britain the characteristic bond between the central and local governments has been the "principle of inspectibility." Initially employed by the Poor Law Commissioners in 1834, the inspection process has been the central government's most effective means of control in the fields of public assistance, education, public health, police, fire services, and road construction.

Inspection in England and Wales is conducted by a staff of full-time paid officials who, after familiarizing themselves with the work of local governments, observe the manner and efficiency with which these governments discharge the duties and responsibilities entrusted them by Parliament. They are often characterized as the "eyes and ears" of the central departments. Although they regularly report to their superiors in the central departments concerning the activities and problems of local authorities whom they have visited, the Inspectors additionally fulfill a larger and more important function than that of mere reporting. They constantly seek to advise and assist the local authorities and to make available to them expert knowledge gained through years of observation and study. Often they speak for the central department and upon occasion act on its behalf. Invariably Inspectors are specialists who know what to look for and where they may find it. It is their peculiar talent to discover at once the essence of a problem, to discern the difference between genuine, serious defects and superficial or irrelevant grievances. Through long experience they know when a given action represents the best effort of a local authority, or in what areas lethargic and inefficient authorities tend to fail in providing satisfactory services. In carrying out liaison and advisory duties they rely principally on courtesy, knowledge of the specialized field, common sense and persuasive powers. They must refrain from attempting to censure or dictate.

The British experience with police inspection encompasses a period of almost one hundred years, having first been undertaken in 1856 when Parliament enacted the County and Borough Police Act.¹ The new statute sought to bring an end to the lawlessness which was prevalent throughout a large portion of the country and introduced a thoroughgoing reform in the police system. County authorities were no

¹ GREAT BRITAIN STATUTES, 1856, 19 and 20 Vict., chap. 69.

longer permitted to exercise discretion in determining whether or not they should establish a police force; provision for a "sufficient" police force was made mandatory. A substantial grant was to be made annually from the central Treasury to the counties and boroughs which maintained efficient forces, and a system of central inspection and control by the Home Office was instituted.

CONTROL BY THE HOME OFFICE

The control of the central government over the police forces of both counties and county boroughs, as exercised by the Home Secretary, has been substantially increased from time to time and today is predominant. In the beginning the Secretary of State maintained his supervision from a distance and confined his activities largely to the receiving of specified information and returns. Thus the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835, decreed that copies of all rules issued by borough authorities for the regulation and guidance of their police forces should be sent to the Home Office each quarter. Four years later when the County Police Act, which authorized the counties to establish police forces, received Parliamentary approval, the Home Secretary had to promulgate rules for the government, pay, clothing, and accoutrements of the constables. The Act of 1856 stated that the justices of every county and the watch committee of every borough must transmit annually a statement setting forth the number of offenses reported, the number of persons apprehended, the nature of the charges against them, and the result of the proceedings taken. Further, it was provided that upon the issuance of a certificate by the Home Secretary to the effect that during the year a police force had been kept in a state of efficiency in point of numbers and discipline, the Treasury would pay a grant amounting to not more than one-fourth of the cost of its pay and clothing.

Empowered by the Police Act of 1919 to issue regulations as to the government, mutual aid, pay, allowances, pensions, clothing, expenses, and conditions of service of the members of all police forces within England and Wales, the Secretary of State acquired an important means of controlling borough forces, means somewhat comparable to those provided for county forces by the County Police Act of 1839. Today a draft of the regulations, prior to being set in motion, must be submitted to a council consisting of the joint central committee of the Police Federation or a deputation from that body and representatives of the chief officers of police and police authorities. Before granting final approval to the regulations, the Secretary must consider any counter-proposals suggested by the council. Today, the regulations issued by the Secretary of State in pursuance of this law constitute a pamphlet of more than thirty closely printed pages and treat in a comprehensive fashion of a wide range of subject matter: the designation of ranks for each local force, the conditions governing the appointment of candidates to a police force, the appointment of a chief officer, the publication and administration of a code of discipline, rules governing promotion, hours of duty, leave of absence, maintenance of personal records, rates of pay, allowances, clothing, and equipment.

Under the present regulations the Secretary of State must in each case extend to the local authority specific sanction for the following: Authorization of maximum strength of the several ranks in each force; appointment to the post of chief officer; modification of the provisions of a code of offences against discipline; establishment

of the scale of pay for inspectors, superintendents, and chief constable for each force; and stipulation of the amounts and conditions of payment of allowances. A flood of correspondence relating to the observance of the conditions laid down in the regulations moves between the Home Office and the county and borough police authorities and their chief constables. Every year appear scores of carefully prepared circulars concerning the many and diverse phases of police activity. To these documents the police authorities attach great importance, and invariably views expressed therein are acted upon.

THE POLICE INSPECTORATE

At present, a small corps of Inspectors working under the administrative direction of the Secretary of State for the Home Department performs the inspection of the county and county borough police forces in England and Wales. Within the Home Office are three divisions concerned with police affairs, one of which is charged with police inspection. The area of England and Wales is divided into four districts with each Inspector holding the responsibility for inspection of the forces in the district assigned to him. One of the four Inspectors thus engaged has been designated Chief Inspector of Constabulary but continues to serve in a capacity similar to that of his colleagues. Frequent changes have been imposed upon the composition of the inspection districts in recent years. Today the four districts contain fifty counties whose forces have an actual strength of 26,889 men and women and whose population is estimated at 22,748,200, and seventy-two county boroughs whose aggregate strength is 18,630 and whose population totals an estimated 12,650,587.² The Inspectors of Constabulary have their headquarters at the Home Office in Whitehall and travel about the districts by train or motor car. The expanding use of women by both rural and urban forces has resulted in the recent appointment of a woman officer to serve as Assistant Inspector of Constabulary.

Since its creation in 1856 the position of Inspector of Constabulary has been occupied by men who, with one or two exceptions, have been persons possessing unusual talents and abilities and who prior to their appointment had made substantial contributions in the public service. A perusal of existing personnel records made in 1949 revealed that of the twenty-two Inspectors fifteen had, prior to the acceptance of their posts, held commissions in the British army, one at the rank of Major-General and another as a Lieutenant-General. Seventeen Inspectors possessed extensive administrative experience in police affairs, having been employed as chief constables in county, county borough, or borough forces. Excluding those men now holding office, the average length of employment has been in excess of twelve years, the shortest term being two years and the longest, twenty-seven years. As members of the permanent Civil Service the Inspectors are subject to the customary regulations pertaining to recruitment, compensation, conditions of service, and retirement.

HOW INSPECTIONS ARE CONDUCTED

Inspectors arrange visits to the county and county borough forces at least once each year and, when necessary, at more frequent intervals. The date on which the

² *Report of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary for the Year Ended the 30th September, 1951* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1952), pp. 32-33.

formal annual inspection is to take place is determined by the Home Office in consultation with the Inspectors, and each local police authority is notified well in advance. From the Home Office, each chief constable receives a form to be used in summarizing important factual information pertaining to the organization and operation of the police force during the past year. This information, which is carefully prepared at the local constabulary headquarters and forwarded to the Inspector prior to his arrival, is of invaluable assistance to him during the inspection, for guided by this preliminary report he is able to spot any crucial deficiencies which may exist and which require investigation. The make-up of these pre-inspection reports varies from year to year. In recent years information pertaining to a diversity of subject matter has been requested: Strength and distribution of the county or county borough forces; use of uniformed women police; the organization and operation of borough or county training programs; promotions effected during the year; maintenance of discipline; significant work of the criminal investigation division; operation of the traffic department, including the administration of the driving school and the accident prevention program; improvements perfected in the system of internal communications; planning and construction of police housing; alterations and additions to station buildings and other structures; and so forth.

Upon arrival at the county or county borough police headquarters, the Inspector formally reviews the force, usually during the first day of the inspection period. An effort is generally made to secure the attendance of the joint committee or the watch committee, as the case may be, but these bodies do not always respond. Frequently, however, the special constables are present and pass in review along with the regular members of the force. Interested citizens turn out in considerable numbers and are thus afforded an opportunity to observe their own police while on parade.

Following the initial formalities, less spectacular but more important phases of the inspection dominate the scene. Touring the county or county borough, the Inspector next examines not only the administrative offices, crime detection laboratories, officers' quarters, lock-ups, machine shops, and other headquarters premises, but also visits the various divisional stations. In the counties he attempts to confer with the constables in the rural areas who are working alone. If the county is a large one, the Inspector will usually find time only for an examination of headquarters with a stop at two or three of the divisions. Examining the books and records which the police maintain, he is principally concerned with things of a non-fiscal nature. Although the District Auditor of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government examines the financial accounts of the counties, including those relating to police expenditures, the Inspector will question any phase of the fiscal operations which directly affects the efficiency of the force. He may, selecting crime reports, converse with individual constables and through questioning inquire into the series of actions which led to the preparation of these reports. Or he may request an officer to describe his previous court action and then examine his notebook in order to verify the action taken. Discussions about current trends in the incidence of crime may be held with the senior detective officers. If a local authority is contemplating the introduction of a new scheme or project, the chief constable frequently checks the details of the proposal with the Inspector before attempting to secure the approval of the Home Office. Consultation concerning matters of this nature may occur during the period of the

regular annual inspection or may necessitate a special visit by the Inspector. The duration of a regular annual inspection varies, depending upon the size of the police force, the area over which it is dispersed, the complexity of the problem requiring the Inspector's attention, and other factors.

In addition to their customary annual visits, the Inspectors frequently call at the headquarters of the county or county borough forces for the purpose of advising and conferring with the chief constables and the police authorities. Problems arise during the year which require immediate attention. A watch committee may wish to increase the size of its authorized establishment, and in order to do so, must secure Home Office sanction. Frequently, the chief constable takes the matter up with the Inspector prior to making the necessary application. If this procedure is not observed, the Inspector may be sent from London to investigate. Inspectors' suggestions are almost invariably accepted by the chief constables and the police authorities, although in a few instances it has been necessary for the Home Office to threaten to withhold the grant in order to secure compliance.

INQUIRIES

Under the provisions of the Police Appeals Act of 1927 and the Police Act of 1943, a member of a police force who is dismissed by his chief constable or required to resign or be reduced in rank or pay is entitled to submit an appeal to the Home Secretary who directs the holding of an inquiry unless it appears that the case is of such a nature that it can be properly disposed of without the taking of oral evidence. For inquiry purposes, the Secretary is instructed to appoint either one person or several individuals. In any event, one representative must be a person with experience in police administration. In most instances the Home Secretary directs one of the Inspectors to hold the inquiry either alone or with the assistance of a barrister. During the proceedings which customarily take place in the county or county borough, the Inspector may require any person to attend as a witness and give evidence or produce documents in his possession which relate to any phase of the appeal and which, under the law, are subject to examination in a court. The Secretary of State receives a report containing the findings of the inquiry, and after considering the accompanying recommendations is empowered either to allow the appeal, dismiss it entirely, or vary the punishment by substituting another penalty which the local disciplinary authority could have originally inflicted. In recent years Inspectors have been induced to hold inquiries concerning matters pertaining to the efficiency of the local forces. A complaint alleging favoritism or unfair treatment may be lodged against the chief constable by a member of the police force, and at the request of the joint committee or the watch committee the Inspector may go out from London to conduct an inquiry. After receiving the subsequent report, the police authority embarks upon appropriate action. This type of inquiry is not provided for by Parliamentary enactment, but is in the nature of a service rendered by the Home Office.

POLICE TRAINING

The last German war plane had scarcely been cleared from the skies over Europe before the British government began to give serious consideration to the solution of some of the more urgent law enforcement problems deriving from the war. In con-

sidering plans of county and borough forces for the return of the men from the services and for the recruitment of additional constables to augment their insufficient numbers, both central and local government officials recognized that the existing training schools, operated by the larger local authorities, were totally inadequate for the burden to be imposed. In 1945 a committee composed of representatives of the Home Office, His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, and the chief officers of police held extended discussions and finally agreed upon the adoption of a scheme whereby the Secretary of State would assume responsibility for the initial training of all police recruits. Under the new plan, centrally controlled residential training schools were to be established. Foremost to be dealt with were the immediate difficulties such as provision for adequate housing, assembling of a competent instructional staff, and the devising of a satisfactory curriculum. In January, 1946, the first Police Training Centre opened its doors to men and women selected locally for probationary entrance into the service, and provided initially a thirteen weeks' basic course in police duties, law, and procedure. During the year ended September 30, 1951, eight centres were in operation; 3,740 men and women successfully completed the basic program, and 4,240 took an additional two weeks advanced course.³

At the present time, the four Inspectors are intimately concerned with the operation of the training centres and frequently attend the meetings of the management committees of chief constables which have been appointed for each of the schools and are responsible for their administration. The Inspectors' role has been one of consultation and encouragement, for in addition to assisting in the detailed planning which was required prior to the launching of the scheme, they have made frequent visits to the centres and have participated in inaugural and graduation parades. Specialized training programs developed by the larger county and county boroughs also have commanded their attention.

The opening of the Police College at Ryton-on-Dunsmore in June, 1948, marked another important step in the development of an effective well-rounded training program for the police officers of England and Wales. In spite of the initial difficulty encountered in finding suitable premises, the delays attendant upon the selection of the commandant and the instructional staff, and the time involved in the preparation of syllabus, excellent progress has been made in providing advanced instruction for officers of intermediate ranks who prior to entrance to the college have been carefully selected for provisional promotion by their respective police authorities. The inspectors have assisted in the work of planning for the establishment of the college and are frequent visitors to its campus for the purpose of advising the commandant and the instructional staff and, upon occasion, delivering lectures dealing with those aspects of police administration with which they have had extensive experience. One of the Inspectors is a member of the Board of Governors, half of whose members are nominated by the Home Secretary and the other half by the police authorities who share in the control of the college and in the expenses incurred.

The use of women for police duties began during the Great War of 1914-1918 when Miss Damer Dawson in the early months of the struggle inaugurated the Women

³ *Report of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary for the Year Ended 30th September, 1951* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1952), p. 11.

Police Volunteers, a body of professional women dedicated to the full-time discharge of law enforcement tasks. Although suffering an initial decline at the end of the war the number of women serving with county and borough forces has slowly increased, and today their ranks count more than one thousand uniformed personnel.⁴ It was not, however, until 1945 that the work of policewomen came to be recognized as of sufficient importance to warrant the appointment of a special staff officer to assist His Majesty's Inspectors. In making her rounds this officer now designated as an Assistant Inspector of Constabulary, gives special attention to questions of discipline and morale and is available for individual consultation. One of her principal responsibilities at present is to encourage the chief constables to utilize women for the performance of a wider range of police duties.

GRANTS-IN-AID

The extension of central government subventions to local police authorities was initially authorized by the County and Borough Police Act of 1856—in amount, not to exceed one-fourth of the cost of pay and clothing of both county and borough forces. In 1874 the limitation upon the amount which could be paid by the central government was removed, and the determination of the size of the grant was left entirely to the discretion of the Treasury. The receipt of a grant was dependent upon the issuance by the Home Secretary of a certificate asserting that the police force had, during the previous year, been maintained by the local authority in a state of efficiency in point of numbers and discipline. Dissatisfaction with the heterogeneous and unsystematic character of the entire grant-in-aid system gradually increased until, in 1888, a thorough revision and consolidation was effected. The Local Government Act of that year discontinued grants paid in support of a number of local functions, including those for county and borough police, and in their place provided that certain revenues be set aside for exclusive use by local authorities and that they be placed by these local authorities in an Exchequer Contribution Account. Sums amounting to one-half the cost of pay and clothing could be withdrawn for police purposes. No further changes were effected in the system until 1919 when the Police Act adopted in that year increased the grant to counties and boroughs for police purposes to one-half the total net approved expenditure. Payments for police superannuation provided for under the Police Pensions Act, 1921, were to be approved only upon certification by the Secretary of State that the management and efficiency of the force had been satisfactory. With the passage of the Local Government Act in 1929, the statutory grants authorized by the Act of 1856 and the Act of 1921 ceased to be payable, and were to be replaced after March 31, 1930, by a general non-statutory grant equal to one-half of the total net approved expenditure and administered by the Home Office. The certificate of efficiency is now no longer a requirement since Her Majesty's Inspectors must only indicate in their annual reports to the Secretary of State that the forces they have inspected during the year are, in their opinion, efficient.

⁴ For a description of the origin and development of the employment of women for police duties see E. H. GLOVER, *THE ENGLISH POLICE* (London: Police Chronicle, 1934), pp. 111-21.

RESULTS OF INSPECTION

The English system of police control combines a number of advantages, principal among which is its compatibility with the traditional autonomy of the local government authorities. The police committees in each county and borough have been stimulated and encouraged to perform their statutory duties within the framework of local responsibility and initiative. For almost one hundred years, the Home Office has supervised the organization and operation of the local police forces and has succeeded in slowly raising their level of efficiency without simultaneously arousing the deepseated national antipathy to a centrally controlled police. Nor has the Home Office been elevated to a position of supreme police authority as were the ministries of interior in some continental countries. What the police statutes really do is to empower the central government to insist upon a standard of competence for the forces of the entire nation. An effort is made to determine whether the police machinery is in good working order and capable of meeting any demands which may be made upon it in an emergency. Should the Home Office be dissatisfied with some aspect of the organization and operation of a force, the Minister himself has no power to remedy the deficiency by direct action. The matter is dealt with through correspondence between the chief constable or police authority and the Home Office, or an Inspector is sent from London to grapple with the problem at first-hand. Suggestions are made, which, if ignored, are followed by admonitions. If the question at issue is of a serious nature, hints may be dropped that unless corrective action is taken, the annual grant will not be forthcoming. The mere intimation of the withdrawal of a grant is usually all that is needed to induce the desired change. In only a few instances has the Secretary in recent years found it necessary actually to withhold the grant. Since the cost of the police services in Britain is relatively high, no county or county borough could for long afford to sustain the loss of the 50 per cent subsidy. An outcry from the rate-payers would be immediately audible.

Effective evaluation of the work of the Inspectors of Constabulary poses a difficult problem. Success would seem to depend upon the finding of satisfactory answers to at least two questions. First, what advance has been made since the year 1856 in progressively improving the competence and efficiency of the forces in Britain and Wales? In other words, what are the positive results of the centralized system of control? The annual reports of the Inspectors and the minutes of evidence published by the Royal Commissions which have been appointed to consider various aspects of the British police system are replete with factual information and evidence providing an extremely gratifying answer to this first question. And secondly, what are the causes of such a marked development in police administration? Unfortunately, the causes of the steady growth and improvement in effectiveness of the forces are not easily isolated. They involve not only the provision for a substantial subvention from the central government and the ever present possibility of its loss, but also the issuance and enforcement of the detailed regulations by the Home Office in pursuance of the powers given to the Secretary of State by the Police Act of 1919, as well as the influence of the Inspectors who are constantly visiting the local authorities, conferring with chief constables and committee members, and spreading through suggestion and counsel the gospel of effective police management.

Let us consider now in some detail the first question—what have been the results of the centralized control system? At the close of their first year of operation under the new system, insufficiency of strength, deficiencies in discipline and leadership, and lack of adequate equipment and physical facilities still characterized many of the county and borough forces. The visits of the newly appointed Inspectors resulted in the naming of six county constabularies and forty-seven city, town, and borough forces as inefficient and therefore not eligible for payments from the national Treasury.⁵ While inspections conducted in 1858 revealed that considerable improvement had been achieved, nevertheless the police forces of one county and fifty-one other authorities failed to rise to the necessary standards. And these figures do not accurately reflect the true condition of the British police prior to the passage of the County and Borough Police Act in 1856, for the justices and the watch committees had by this time already responded to the encouragement and counsel offered by the Inspectors. The inefficiency of the forces which were in existence during that period must have been notorious judging from the testimony presented in the report of the Royal Commission on Police Forces published in 1839 and from the findings of the Select Commission of 1852–53. The steady reduction in the number of local police forces, which the Inspectors judged to have fallen short of the minimum required standard of efficiency, took place in the years which followed. In 1860 one county and thirty-two boroughs were reported inefficient and ineligible for the subvention; in 1865 no counties and twenty-six boroughs were thus reported; in 1875 one county and eleven boroughs were excluded. After 1890 the forces unfavorably reported totaled only one or two each year and in many instances all were declared efficient.

The fact remains, however, that the true significance of this reported increase in the efficiency of local police forces is dependent upon the character of the standard of measurement utilized. Did the Inspectors during this period of almost one hundred years apply an absolute standard in arriving at their judgements? Or did they attempt over a period of time to raise or lower the requirements demanded of the local police? It is difficult, if not altogether impossible, to provide conclusive answers to these questions. One may begin by examining the actual strength of all forces in England and Wales in 1856 and in selected years down to 1951, observing that the population per constable declined from 1,784 persons per constable in 1856 to 695 persons per constable in 1951. This downward trend in population per constable may be explained in part by the changes which have taken place in the conditions of service—reduction in the number of hours worked per week, and the provisions for full pay during holiday periods. But perhaps the most important single cause has been the growing demand by the public for a higher standard of police protection, particularly evident since the termination of World War I. Increased authorized strength of the police forces has been the object of sustained Inspectoral effort since the earliest days. While it must be admitted that an increase in numerical strength of the forces does not in itself constitute an index of rising police efficiency, such an increase, when coupled with modern technological developments in transportation and communication, is generally believed to yield improved police competency. Furthermore, the advent of the

⁵ *Reports of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary for the Year Ended the 29th September, 1857* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1858). No specific page reference can be given.

high-speed prowl car and the perfection of the wireless, accompanied by the development of modern finger-print detection, have enhanced the usefulness of the individual law-enforcement officer.

Actually, a cardinal principle of Home Office policy has been a determined effort to exact from county and borough forces a degree of competence which is constantly experiencing upward revision. A mere perusal of the printed annual reports of the Inspectors will convince the reader that these officers have continually sought to implement this objective. When in 1919 provision was made for issuing and enforcing detailed regulations governing the operations of each force, a much greater degree of control was secured. The standard of efficiency currently being applied has reached all time heights—for not only have the number of independent forces been further reduced through the elimination of the non-county borough police in 1946, but two additional Inspectors, an Assistant Inspector, and two staff officers have been appointed, thus bringing the Home Office into closer relationship with the remaining authorities.

To discover and properly evaluate the various causes of this substantial increase in the efficiency of county and borough forces in a more complex and difficult challenge. There are perhaps those who believe that the passage of the Act of 1856 and the enactment of subsequent legislation had little or no precise effect, but that the discussion which they activated provided merely the main leavening force, and that since the natural course of events was moving in a progressive direction, improvement would have come without legislation. While it is true that conditions accompanying the development of the industrial revolution in England led the people to recognize the need for more effective police protection, it is unlikely that much would have been done to improve the existing police system by local authorities acting on their own initiative. If improvement might have been achieved without central control, why then did not reform begin after the acts of 1835 and 1839?

Subventions from the national government constitute an important feature of the system of central direction. If the Parliament in 1856 had authorized the payment of funds from the Treasury without requiring a certificate from the Secretary of State, it is exceedingly doubtful if the desired improvements would have taken place. While there were some localities that were stimulated to activity simply by government aid, it seems probable that in the majority of cases sums received would have been applied to lowering the rates instead of increasing efficiency. The local indifference and apathy which prevailed were too strong to be overcome by mere gifts with no conditions attached. Seventeen years had elapsed from the time that the conditions were actually portrayed and a solution proposed until remedial legislation was placed on the statute books. How many more years might have been required to arouse sufficient interest by purely moral and educational means? Even today it is questionable whether the use of subsidies alone would insure the necessary uniformity and efficiency among the police forces in England and Wales. Nor would the issuance by the Secretary of State of comprehensive regulations concerning the government and management of local police forces in itself contribute much toward the accomplishment of the desired objectives, unless accompanied by central subsidy and inspection. Police regulations admittedly are an exceedingly useful adjunct to the work of the Inspectors, but they

do not constitute the centrality of the system of control as exercised by the Home Office.

The work of Inspectors of Constabulary may be considered the keystone in the entire structure of central supervision and control. The Inspectors provide the Secretary of State with a type of central intelligence—they move about among the county and county borough forces, conversing with members of the police committees and conferring with chief constables, observing on-the-spot the actual functioning of the police, and then report back to their superiors in Whitehall concerning a wide range of details relating to the efficient operation of the forces within their respective districts. Their recommendations largely determine the extension or withholding of the Treasury grant. However, their role is not thus narrowly confined to reporting to the central ministry. The individual Inspectors have down through the years exercised a more positive and direct influence upon the administration of local constabularies. Information pertaining to the utilization of new techniques and methods in the solution of many common problems is disseminated by them to chief constables and to members of police committees. Suggestions and encouragement are extended at formal inspections, special visits, and at district and central conferences. The part played by the Inspectors in the training of recruits at the Police Training Centres and of senior officers at the Police College is of the utmost importance. In short, the Inspectors, through their day-to-day activities, supply the positive and dynamic elements in the system of central control. In the years to come the duties of H. M. Inspectors are likely to increase in number and complexity, for the national government appears to be committed to a policy of extending its responsibility for the maintenance of a highly efficient nationwide police network.