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POLICE SCIENCE

THE PREFECTURE OF POLICE

Brian Chapman

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Although most students of French affairs are aware that the Paris Prefecture of Police exercises considerably greater powers than any police authority in this country, no recent attempt has been made to analyse the powers of the Prefect or to describe the organization of the Prefecture. This study will indicate the most important police problems facing the Prefecture, the main lines on which the police forces are organized, and briefly the way in which the force is recruited. As a preliminary, however, some mention must be made of the French conception of "police powers" and the special status of the police authority in French law.

POLICE POWERS

The revolutionary *Code* of October 24, 1796, contains the following definition of the duties of the police authorities. "The police," it says, "is responsible for protecting public order, liberty, property, and individual safety. It is divided into *police administrative* and *police judiciaire*. The object of the *police administrative* is the maintenance of public order; its principal task is to prevent crimes. The *police judiciaire* seeks out the crimes which the *police administrative* has been unable to prevent, collects the evidence relating to these crimes, and hands over the guilty parties to the tribunals charged with punishing them."

The word "police" is used in this quotation in two senses. The *police judiciaire* is purely and simply a body of men; but the *police administrative* is, on the one hand, a police force in the English sense, containing all those men (generally uniformed) who are responsible for preventing any threat to public safety, together with those officials like the Mayors and Prefects who exercise an ordaining power for that purpose; on the other hand it is the abstract conception of that ordaining "police" power.

The distinction between *police administrative* and *police judiciaire* is best seen by illustration. The forces of the *police administrative* are

responsible for traffic control, patrolling streets, and so on; the *police judiciaire* for investigating and apprehending criminals after the law has been broken. This distinction in the forces roughly coincides with the division into the uniformed and plain-clothes branches.

The ordaining power of the *police administrative* is subdivided into the *police générale*, the *police municipale* and the *police rurale*. This roughly corresponds with the division of responsibility for public order between the various police authorities. The Minister of the Interior and the Prefects in their Departments are responsible for the general safety of the State and public safety in the Department (*police générale*); the Mayor (and in some respects the Prefect also) is responsible for public safety in the Commune (*police municipale*) and in the countryside (*police rurale*). The Mayor is assisted in enforcing the law and police ordinances in the Commune either by uniformed police recruited and paid locally, if the Commune is under 10,000 inhabitants, or by detachments of State Police if it is above that figure. The Prefect in the Department has under his operational control all the police forces in his area, but the general supervision of the State Police lies with the special Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior, the *Sûreté Nationale*.

This Directorate also controls and organizes the other branch of the State Police, the *police judiciaire*. This force is organized on a regional basis; and its officials are subject both to the Prefect in the Department in which they are stationed, and to the State Advocate, (*Procureur de la République*) in that Region. When investigating crimes, however, they work under the direction of the official of the Ministry of Justice, the *juge d'instruction*, charged with the legal presentation of the case.

If Paris were administered in the ordinary way, the Mayor of the city of Paris would exercise the *police municipale* and the Prefect of the Department of the Seine would control the *police générale* in the Department as a whole. Instead, Paris is governed according to special statutes whereby the city has no elected Mayor; the Prefect of the Seine has assumed all the Mayor's ordinary powers of administration, with the important exception of the municipal police powers. These go to a special police authority, the Prefect of Police, first created in 1800. He is an official appointed by Decree on the advice of the Minister of the Interior and liable to instant dismissal without cause or explanation. His original mandate for the *police municipale* of Paris charged him with ensuring good order in the streets, to license hawkers and traders, enforce fair dealing and inspect goods offered for sale, and made him responsible for the security and salubrity of the

public highway. He was to look after the adequate provisioning of the population, and to protect it from civil and natural catastrophes including fires, floods, epidemics, and escaped lunatics; in the event of any such emergency he was to take all the steps necessary to overcome it. This meant that, apart from other things, the Paris fire services were under the Prefect's immediate control and the cost of that force is borne on the Municipal Police Budget. In short, the public order, morality, and security of the city of Paris were in his hands.

In addition to these municipal police powers, the Prefect of Police replaced in 1801 the Prefect of the Seine as the authority controlling the *police générale* throughout the Department of the Seine. This made him responsible for the security of the State, the prevention of plots, espionage, seditious meetings, the control of foreigners, the press, and associations. He was further required to apply and enforce the execution of laws and regulations concerning public health, public morality, and public security in the Department as a whole, and particularly to control unhealthy trades and professions, sanitary conditions, streets, morals, and the proper conduct of hotels and brothels, churches and theatres, gambling houses, and exchanges. As the Departmental police authority he was also charged with the supervision and inspection of penal establishments, public and private asylums, and certain children's institutions administered by the public health authority in the Department.

The Mayors of the remaining eighty Communes in the Department of the Seine continued to be responsible for the *police municipale*, with the exception of public demonstrations. The necessity for this concentration of power in the hands of the Prefect of Police should become more evident in the following sections.

Since 1800 certain powers connected with street lighting, highway repair, the inspection of premises, and so on, have been transferred to the Prefect of the Seine; but in all important particulars the Prefect of Police remains responsible for the safety of Paris, having under his jurisdiction services which in this country are operated by several different authorities, some national, some local, but few by a British police authority. Yet it must always be remembered that his peculiar status does not come from an unusual or special grant of powers not normally held by a French police authority: the *police municipale*, the *police générale*, and the *police judiciaire* are the same in Paris as elsewhere. The exceptional authority of the Prefect of Police comes from the unparalleled concentration of all the police powers into his

hands, and from the fact that Paris has a unique social and political significance in France.

THE POLICE PROBLEM IN PARIS

The police problem in Paris is rendered abnormally acute by a strong political element which accentuates all the normal difficulties present in a large urban and industrial area and in a capital city. The citizens of Paris have been at the head of every successful revolution in France since 1789, and have been involved in many unsuccessful risings. Paris is pre-eminently a city which objects to authority and which is easily stirred to aggressive action. It regards itself as the symbol of France and the home of liberty and the ideals of the Revolution. The Parisian has little truck with the organized political parties, their bargains, and their pressure groups; but he can be provoked into spontaneous action in the streets in support of his ideals. For example, when Right-wing elements decided recently to hold a Mass for Pétain in Notre Dame Cathedral, the Resistance groups of all complexions organized a great counter-demonstration which was kept quiet only by the presence of large forces of police. The "natural" mode of organizing the Parisian is not into parties resolved to influence the Government, but rather into leagues to protest against the Government's actions. The extreme left are prominent in organizing these sudden aggressive movements designed to discredit the Government and destroy its authority; when General Eisenhower first arrived in Paris to take command of NATO, a violent protest demonstration was organized by the Communists which led to much street fighting round the Champs Elysées; and the Partisans of Peace are always likely to belie their name. There is an anarchistic and a revolutionary tradition in Parisian life which finds an outlet in spontaneous "descents into the street."

The natural consequence of this is the political hold of extremist groups, both of the Right and of the Left; Paris is the focal point for conflicts between the irreconcilable elements in French political life. Thus, the police authority has continually to be alert for the sudden appearance in the streets of demonstrations inspired by an affront to the Parisian's sense of justice, and to plots and movements hoping to canalize these emotions into organized militant outbreaks. In the first instance, the police authority is brought face to face with the anarchistic tradition of hostility to authority, distrust of administration, and contempt for the Government. Subsequently, the revolutionary leadership of Paris is invoked, and the movements are against the régime and the existing form of Government.

This militant spirit is kept alive not only by tradition but by the peculiar way in which the social problems of a great city have, in Paris, fallen into a political mould. The social geography of Paris has a pattern which increases the perennial tension between rich and poor. The movement of population in the nineteenth century began with the demolition of the old centre of Paris and the creation in its place of broad fashionable boulevards; this drove the working population to the outskirts, to the encircling heights between the Buttes de Chaumont and Montmartre. The bourgeoisie, who invaded the new centre, in their turn yielded place to the hotels, the cinema, and the exclusive commercial address, and they have settled in the fashionable areas of the West round the Bois de Boulogne and the areas left free when the city walls were demolished. Such clearly defined social geography can only exacerbate social hostility, and this in turn strengthens the extremist political groups and enables them to provoke and exploit mutual antagonism and the resulting distrust. This hostility may be shown in various ways: for example, bitterness against the raising of rents, which had been previously frozen at a very low figure, has been so marked that the police have been forced to execute eviction orders made by courts of law at or before dawn, in order to prevent pitched battles in the streets with the neighbors and local political "militants."¹

In a similar way the industrial geography of Paris leads to a material simplification of political issues and conflicts. The old areas of industrial development were round the stations of the Gare du Nord, the Gare de l'Est, and the Gare St. Lazare. This was in large part due to the existence of the local "import" tax (the *octroi*), which penalized goods introduced into the city of Paris from outside, by subjecting them to a levy. This naturally led to a concentration of industry round the most favorable zones and impeded its extension towards the outer suburbs. When the time came for the large-scale industries, such as automobile and aircraft engineering, they were forced to settle in the far south-west of Paris round Billancourt; and this area, together with the suburbs which have sprung up along the southern rim of Paris, is consequently dominated by strongly organized industrial workers, who fit easily into a tradition of militant syndicalism. When it is realized that Paris is by far the most important industrial centre in France, with the largest markets, the greatest port, a great communications centre, a third of all chemical and parachemical industries, two-thirds of the national automobile and aircraft industries, and substantial

1. Reply given by M. Baylot, Prefect of Police, before Municipal Council, June 28, 1951.

numbers of workers in trades of most other kinds, it will be appreciated that the threat of direct action in support of economic and social ends is of considerable importance. Recently, the Renault works at Ivry dismissed several men who had been responsible for provoking a political strike against German rearmament during which a pitched battle was fought with the police causing several casualties; a force of 4,000 men had to be deployed in the vicinity of the factory the day these dismissals came into effect in order to keep the peace.

Politics also cut athwart a major social problem of most large cities, the racial and national question. In 1949 there were 308,000 registered foreigners resident in Paris, many of whom were organized into emigré clubs, political associations, and national groups. Today these groups are rarely involved in international conflicts since for many of their members an expulsion order signifies the end of useful existence. The associations do, however, provide obvious cover for anti-State activities, for spying, and for seditious movements, and although the great proportion of their members are innocent of such motives there have been sufficient exceptions to justify the attention of the Prefecture of Police.

The most noticeable racial problem lies in the large number of non-European nationals of the French Union, who require at most a permit to enter the country, and do not have to register as foreigners. Their number can consequently only be estimated, and it seems to be in the region of 300,000. They have different standards of conduct, morality, and traditions, and they tend to conglomerate round the Gare d'Austerlitz and the Gobelins. In recent years these groups, and especially the student movements among them, have been very prominent in organizing street demonstrations, frequently connected with events happening inside their countries of origin; in Algeria, Tunisia, Indo-China, and Madagascar. They probably do not represent any real threat to the safety of the Government, except insofar as their intrigues tend to centre on the capital, the seat of Government; but their demonstrations have a habit of degenerating into violent street battles, throwing a continual strain upon the uniformed police.

The political side of the Prefect of Police is also accentuated by the fact that his actions can be questioned in the elected Councils of the City of Paris and of the Department of the Seine. His budget has to be debated and voted by these assemblies, and he is required to answer, verbally or in writing, questions put to him by Councillors both at the budgetary sessions and at other sessions. This ensures the public accountability of the Prefect and prevents abuse of power. It lends itself, however, to political motions in these assemblies by parties inter-

ested in discrediting the Prefects, and thus indirectly the Government; and there are lively scenes when such issues as evictions, the dispersal of demonstrations, or traffic problems are discussed. Although the Prefects can be dismissed only by the Minister of the Interior, and although the Prefect of Police can always refuse to answer questions involving confidential police arrangements, the public nature of these sessions forces the Prefect publicly to accept political responsibility for his decisions and also heightens the existing political tensions in municipal affairs.

It must also be remembered that much of the national political life of France is set in Paris, and that parliamentary intrigues can seriously affect the stability of the country and the security of the capital. Some of the more recent scandals involving ministerial corruption have been brought to light by the Prefecture of Police. When the butchers, in an attempt to force the policy of the Peasant Party on the Government, stage a political strike, with ministerial connivance, against price control, the Prefecture of Police cannot fail to be concerned with the background of intrigue to the affair, since the Prefect is responsible for the adequate provisioning of the population.

For all these reasons the Prefecture of Police is forced to concentrate largely upon social, economic, and political affairs, and not only to have at the alert strong forces of police to prevent spontaneous or organized demonstrations from gaining control of the streets, but also to maintain a Directorate specially concerned with politics and plots.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PREFECTURE

Despite the variety of duties undertaken by the Prefecture of Police, its formal organization is comparatively simple. There is a major distinction between administrative and active branches, with a further division of the active force into uniformed, judicial (*police judiciaire*), and special police. There are four administrative Directorates and six active Directorates, and it is most convenient to deal with them in that order.

Standing outside the Directorates is the personal cabinet of the Prefect of Police presided over by his *directeur du cabinet*, a senior member of the *Corps Préfectoral*. This deals with the personal and private matters assigned to it by the Prefect and, in most cases, with those delicate and confidential matters which he wishes to keep under his personal control.

Of the four administrative Directorates, two are under the immediate supervision of the Prefect himself, and the other two are subject to

his second in command, the Secretary-General of the Prefecture, who is also a senior member of the *Corps Préfectoral*, normally a first class Prefect.

The first Directorate immediately under the Prefect is the Directorate of Personnel, the Budget, Material, and Legal Affairs. Each of the three individual items is dealt with by a Sub-Directorate headed by a Director or an Assistant Director. The details of the work of this Directorate are more or less self-explanatory as they concern the appointment, promotion, and discipline of members of the force; the preparation of the budget, the paying of monies, and keeping the Prefecture's accounts; and major building and repair projects. The three Sub-Directorates together employ 246 officials; these figures for personnel will be broken down in the next section. Attached to them is a section for legal affairs with a staff of 11.

While there are obvious reasons why the Prefect should wish to maintain close contact with this first Directorate it is not so evident at first sight why he should be immediately connected with the second administrative Directorate, that for Transport, Traffic, and Commerce. This deals with questions about public highways, the licensing of vehicles, traffic problems, public transport, and labor laws. The reason for its prominence in the administrative hierarchy is that, strange as it may at first appear to a foreigner, the Parisian considers he has an acute traffic problem. To anyone accustomed to English cities the wide boulevards, spacious squares and elaborate crossings in Paris seem to be specially designed to meet the demands of modern traffic. On closer acquaintance, and in view of the speed at which the Parisian expects to be able to move through the centre of the city, there may be some substance in his argument. The principal difficulty is the weight of traffic in the industrial area round the Gare du Nord, Gare de l'Est, and Gare St. Lazare; between these stations roads are much too narrow and congested to cope with heavy vehicles. Furthermore, communications between this industrial area and the South run across the centre of the city and the river, and are concentrated into only one really adequate route by the Boulevard Strasbourg and the Boulevard Sébastopol. This results in the concentration of traffic at a few points in the centre where this route cuts across the already heavy East-West traffic following the line of the River Seine. This leads to traffic jams of some magnitude—made worse by the lack of patience of the average French driver—if there is the slightest delay at even the best regulated crossings. New and elaborate schemes of one-way streets have been introduced recently with promising results; yet the Prefect has

estimated that an expenditure of some 14 milliard francs will be required before the traffic problem will be solved. The prominence attached to the Directorate of Transport and Highways may probably not unjustly be regarded as a sop to public opinion.

The two Directorates under the control of the Secretary-General of the Prefecture are concerned with Security and Public Health, and with the *police générale*. The first is responsible for protecting the population against natural catastrophes such as fires and floods, and it licenses theatres, cinemas, and other public places of assembly which present a fire risk. The same Directorate deals with epidemics, the sanitary conditions of dwellings and factories, the inspection of food and the condition of food establishments, with preventing the spread of contagious diseases, the protection of children in moral danger, the quarantine and inspection of animals, and the supervision of certified lunatics.

The Directorate of the *police générale* registers foreigners, receives and examines applications for naturalization and delivers passports. Various Bureaux in this Directorate are charged with the administrative supervision of race tracks, gambling houses, licensed premises, gypsies, and the use of professional qualifications and titles. In administrative importance this Directorate ranks next to the Directorate of the Budget, and in size (481 officials) it is a good deal greater than any other.

To complete this sketch of the administrative services of the Prefecture mention must be made of three specialized departments operating under the general supervision of the Secretary-General. These are scientific establishments staffed by specialists; a chemical laboratory, a toxicology section, and a veterinary service.

There are next the six operational Directorates of the Prefecture, three of which are dominant and absorb by far the greater number of men and officers. These three are responsible for good order in the city, the apprehension of criminals, the investigation of crimes, and the compilation of information on social, political, and economic affairs and controlling gambling. They are respectively the Directorates of Municipal Police (*police municipale*), Judicial Police (*police judiciaire*), and General Intelligence (*renseignements généraux et jeux*).

The Directorate of the Municipal Police has a force of some 19,000 uniformed officers and men, deployed throughout the city of Paris and the Department of the Seine, and an administrative staff of 68 in the Prefecture of Police. The rank and file (*gardiens de la paix*) direct traffic, maintain order, and patrol the streets; they are the uniformed force well-known to visitors. Their officers are the *commissaires de*

police and the *officiers de paix*, who rank as Chief Inspectors and Inspectors and have certain executive powers in administrative and legal matters and are responsible for traffic, public health, and the good order of public meetings. This force is divided between twenty district stations in the city of Paris (*commissariats d'arrondissement*) with a sub-station in each *quartier*, and twenty-five area police stations (*commissariats de circonscription*) covering the remainder of the Department of the Seine. Each station is commanded by a *commissaire de police*, and the stations are grouped into divisions under a *commissaire divisionnaire*, a rank corresponding to Superintendent. Since this force is responsible not only for routine police duties, but also for the control and, if necessary, the dispersal of demonstrations, riots, unlawful assemblies, and armed mobs, a standing mobile reserve, fully equipped with the necessary implements of crowd control, is continually present at the Prefecture of Police, or if necessary strategically deployed in the city. The efficiency of this reserve and the scrupulous attention to detail is a characteristic of the Paris police; considerable emphasis is placed in the transport section on very heavy carrier vehicles, used for the rapid transport of this squad and also for rapidly sited road blocks. These vehicles have red reflectors on their sides to increase their utility as ready road blocks, and perhaps this illustrates the essential difference in outlook between the Parisian and the English police; it is reasonable for the Paris police to act on the assumption that barricading the streets is a normal part of police work.

This is perhaps the point at which to introduce the special reserve force available to the Prefect of Police; it is also a uniformed body and frequently used to control demonstrations and street disturbances. This is the *Garde Républicaine*, a branch of the *Gendarmerie* under the administrative control of the War Ministry. It comprises a force of about 3,000 men and 100 officers divided into a horse and a foot regiment. They are always liable to be requisitioned by the Prefect even though they are a military force recruited from regular soldiers. These troops, distinguishable by their bright uniforms, have a special charge to protect the President's Palace and the National Assemblies, and they provide the ceremonial guard on state occasions.

The second great operational Directorate of the Prefecture is the Directorate of Judicial Police, charged with discovering and investigating crimes and with the apprehension of criminals. It is a plain-clothes force numbering in all 2,225 officials, who are divided between a headquarters staff at the Quai des Orfèvres, and the district and area police stations of the city of Paris and the Department of the Seine.

When a case arises in a district it is referred, unless of a minor and purely local character, to the offices of the Director of the Judicial Police, who decides whether to detach officers from headquarters to deal with it or leave it to the local *commissaire*.

The headquarters staff of the Judicial Police consists of an administrative group of 75 officials, and an operational force numbering 1,418, mainly *commissaires* and *inspecteurs* (equivalent to detective sergeants); there are also 32 plain clothes women police, controlled by a principal, who work with them on special duties. There is no uniformed women's branch. Most of this force is divided into five Brigades, each specializing in a particular branch of police work. The first and most important of these is the *brigade criminelle* (or *spéciale*) charged with the investigation of all crimes of special importance—murders, large thefts, counterfeiting, forgery, and blackmail. It works in conjunction with its counterpart in the *Sûreté Nationale*, which has similar jurisdiction throughout the rest of France. This Brigade can properly be regarded as the *corps d'élite* of the Judicial Police, if not of the whole force.

The second Brigade is charged with the execution of warrants emanating from the judicial authorities, a task involving well over 10,000 missions a year. It acts in close liaison with the State Advocate's department in the preparation of evidence, the production of witnesses, and the seizure of documents. It also has general responsibility for the arrest of escaped prisoners, deserters, illegal immigrants, and those whose residence permits have been withdrawn. This Brigade has the doubtful honour of being the most dangerous branch of the Paris police, several officers being killed annually in carrying out their duties.

The third Brigade, the *brigade mondaine*, specializes in work connected with public morality, and more particularly with investigating offenses concerning prostitution, vice, white slavery, drug trafficking, immoral practices, and kidnapping. It works in close touch with a special office of the Judicial Police which keeps a register of prostitutes and attempts, as far as possible, to regulate their conduct. In addition, a special prophylactic dispensary has been created to try to stamp out venereal diseases.

The fourth Brigade is also concerned with public morality, and its special field is juvenile delinquency and abortion.

The last Brigade deals with assaults and with highway robberies (*brigade de voie publique et volante*). It was for some time the equivalent in Paris to the flying squad organization in London. But the speed of the criminals' movements, and the rapid and disturbing spread

of bare-faced robbery after the war led the Prefect of Police to set up, in 1949, a new service operating throughout the city and the Department. This service comprised twelve *brigades territoriales*, organized into six divisions in the city and six in the rest of the Department. Some of these divisions extend over several Communes of the Department while others cover little more than one *arrondissement* in the city. The divisions were drawn up not so much according to population as according to the incidence of crime as shown in criminal statistics. These showed that the incidents notified in suburban Communes such as Drancy, La Courneuve, and Chevilly were very few indeed, while the XIIIth *arrondissement* round the Gobelins and the area round Montmartre were hot-beds of criminal activity. Some districts, in fact, were found to specialize in a particular branch of criminal work; for example, the XVIIth *arrondissement* and the adjacent Commune of Levallois were the centres of the car "trade." The *brigades territoriales* are equipped for instant action on the scene of a robbery or an assault, and they comprise balanced teams of investigators, linked to each other and to the Quai des Orfèvres by radio. They have managed to eliminate many of the cruder and more provocative criminal attempts, and cut down criminals' freedom of movement and operation. There is every indication that the diversion of specialized equipment to these Brigades and additional personnel would further increase the value of their work.

There are finally six sections (*cabinets*) which work in liaison with the State Advocate's department; their task is to collect evidence and carry out investigations required by the examining magistrates (*juges d'instruction*) in the course of preparing cases for trial. Finally, under the control of the Judicial Police, are the criminal records and the Judicial Identity department.

The third great Directorate is the political police, or the Directorate of General Intelligence (*renseignements généraux*). The history of this body, like that of its counterpart in the *Sûreté Nationale*, goes back to 1851 and the creation of the special railway police force. Gradually the functions of the force extended, and it now has a general warrant to keep the Prefect of Police, and through him the Minister of the Interior and the Government, as fully informed as possible of any public or secret matter of political, economic, or social interest.

This Directorate is divided into eight sections, each dealing with one major aspect of public activity; the press, political associations, foreigners, counter-espionage, general security, gambling houses, and race-courses and their clientele. It files and examines newspapers, adver-

tisements, and published works for seditious articles and subversive intentions. By this and other means it follows the course of political and social movements, and estimates as reliably as possible the changing currents of opinion, the strength of political forces, and the influence of administrative actions; it also keeps a close watch on strikes and the organizers of demonstrations. It is reputed² to have its agents in most political organizations, and to be able to know at first hand details of the meetings and intentions of any public or private group in which it is interested; also dossiers on all persons, French and foreigners, who show any interest or take any part in political or social affairs are believed to be filed in the Prefecture. Probably future historians will find in these reports the solution to issues which are obscure to contemporary observers.

This Directorate, it will be immediately appreciated, is the core and hub of the "political" police in Paris. It comprises about 800 officers and administrative officials under the control of a Deputy-Director (*Chef de Service*). It provides the Prefect with information on current affairs that is in many ways more accurate and is certainly more extensive than that acquired by the Ministries. In this respect this Directorate performs a vital and necessary task, for on its ability to prophesy correctly depends the Prefect's ability to make the necessary dispositions; for, whatever one's personal reactions to the existence of a political police, a country which is menaced by factions which are prepared to overthrow the Government and demolish the régime but which refuses to take this necessary precaution, is well on the way to committing suicide. The protection of a society in which social and political antagonisms are harnessed by forces which desire the destruction of that society, is something more than a mere matter of controlling traffic, investigating crimes, and supervising public activities. France has had such elements for too long to consider them abnormal visitants. In the last few months many Communist Party offices have been attacked with plastic bombs thrown by Right extremists, and the Communists themselves are always ready to challenge government authority by direct action and political strikes in the hope of weakening the fabric of the State. The police are probably right when they consider that the good order of Paris and the safety of the State are more seriously threatened by actions such as these than by the outrages of a homicidal maniac. The real point in considering the political nature of the Paris police is to remark its ability to function without tyranny, and to inform without damaging the freedom of the citizen. It may be re-

2. Raymond-Laurent: *Paris, sa vie municipale*; Godde, Paris, 1938, p. 38.

marked in passing that the British police services would probably show signs of significant change if the I. R. A.³ continued to operate.

One just criticism of the political police must, however, be noted; its continual feuds with other security forces responsible for counter-espionage and intelligence. There is an unhappy rivalry of long standing between the officers of the Directorate of General Intelligence and those of its counterpart in the *Sûreté Nationale*. In principle the latter operate only outside Paris, but in practice the *Sûreté* frequently finds it necessary to carry out investigations inside Paris. There have been occasions in the past when the two forces have come into conflict, and a regrettable amount of side-play has interfered with the efficiency of both—denouncing each other's informers, arresting witnesses, and so on. There seems to have been a great deal less of this kind of warfare between the Prefecture and the *Sûreté Nationale* since the war. From the committee of enquiry's report into the Affair of the Generals it now seems to be fought out mainly between the *Sûreté Nationale* and the other agencies like the SDECE and the intelligence services attached to the various Ministries.

Finally, the operational forces of the Prefecture of Police are completed by four branches charged with special duties. The first of these, and by far the largest (1,271 officers and men), is the Directorate of Technical Services, which is responsible for the maintenance of all types of equipment used by the police forces. It is controlled by a chief engineer and is composed in part of qualified transport, radio, electrical, and mechanical engineers, in part of *commissaires*, and in large part by *gardiens de la paix* detailed for service in this Directorate rather than in the Municipal Police.

The second special Directorate is the Economic Police, with a staff of 252 of which the greater part are *inspecteurs*. This Directorate is responsible for enforcing the law with regard to weights and measures, price controls, and the quality of goods offered for sale. Included in this Directorate is a section for the repression of frauds.

The third and fourth of these special departments are the Inspectorate General of Police Services which, under the direction of the Inspector-General, administers the Police School, supervises the efficiency of the police services and holds enquiries into abuses or shortcomings; and the Security Squad attached to the President of the Republic, which is responsible for the President's personal safety and for the internal security of the *Elysée*. Both of these branches are comparatively small, the first comprising 68 officials and the second 69.

3. Irish Republican Army.

The fire services in the Department of the Seine also come under the control of the Prefect of Police. They are organized on quasi-military lines into companies, posted throughout the city and the Department, and their commanding officer is a Colonel. There are 18 senior officers, 78 junior officers, 855 sub-officers and NCO's and 2,493 men. Administratively the force is attached to the Directorate of Security, but operationally it is quite distinct from any other service.

PERSONNEL

The total personnel employed by the Prefecture of Police, both administrative and operational, is 25,440 officers, officials and men, of which 1,614 are administrative officials. This means that in the Department of the Seine as a whole there is one police officer for every 187 inhabitants, and, if administrators are included in the count, one to every 200 inhabitants. In fact, since greater forces are stationed in the city of Paris than in the suburban Communes, the proportion inside the city would be nearer one to 175 inhabitants.

The active police force comprises 15 Directors and Deputy Directors, 449 *commissaires* and other officers, 2,830 *inspecteurs* (who rank as police sergeants in Anglo-Saxon countries), and 20,483 *gardiens de la paix* and agents. There are also a small body of 32 women police, mainly engaged on plain-clothes work, and 18 specialists—doctors, engineers, and scientists. With this force the Prefect of Police has to preserve the peace and health of Paris.

The Prefect of Police's personal staff consists of a *directeur du cabinet* assisted by a junior Sub Prefect, and a deputy *directeur*. The Secretary General of the Prefecture, who is a first-class Prefect in his own right, also has a junior Sub Prefect as an assistant. All these officials are members of the *Corps Préfectoral*, and this means that questions of top policy are decided not by police officers but by civil administrators who may not have had any previous experience of routine police administration beyond that normally acquired in the course of a prefectoral career. If anything the police system has gained from this.

It may be interesting to trace the background of the present Prefect of Police, M. Baylot, and of his predecessor, M. Léonard.

M. Léonard, who was Prefect of Police from May 1947 to May 1951, has had a brilliant and varied career in many branches of the administration, and although a member of the *Corps Préfectoral* for a long time he has served outside it for considerable periods. He was born at Bordeaux in 1898 and took degrees in law and letters and a diploma at the *École des Sciences Politiques*. He joined the Corps as

the *chef de cabinet* to the Prefect of the Gironde Department in 1921, and two years later he was promoted to Sub-Prefect at Blaye. From 1926 to 1934 he was attached to the Directorate of Alsace-Lorraine affairs, and in 1934 he was appointed Sub-Prefect at Thionville. In 1938 he went as a *maître des requêtes* in the *Conseil d'Etat* in which he served, except for a year in the War Ministry in charge of legal affairs, until the Liberation. He was at once nominated Prefect of Seine-et-Oise with the rank of Prefect *hors classe* and acquitted himself with great distinction. In May 1947 he was appointed Prefect of Police; at a time of great difficulty in the internal affairs of France he concentrated on strengthening the discipline and morale of his forces. In May 1951 he was offered the Governor-Generalship of Algeria in face of strong competition from the most eminent administrators and political personalities. This is one of the few promotions open to a man who has reached the eminence of Prefect of Police.

His place at the Prefecture was taken by M. Baylot, whose career affords a striking contrast to the smooth progression of that supremely competent administrator, M. Léonard. M. Baylot was born in Pau in 1897; after taking his diploma at the *École Supérieure des Bois*, he entered the Postal and Telegraph service and worked mainly in the research and experimental division. He entered the Resistance in the last war, and became a figure of some importance in clandestine activities, as a result of which on Liberation he was immediately appointed Prefect for the Basses-Pyrénées at Pau. Unlike some other novices appointed to the Prefectoral Corps at this very difficult period, he managed to establish his authority rapidly and bring order from chaos. Consequently, two years later he was promoted to be Prefect of the Haute-Garonne at Toulouse, where he remained for a further eighteen months. Then he was called to Paris to undertake the duties of Secretary-General of Food Distribution, a department which had suffered badly from political and commercial intrigues. In February, 1948, he was sent as Prefect to the difficult post at Marseilles, where his prestige increased by his skilful direction and reorganization of a police force which had been badly shaken by the violent political general strike of November 1947. He also showed marked gifts for winning the sympathy of the population. As a result of his success in this critical post, in January 1951 he was given special jurisdiction over the police forces of the Region. In May he was appointed to replace M. Léonard.

Compared to the career of M. Léonard that of M. Baylot has been unorthodox, though it is interesting to remark that both the present Director-General of the *Sûreté Nationale*, M. Hirsch, and his prede-

cessor, M. Bertaux, entered the Prefectoral Corps from outside at the time of the Liberation. The choice of civilian administrators to fill the most senior police posts is quite deliberate. A man appointed Prefect of Police must bring with him considerable experience, political tact, a high administrative flair, a command of men and a decisive mind, an imaginative grasp of the problems of a great city, and an ability to explain and justify his views and purposes publicly to an elected assembly. These qualities are not frequently found in one man, and when they are they are still inadequate unless he also possesses the final hallmark of a Prefect of Police, physical bravery.