

Police patrol: the backbone of policing

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Police Patrol: The Backbone of Policing As seen in the work of Archbold, patrol service is the centre of policing as the police in patrol play numerous roles from preventing crime to responding to calls that require their service (2). The methods of patrol services have changed with time, since its onset on patrol on foot to patrols on automobiles. This piece will endeavor to examine how the history of policing has progressed and changed over time. In the beginning, American policing solely relied on the citizens who were responsible for enforcing law. The citizens formed a huge part of the watch groups, what formed the frankpledge system as seen in the work of Archbold (2-3) just like the one in England. The citizens were to watch out for crimes in their colonies in the late 1700s to the onset of 1800. In 1829, Robert Peel was to introduce a bill in parliament that was to create a police force that would govern the city (Archbold 3). The London Metropolitan was to be viewed as the legitimate one to the public. This was a motivation to the American policing. Since the population was on the increase in America, there were slave patrols in the South in the early 1700s. It is this fact that led to Samuel Walker defining the slave patrols as police agencies (Archbold 4). In the 1800-1970s, the police were linked to the then politics as the politicians hired officers to aid them woo the citizens to vote for them in return gain favors. Later as Robert Fogelson would indicate, the police role changed to distributing food, helping the homeless, inspecting markets, cleaning streets amongst others (Archbold 7). Minimal patrols were seen at the time. With the call boxes in place, it was easy for the public to reach the headquarters for better communication of the patrol officers and their supervisors . Corruption was however at its peak with commissions such as Lexow examining the vice (Archbold 8).

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In the 1900-70s, reforms were to be experienced where politics was alienated from policing. Policing was professionalized, qualified police were hired, training and technology was applied in policing (Archbold 9). It is in this era that the speed readers were installed in the patrol vehicles to improve service delivery (Archbold 9). Later the patrols were to focus on maintaining order during protests and controlling crimes during the 1960s. The linkage between the public and the police force worsened especially after the numerous unrests.

My number one recommendation to improve American policing would focus on recruitment. In the event that potential police recruits are screened prior to their employment, the system will definitely acquire the most skilled personalities for the right job. With the country facing lack of multiplicity among its officers, it is recommended that the recruitment of the police be more thorough to get the right persons for the tough role ahead and the changing nature of crimes witnessed in the present day society. In the long run, the police strength will be boosted.

Work cited

Archbold, Carol A. Policing: A Text/Reader. London: SAGE Publications, 2012. Print.