

1958

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Recommended Citation

Fred Hess, Police Training--Small Communities, 49 J. Crim. L. Criminology & Police Sci. 75 (1958-1959)

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POLICE SCIENCE

POLICE TRAINING—SMALL COMMUNITIES

FRED HESS

Fred Hess was appointed Chief of Police, Bloomfield, New Jersey in 1953 after twenty-five years of service as a member of the Bloomfield Police Department. He is a graduate of the National Police Academy and former Chairman of the Examining Board, State Patrolman's Benevolent Association, a board which assists with promotional examinations in many police departments throughout the state. Chief Hess is President of the Essex County Association of Chiefs of Police and Vice President of the New Jersey association. This article was presented at the Sixth Annual Conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Honolulu, T.H., last October.—EDITOR

Scanning the records of the post-war years since 1945, we find our society more complex. The increase in population, coupled with the great strides in the advancement of transportation facilities, is daily altering and expanding the problems of our office. Small communities (that heretofore knew personally their every family's ancestry, weakness and difficulties), are now faced with many new problems that daily "roll" into their jurisdiction, on wheels of the modern engineers.

With this progressiveness, we find ourselves with situations that require versatile leadership. A practical and academic understanding and know-how are expected of us in any emergency, as well as the use and application of modern equipment. The average citizen, unaware of the effect of the slashed budgets and economies have on our operations, are of the opinion that we have at our disposal, the same facilities available to Dragnet's Sergeant Friday and Frank Smith. This is not true of the small community. For the efficient execution of the varied demands placed upon our office today, we require *trained personnel*.

We, in law enforcement, being affected by the rapidly changing scene of our profession, are thoroughly aware of the avenues of assistance available to the modern criminal; including vast wealth and superior scientific equipment. No longer can the welfare of our safety permit the only requirement of a law enforcement officer to be a badge, a nightstick, and a gun. We can say "Gone Forever" to the days when the law enforcement officer's knowledge was probably accidental if he knew statutory law, or rules of evidence, or constitutional guarantees of the individual. Today he must be in accurate possession of, and conversant

with, the facts. In our republic where there is a social control of government by law—the symbol of such government by law—is the law enforcement officer. It is his primary function to enforce the law, and it is our responsibility to insure that he is fully equipped and prepared to accomplish the task.

Because of the complexities surrounding us today, the role of the policeman merits special attention. We must recognize that his role has become more professionalized and specialized. His desire to accumulate vast knowledge in specialized fields of our profession, is assisting us in our constant search for new ideas, methods, and techniques. We find we rely upon these specialists to assist when decisions must be made on subjects we have not had the opportunity to pursue and therefore know relatively little about.

Police service may well not be considered as a profession until such times as well developed training programs are provided for the police that are comparable to those that prepare persons for the recognized professions—such as law. Traditionally, our police departments have been indifferent to the necessity of training. This is largely accountable to the fact that the training responsibility would fall upon the individual local police departments. Many do not have the extensive needs nor the facilities to carry on any worthwhile program of this sort. (Police training to be effective, must be available to the rank and file and not exclusively to a select group of leaders.)

In an effort to overcome this attitude, the Chiefs of Police of the twenty-two municipalities comprising Essex County, New Jersey, recognized that in order to cope with the ever increasing challenge

of society, well trained personnel would be an absolute necessity. The training facilities available to local police departments were not of a scope to adequately meet the dire need for the training of new men that had joined our forces since the end of the "Great War". We were interested in the transfer of techniques from the experienced to the inexperienced and from one force to another. The satisfying of the needs and the means of a systematic police training program was our prime concern.

On February 15, 1955, "The Association of Chiefs of Police of Essex County, New Jersey" was organized. Twenty-two Chiefs of Police of the local municipalities, the County Prosecutor and his Chief of Detectives, County Sheriff, and Chief of Sheriff's Detectives, Chief of the County Park Police, and the District Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, comprised our membership.

The goal of the organization was (1) closer relationship with all departments; (2) protective welfare of the public; (3) elevate the standards of the police profession; and (4) to promote police efficiency in general. Our present concern is with that phase dealing with the promotion of police efficiency.

It was agreed by the members of the Association that a police academy was of dire necessity and that we would take the necessary steps to establish such a facility for the specific purpose of providing police training to the personnel of all the municipal police departments of our Essex County, in a unified and systematic manner.

To assist in finding the proper measures to develop this endeavor, we invited for conference, trained and experienced authorities from the fields of education, military service law enforcement. Their eagerness and avid desire to assist us was outstanding. Years of tried and tested methods were generously imparted, and we received their full cooperation far beyond our greatest expectations. Leaders in other fields where problems presented themselves, and which we were not able to meet, were likewise cooperative and even went so far as to assemble in bodies to conscientiously solve the problems confronting us.

After many months of careful investigation and compilation of teaching material solicited from Police Academies throughout the nation, a six weeks "Basic Police Training" course was formulated. Naturally, there were obstacles to be sur-

mounted. Providing qualified instructors, instruction material, classroom, training quarters, and last but not at all *least*—finances. Again, the outside agencies could assist.

Police personnel throughout the county were carefully selected to attend a special "Instructor's Course" which our County Vocational School System volunteered to give to start us on our way. At the completion of the detailed training these men received, they were well qualified in the art of instruction to impart the selected material to be offered our classes. Thus, our instructor problem was solved.

As to the site for suitable quarters for the academy, we are most grateful to the New Jersey National Guard for making available to us their training armory for the holding of our classroom periods and firearms training. Their interest in our training program was so receptive that they assigned high ranking officers to our faculty to give instruction on subjects such as "Riot Control". Further, they enrolled one officer to complete the prescribed course of the Academy.

The course covers as main subjects Government, Courts, Law, Police Organization, Patrol, Traffic, Search, Seizure and Arrest, Investigation and Interrogation, Self Defense and Prisoner Control, Firearms, First Aid, Departmental Coordination, Cooperating Law Enforcement Agencies, Relationship with the Public, Cooperating With Other Municipal Departments, Report Writing, and General. We also recognized, as members of the International Chief's Association have, the need for training in human relations. Instruction in Police Community Relations was incorporated in our program of study and are taught by members assigned from the New Jersey Regional Office of the National Conference of Christians & Jews.

The problem of finance was readily solved when the governing bodies of the participating municipalities agreed that all instructors would be permitted and also scheduled, to teach their subjects during the course of their regular working hours. Both the instructors and governing bodies agreed to this at no extra compensation.

The School System happily accepted to furnish all of our printing needs. We felt a Coordinator should be assigned for each session to assure a smoothness and effectiveness of operations. The Coordinator to be selected and assigned in the same manner as the instructors and preferably an officer of superior rank. Each participating law

enforcement agency to accept their turn in providing this Coordinator.

We now have approximately forty-five members of the faculty which includes law enforcement officers from the various agency levels; professional teachers from our educational system, engineers, psychologists, lawyers, judges, doctors and members of various municipal departments such as Welfare, Health and Revenue. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, thru their Director Mr. John Edgar Hoover (who, in my opinion, is the true founder of organized police training) assigned agents as instructors for the more technical subjects.

The "Basic Police Course" is held eight hours a day, five days per week for six weeks making a total of 240 hours of actual instruction received. The men attend the Academy in full uniform while on full pay from their respective municipality—thereby placing them under the direct jurisdiction of the Coordinator. To date we have concluded six sessions of our Basic Training Course; graduating a total of 150 men. The seventh session is scheduled to begin immediately following our International Conference.

The individual performance of an officer during this period does not go unrecognized. The officer attaining the highest academic average at the conclusion of the training period, is presented with the Sarah Metz Memorial Award, which is a Cobra Colt Revolver and which award is made possible

by Mr. Henry Metz, a private citizen vitally interested in the welfare of policemen.

Gradually, as our Basic Course progressed and functioned to our satisfaction, additional committees were appointed for the purpose of furnishing programs for advanced and specialized training. With the aid of the same agencies, we expanded our curriculum to offer specialized schooling in detective techniques and methods, photography, fingerprinting, and other desired sciences. We experienced the gratifying knowledge of our department members, imploring for the opportunity to attend sessions to further their education on subjects of their acute interest.

We have without a doubt benefited from our efforts in this field. Reports have been received from Chiefs of Police relating specific incidents where the training received at the Academy has protected their men from sustaining injury or possible loss of life. We are experiencing a beneficial upsurge in police performance. Our citizens have accepted the progress of our enforcement agencies and have come to insist upon it. As a result of the training we are rendering, we are confident the men are fully prepared to meet the demands of their stations.

In conclusion, we can simply say—the law enforcement officer in today's community has responsibilities which make professionalized training absolutely necessary. This merely to underscore the reasons why police schools, like this one described, are in existence together with schools of the F.B.I., Universities, and Academies.