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Isolation of the Police: A Comparison of the British and American Situations

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In the following article, Dr. Clark examines the often-heard complaint that police forces are isolated from the mainstream of American society. He compares some of their values, orientations toward police action, and social activities with similar characteristics of the general public and other community social control agencies. Frequent comparisons are made with the police situation in Great Britain. This is one of the few systematic studies available on the integration of policing in local communities—EDITOR.

Policing in most societies exists in a state of "dynamic tension" between forces that tend to isolate it and those that tend to integrate its functioning with other social structures. In its broadest sense, the concept of isolation-integration is used here to denote the degree to which policing contributes to the overall unity and welfare of a society as measured by its own diverse sets of standards. More specifically, the police may be said to be isolated when the relationships between themselves and others involved in social control activities are less frequent or of a different nature than those thought to be desirable, or when conceptions of proper police action vary significantly between the police and some other segment of the population, or when actual police action varies from that desired by specified others. Police isolation often means the lack of social interaction on the behavioral level, but it also refers to the lack of consensus regarding proper police functioning.

It is the purpose of this paper to identify some forces that contribute to the isolation and integration of policing and to suggest their consequences to police organizations and general society. Further, the results of a study which attempted to measure the nature of police isolation in three medium-sized cities in Illinois are presented and compared with similar recently published data about the British police.[1]

FORCES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE ISOLATION OF POLICING

Certainly, those who have experienced restrictive action by the police (and even those who perceive

themselves as potential police clients) resent this intrusion upon the pursuit of their private interests.[2] This resentment may foster efforts to neutralize further police activity and frequently sensitizes both parties involved to differences in their conceptions of desirable police work—both reactions being likely contributors to police isolation. The potency of this isolating force is probably proportional to the importance placed upon the behavior actually or potentially being curtailed, the projected social consequences of this kind of police-public contact, the availability of "isolating resources," and the predispositions of those involved regarding the proper role of formal social control agencies.

A second force that contributes to police isolation is the social reaction to recurrences of the historic problems of policing. The history of local police forces both here and in Great Britain is liberally endowed with incompetence, brutality, corruption, and the influence of private interests, although there is considerably less of this in Great Britain since about the middle of the nineteenth century.[3] The extensive documentation of policing in totalitarian countries frequently reinforces our worst fears of relatively uncontrolled police power. Our recent preoccupation with the emotion-laden issues of racial segregation, civil liberties, increased official crime rates, and corruption of those in authority (especially the police) has re-sensitized us to questions of the quality of police forces and

[1] The data in British police-public relations are taken largely from the ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POLICE, Morton-Williams, *Relations between the Police and the Public* (Appendix IV) (1962). Readers may also be interested in the final recommendations made in the *Final Report* by the ROYAL COMMISSION.

[2] For an extremely insightful analysis concerning resentment to police activity see Stinchcombe, The Control of Citizen Resentment in Police Work (undated, unpublished monograph).

[3] For brief histories of the development of modern police forces in the U.S. and Britain see GERMANN, INTRODUCTION TO LAW ENFORCEMENT 37–67 (1962); CHAPMAN, THE POLICE HERITAGE IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA (1962).

their social responsiveness.[4] The accumulative effects of fear, mistrust, and disdain overshadow relationships between the police and others and result in restricted interaction between the two factions and incomplete cooperation and distorted perceptions of police motives and operations on the part of the public.

Thirdly, police officers and their operations tend to be set apart because they are visible reminders of the seamy and recalcitrant portions of human behavior. In societies where a generalized stigmatization of the individual and perhaps his associates is the prevalent reaction to social deviance and where there is a pervasive orientation that "getting caught" is the crucial determinant of this degradation, the consequences of police detection and apprehension loom large, indeed. Lawyers, judges, probation officers, and social workers are associated with deviants, in a sense, *after* social sanction which occurs in a very real sense during the investigative and accusative operations of policing. The maneuvers and hagglings of prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges and correctional personnel in the vast majority of cases are not primarily concerned with *whether* social sanction should be applied but *what form* formal sanctions will take. Obviously, not only does the latter depend upon the former, but "post-police" handling is likely to be less important to the actual or potential offender. Therefore, prudence demands that actual or potential police clients construct maximum insulation between themselves and the police who are the pivotal figures in the application of social sanctions. The reservoir of possible police clients has grown immensely with the proliferation of legal regulations.[5] Positive reaction notwithstanding, thoughts of policing to this segment of the population may conjure up images of surveillance, inconvenience, embarrassment, frustration and indignation. Though the presence of police may serve as a positive socializing symbol for social control,[6] it may also be a constant reminder that the police must be isolated in order to reduce the risk of social sanction.

The rapid growth of professional expertise in a complex industralized society has had its effect upon policing. Modern crime detection techniques, police administrative procedures, techniques of handling mass demonstrations and riots, and communication networks have contributed to the increased differentiation of the role of policing. Good policemen must be trained and re-trained. To the extent that such socialization creates an occupational structure with its own standards of behavior and a body of specialized knowledge, this occupation may be thought of as a profession. Professionalization to the point of being granted license to determine the content of policing provides both the condition and the impetus whereby the profession may become isolated from other occupations and the general public. Whereas the professionalization of other occupations might be looked upon as very desirable by the general population, its emergence here serves to aggravate an already sensitive relationship between the police and the public. Becoming more expert and unreproachable in the restriction of behavior may be interpreted quite negatively, especially by those who were not in sympathy initially with police procedures and philosophies. This same isolating force may operate to mutually isolate the police and other organizations in the social control system (e.g., social welfare agencies and schools) whose philosophy of operation is not sympathetic to the professionalization of certain police activities.

One of the most important contributions to police isolation stems from the general policy (official or unofficial) of policing organizations themselves. That is, in the interest of "good police work," officers are often advised to isolate themselves from certain segments of the public in order to avoid entangling or contaminating relationships. In fact, becoming closely identified with any segment of the public is frequently condemned because of the increased vulnerability to charges of favoritism and the fear of incurring obligations that subsequently could become detrimental to police operations.

For at least these reasons, policing in our society tends to be isolated in both the behavioral and normative sense. However, in most societies, and especially those more or less committed to democracy, numerous counterpressures contribute to the integration of policing.

[4] Examples are *Our Streets of Violence*, The New Republic, Sept. 5, 1964; *How Cops Behave in Harlem*, THE NEW REPUBLIC, Aug. 22, 1964; *Who Cares*, LOOK, September 8, 1964.

[5] See Gourley, *Police Public Relations*, 291 ANNALS 135 (1954); Parker, *The Police Challenge in Our Great Cities*, 291 ANNALS 5 (1954).

[6] See Wenninger & Clark, *A Theoretical Orientation for Police Studies*, in Klein & Myerhoff, *Juvenile Gangs in Context: Theory, Research, and Action* 178–191 (undated), monograph in the Youth Studies Center of the University of Southern California.

FORCES THAT TEND TO INTEGRATE POLICING

First of all, a large proportion of the population accepts the legitimacy of policing as an integral part of the social structure. Though this may be an elementary observation, it is probably this basic orientation that provides the fundamental integration of police forces and their operations into most communities. To most, not having a body of functionaries who will intercede in certain social control situations that are thought to be damaging to the individual or the community, however rare the occasion, is unthinkable. Outcries against the police demand their reform, not abolition. The public and those in other parts of the social control system recognize that the police cannot be totally isolated and perform their fundamental functions. This minimum of acceptance, although variously defined, assures the police of continued existence and integration.

A second force which mediates against police isolation is the fear of what police agencies might become if they were not integrated in the sense of being responsive to the dominant will of those policed. As was mentioned above, however, this same fear may prompt police isolation; because of the possibility of negative consequences from interaction with the police who are not totally responsive to public desires. This fear of uncontrolled police activity appears to create an "approach-avoidance" situation which might better be termed a state of *social ambivalence*. The manifestations of this ambivalent orientation toward the police are numerous. For example, episodes of flirtation with the police (e.g., having them speak at service club meetings and school assemblies) alternate with widespread general condemnation of police officers and their activities and demands for investigations. At times, police are forced to be subservient to "civilian" police commissions or advisory boards to insure police integration, while at other times they are surrounded by an apathetic local government and public who may even strongly encourage them "to do whatever you think best."[7] In yet another

area, many communities demand that police officers be recruited only from within the local jurisdictions to assure police sensitivity to their unique circumstances, yet expect the officers to be free of any entangling social relationships that might bias their work—all this with little or no formal training in policing!

A more specific source of pressure toward the integration of policing is the process of accommodation which occurs between the police and the policed. The subversion of police activity by the policed through purposefully placing the police in a position of indebtedness or obligation to them tends to bind the two parties involved more closely together. Those at high police risk, such as tavern operators, professional criminals, cab drivers, prostitutes, and drug addicts, are famous for such operations.[8] The police are equally renowned for their efforts to create "contacts" among these same populations. One consequence of such activity is the creation of integrative tissue between the police and their potential and actual clientele. It should be noted here that greater police integration with certain populations may result in the isolation of the police from other segments of society, as was suggested above. Therefore, this specific process may explain both the integration and isolation of the police, depending upon the portion of the citizenry or the quality of policing being considered.

Somewhat similarly, those portions of the public who are likely to request more than ordinary police services may be more solicitous than others of police personnel and may initiate relationships that in some fashion bind the police closely to them. For example, managers of financial establishments, theatre owners, operators of "teen-age hangouts," certain property owners, and tavern operators, have particular need for rapid and reliable access to police services. Through their efforts to obtain these, they entwine the police into the social fabric.

Also, the occupation of policing holds considerable glamour for significant numbers of people. Characteristics of policing such as danger, public prominence, power, "being in on the know," and handling the "bad guys," appear to attract portions of the public. This probably accounts for some efforts by the public to interact with the

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[7] See ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POLICE, *Final Report* 22-24; 51-55 (1962); JOHNSON, CRIME, CORRECTION AND SOCIETY 440-461 (1964); Gourley, *op. cit. supra* note 5 at 135; SMITH, POLICE SYSTEMS IN THE UNITED STATES 15-23 (1960). GERMANN, *op. cit. supra* note 3 at 67-103. For a sample of police reaction to restriction of their power see Wilson, *Police Authority In A Free Society*, 54 J. CRIM. L., C. & P. S. 175 (1963) and Day, *Criminal Law Enforcement And A Free Society*, 54 J. CRIM. L., C. & P. S. 360 (1963).

[8] The classic documentation being WHYTE, STREET CORNER SOCIETY 111-146. See also Wilson, *The Police and Their Problems: A Theory*, 12 PUB. POL. 203-204. DEUTSCH, THE TROUBLE WITH COPS 75-84, 96-106 (1955).

police, and the latter's willingness to respond. A latent function of such activity is the greater integration of the police with the public.

One of the most obvious and powerful social forces of police integration is the effort of police officers themselves to keep the role they occupy in fundamental agreement with their cultural heritage and that of the community within which they work. Although the power of this pressure varies with the selection, training, and retention policies of the police, there is strain toward consistency between the work and private attitudes and values of police officers. Of course, to the extent that police recruiting, training, and retention create a body of individuals who hold a unique set of values and attitudes, consistency between private and occupational orientations may help explain the lack of police integration into the larger society.

Police officers have occupational reasons for avoiding their own isolation. Most aspects of policing require the uncoerced cooperation of the public.[9] Since the criminal code is at best only a crude guide to police action, the major responsibility for determining when and how to activate police power lies squarely upon the shoulders of the police.[10] Therefore, when police initiate action, they do so with the knowledge that their action is condoned by the significant public and the legal system which may ultimately become involved, and frequently by the offenders themselves.[11] Such efforts to act safely within the boundaries of expectations of others cannot help but exert pressure toward a closer integration of policing into the larger society. On an operational level the police depend upon their working relationships with the public as sources of information, as indicators of public sentiment, and in the more informal aspects of social control, as their colleagues.

Policing leads a turbulent existence as a result of the strains imposed upon it by the various forces which tend both to isolate and integrate it within society.[12] Changes in the relative strength of one or more of these forces may bring about a significant change in the character of police isolation. The consequences of such isolation have been the subject of a few scientific investigations. Although these efforts have been focused primarily upon the dysfunctions of police isolation and even include suggestions as to how "the problem might solved," several positive consequences of this isolation are identifiable.

POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ISOLATION OF POLICING

Among these would be the probability that up to a certain ill-defined point the smaller the involvement of police personnel with those who are to be policed (especially the more habitual and traditional offenders), the freer the former feel to detect, harass, and apprehend the latter. Obviously, there is a real danger of overstating and distorting this point, but there is evidence to indicate that the police have some practical difficulty in restricting the behavior of those with whom they are clearly identified or by whom they have been, in a sense, co-opted.[13] This is not meant to imply that good police work consists of dispassionate detection and apprehension, but merely that certain degrees of detachment from clients may be conducive to more objective evaluation and more aggressive action in police situations. When one considers the great variation in the demands placed upon municipal police forces and the equally diverse motivations for these expectations, there is a real reason to doubt whether "good police work" can be accomplished for the whole society. For example, as a practical matter, it is difficult to see how police forces in areas experiencing severe racial turmoil can retain sufficient isolation from the white population and enough integration with the Negro population to effect "good police work" with either. Here the unenviable role of the police as "the agency between" becomes sharply defined.[14]

Secondly, to the extent that police forces are used as positive agents of social change, they are likely to represent but a portion of society (likely

[9] Parker, *op. cit. supra* note 5; Gourley, *op. cit. supra* note 5; Wilson, *op. cit. supra* note 7.

[10] See ROYAL COMMISSION, *op. cit. supra* note 7 at 31; 34–50; LaFave, *The Police and Non-Enforcement of the Law—Parts I and II*, (1962) WIS. L. REV. 104, 179. See also LAFAVE, ARREST: THE DECISION TO TAKE A SUSPECT INTO CUSTODY (1965).

[11] BANTON, THE POLICEMAN IN THE COMMUNITY 144–146 (1964); Goldman, *The Differential Selection of Juvenile Offenders for Court Appearance*, National Council on Crime and Delinquency 101–108 (1963).

[12] Wilson, *op cit. supra* note 8 at 191–193; Ehrlich, The Analysis of Role Conflicts in a Complex Organi-

zation: The Police, 1959 (unpublished doctoral thesis in Michigan State University Library); Deutsch, *op. cit. supra* note 8 at 21–37.

[13] WHYTE, *op. cit. supra* note 8; Wilson, *op. cit. supra* note 8; DEUTSCH, *op. cit. supra* note 8 at 75–106.

[14] Police agencies may be viewed as standing between efforts to maximize individual desires and the need of social protection, between law breakers and their actual and potential victims.

the dominant political forces), and therefore, will be asked to force compliance with new regulations upon large segments of the population.[15] The relatively threat-free sanctuary of being somewhat isolated from the public, and perhaps not as vulnerable or responsive to its criticism, contributes to more aggressive action to effect social change.

In his discussion of role-set, Merton alludes to another possible function of some degree of police isolation. He suggests that the "mechanism of insulating role-activities from observability by members of the role-set" may contribute to social stability by allowing those in the same role-set who are differently located in the social structure to play their individual roles without overt conflict.[16] In this sense, police isolation may be said to permit the "peaceful co-existence" of police operations and anti-police sentiments and actions.

One of the most frequently offered panaceas to "police problems" is that of professionalization.[17] To the extent that this concept implies the accumulation of practices recognized as desirable by significant numbers of policemen and serving as a major guide to police behavior, then freedom from entangling social relationships with those who do not have similar orientations is functional to its growth. At least in the short run, the detachment from certain segments of the larger society may go hand-in-hand with or be a necessary pre-condition of increased police professionalization, given the myriad of standards for police work held within society.

NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF ISOLATION OF POLICING

The listing of benefits derived from police isolation for either the police themselves or other segments of the community should not overshadow the social costs of such isolation. One prominent police chief has chastised his fellow officers for their retreat into "minoritism" and their "near-fatal inability to recognize police dependence on public opinion" and cooperation.[18] Police officer morale is thought to be severely damaged by feelings of isolation, yet high morale of police forces is considered

[15] For a brief discussion of the role of the police as change agent see Wenninger and Clark, *op. cit. supra* note 6.
[16] MERTON, SOCIAL THEORY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE 374–376 (1957).
[17] GERMANN, *op. cit. supra* note 3 at 213–221; DEUTSCH, *op. cit. supra* note 8 at 226–233; Wilson, *op. cit. supra* note 8 at 200–211; SMITH, *op. cit. supra* note 7 at 14–15.
[18] Parker, *op. cit. supra* note 5 at 5.

to be a major factor in aggressive police work.[19] Gourley maintains that the lack of a "spirit of free cooperation" between the public and the police decreases police morale and cripples their service. He points out further that without the assistance of the public, police convictions become difficult if not impossible, a state which tends to regenerate poor morale on the part of the police department as well as negative attitudes on the part of the public toward the police.[20] One might generalize such observations and predict the probable negative consequences of the isolation of the municipal police from other community social control agencies such as the courts, social welfare, and the schools as well.

Westley attributes much of the rationale for police violence and secrecy to their perceived isolation. The development of a rigidly defined "ingroup," not well monitored by other social structures, allows the development and persistence of certain abuses of police power that their more complete integration might prevent, according to this author:

"[The policeman] ... regards the public as his enemy, feels his occupation to be in conflict with the community and regards himself to be a pariah. The experience and the feeling give rise to a collective emphasis on secrecy, an attempt to coerce respect from the public and a belief that almost any means are legitimate in completing an important arrest."[21]

Although such an interpretation is clearly within the tradition of suspicion of police power and stems from the study of one metropolitan police department, it is undeniable that the police have unique opportunities to abuse the power of the state. To the extent that forces exist that result in police malpractice if not controlled through their close integration with the larger society, isolation of the police may be looked upon as dysfunctional to society.

In a study of the discretionary power of the police in their contact with juveniles, Goldman found that the more integrated the police were into the community, the greater the number of "arrests" of juveniles but the less frequently their cases resulted in official action.[22] This conclusion suggests that the juvenile delinquency rate (as

[19] Wilson, *op. cit. supra* note 8 at 191–192.
[20] Gourley, *op. cit. supra* note 5 at 135.
[21] Westley, *Violence and the Police* AM. J. Soc. 35 (1953).
[22] Goldman, *op. cit. supra* note 11.

measured from court statistics) may be more a measure of police isolation than the misbehavior of youngsters. Apparently the integrative structure between the police and other facets of the local community provides avenues of informal adjustment among the offender, the offended, and the police. When such routes are not available, there is little time (and perhaps desire) to establish them and formal channels are more likely to be utilized. Once official channels have been activated, official disposition is often imminent.[23] Therefore, if reduction of the official juvenile delinquency rate is a social goal, police isolation is dysfunctional.

A STUDY OF POLICE ISOLATION

Having identified some of the forces which tend to isolate or integrate the police within society and some of the resultant consequences, questions arise as to the measurement of the degree and exact nature of such isolation. The phenomenon might be measured, using a variety of indicators depending upon the aspect of policing chosen for examination. In the research reported here data were collected on the following indicators of isolation:

1. The social isolation of police officers and their families.
2. The quality and quantity of police interaction with other agencies of social control.
3. The consensus among the public, police, and other social control agency personnel on certain moral attitudes.
4. The consensus among the public, police, and other social control agency personnel on the conception of proper police action in "police situations."

Data regarding these indicators were gathered during 1963–64 as part of a larger study of the role of the police in social control.[24] Data were collected in three Illinois cities of 80,000 to 130,000 population from three sources: (1) the total universe of municipal police, (2) a random sample of the public age 15 and over (approximately 200 from each city), and (3) the total universe of those in other social control agencies who were likely to have direct interaction with the police through the

[23] For an illustration of this process see Scheff, *The Societal Reaction to Deviance: Ascriptive Elements in the Psychiatric Screening of Mental Patients in a Midwestern State*, 2 Soc. PROB. 401–413 (1964).
[24] Essentially the larger study is focused upon the image the public and police have of policing, the attitudes social control agency personnel (including the police) have toward related agency personnel and the behavioral consequences of these attitudes.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY SOURCE IN THREE ILLINOIS COMMUNITIES

Municipal police............................	313
Public.....................................	598
Social Control Agency Personnel..............	430
(Including)	
Prosecutors...............................	8
School Officials...........................	64
Court Personnel...........................	26
Clergymen................................	192
Public Social Workers.....................	66
Private Help Agency Personnel.............	74

normal pursuit of their occupation. Police officers and those in the other social control agencies (operationally defined as prosecutors, school officials, court personnel, clergymen, public social workers, and private help agency personnel) responded to anonymous questionnaires.[25] The members of the public were individually interviewed. Part of the questionnaire to which the police and public responded was a replication of a recent survey of public-police relations conducted for the Royal Commission on the Police in Great Britian,[26] which involved interviews of a sample of 2605 members of the public (age 18 and upwards) and a sample of 611 police officers. The recent publication by Banton of a comparative study of a few police departments in Scotland and the United States[27] provides further information for cross-cultural comparison.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

(1) Social Isolation of the Police

Perhaps the most obvious indication of the lack of integration of the police into the larger society is the isolation of the officers and their families. Although police officers may restrict their social relations with the non-police public for a variety of reasons, social interaction is further restricted

[25] Police officers completed questionnaires in small groups. Other agency personnel completed their questionnaires privately. Clergymen (a 2 in 3 sample) responded to a mailed questionnaire with a return rate of 46%.
[26] ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POLICE, Minutes of Evidence (1962). All respondents in the British study were individually interviewed. The public sample was drawn randomly from 60 police administrative districts in England, Scotland, and Wales. Approximately 10 police officers were drawn at random from each of these 60 districts.
[27] BANTON, *op. cit. supra* note 11.

by the public. In this study, the officers were asked if being policemen made any difference in their freindships with non-police persons. Forty per cent replied that it did and 35 per cent added that it affected their immediate family's relationships with the general public as well. In his extremely provocative study, Banton concludes that "the American policeman in his public and private roles is less set apart from society than his British counterpart."[28] Therefore, one would expect to find a larger proportion of the British officers who felt socially isolated than was found in our study. This hypothesis is supported by the British survey results which reveal 67 per cent of the police officers indicated their occupational role contributed to their social estrangement.[29] Although these findings are not directly indicative of the *distance* between the police and the public, they provide a measure of the pervasiveness of such feelings on the part of the officers which may vary directly with the distance.

American police explain their segregation on the grounds of their peculiar working hours, other unique demands of police work, and the public dislike for those who represent arbitrary authority. British police seldom mention these factors specifically but over half (58 per cent) of them felt the public to be suspicious, reserved and guarded in their presence.[30] Only 7 per cent of the American police noted this factor, indicating a possible difference between the two societies either in the public's reaction to police (more relaxed in America) or in the sensitivity of the police to incomplete public acceptance (more sensitive in Great Britain), or both. These findings seem to support Banton's contention that the British police officer is seen as a representative of the police establishment and not as an indivudual whereas his American counterpart is more likely to receive particularistic treatment from the public.[31]

Responses to questions concerning social isolation suggest that police officers and their immediate families are segregated from those in their own neighborhoods and social strata. For example, many of the Illinois police officers perceive their occupation to be a cause of ridicule of their children and the reason for members of the community to expect flawless behavior from the officer and his family. Probably few other occupational groups experience this isolation in social relationships from those "on their own level."

(2) Police Isolation from Other Social Control Agencies

If we conceive social control to be a *system* of relationships which pervade a community,[32] and if we agree that part of the policing function is to effect social control, then we might logically expect police personnel to interact with other organizations who also play social control roles. Both formal regulations and informal understandings require interaction between the municipal police and other control agencies under certain circumstances although the great majority of such contacts are left to the discretion of the agencies involved. The failure of the police to initiate interaction with another control agency when situations dictate they should, or for the other agency not to establish contact with the police in similar situations, would indicate something of the quality and quantity of police isolation in a given community.

Members of both the police department and the other social control agencies were asked to indicate the frequency with which they failed to interact with the other on official matters because the personnel of the other agency's not being "what they should be." Failure to interact was operationally defined to mean (1) avoiding or ignoring a situation which might result in the need for interaction, or (2) turning to somebody else for assistance, or (3) handling the matter themselves without the assistance of others.

The data in Table 2 demonstrate that a significant portion of the police *and* other agency personnel manage to curtail indicated interaction in official matters, and therefore, mutually isolate each other within the social control system. This phenomenon is particularly noticeable between the police and public social workers[33], which may reflect

[28] BANTON, *op. cit. supra* note 11 at 219.
[29] ROYAL COMMISSION ON POLICE, Minutes of Evidence (1962).
[30] *Ibid.*
[31] BANTON, *op. cit. supra* note 11 at Chapters 7 and 8.

[32] We stress again that the social control activities of police, although few in number when compared to total social control efforts, are important to the total efforts and must be integrated into them for greater efficiency. See CLINARD, SOCIOLOGY OF DEVIANT BEHAVIOR 148–152 (1963).
[33] The author was impressed, as others have been with the institutionalized hostility between those in police work and those in social work. The nature of "inter-institutional conflict" will be examined in a later article. See Miller, *Inter-institutional Conflict as a Major Impediment to Delinquency Prevention*, HUMAN ORGANIZATION 20–23 (1958). A paper, *The Control of Delinquent Behavior by Police and Probation Officers* by Peter G. Garabedian and read at the 1964 annual

TABLE 2

PERCENT OF AVOIDANCE OF INTERACTION BETWEEN POLICE AND OTHER SOCIAL CONTROL AGENCIES*

	Avoided or Ignored the Situation		Turned to Somebody Else		Took Care of Things Personally	
	Agency Avoidance of Police	Police Avoidance of Agency	Agency Avoidance of Police	Police Avoidance of Agency	Agency Avoidance of Police	Police Avoidance of Agency
Prosecutors........................	63	27	50	30	87	31
School Officials.	25	23	24	34	31	32
Court Personnel.....................	21	26	26	39	22	30
Clergymen..........................	33	20	39	26	45	26
Public Social Workers................	42	37	47	50	50	47
Private Help Agencies........	33	27	40	39	30	40

* Percentages are those who failed to interact "sometimes," "often," or "almost always."

TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO BELIEVED THE CONTENT OF HYPOTHETICAL POLICE SITUATIONS TO BE MORALLY WRONG

Situations	Police	Public	Prosecutors	School Officials	Court Officials	Clergymen	Public Social Workers	Private Help Personnel
1. Sunday Blue laws...... ..	13	28	0	19	11	58	20	25
2. Racial Prejudice........ ...	62	71	25	81	96	87	82	92
3. Gambling....................	68	72	25	69	85	91	55	60
4. Drunken Bums.........	85	86	38	78	93	93	69	68
5. Prostitution..	90	94	63	100	96	99	89	92
6. Obscene Literature....	94	96	63	97	100	97	88	89

the presence of conflicting operating ideologies, lack of professional respect, and ignorance of the other's operations.

One may only speculate on the relative isolation of the police from other control agencies in Great Britain. The greater overall integration of the British society and the commonly accepted notion of greater respect for police and their operations in Britain suggest that isolation of the police might not be as great there.

(3) Isolation of the Police on Moral Attitudes

Banton suggests that the isolation of the British police has resulted in their espousing a value system somewhat different (more traditional) than that held by the general public.[34] To the extent that the American police are also isolated, one might expect

meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, reports an extremely interesting study of the differential commitment these two categories of officials have to punitive reactions toward legal offenders which may have direct relevance here.
[34] BANTON, *op. cit. supra* note 11 at Chapters 7 and 8.

to discover similar differences between the police and public in this country, although of smaller magnitude if it is assumed that American police are more socially integrated than their British counterparts. Unfortunately there are no comparable British data to compare with those gathered in our research on this aspect of police isolation. However, data are available in this study to measure divergence in moral value orientations between the police and those in other social control agencies and the general public in the three Illinois communities.

All respondents were presented with six hypothetical situations which might involve police action. These situations were constructed so as to be brief, free of direct involvement of juveniles, and ranging from instances where it was thought most would agree that no police action was required to those where most would agree that police action was appropriate. These six situations were:

1. A police officer finds a grocery store illegally open for business on Sunday.

2. A Negro meets a police officer on a street and tells him that he has just been refused service in a nearby restaurant. He says that he is willing to do whatever is necessary to take action against the owner of the restaurant.

3. A police officer learns of card games being played for large amounts of money in a private home. The card games are being run by professional gamblers although the games are not crooked. No juveniles are involved.

4. A police officer discovers a couple of bums who had been drinking in the alley and are pretty drunk. The officer knows both because he has found them many times before in the same condition.

5. A police officer finds out about a woman who is charging men to sleep with her. No juveniles are involved.

6. A police officer learns that a person is in town selling obscene magazines. These magazines are written and have pictures for the purpose of being sexually exciting. As far as the officer can tell, no juveniles are involved.

All respondents were asked to reply to several questions about each of the six hypothetical situations. One such question was, "Do you believe this kind of thing is morally wrong?". As demonstrated in Table 3, there is great similarity between the distribution of the public and police responses, indicating the absence of a unique moral orientation of policemen and suggesting no significant isolation in this regard. However, there are some interesting differences between the distributions of responses among the municipal police and certain other social control agencies. The police were more likely than any other category of respondents measured to indicate that the case of racial prejudice was not morally wrong. However, a higher proportion of police officers interpreted gambling and being a drunken bum to be moral transgressions than did the public social workers and private help agency personnel. To some extent then, the police appear to be isolated, although cultural integration of all agencies is the predominant indication from this comparison.

(4) Police Isolation on Conception of Police Work

One of the most direct indicators of the isolation of policing is the dissensus existing between the police and others on the conceptions of proper police activity. It is not realistic to expect the public to exhibit expertness on the allocation of police resources. Yet, however misinformed it may be, public opinion provides the foundation for actions concerning the police. Isolation of the police is keenly felt when considerable discrepancy exists between police and public expectations of policing, although the magnitude of this discrepancy is at best an imperfect indicator of the magnitude of the reaction by the police and the public to this difference.

The Illinois public was asked if there are any areas in which the police should spend more of their time or less of it. A significant portion indicated they did not know (20 and 35 per cent, respectively), which may in itself suggest a lack of sufficient police integration to prompt minimal knowledge or concern on the part of the public. Nearly one-half of the public sample stated that there were areas where the police should spend more time, while only 15 per cent responded that the police should spend less of their time on certain matters. Obviously more persons see circumstances in which additional police activity is thought appropriate than where it should be diminished or eliminated—a provocative finding! This phenomenon is not as evident in the British data where about 38 and 28 per cent of the public note areas where police should spend, respectively, more and less time.[35] These data suggest that there is considerable discrepancy between the conception of proper police operations and the perception of actual police operations in the mind of the public.

As would be expected, policemen gave more specific responses to the above two questions as revealed in Table 4. Eighty-two per cent of the Illinois officers believed that there were areas where more of their time should be spent, although somewhat similar to the Illinois public, a much smaller proportion identified areas in which police effort should be curtailed. These data suggest that in any police officer's opinion there are discrepancies between the conception of the ideal police role and the real one. The situation in Great Britain appears to be similar.

In the sense that the police and public *agree* in principle that the roles of the police on the desired and real levels are far from being identical, one could say that the police and public conceptions are integrated. However, to the extent that the character of this discrepancy is different for the police and public, then isolation exists. After noting the difference in proportion of police and public

[35] ROYAL COMMISSION, *op. cit. supra* note 29 at 19.

TABLE 4

Comparison of Public and Police Responses in Great Britain and United States on Questions Regarding the Role of Policing*

Question and Response	Public		Police	
	U.S.	G.B.	U.S.	G.B.
	%	%	%	%
1. Are there any things you think the police should spend *more* time on than they do now? (YES responses)............	47	38	82	73
2. Are there any things you think the police should spend *less* time on than they do now? (YES responses)..............	15	28	52	75
3. Do you think there is anything the public should do to help the police more to prevent crime or enforce the law? (YES responses)...	76	73	88	97
4. Do you think that in general the public helps as much as they should when they see a policeman in trouble, for example in dealing with violent drunks or gangs? (NO responses).....	60	75	87	87
5. Have you ever been asked by the police to testify as a witness in a case? (OF THOSE THAT RESPONDED YES) Did you agree to be a witness? (NO responses)	24	10		

* Data on public and police respondents gleaned from Royal Commission on the Police, Appendix IV to the *Minutes of Evidence*, "Relations between the Police and the Public," by R. Morton-Williams, London: H.M.S.O., 1962.

respondents who indicated that the allocation of police effort should be modified, it is interesting to discover that there is basic agreement between the public and police *within each country* on the areas wherein police efforts should be altered. The Illinois police officers agreed with members of the public that the police should spend more time on "crime prevention and detection" and "improving relations with the public," and less time on "being on duty at public affairs," and "office work."[36] The British public and police agreed that the officers should devote additional time to "foot patrols" and less to "enforcement of licensing regulations," "office work," and "traffic control and supervision."[37] Again, these crude data reveal basic integration of public and police disposition on desired police operations. It would appear that portions of the police role, as they are now being performed, are somewhat isolated from the preferred role content as viewed by large segments of both the public and police.

The role of policing society has traditionally included public assistance to law enforcement agen-

cies under certain circumstances. As mentioned previously, there is recurrent concern about a seeming decrease in the willingness of the public to perform this role. Banton concludes that police officers in the United States are more likely than their British counterparts to have "to go it alone."[38] In both the British and American surveys respondents were asked if the public should assist the police more in prevention of crime and enforcing the law. Table 4 demonstrates that the large majority of both the police and public answered affirmatively. Although a slightly smaller majority answered negatively, the public and the police in both this country and Great Britain went so far as to declare that the public does not help as much as they should to assist policemen in difficulties, e.g., in dealing with violent drunks or gangs. An extremely high proportion of the British respondents (especially the police) felt the public was not responsive enough to police needs. Although it might be concluded that there is limited cooperation between the public and police, these findings might also reflect deep concern on the part of both parties of some slight change in what traditionally has been a very close relationship. The responses to a further question tends to support the latter conclusion. In response to an inquiry of those who had

[36] The Illinois public also indicated the police should spend *more* time on "traffic control and supervision" and the police suggested *less* time should be spent on "checking buildings to see if they are locked." To this extent the public and police conceptions of the ideal police role are different.

[37] Royal Commission, *op. cit. supra* note 29 at 35–36.

[38] Banton, *op. cit. supra* note 11 at 100-101; 110-114.

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO INDICATED THE POLICE SHOULD TAKE ACTION IN THE HYPOTHETICAL SITUATIONS

Situations	Police	Public	Prose-cutors	School Officials	Court Officials	Clergy-men	Public Social Workers	Private Help Per-sonnel
1. Blue Laws...................	2	6	0	9	4	7	0	7
2. Racial Prejudice..............	58	55	75	48	48	54	54	63
3. Gambling....................	91	71	0	83	85	87	78	76
4. Drunken Bums...............	99	94	100	97	96	96	94	100
5. Prostitution.	95	89	100	98	93	98	83	93
6. Obscene Literature............	95	92	100	94	100	93	88	92

been asked at some time by the police to serve as a witness, a relatively small number of the British respondents had refused to do so compared to about one-fourth of those asked in Illinois. Although other forces than commitment to police assistance probably ᷟ affect these decisions, it would appear that the British police receive more assistance from the public than is the case in Illinois, although Britishers tend to be more concerned about the lack of public-police cooperation.

In summary, there is a consistent response pattern of both the public and police in both countries regarding the desirable character of the policing role. To this extent the police do not appear to be isolated. However, since such high proportions of public and, particularly, the police, would suggest changes in actual policing activities, there is an overpowering suggestion that the police are isolated by the manner in which they perform their operations.

Further data pertaining to this tentative conclusion were gathered through the use of the six hypothetical situations mentioned previously. With each situation all respondents were asked several questions concerning the nature of police action dictated and usually received in their local community. Great divergence between the orientations of the police and others toward the role of the police in these circumstances would indicate police isolation from the larger society.

As the data in Table 5 demonstrate, the proportions of the public, police, and those in other social control agencies who would have the police take action in each situation is rather uniform. Almost all would have the police take no action in the Sunday blue-law case. Conversely, almost all would have the police take some sort of action in the situations concerning drunken bums, prostitution, and obscene literature. Nearly all categories

of respondents were equally divided on the issue of police intervention in the instance of racial prejudice, and a significantly greater proportion of the police (91 per cent) than the public (71 per cent) believe the police should take action in the gambling situation. Once again, the data reveal the public, and other control agencies in essential agreement about the desired role of the police in these hypothetical situations. Obviously, this measure is not sensitive to the intensity of police-public or police-other control agency conflict that might occur between those of conflicting persuasions.

Knowing that the ecological distributions of the police, public, and control agencies are similar on whether action should be taken does not assure us that there is commensurate integration of orientation on the nature of the action to be taken. Cries for action do not necessarily provide useful guides to the exact police performance expected. Police officers were asked what they believed the people in the community wanted them to do, and the public was asked what they really would like the police to do in each of the situations. Although the possible responses were somewhat tailored to each situation, in each case a response was available which focused upon (1) doing nothing, (2) mediating, (3) harassing, (4) warning, (5) arresting, or doing "something else."[39] Evidence of significant discrepancies between the distribution of responses across these possible answers is submitted as evidence of a type of police isolation. Table 6 summarizes the results.

[39] For example, in Situation No. 1, the possible responses were:
1. Do nothing at all.
2. Keep them off the streets.
3. Keep the pressure on people like this until they move on.
4. Warn them that if they keep doing this they will be arrested.
5. Arrest them and book them for legal action.
6. Something else (what?) ————.

TABLE 6

COMPARISONS AMONG POLICE PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC'S EXPECTATIONS, ACTUAL PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS, AND ACTUAL POLICE ROLE PERFORMANCE IN SIX HYPOTHETICAL SITUATIONS

Situations	Do Nothing	Mediate	Harass	Warn	Arrest	Something Else
1. *Blue Laws*						
Police perceive public...........	75	17	1	0	0	7
Public desires.....	67	23	3	2	1	4
Police performance...	93	3	0	0	1	3
2. *Racial Prejudice*						
Police perceive public...........	24	46	1	7	4	18
Public desires.....	17	52	9	10	4	8
Police performance..............	24	41	1	10	8	16
3. *Gambling*						
Police perceive public...........	10	5	14	4	61	6
Public desires..................	9	13	12	23	41	2
Police performance..............	10	2	7	3	74	4
4. *Drunken Bums*						
Police perceive public...........	1	42	6	3	43	5
Public desires..................	2	15	7	31	33	12
Police performance..............	1	12	4	5	77	1
5. *Prostitution*						
Police perceive public...........	2	10	6	2	76	4
Public desires..................	4	5	7	24	57	3
Police performance..............	3	1	3	1	89	3
6. *Obscene Literature*						
Police perceive public...........	2	8	4	5	79	2
Public desires..................	2	8	11	18	59	2
Police performance..............	5	2	3	5	83	2

Again, the percentage distributions are somewhat similar in many cases, which signifies certain similarity between public desires of policing and the police perception of these desires. However, there is the noticeable tendency for the police to misperceive public desires between the warning and arresting of offenders. In almost all cases a significantly larger proportion of the public wished to have the police warn the offenders than was judged to be the case by the police, and in four of the six hypothetical situations a significantly smaller portion of the public would like to see arrests made than was perceived by the police. As mentioned previously, these data are not extremely helpful in predicting the outcome of encounters between those of different persuasions, but there is clear evidence that a greater proportion of the public than of the police is likely to wish police

effort which stops short of formal arrest, however untenable this position may appear to police officials. Police officers are more likely to be aware of a series of events which precede their making an arrest, while the knowledge of the private citizen is more likely limited to the immediate incident. Based only upon the single incident the judgment that a warning is sufficient may seem to be the most appropriate action. Whatever the reason for the difference in orientation, the police can be said to be isolated in their perception of public desires regarding the arrest of certain offenders.

The final evidence regarding conceptions of the policing role as an indicator of police isolation from other aspects of society is the discrepancy between the police action desired by the public and that which the police actually perform. With each of the six situations, all police officers were asked to

disclose the action usually taken by their depart-
ment in such circumstances. These responses were
compared to the public's declared desires for police
action (see Table 6). In most situations the actual
police performance is noticeably different than the
desires of the public for it. In all cases except the
racial segregation issue, reported police action be-
comes much more unified into a single response.
Apparently police action is much more likely to be
an actual arrest than public desires would dictate,
and even more likely than the police perception of
community desires would suggest. The blue-law
situation is an exception, but even here, there is
much greater consensus among the police on their
taking no action in such cases than is warranted
by expressed public desires or of the police percep-
tion of them.

When it comes to actual behavior, then, the
police tend to act in a unitary manner and some-
what differently from what a large segment of the
public desires in these situations. The findings are
clear enough to suggest the strong influence of
separate organizational (and perhaps professional)
standards to guide police operations. As was hinted
in the comparison just prior to this, the closer
one's measures approach actual police operations,
the greater the isolation of the police from the
larger society.

CONCLUSION

Probably as a result of some of the forces identi-
fied at the beginning of this article, policing in the
United States (Illinois) and Great Britain occupies
a position of some isolation within their respective
societies. The character of this isolation is some-
what peculiar to the specific society but consider-
able similarity between the two situations exists.

A large proportion of the policemen sampled in
both countries feel socially isolated although the
British officers are more likely to notice the lack
of social integration.

Illinois policemen frequently avoid interaction
with other social control agencies and these organi-
zations reciprocate in kind. The quality of certain
moral value orientations appears to be similarly
distributed among police officers and the general
public, although the police officers as an organiza-
tion occasionally differ on certain moral issues from
other social control agencies.

Both the British and Illinois police and public
agree in principle on the content of the ideal police
role, but at least in Illinios, police role performance
differs significantly from this common ideal. The
data suggest that the police knowingly perform
their function somewhat differently than their own
individual convictions or their perception of public
desires would dictate.