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RECOMMENDATIONS BASED UPON A STUDY OF POLICE CADET PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES

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The pragmatic philosophy underlying the basis for the suggestions in this paper should be mentioned at the start. The guidelines developed are based upon an examination of two major reasons stated by police agencies for establishment of cadet programs. A study for the Office of Law Enforcement Assistance¹ revealed that somewhat less than half of the agencies with a program indicated that its potential as a recruitment technique was a major reason for its adoption. Experience, both qualitative and quantitative, is too limited to prove or disprove the validity of this belief; however, the hard data at the time of the study are:

- Thirty-two departments (out of ninety-two) have a cadet program;
- Seventy per cent of all cadet programs have been in existence for five years or less;
- The number of cadets hired since inception of the programs is 2,265;
- The number of regular patrolmen appointed from all sources (in the same period) is 12,230;
- The number of cadets that became regular patrolmen is 734;
- The number of cadets that left the department after appointment as regular patrolmen is 96, leaving a net of 638 still active as patrolmen.

These figures hardly provide the basis for a cogent argument that cadet programs are a significant recruitment device. Furthermore, a fundamental point must be raised concerning the responsibility of the federal government in meeting manpower needs of local police. Even if the answer to this hypothesis is unequivocally positive, a relevant

question that follows is whether the establishment of a cadet program can be an efficient method of recruitment. On the other hand, if a superior type of policeman is consistently obtained through this device, even though it lacks efficiency, a serious argument is possible for the support of cadet programs. The available facts resulting from the OLEA survey indicate that only 18 of 184 cadets were promoted to supervisory rank after they became patrolmen and were eligible for promotion. It is difficult to develop enthusiasm for the advocacy of cadet programs as a recruitment device since those now in existence have not produced superior police personnel.

The second major reason prompting police agencies to adopt cadet programs is that they may serve as a source of potential leaders. While the reported data do not presently support this view, the question must be raised: Is it possible to establish a program which will produce command personnel? Any recommendations must also consider a possible change in emphasis on the role of police in modern society—a subject of concern to the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice. Some emerging trends are clearly evident. The patrolman, as well as the police administrator of the future, will be judged to a great extent by his ability to make and effect decisions. Another factor to be considered is the necessary academic education which a policeman should possess to fulfill his new role; certainly, higher education can be an influential factor in the development of suitable attributes. Also inherent in this discussion is the respective value and place of a liberal arts education versus professional training. Reflection on this question quickly leads to a

¹ OSTERBERG, J. W., TRUBITT, H. J. AND MYREN, R. A., *Cadet Programs: An Innovative Change?*, 58, J. CRIM. LAW, CRIMINOL., AND POL. SCI., 112 (1967).

consideration of the objectives of the two-year, four-year, and graduate programs in police education. At present it is possible to characterize these programs in the following manner: junior college, vocationally oriented; baccalaureate programs, culturally oriented; graduate programs, interdisciplinary specialization or professionally oriented. From this observation it is apparent that future potential leaders are best obtained from among graduates of baccalaureate or graduate programs. Although not directly related to cadet programs, it seems appropriate to suggest that the Government (LEAA) give some consideration to substantial scholarship support for majors in departments of police administration and the like. A college student's commitment to police work is indicated by his choice of major subject. Under the circumstances, he is more likely to enter law enforcement ultimately as a career than would be the average major in the other social sciences. It is for this reason that financial support for police majors is recommended in particular rather than support across the board for social science majors. For cadet programs intended to produce future leaders, it seems reasonable that any support should be given to those police agencies which encourage cadets to obtain at least a baccalaureate degree. However, we live in a practical world where the optimism displayed in the suggestions above is perhaps unwarranted.

Under these circumstances an interim set of recommendations has been prepared and is attached to these introductory remarks. They assume that the police field must learn to crawl before it can take the giant step toward requirement of a baccalaureate degree as a condition of leadership in police work.

It is hoped that the Government (LEAA) will take a long-range view and will strongly support graduation from college with a four-year degree as the objective over the next two decades. Of course, the ultimate goal must be the requirement of a graduate degree, at least for those who aspire to leadership of a police agency twenty-five years from now.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Recommendation I. THE RATIONALE OF THE CADET PROGRAM SHOULD BE DETERMINED AND STATED CLEARLY BY EACH DEPARTMENT.

It is axiomatic that any activity must have a well-defined goal if its success is to be measured.

The results of the survey for OLEA indicated that too many departments assign too many conflicting goals to their cadet programs. Unless a program is very carefully structured, it cannot produce personnel of high quality who are potential leaders and at the same time provide for the quantitative requirements of general recruitment. The basic choice then in any program must be made between *quality* and *quantity*.

Use of a cadet program as a major personnel source suggests that an apprenticeship system of policing is being established. In addition to being undesirable per se, it ill-behooves law enforcement to forment apprenticeship systems when the stated desire of the field is achievement of professional status rather than that of a skilled trade.

Recommendation II. USE OF A CADET PROGRAM AS A DEVICE FOR OBTAINING POTENTIAL LEADERS SHOULD BE DRAMATICALLY ENCOURAGED.

It is quite apparent to informed persons that executive and leadership talent in police service is not being nurtured systematically. A cadet program must properly be viewed as a vehicle to interest young men in the field with the specific purpose of preparing them for roles of leadership and not just to meet present needs for patrolmen.

Guideline II A. A FIRM POSITION ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN CONJUNCTION WITH SERVICE SHOULD BE ENUNCIATED BY EACH DEPARTMENT.

Wide variation in the relationship of education to work exists in present programs. This is attributable, in part, to the availability of local educational facilities and, in larger measure, to the ambivalent rationale underlying the formulation of the cadet program. If a program is designed to cultivate potential leaders for the department, the role of education vis-a-vis work experience should be carefully articulated and college education not only should be encouraged but supported financially.

Guideline II B. HOURS OF DEPARTMENTAL EMPLOYMENT SHOULD BE REDUCED WITH A CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AND REQUIREMENTS.

The exact proportion of higher education to work can be adjusted to local situations; however, greater stress should be placed on the academic experience by attaching considerable importance to it and by allowing adequate time for its acquisition.

This can best be achieved by a realistic work-school schedule; anything other than this simply produces a moonlighting student or a moonlighting police employee.

Guideline II C. CADETS ADMITTED TO A LEADERSHIP-ORIENTED PROGRAM SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AND TREATED AS CADET-STUDENTS RATHER THAN AS WORK-APPRENTICES OR NEOPHYTES.

The hallmark of a cadet in the classical sense is that he is destined for a leadership role rather than service in the entrance grade. Accordingly, the success of a cadet program will depend on interest and activity continuing far beyond the cadet experience. The entire career-management pattern of the man after appointment as a police officer must be under review. This necessitates treating cadet personnel as "men apart" and subsequently arranging affairs to insure that leadership potential is recognized and developed as quickly as possible. Obviously, great changes in present police personnel thinking will be necessary but such changes are imperative if a leadership class is to be established. Both the individual and the department should be clearly aware that the man was groomed for greater responsibility. He should be able to move into it as quickly as possible without obstruction by unnecessary barriers of tenure, residence, and so on. Lateral transfer from department to department is a necessary correlate of this career concept.

Guideline II D. CADET-JOB ASSIGNMENTS IN LEADERSHIP-ORIENTED PROGRAMS MUST BE MADE WITH AN EYE TOWARD PROVIDING WORK IN TASKS HAVING LONG-RANGE EDUCATIVE VALUE.

Mastery of clerical skills in a given assignment should not be the hallmark of a cadet's performance in a job, nor should jobs be assigned in the erroneous belief that it is cheaper to have cadet perform them. Job rotation should be planned for its long-range informative value rather than merely for the sake of exposure to a variety of tasks.

The bulk of cadet duties is essentially clerical in nature; however, it must be emphasized that the cadet is assigned to the task for the observation of the functions of the agency on an overview basis rather than to acquire competence in a given position. Under this philosophy, assignment should be made only to operations that provide a good vantage point for a rounded view of departmental operations and a proper understanding of the police function.

Guideline II E. A CADET'S STATUS AS A STUDENT LARGELY DETERMINES HIS STATUS IN THE CADET PROGRAM.

The student's academic achievement should be directly related to his status as a departmental employee, i.e., cadets in academic difficulty are to be considered marginal in departmental eyes despite good duty performance records, and cadets who fail academic work should be considered for removal from the cadet corps. This procedure will place proper emphasis upon the academic portion of the cadet position. If the police cadet is to be a member of an elite group, his intellectual abilities must be above reproach, and the setting of high academic standards emphasizes this aim. A position in the upper third or quarter in scholastic standing is feasible for a cadet corps worthy of elite status. To permit anything less than this standard is to condone poor scholarship which denigrates the entire value of the educational alliance required of cadets.

Guideline II F. OFFICERS APPOINTED FROM THE CADET PROGRAM SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO CONTINUE THEIR FORMAL ACADEMIC CAREERS TO COMPLETION OF AN APPROPRIATE DEGREE.

The process of formal education does not end automatically upon appointment as a police officer or upon attainment of majority. The same reasons for cultivating leadership through breadth of education apply in post-cadet career activities as well. Certainly, it will serve the best interests of both the department and the individual if he receives the highest possible formal education. Departmental encouragement of this goal should be openly manifested. This may take the form of partial subsidization of educational costs, adjustment of duty schedules to permit class attendance, and through a requirement of some specific educational achievement as a precondition for promotion.

Recommendation III. THE TRANSITION FROM CADET TO POLICE OFFICER SHOULD BE MADE AS SIMPLE AND AUTOMATIC AS POSSIBLE UPON ATTAINING MAJORITY.

The transitional point in the career of a cadet generally occurs at age twenty-one or shortly thereafter. Departments should encourage career continuation by reducing as much as possible any formalities or reapplication procedures that are required at this point. If the cadet entered the service with the expectation that policing was his career,

the transfer of status should be given the appearance of a graduation rather than an abrupt entry into an essentially new career. Nothing should be done to encourage the thought that the cadet was employed for any purpose other than to become a police officer and that this would occur as a matter of course providing his performance was satisfactory as a cadet.

Recommendation IV. FEDERAL SUPPORT UNDER THE OMNIBUS CRIME CONTROL AND SAFE STREETS ACT OF 1968 (P.L.90-351) TO CADET PROGRAMS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO PROGRAMS THAT ARE INNOVATIVE AND THAT MEET THE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES ESTABLISHED ABOVE.

Direct subsidy of large numbers of cadet pro-

grams, simply because they have made application for support, will not help the national police problem. Across the board distribution of meager funds to applicant agencies only dissipates the available resources. In fact, such indiscriminate largess may harm law enforcement inasmuch as the final effect can be merely the subsidization of teen-age manpower pools inside police departments unless there is some assurance that the critical need for long-range leadership in police service will be met. In addition, mass employment of youth is now being conducted by several other federal agencies and LEAA activity in this field would be essentially meaningless to the economy and detrimental to the primary clientele of LEAA—agencies in need of aid in many areas of law enforcement.