STRATEGIES FOR POLICING

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Introduction

Police departments are prominent public organizations. There are more than 10,000 of them. " They employ about 500,000 people, and expend more than $10 billion annually to maintain their operations." But their prominence depends on more than economic scale and ubiquity they are the focus of our greatest hopes and fears for civil community life. When we fear criminal attack, we want the police to reassure and protect us. When we are desperate, injured, or indignant and have no private resources to aid us, we call on the police for assistance. Yet despite this reliance, deep in our consciousness is a profound mistrust of the authority and force that the police represent. Our traditions teach us that the greatest threat to freedom and well-being may be the state itself. When we are not using the police for our private purposes, then, we are apt to see them as the agents - perhaps even the architects - of state repression.

The prominence of police departments makes the "organizational strategies" that they pursue important to decent and effective governance. By "organizational strategy" we mean to suggest a conception that harmonizes three different aspects of the organization's institutional existence: 1) its substantive goals and purposes; 2) its sources of legitimacy and support; and 3) its characteristic mode of operation. Plausible strategies for police departments have been (or could be) built around: 1) "crime fighting" (the goal is controlling violent crime; legitimacy and support come

from the obligation to enforce the criminal law and widespread public concern about rising crime rates; and the characteristic mode of operation is uniformed motorized patrol backed up by plainclothes detectives); 2) "order maintenance" (the goal is to reduce fear associated with disorderliness on public streets; legitimacy and support are based largely on community sentiment against disorderliness: and characteristic modes of operation involve pro-active patrolling from autos or foot-patrol); 3) "emergency medical and social services" (substantive goal is to assist citizens in desperate circumstances without private resources to help them; support and legitimacy comes from community interest in helping desperate people; characteristic modes of operation includes patrolling with officers who are well trained in first-aid and knowledgeable about social services); and others.

Despite the importance of police departments and their organizational strategies, however, relatively little intellectual and professional attention has been focused on the question of ideal strategies for policing. Part of the explanation for this oversight is the strength of our commitment to a convenient social fiction: that police organizations have little discretion to decide on a "strategy" that would guide and justify the overall conduct of the organization. We like to think that police operations are tightly circumscribed by an elaborately articulated structure of substantive and procedural criminal law. What room remains within this legal structure is filled

out by well known principles of professional police practice. Since police departments cannot do other than what they now do without risking charges of illegality or professional incompetence, it is useless to explore different strategies of policing.

The problem with this position, of course, is that it flies in the face of reality. We know that strategies and styles of policing differ enormously as one moves from city to city, and even from neighborhood to neighborhood. We also know that basic strategies of policing have changed significantly over our history. Finally, we know that police administrators (at varying levels within police organizations) make consequential choices about police strategies with only limited guidance from the criminal law. Their choices may be guided by community politics or conceptions of good professional practice, of course. But to the degree they are, their choices must be less strictly determined and their role in setting strategy a less passive one than we are accustomed to admit. After all, they shape community politics and professional practice as well as act within their strictures. So, it is likely that substantial discretion exists in the adoption of police strategies. With the discretion comes the right (and the responsibility) to decide wisely about the goals, justifications and methods of a police department.

A second explanation for inattention to questions concerning the strategies of police departments is that the questions are inevitably normative as well as empirical. Developing a strategy for a police

department involves hard judgments about what can be justified, and the relative social value of alternative uses of police resources as well as factual knowledge of what the police do and what activities reliably produce what kinds of results. Neither those who <u>do</u> nor those who <u>think</u> <u>about</u> policing have been eager to confront the normative questions. Those who do policing have been reluctant partly because they lacked standing to consider the issues, and partly because the questions threatened to destabilize their political and organizational environment. Those who think about policing have been reluctant because their claims to expertise and deference have been rooted in their ability to make factual determinations rather than their social vision. As a result, the social scientists who have studied policing have avoided proposing a view of what police departments <u>should</u> do with the power and resources entrusted to them.

Our purpose in this paper is to initiate and structure a dialogue about attractive future strategies for police departments. We think in terms of a dialogue not only because the work is preliminary and we hope to encourage the thinking of others, but also because we do not believe that the question of organizational strategies for police departments should ever be generally or permanently resolved. As we will see, any strategy for a police department represents a more or less delicate balancing of social values in a particular political and institutional setting. It follows, then, that strategies of police departments will and should change as the social context changes: as

certain problems become more urgent and others fade, as new technologies and practices are conceived and old ones found wanting, and as we gain and lose confidence in the different sorts of institutions that grant legitimacy to police operations. But to say that there is no permanent (or general) resolution to the question of institutional strategies for the police is <u>not</u> to say that the question cannot be usefully structured for analysis, nor think it is impossible to make useful statements about potentially interesting alternative strategies in our current situation. These, then are our aims: 1) to develop a notion of "organizational strategy" that might help police executives and others consider the question of how police resources might be used in the future; 2) to use the construct to see current strategies of policing in a historical (and cross-national) perspective; 3) to develop an analytic framework within which alternative police strategies might be conceived and evaluated; and 4) to sketch the outlines of a serious competitor to current conceptions of policing.

The Concept of an Organizational Strategy

As noted above, we define an "organizational strategy" as a concept that blends three different aspects of an organization's existence and operations in a simple, coherent idea. The three different aspects of institutional existence are: 1) the substantive goals which the organization pursues (and for which it is accountable); 2) the sources of support and legitimacy from which the organization draws the resources (both money and authority) it needs to pursue its goals; and 3) the modes of operation through which the resources of the organization are deployed to accomplish its objectives.

In the concrete world of managing police organizations, these abstract terms refer to diverse features. The substantive goals of policing could include reducing violent crime, eliminating burglary, alleviating citizen fear, maintaining orderly streets to facilitate commerce, providing emergency medical or social services, performing intake and referral functions for social service agencies, or some complex combination of all of these. Sources of support and legitimacy could include an unblemished reputation for fairness in distributing the burdens and benefits of police surveillance and solicitousness towards the rights of the accused; organizational structures that allow local communities to exercise some influence over police operations; a unique professional reputation certified by organizations such as the International Association of Chiefs of

Police; or a record of accomplishment in controlling crime or providing emergency services. Modes of operation could include: 1) operating procedures governing the operations and dispatching of patrol vehicles, the conduct of criminal investigations, the management of domestic quarrels, and so on; 2) the allocation of resources (and organizational status) among operating units such as the patrol force, the detectives, a traffic squad, the youth services bureau and so on; and 3) the administrative arrangements that gave form and coherence to organizational activity such as organizational structure, formal and informal personnel systems, and various mechanisms of management control.

Given the actual complexity of a police department's organizational life, it is difficult and potentially misleading to characterize its current strategy in any simple terms. At any given moment, a police department will be pursuing many different substantive goals, drawing support and legitimacy from many different sources, and operating through administrative arrangements that defy any simple categorization and description. Only a piece of the organization's life can be captured in a simple characterization of its strategy. Similarly, in planning for the future of the department, a simple characterization of a desirable strategy will be importantly incomplete. It will not show exactly how substantive goals, external sources of legitimacy and support, and administrative arrangements governing operations should be adjusted. In short, there

is a noticeable gap between the abstraction of an organizational strategy and the reality of the organization's life. Noting the gap, one can reasonably ask why it is desirable to spend time thinking of simplified conceptions of broad strategies for police departments rather than continuing to analyze and evaluate current operations -- particularly when so many questions remain to be answered about the nature and impact of current police operations.

Our response is that we should think about broad strategies for police departments because police executives need more than explanations and evaluations of current operations (helpful as they are) to manage their organizations into attractive futures. In our view, police executives are stewards responsible for using the police authority and resources lodged in their organizations to achieve public purposes. To meet their responsibilities, they must have a conception of their purposes, and the sources of support for those purposes. They must know how much leeway exists in their current institutional setting to pursue different substantive goals, to experiment with different modes of operation, and to attract new sources of support. And, they must know what they as organizational leaders must themselves do to develop and exploit socially valuable opportunities in their environment. To do these things reliably and well, police executives need an organizational strategy. They must have a broad conception of what kind of organization is attractive and feasible for the future.

Police executives need a strategy for their organization for two different reasons. First, they need it for themselves -- to guide their own actions. A crucial problem for executives is to know how to manage their own time, and how to decide the variety of specific issues thrust at them by their organization and its environment. If police executives have a concept of how the police departments could function in the future, he will have a sense for those political and organizational tasks that are important in maneuvering the organization towards his intended position, and those that are less important. Similarly, they will have a touchstone for assessing the issues and choices that are thrust upon them. In short, executives can use their strategic conception to lend consistency and coherence to their own actions and thereby communicate a clear, powerful message to their organization and its political environment.

In addition, police executives need a strategic conception to guide others in their institutional setting -- both subordinates who must act to help the executive realize his purposes, and various overseers who must continue to support the police executives' efforts. Indeed, a strategic conception is a particularly important tool to police executives because they lack many of the other tools ordinarily available to managers of organizations. For one thing, they are given neither a clear grant of authority nor a coherent, widely supported purpose. Many people - elected political executives, community groups, police unions, the media - feel entitled to share the

responsibility for managing the organization. Moreover, they have different notions of what the organization should be doing. In such a world, the police executive will be buffeted and his influence diluted unless he can develop a strategic conception that can command relatively widespread and durable support. In effect, an organizational strategy is an important tool a police executive can use to marshall support and weaken opposition from those who oversee his operations.

In addition, however, police executives often share control over basic tools of managerial influence (e.g. budgets, personnel systems, and organizational structure) with overhead agencies (e.g., budget officers, civil service commissions, and local legislative bodies). Lacking discretionary control over these systems, police executives find it difficult to shape police operations. To the extent that police executives are successful in attracting support from the authorizing environment, of course, the police executive will find it easier to win concessions from the overhead agencies and shape management systems in the way he desires. And to this extent, an organizational strategy is helpful in managing internally as well as externally. But beyond this, an organizational strategy is important for internal institutional leadership. To the extent a strategy expresses values important to current employees, it will motivate them. To the extent that the strategy expresses an interest in some purposes over others, it may guide decisions by subordinates. And,

over the long run, it may importantly shape the internal politics of the organization. Thus, a coherent strategic concept can be an important instrument for enhancing managerial influence in an environment of shared policy making responsibility and limited organizational controls.

To serve these purposes, a strategic concept must meet several important intellectual tests. First, the concept must be simple and broad. These qualities are necessary to insure that the concept can be widely understood, easily recalled, and adapted for use in widely varying and rapidly changing circumstances. Complicated ideas are too hard to explain, remember, and apply in diverse situations. The simplification cannot be mindless, however. It must reveal a discriminating perception that ruthlessly eliminates all but the most important qualifications leaving nothing but the few essential ingredients of the organization's position.

Second, the concept must integrate the three diverse aspects of an organization's position: its substantive goals and accomplishments, its sources of support and legitimacy, and its basic mode of operation. Goals can never be considered without asking about sources of support and operational capacity. Operational techniques cannot be considered independently of goals. They must all be fitted together in a harmonious whole -- otherwise the strategy is flawed.

Third, the concept must be grounded in and drawn from a particular institutional setting. It must be geared to a particular

department, in a particular political environment, facing a particular set of problems. The organizational strategist must work with the existing institutional arrangements -- not outside them. This does not necessarily imply that a police executive is locked into a particular strategic conception. Most institutional settings have some play or some unutilized potential in them. There are some political groups that can be encouraged, some old principles and purposes that can be resurrected to justify changed goals, some slack resources within an organization that can become the leading edge of an organizational change. The problem for the police executive is to spot the opportunities to move in the directions he wants to go in the existing institutional setting, and to act to exploit those opportunities.

In sum, developing conceptions of plausible organizational strategies is a much different intellectual enterprise than analyzing police operations. It looks to the future, rather than to the past; it is concerned with sources of support and legitimacy as well as with operations and outcomes; it is deliberately broad -- embracing all aspects of a police operation -- rather than narrowly focused on a particular activity; it is synthetic and integrating rather than analytic. Moreover, we think political executives can use strategic conceptions to guide their organizations -- not only because they are useful ideas in the minds of the executives, but also because they can be used to do the hard managerial work of attracting support from

overseers and giving guidance to subordinates. Finally, we think that developing strategies is hard intellectual work -- a worthy task for police practitioners and researchers. Thus, we think this subject can usefully claim the attention of those who think a lot about policing.

Rather than continue to argue the point, however, it is probably best to simply follow our own advice and see what can be seen if one takes the question of organizational strategies for police departments seriously. That is what we intend to do.

Police Strategies in Historical Perspective

It is easy to forget that publicly supported police organizations are a relatively recent social invention. Throughout the colonial period and up until the mid-nineteenth century, policing in the United States was performed by night watchmen. They provided public services such as lighting lamps, reporting fires, managing runaway animals, helping drunks on their way, and generally stood ready to help in emergencies. Their crime fighting role was generally restricted to raising general alarms when they saw criminal misconduct - an event that must have been rare given the small numbers and the haphazard methods of patrol. The investigation of criminal offenses was a private responsibility. When sufficient evidence was gathered, a victim could enlist the aid of a constable in arresting a suspect, but the constable would depend on the victim to know where the suspect could be found. Thus, order in colonial communities was maintained largely by private efforts complemented by intermittent contributions of publicly supported watchmen, constables, and courts.

By the 1840's, this arrangement seemed insufficient to deal with what was perceived as a rising tide of lawlessness in America's cities. Whether the focus of concern was increased levels of individual crimes such as robbery, burglary, and so on, or the growing threat of collective violence in industrializing cities remains unclear. But whatever the impetus, city governments began experimenting with new forms of policing. In developing the forms,

the city governments had several sources from which to draw.

Probably the most important source of ideas, was England which was, at the time, also debating and experimenting with new forms of policing. The old English system had served as the model for the old American system and included the same major features: i.e., heavy reliance on private individuals for crime prevention, apprehension and investigation, supplemented by watchmen, constables, and courts. It differed from the American system in two important respects, however. First, the authority of the constables and the courts came from the Crown rather than from a social contract. This meant that the police forces in Britain were more centralized than in the U.S., and supported by a different source of legitimacy than could be claimed by police in the United States. Second, publicly supported policing in England was supplemented by private, commercial firms whose business was "thief catching". The Bow Street Runners were the most famous of these firms. Their techniques for solving crimes depended on the use of informants as well as the traditional techniques of interviewing victims, witnesses and so on. In fact, on some occasions it seems that these firms were able to solve crimes because they had arranged for the crimes to occur! The potential for this sort of corruption, as well as the intrusiveness of informants and covert methods gave "detective policing" a bad name in England, but the existence of these commercial firms did establish some alternative to the notion of overt patrols "by watchmen and "reactive" constables.

Despite the existence of crown authority and commercial detective policing, however, the old English system seemed unable to deal with the social challenges of the 1830's. As in the United States, the problem lay in the cities, and the concerns included: 1) collective violence (the British propensity to redress grievances through rioting was well established by the 1830's and previous efforts to handle rioting were both ineffective and unpopular); 2) public decency and order (private reform groups were active on issues such as public drunkenness, juveniles on the street, and so on), and 3) the provision of public services (lamplighting, handling emergencies) as well as street crime.

The debate about how best to deal with these problems, produced a conception of "preventive policing" as well. Bentham and Colquhoun, searching for an alternative to the largely reactive policing that then characterized London and other British cities, proposed a model of policing that would allow the police to supervise and regulate particular individuals and groups who by some standard had been identified as dangerous or threatening to the social order. They proposed legislation that would allow the regular supervision of known criminals, people in "dangerous" occupations (e.g. minstrels), and even specific ethnic groups (e.g. Jews).

In the end, neither "detective policing" nor "preventive policing" was adopted as a strategy to guide English policing during the mid-1800's. Instead, in 1829 the Metropolitan Police Act was

passed by Parliament and, shortly thereafter the Metropolitan Police began patrolling the streets of London. The style of policing that emerged represented an extension and consolidation of the tradition of watchmen and constables. The strategy was still overt, reactive patrol. Investigation was still privately supported. There was no reliance on informants or covert police to gather prior information about crimes. And there was no special supervision organized around individuals or classes of people. The only changes in the strategy were that the patrol force was larger, trained and deployed more carefully, and organized in a chain of command that would allow the police to operate in large as well as small units. It is worth noting that this patrol force was trained to be civil and neutral in its dealings with citizens, and was armed only with concealed truncheons. Despite the non-intrusive strategy, the careful training, and the legitimacy conferred on the police by the urgency of the problems, parliamentary authorization, and the traditional authority of the Crown, however, the police were not a popular institution. It was reported that upper class people whipped the police as they passed in carriages, and the press reported favorably when a policeman was killed in a crowd. Nonetheless, the institution survived to become popular.

In the United States, the English debate and resolution was bound to be influential. But other concepts contended for public acceptance. Some thought that no adjustment in the traditional model

of watchmen and constables should be made: The system had worked for hundreds of years, and any extension of the police function threatened to destroy individual liberty. Others noted that southern cities in the United States (e.g. extensive patrol operations - both mounted and foot -to deal with the special problems of maintaining the slavery system and warding off the threat of slave revolts. Finally, there was some interest in the "continental" system of policing which relied on informants and covert policing rather than visible patrols, and was explicitly designed to thwart crimes and aid in the apprehension of criminals as well as respond to crimes reported by citizens.

As in so many things, the English example eventually proved compelling in the U.S. In 1845, New York City established a municipal police force based on the British model. Boston and Philadelphia followed quickly. By 1855, cities as far west as Milwaukee had police departments. As in England, the strategies of these departments were largely reactive, overt patrol forces capable of operating in large or small units. Because the forces were accessible to citizens at all hours, they inevitably ended up in emergency service provision as well as crime control and order maintenance.

The establishment of publicly supported police departments organized to patrol city streets was clearly a major event in the institutional development of strategies of policing. Indeed, current police departments and their commitments to patrol strategies are the direct descendants of the innovations of the mid-1800's. At the same

time, however, one must see that these reforms were a less decisive resolution of basic issues in the design of police strategies than is often supposed.

It is often assumed, for example, that the responsibility for crime control passed irrevocably from private to public hands in the mid-1800's. But the fact of the matter is that private police forces in the form of railroad police, "Pinkertons", and private detectives played major roles in controlling crime and disorder well into the 20th century. Moreover, although these disappeared from view in the 1940's to 1960's, private police forces are now reappearing in the form of commercial security guards, and volunteer citizen block watches. And we now know that even large, professionalized police organizations are fundamentally dependent on the willingness of citizens to alert them to the occurrence of crime and aid them in the identification, apprehension and conviction of suspects.

We are also inclined to think that the reform of the mid-1800's focused the attention of the police on crime and civil disturbances. In fact, however, the scope of police responsibilities was left very broad. Street crimes and riots became a major responsibility of the police. But they were also responsible for managing lesser forms of public disorder (e.g. drunkenness, vandalism, obscenities, harassment, lewdness); for regulating economic activity (e.g. enforcing traffic laws, preventing unlicensed peddlars from operating in areas where they weren't allowed, checking on licenses, inspecting facilities, and

so on); and for handling medical and social emergencies (e.g. traffic accidents, fires, lost children, and so on).

Similarly, although the strategies adopted seemed to emphasize overt, reactive patrols, the other strategies for dealing with crime and disorder did not entirely disappear. By the late 1800's, most metropolitan police departments had developed detective divisions as well as patrol divisions. These units not only conducted investigations of past crimes at public expense (a major change from the earliest traditions), but also began using informants and covert methods that allowed them to thwart future crimes as well as solve past crimes. And, while no explicit authorization was given for "preventive policing" in the form of focusing police attention on individuals and groups, the police inevitably ended up using some of their authority to manage disorder and regulate commerce to accomplish the same purpose.

Perhaps the most significant question left unsolved by the reforms of the mid-1850's, however, was the basis of police legitimacy. In England, the legitimacy of the police was based on the strong combination of parliamentary and crown authority. And even with this, the police were initially quite suspect. In the United States, the legitimacy of the police rested originally on local political support. In a society that was traditionally hostile to any form of state power, and one that was socially diverse, this was a weak reed on which to build a strategy of policing. In order to

survive, police organizations had to seek very close ties with local political power, to show that they could deal effectively with an important social problem, or to shelter within legal obligations and portray themselves as neutral instruments of the law. Which of these could or should be the basis of police legitimacy in the U.S. was not resolved in the mid-1850's and remains unresolved today.

Given these unresolved issues in the design of police institutions and strategies, it is not surprising that policing in the U.S. experienced significant changes in the century and a half from 1850 to 1980. For our purposes, it is useful to think of three different phases of policing. None of the phases had very distinct edges, but each captures an important change in the dominant strategy of policing in the U.S..

The first phase occurred when the newly formed police organizations sought survival and a form of legitimacy by seeking alliances with local politicians. In the words of Robert Fogelson, police departments became "adjuncts to the ,political. machine." As such, police departments were managed as a source of jobs and an opportunity for upward mobility among newly arriving ethnic groups rather than as a professional organization. Their enforcement activity was focused primarily on order maintenance and economic regulation. But because their support and legitimacy was based on political support from local communities rather than an abstract notion of full and impartial enforcement of the laws, their

enforcement efforts were far from even-handed. Instead, their efforts were bent to accomodate both cultural differences and the political objectives of their supporters. In many ways, the police were more a central cog than a mere adjunct of the big city machines. This phase lasted from approximately 1870 to 1900.

In the late 1890's and early 1900's, the police became a favorite target of reformers in the Progressive movement. They despised both the established power of the machines, and the "disorder" that characterized those parts of the cities where police had stopped enforcing vice laws. Thus, ending the "corruption" of the police became a central part of the Progressive program. In many cities throughout the U.S., they attacked the existing police strategy and ushered in a new strategy of policing based on the even-handed enforcement of laws.

The institutional innovations that embodied their conception of an appropriate police strategy involved the following:

o   A commitment to the even-handed enforcement of the criminal laws as the dominant source of legitimacy for the police.

o   A paramilitary form of organization that not only allowed both small and large unit operations, but also suggested tight discipline for the individual officers, and a centralized structure of command and accountability.

o   An organizational structure that severed the links between

        precinct politicians and the police by centralizing many organizational decisions, and creating functional rather than geographically defined specialization within the organization.

o   Rigid personnel procedures based on meritocratic principles.

o   Special procedures for appointing and terminating police executives that assured them some independence from the chief political executives of the cities.

Thus the reform strategy of policing was based on the notion of an even-handed enforcement of laws achieved through a centralized, highly disciplined bureaucracy. Its influence is still importantly reflected in both our philosophy of policing, and in the institutional arrangements governing police departments.

The first wave of reform did not succeed everywhere. In fact, the Great Experiment with the prohibition of alcohol created havoc for the reform strategy of policing. The opposition to the liquor control laws was so intense that the goal of equal enforcement of the laws became unsustainable. "Corruption" reappeared to accomodate the unwillingness of citizens to comply with the law. This experience taught a significant new lesson to the reformers, and, following the repeal of prohibition, they applied it: Not all laws commanded equal respect from the citizenry. Therefore, only those laws that could be widely supported should be enforced. Later, this idea was expanded to

include the notion that some laws (primarily those concerning "victimless" crimes) were technically more difficult to enforce through non-intrusive measures than others, and that these laws created problems for enforcement agencies. Together these ideas created the first strong effort to narrow the scope of police responsibility. The police should be primarily concerned with serious crime where the laws could be fairly and non-intrusively enforced. Murder, assault, robbery, rape, burglary and theft should be the targets. Victimless crimes, disorderliness, economic regulation, etc. should be downplayed in police strategies because these were the areas that aroused citizen opposition, allowed unequal enforcement and spawned corruption. The clean, bureaucratic model of policing could be created only if the scope of police responsibility was narrowed to crime fighting.

This strategy of policing gained additional impetus from two different sources. One was the development of communication and transportation technologies. With cars, telephones, and radios (all of which became widely available in the 1940's and 1950's), it became possible to think of a dense mobile patrol force that might appear omnipresent and could respond very rapidly to calls for service. To Orlando Wilson and other police strategists, this capacity seemed ideal for combatting property and violent crime. Moreover, this technology meshed neatly with the notion of a centralized, tightly disciplined organization. The second important influence was the

development of the Unified Crime Reports which counted and published rates of Part I offenses (homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft) for every city in the country. Because these offenses were now routinely counted and used as indicators of police performance, police administrators began thinking of these offenses as the important targets of police efforts. The net result of these trends was to create a new reform strategy that resembled the old in its commitment to equal enforcement of the laws and its emphasis on a disciplined bureaucracy, but differed from the older reform strategy in the narrowed focus on property and violent crimes rather than the enforcement of all laws including those designed for order maintenance and economic regulation.

To a great extent, the professionalized "crime fighting" conception of policing is the dominant current strategy of policing. Its substantive goal is the control of crime and the fear of crime. It draws support from its commitment to an even-handed, non-intrusive enforcement of laws that command widespread public support and from claims to professional competence and expertise in handling a serious public problem. Its basic modes of operation include motorized patrol, rapid responses to calls for service, and investigation of offenses after the fact. One would find features of this strategy in virtually every police department in the U.S.

Even though this conception remains the dominant strategy for police departments, it has been buffeted over the last 20 years and

shows some signs of erosion.   Seeds of difficulty for this strategy have been sown by at least four important factors.

The first factor is that the police are now beginning to pay a price for separating themselves from political institutions in the cities. The problem was seen most vividly in the mid-sixties as the police confronted the civil rights movement. The movement embraced three distinct sorts of collective action: legitimate political groups engaged in non-violent civil disobedience protesting unjust laws; large scale riots triggered by some combination of a widespread sense of injustice, economic frustration, and sheer opportunism; and terrorist groups engaged in both ordinary crime and attacks on police. Dealing with each of these activities was a major problem for the police. Police zealousness in controlling ordinary street crime was often seen as a major cause of riots. Dealing with terrorism involved the police in proactive, detective policing which was widely seen as threatening to important First and Fourth Amendment freedoms. And in designing and executing their strategies to deal with these problems, the police found themselves without local political allies that could help them. They had no way of discussing policies with local community leaders or enlisting their support to control the situation. The strategy of professionalized crime fighting could not deal gracefully with a broad political attack on city governance. The result of this experience was to lead the police to experiment with a variety of mechanisms to improve police-community relationships --none

of which have yet shown any significant long-term benefits in restoring local political support for the police.

A second important factor creating problems for the strategy of professionalized crime fighting was the sharp disputes about police investigative tactics. The attack on police practices was led by the courts. Constitutional protections against electronic surveillance were extended by statute to apply to all states. The exclusionary rule made illegally gathered evidence useless in criminal prosecutions. And Miranda required the police to inform suspects of their rights to counsel at a very early stage of police investigations. These actions may or may not have had an important effect on the capacity of the police to conduct investigations. But the harsh tone of the court and the sharp attacks by the professional crime fighters made everyone think that there was a significant conflict between effective crime fighting and the protection of important individual freedoms. To the extent these two different goals were in sharp conflict, and to the extent that at least some people wanted to protect individual freedoms, the commitment to professionalized crime fighting was weakened.

All this leaves police departments today in a much less secure position than they were 20 years ago. They may feel temporarily reassured by the election of a president who seems to share their commitment to professionalized crime fighting, and by the increasing public concern about crime. But it is at least plausible that there

are forces which will force the police to change their current strategies. We think two basic problems are inescapable for the police.

One is that their current modes of operation will continue to fail to deal with crime and with the fear of crime. They may be saved by a demographic shift or the appearance of economic or international security problems that are sufficiently severe to drive the crime issue away. But if crime remains a problem, the inability of the police (organized as they currently are) to deal with it will become increasingly apparent. They will have to reach out for different operational capacities and different relationships with the community, to cope with the problem.

The second problem is that police departments increasingly look like organizations designed to benefit their employees rather than the people they are supposed to serve. The militancy of police officers in advancing their economic interests while resisting any changes in operating procedures contrasts oddly with the failure of the police to deliver services that the community wants. Their objections to changes in working conditions and styles of policing sound less and less like professional judgments about what techniques are effective in controlling crime and increasingly like self-serving justifications for continuing ineffective but comfortable practices. In this, they resemble teachers, doctors, and railroad engineers --all of whom command less and less respect in the general population. We

think the resurgent interest in private police exemplified by the enormous appeal of the Guardian Angels indicates just how far the loss of public confidence in police departments has gone.

A Framework for Considering Alternative Police Strategies

If police departments are now being seriously challenged by the forces we identify, it may be _necessary_ for them to consider changes in their basic strategy. Even if it is not necessary, however, it may be possible for imaginative police executives to exploit an opportunity to change the current strategy of policing in desirable directions. In either case, it is useful to reflect on what the history of policing in the U.S. suggests about the basic dimensions of choice in designing a police strategy -- the core values of the society that are importantly at stake in the design of police strategies, the basic institutional questions concerning the distribution of responsibility for performing various public functions, and the organization of public agencies to achieve the (often) conflicting goals of administrative efficiency, full and impartial enforcement of the laws, and democratic accountability.

Core values at Stake in the Design of Police Strategies

In the public debates about police strategies, and in the choices that have been made, it is possible to discern core social values at stake in the design of police strategies. One basic value is the desire to establish order in social interactions -- to guarantee rights to life and property against attack by other citizens, and somewhat more broadly to make social interactions predictable, convenient, and unoffensive. It is concern about this value that has traditionally motivated greater investments in police organizations.

When social conditions changed to make people feel vulnerable to individual or collective attacks on life and property, or to make ordinary economic and social transactions less predictable, or occasionally, even when public decorum has been breached, the public has granted more money and more authority to police departments. It is also this value that has determined the scope of police responsibility. When we have thought broadly of public order (e.g. included concerns about disorderly or distasteful conduct as well as unjustified attacks on life and property) the scope of police responsibilities has been quite extensive. When, for some combination of prudential and principled reasons we have insisted on a narrower public interest in private conduct -- one limited to attacks on life and property -- the scope of police responsibilities has narrowed.

A second core value has been an interest in protecting individual freedom against intrusion by the police. This value is often in direct opposition to the first. The broader the interest in promoting orderliness, the more intrusive the police are authorized to become: they intervene both more broadly and more intensively. It is this fact that has counseled a narrow interest in orderliness. It is worth noting, however, that this inherent tension between guarantees of orderliness and non-intrusiveness can be lessened not only by limiting the statutory authority of the police, but also by arranging their operations so that private citizens can trigger and direct police activity within the existing framework of laws. It is this

opportunity that established the appeal of reactive police strategies. Until citizens alert the police to misconduct, reactive police are restricted to relatively superficial surveillance activity. Moreover, even after the police have been invited to give close scrutiny to a situation, the citizen retains a substantial amount of control over their conduct. The fact that citizens control police activity in this way makes the police operations less intrusive than if the police initiated the actions themselves. In principle, this same kind of mechanism could be used to limit and justify police interventions for macro policies as well as micro events. If the police were to be asked by citizen groups to police against some kinds of conduct in particular ways (say, for example, efforts against pornography in a residential area, or against gun carrying in neighborhoods that have high rates of armed robbery), we might be inclined to see the police operations as less intrusive than they would appear if the community had not given the police a license within the framework of laws. So, providing citizen control over police conduct is a means of limiting police intrusiveness as well as narrowing the scope of the law.

Two other aspects of our interest in non-intrusiveness are worth noting. One is that in conducting investigations, we impose restrictions to protect social interests in guaranteeing individual privacy. We are particularly concerned about coercive, deceptive or particularly intrusive investigative methods. They are not entirely ruled out, of course. But when they are used, we demand that they be

used in a limited area where there is a good chance we will find evidence of a crime. The second aspect of our interest in non-intrusiveness is a general preference for the private solution of problems rather than public solutions. If a social problem can be solved privately, or if a domestic dispute can be resolved without public auspices, then the police generally prefer not to become involved. The general idea, then, is that the police should float on the surface of social interactions; they should intervene only in limited areas, only when they have been invited in, and should encourage private rather than public solutions of problems.

A third core social value at stake in the design of police strategies is the social interest in equity and fairness. This basic value is reflected in three more particular ideas. One idea is the importance of guaranteeing due process for suspects and defendants. Because the society wants to be sure that a person convicted of an offense is in fact guilty and has not been unfairly treated, it demands that the police be as solicitous of the rights of suspects as others, and that a compelling body of evidence be gathered to sustain a conviction. Obviously, there may be some tension between pursuit of this value and the pursuit of an interest in promoting orderliness.

A second particular idea associated with the general concept of equity is that similarly situated individuals should be treated alike. Investigation, apprehension, prosecution, and sentencing should be impartial. These actions should be responsive to what the criminal

justice system can see of the relevant factors, and should not be guided by factors outside the concerns of the law. This objective may be in opposition to the social interest in non-intrusiveness. To the extent that we leave choices about involving the police to private individuals, and to the extent that we leave many situations to private arrangements to resolve, the operations of the criminal system will be fitted around private arrangements. Those citizens who can and prefer to deal with the problems privately will not be subjected to public intervention. Those who lack private capacities will find themselves dealing with the police. And the system will look unfair in terms of the way it handles different cases.

A third particular idea associated with equity is that citizens in the society should have equal access to public protection. To the extent that the society decides to invest in public supported security arrangements, the benefits of this public expenditure should be fairly distributed. Everyone should be able to call on police resources. This objective may conflict with the desire to focus criminal justice resources on some particular kind of problem or some particular area.

It is interesting to consider the extent to which the transfer of responsibility for policing from private to public hands was consistent with an interest in promoting equity as well as increasing security. Arguably, public agencies are more solicitous of the rights of suspects, more inclined to treat like individuals alike, and more equally available to citizens than any private enforcement

arrangements.   That is generally what we think when we think of vigilantes and contrast them to police. But it is also what we forget when we think of our interest in non-intrusiveness and judge that private arrangements are generally superior to reliance on public agencies.

Throughout this discussion we have emphasized the tensions among the core values. The fact that there are tensions means that there is no permanent resolution to the question of desirable police strategies. All strategies advance some core values at the expense of others. Those whose favorite values are advanced in the chosen strategy applaud it. Those whose values were sacrificed at the margin oppose the chosen strategy. At the same time, there are many degrees of freedom in the selection and articulation of a strategy. It is not a simple case of being pro-security or pro-freedom, or pro-equity or pro-freedom. There is room for blending and weaving different values together. The artistry in selecting and articulating a strategy involves knowing which values can command strong and widespread support from the local institutional setting and developing concepts that express support for several different values.

Institutional Arrangements and Operating Modes

In addition to thinking about core social values, the police strategist must also make choices about basic institutional arrangements and modes of operation. These choices are far from neutral with respect to values, of course. Specific institutional

arrangements and modes of operation will be biased with respect to the core social values -- making some relatively easy to achieve and others much harder.   Thus, the institutional arrangements must be consistent with the strategists' preferred social values.

A crucial threshhold question in the design of police strategies is how the responsibility for deterring crime and apprehending offenders will be divided between public and private sectors.   No police strategy will ever eliminate the role of the private sector in controlling crime.   Individual citizens will always be free to limit their exposure to risks of victimization; to invest in locks, guns and other devices that make themselves and their property more secure; to band together with other citizens to patrol their streets or to finance a private security force; to hire private detectives to help them solve mysteries that are beneath the dignity of local police forces; and so on.   And these actions will have effects on both the overall level of crime, and the distribution of the burdens and benefits of policing.   But a police strategist can make a more or less determined effort to assume the burdens of private crime control and order maintaining efforts.

A natural assumption is that public policing substitutes for private policing: as the society makes increased investments in public policing, private social control efforts fade   - leaving the total amount of social control about the same as it was before the new investments in public policing.   We imagine citizens refusing to act

in situations where their intervention could be as effective as police interventions. "Let the police do it, they get paid for it" is the refrain. A different idea is that public policing can complement private social control efforts. In this notion, the presence of a public police force emboldens private individuals to take more public responsibility. They call the police when they see offenses, agree to act as witnesses, and even intervene themselves precisely because they are confident that the publicly supported police force will help them.

Whether a police department turns out to substitute for or complement private social control efforts probably depends a great deal on what the police do, and how accessible they are to the community as well as their size. If the police focus on problems that concern the community, if they are responsive to citizen calls for service, if they solicit community advice in the use of proactive police methods, and if they are not so large that they seem overwhelming, they may strengthen rather than weaken private social control efforts. If, on the other hand, the police are seen as large, independent, professionalized forces with exclusive responsibility for crime control and order maintenance, private social control efforts may shrink leaving the total social control capacity smaller than it was before the public police forces were created. Whatever the actual facts here, a wise police strategist should be concerned about the total amount of crime control and, to the degree possible, should arrange public crime control activities to complement private crime

control and order maintenance.

A second crucial question in the design of strategies for police departments is how broadly they will define their domain of responsibility, competence and interest. Current statutory authority and responsibility for police departments is very broad -- running from the control of serious crime, to the management of civil disorder, to certain forms of economic regulation, to the control of vice, to the management of traffic, and to the handling of disorder (covered by city ordinances regulating noise, swearing, spitting, lewdness, and so on). Moreover, because police departments are often the only government agency instantly available to citizens on a 24-hour basis, they inevitably end up handling emergencies of various kinds -- traffic accidents, heart attacks, domestic disputes, lost children, fires, drownings, even sporadic feelings of desperate fear and loneliness.

There is a tendency for police strategists to define their responsibilities and interests rather narrowly -- specifically, in recent years, to focus on serious crime. They do this for at least four reasons. First, they think that serious crime is what most concerns the community. Second, this is the only part of their operation for which statistics are routinely collected and published. Third, they have limited resources and judge the potential demands in other areas to be limitless. And fourth, they believe that they will have great problems with the principles of non-intrusiveness and equal

enforcement of the laws if they stray from the narrow path of controlling serious crime.

Arguably, this narrow focus is a strategic error. One problem with it is that the police may be unsuccessful in controlling serious crime -- particularly given the current definitions of crime which fail to distinguish crimes that were potentially suppressible by police action (e.g. street muggings in high crime areas) from those that were not (e.g. first time domestic assaults in private locations). But a more important problem is that in focusing on serious crime the police may be failing to respond to a community's greatest concerns, and therefore failing to attract support and legitimacy they could achieve. It might be, for example, that communities are more frightened by disorder and incivility than by violent crime, and that the police could do a lot to reassure citizens by doing order maintenance as well as crime fighting. Similarly, much of the economic regulatory activity such as traffic and parking control are now performed rather mechanically and mindlessly rather than organized in a way that attracts the support of the local merchants. There may be risks to the values of equity and non-intrusiveness in taking order maintenance and economic regulation functions seriously and shaping them to the preferences of the local community, but they may inspire a great deal of community support and enthusiasm. Finally, it may make sense for police departments to emphasize their emergency service roles. To the extent that they

operate as a patrol force they will inevitably end up performing these functions, so they might as well think of it as part of their job, do it well, and get credit for it. After all, it is an important and popular function which the police typically do well. Yet less and less attention is paid to this function both within and outside police departments.

In sum, then, there are potential gains as well as risks in broadening the scope of police responsibilities. Probably the easiest move to make is to re-emphasize the emergency service function. This need not involve the police in social work, but does give them a different relationship to the communities they serve. Order maintenance in very public areas of a city (e.g. bus stops, parks, busy street corners) may also be important and neglected areas of police responsibility. Operating to facilitate commerce is another potential objective, but poses somewhat greater risks for police departments. However a strategist comes out on the relative importance he attaches to these different functions, it should be clear that there is no obvious virtue to a narrow crime fighting conception: police departments may not be able to escape this duty, but they need not make it their sole "raison d'etre".

A third choice police strategists must consider is what their basic mode of operation will be in spotting circumstances that require police intervention. This choice is made in several different dimensions. One dimension is whether one will emphasize patrol

activities (which involve the police in broad but relatively superficial surveillance of the social world) or investigations (which involve more intensive surveillance along a relatively narrow front). A second dimension is whether the surveillance will be open and overt, or deceptive and covert. A third dimension is whether the police will be reactive (taking their cues from citizens as to where to focus their attention) or proactive (deciding on their own initiative where and what they should look for). A final dimension is whether the police should be interested primarily in after the fact investigations of criminal events, or whether they should make efforts to thwart crimes before they occur or while they are in process.

The dominant current police strategy is based heavily on overt patrol. About 60% of the resources of most police departments are committed to the patrol function, and this usually means uniformed police riding the streets in clearly marked cars. In addition, most police departments have a detective unit claiming about 10% of the resources and usually engaged in after-the-fact investigations of criminal offenses. While they usually do not wear uniforms and use unmarked cars, they make relatively little effort to conceal their identity as policemen. Finally, most police departments make some investment in covert, proactive investigations in the vice area. Since there is no victim who will come forward to show the police that a crime has been committed, if the police are going to enforce laws against gambling, narcotics and prostitution, they have no choice but

to rely on covert, proactive methods.

The characteristic mode of operation described above fits well with an interest in crime control, non-intrusiveness and equity. The uniformed patrol is assumed to have the capacity to thwart crimes through general deterrence, and by its capacity to respond quickly to calls for service. When deterrence fails and the patrol force arrives too late to catch the offender, the detectives take over to solve the crime. Intrusiveness is limited by the fact that the general police surveillance is open, relatively superficial, and limited to public spaces. Intensive investigation begins only after a crime has been committed and focuses narrowly on the solution of that crime. Citizens exercise substantial control over the initiation and conduct of police investigations. The only exceptions to these general rules are the vice operations which are kept small, and are focused on crimes about which the community has expressed substantial concern. Equity is served by the generality of the surveillance associated with patrol (everyone is subjected to the same small amount of police scrutiny), and by the fact that anyone, for the price of a phone call, can claim police services. Thus, the decision made in the mid-1800's to make public policing a patrol and detective activity rather than either an informant-based continental system or an offender-oriented system of preventive policing carries on until today.

The stability of this basic mode of operation is not surprising: it does balance several competing values rather neatly. It is worth

noting some difficulties with this mode of operation when it is joined
to the objective of crime fighting, however. One difficulty is that
in the vast anonymous cities of today, this basic mode of operation
turns out to be surprisingly ineffective in controlling crime. It is
unclear how much crime is deterred by motorized overt patrol. The
detective units seem to find it difficult to solve crimes. And the
vice units are widely suspected of both corruption and
ineffectiveness. Given the urgency about crime fighting (which is
exaggerated to some degree by the police departments' commitment to
crime control as a dominant objective), police departments may feel
obliged to experiment with other plausibly more effective methods of
crime control. The second difficulty is that to the extent one
deploys an overt patrol force available to citizens at the price of a
phone call, the police department will be involved in much more than
crime fighting. A variety of citizen demands will be expressed; a
variety of emergencies will appear to which the police are the obvious
people to respond. Thus, the commitment to non-intrusiveness and
convenient accessibility to citizens conspire to defeat the narrow
focus on crime fighting: we end up with police forces that seem to
invite a variety of citizen requests through their accessibility,
frustrate the citizenry by failing to take some calls seriously,
justify their indifference by a focus on crime fighting, but then fail
to effectively control crime. In this situation, the virtues of non-
intrusiveness and equity as against crime control and order

maintenance may be forgotten.

It is not clear whether and how police executives should deal with these difficulties. It is probably difficult to increase crime fighting effectiveness without trying more intrusive measures (e.g. heavier reliance on covert methods focussed on individuals as well as acts). At the same time, it is hard to imagine radically de-emphasizing the importance of the crime control objective. It might be advisable for police executives to move in both directions at the same time. That is, it may make sense for them to experiment with enforcement methods that are more intrusive (e.g. proactive patrolling, decoy operations, stake-outs of vulnerable locations, perpetrator oriented patrols, recruitment of informants, and so on), and to capitalize on the availability of the patrol force by emphasizing responsiveness to citizen interests and their capacity to deal helpfully with emergencies. In effect, the uncertain crime control benefits of limited efforts with more intrusive enforcement methods may not alone be sufficient to justify the methods, but if they were paired with a renewed commitment to community service, the community might tolerate the change and find themselves better off in many important aspects of their lives.

A fourth question that police strategists must address is the internal organization of police departments. Most police departments are currently organized along functional lines: there is a patrol division, a detective division, a vice division, a youth division, an

internal affairs division, and so on. This is a legacy of the reform era and its interest in centralizing police power and breaking the power of the local politicians over police precincts. The usual justifications for organizing on functional lines are two-fold: first, it allows resources to be reallocated across geographic areas relatively easily; second, it promotes the development of the special capacities associated with each functional area. The problem is that the separate functional capabilities cannot be easily coordinated to deal with the problems of a particular area.

The alternative organizational scheme is to organize along geographic rather than functional lines -- giving area commanders responsibility for directing the activities of all the patrolmen, detectives, youth workers and so on that work within a given geographic area. To a degree, many police departments approximate this geographical organization by organizing their patrol divisions in geographic units and making the precinct patrol commander the police official responsible for representing the police department to local community groups. His problem in representing the department, of course, is that he cannot really control the activities of detectives, youth workers and other functional specialties. At best, he has a "dotted line" relationship to (indicating some modest influence over) these functional units. The price of this limitation is that the precinct commander attracts less support from local communities than he would if he could in fact speak for all of the department's

resources and activities in a local area.

It is not an accident that police departments are not organized on geographic lines. One consequence of any organizational structure is to allow interest groups more or less access to an organization's operations. If an organizational unit is created whose jurisdiction coincides exactly with the interests of a given constituency group, that group will have significant influence over the organization's activities. If the unit has a jurisdiction that includes only a piece of the operation that is of interest to the outside group, or includes a jurisdiction that attracts the interest of many outside groups, the influence of specific outside groups will be diminished. By organizing on a functional basis, then, police departments weakened the influence of precinct level polticians and increased the power of the chief (and those who influence him) with respect to police operations. Thus, centralization of authority is consistent with a notion of uniform, even application of laws across a city, and it has stood reform police chiefs well. But this organizational structure has also cost the police something in terms of their community relations. Local community groups whose interests and problems differed from those of the city as a whole had no one to talk to in the police department. The inevitable result was that their support for the police was more qualified. To the extent that police executives would now like to cultivate stronger political support from local communities, it may be desirable to shift more powers to local

precinct commanders, or even to lower levels in the department (e.g. to lieutenants or sergeants who can serve as leaders for "team policing" units).

Alternative Strategies for Police Departments

For the last three decades, police departments have relied on a strategy of professional "crime fighting". They have narrowed their substantive goals and responsibilities to focus on "serious crime" -- usually Part I offenses (e.g. murder, rape, assault, robbery, burglary, larceny, and auto theft). Order maintenance, economic regulation and emergency services have all been de-emphasized in the rhetoric of police departments if not always in their actions. And, over time, the rhetoric has probably importantly shaped the conduct. In attacking serious crime, the police have relied largely on random patrolling in marked cars and the retrospective investigation of criminal offenses. The random patrolling was thought to generally deter criminal attacks as well as aid in apprehension of offenders by allowing a rapid response to calls for assistance. The retrospective investigation of cases was thought to permit the apprehension of offenders after the fact, thereby deterring other offenders who considered the same sort of crime, as well as permitting the incapacitation of the particular offender. The autos, telephones and radios provided an important technological underpinning for patrol operations, as did the growth of "forensic sciences" (to a lesser degree) for detective wrok. In addition, the administrative systems of police departments were set up to create a professionalized bureaucracy: the functional organizational structure centralized authority in the police executive; the paramilitary tradition gave the

appearance of tight discipline and allowed for the even-handed application of the law; special training and meritocratic personnel systems made it seem that the police were professionalized. Joe Friday's polite but frosty professionalism ("Just the facts, ma'am") was an almost perfect expression of the image of the crime fighting professional policeman.

This concept of policing drew support from a variety of sources. In many ways, this strategy was most responsive to a legal tradition that emphasized both non-intrusiveness and equity. The non-intrusiveness is reflected in the narrowed focus on serious crime. Order maintenance and economic regulation were downplayed as activities that brought the police into a relationship with the community and tempted them to enforce the law in a discriminatory way. It is also reflected in the basic mode of operation. The police for the most part skimmed the surface of social life in the community until they were called in to deal with a serious criminal offense. The concern with equity was advanced through the same means. Without proactive police sorties, questions about badly motivated police operations could not arise. Similarly, since police surveillance was quite general, and since anyone could call the police, everyone in the society seemed to share the benefits and burdens of policing about equally. Finally, the neutral, professional competence of the individual officers established through the disciplines of the centralized control and meritocratic personnel systems guaranteed that

citizens would be dealt with even-handedly. In addition to sheltering in the legal tradition, the police could also claim a modest amount of specialized expertise. By emphasizing technology, by having mysterious procedures, and by claiming the status of brave people prepared to deal with violent crime, the police attracted support for their professionalized competence. In a world where citizens were increasingly afraid of violent crime, this special competence was of great importance.

This strategy of policing has been fairly successful in the past. But it may be that it has now reached the limits of its value. The major price of following this strategy has been the gradual alienation of the community from the police function. The police stare suspiciously at the community from automobiles, and then careen through city streets with sirens wailing only to find three other police cars on the scene comforting a victim of an offense that occurred twenty minutes before. Their contact with the community is limited to suspicious staring, responding to crime calls, and rejecting citizen requests for assistance in non-criminal areas so that they can get back "in-service" (i.e. get back to the business of staring at the community from their cars). The citizens, for their part, find the police unresponsive to them as individuals and as groups. The police will treat many of their demands which they take seriously (e.g. fear late at night, anger at loud neighbors, and so on) as unimportant. Moreover, when they want to talk as a group about

current police policies and practices, they are met by a "community relations specialists" or, at best, a precinct patrol commander, neither of whom is either inclined or able to respond to their requests. This wouldn't be so bad if the police were succeeding in their crime fighting role. But the fact of the matter is that they are not succeeding. Crime rates continue to increase; clearance rates continue to fall. And most of our research into police operations suggests that the current practices and procedures of policing fail to deal with crime because the police get less help from victims and witnesses in the community than they need to successfully control crime.

These observations suggest to us that it may be desireable for police departments to experiment with some different strategies of policing than are now being used. We cannot say with confidence what the alternative strategies should be, but we can present some general ideas that might guide the development of a new strategy.

One general idea is that the community must become more actively involved in crime control efforts. The police must begin thinking of themselves and acting as _complements_ to private social control efforts, not as substitutes. This may mean that the police should start de-emphasizing their special competence and expertise in controlling crime, and stop insisting on their monopoly over crime control efforts. Volunteer citizen efforts and commercial security arrangements should be welcomed by police executives rather than

treated with contempt or hostility. The police should be available to back up citizens and reduce the risks they run by assuming public responsibility -- not held back to let the citizen crime control efforts fail.

To involve the community in crime control efforts it may also be necessary for the police to deliver to the community more of what they think they need from the police department. It is possible that the fear of crime is as great a problem as the actual occurrence of crime, and that fear is triggered by disorder rather than actual crime. To the extent this is true, it may be advisable for police departments to get back in the order maintenance business. It may also be possible to attract community confidence in the police by providing emergency services or being helpful in the organization of commerce in local neighborhoods. Both functions will feel like service to the community and will draw the police out of the world of cars and dispatches, and into the world of community life. If the community feels like the police work for them, they may be willing to share some of the information they have about offenses and offenders.

A second general idea is that the police may have to begin experimenting with more intrusive and more determined efforts to deal with serious crime. At a minimum, it may be important for the police to lend more support, comfort and protection to victims and witnesses of crime than they now do. They should not be treated as any old citizen by the police; they should receive special attention in their

communities. Moreover, the _police_ should do this -- not some special social service agency since victims and witnesses are as likely to want effective protection as "counseling." Beyond this, it may be necessary for the police to become more proactive and intrusive. Overt patrol, for example, could look more attentively for people carrying weapons, or could begin sharing the responsibility for supervising parolees and probationees in the community with probation and patrol officers. More extensive use of covert methods such as informants and undercover police might be made. Sometimes the informants and undercover police would be simply passive observers; other times they might operate as decoys or otherwise create opportunities for people to commit crimes. It might even be desirable to consider the limited use of surveillance targeted on gangs or known criminals rather than restricting surveillance to locations or acts. Which of these methods has real potential for handling what sorts of crimes remains unclear. But experiments may be worthwhile.

The third general idea is a natural implication of the first two: if it is important to re-establish the role of citizens in crime control and order maintenance activities, and if the police are going to experiment with slightly more intrusive enforcement methods to attack serious crime, it is important that the police establish procedures and structural arrangements that will allow them to consult frequently and extensively with representatives of the local community.   In effect, the police must seek some political

authorization for their activities in addition to legal authorization. This political authorization cannot overcome constitutional restrictions or a continuing interest in equity. But it should be available both to limit the intrusiveness of police methods, and to justify any increase in intrusiveness associated with new practices.

These general ideas add up in our minds to a police strategy that might be called "community crime prevention and order maintenance." It emphasizes the role of the community in controlling crime, and in authorizing and legitimating the methods of the police. The strategy also revitalizes police concern with its order maintenance responsibilities both as a service for the community and as a separate device for dealing with the fear of crime. Modes of operation consistent with this strategy could involve heavier reliance on foot patrol, or park and walk strategies, special efforts to reassure and comfort victims, or simply a greater willingness to spend time with citizens in response to calls for service.

In proposing this strategy, we are not sure that it would be successful in controlling crime, reducing fear, and building support and legitimacy for police departments. Moreover, we are mindful of the risks to the values of non-intrusiveness and equity associated with this particular concept. Finally, we can easily imagine alternative strategies. It may be possible, for example, to stay with the current strategy of policing but shift resources from patrolling to after the fact investigating. Or, one might stay with the current

strategy but organize patrol around dangerous activities or dangerous offenders. One might even think of a strategy of policing that de-emphasized crime control significantly in favor of the provision of emergency services of various kinds. So we are not asserting a clear conclusion. What we are asserting is that now is an attractive time to do some broad thinking about alternative strategies of policing, and that our concept of "community crime prevention and order maintenance" is a provocative start.