

Woods to Wine Out Detective Bureau's Only Weak Spot

In Reorganizing Branch of Police Department Commissioner Will Centralize Authority, Establish School for Plain Clothes Men and Shift Clerical Work

By ARTHUR J. MCKENNA

The only weak spot in the administration of Police Commissioner Woods is to be eliminated. Through changes made within the last week and others soon to be announced it is planned to wipe out the shortcomings of the detective bureau so startlingly exposed in the Ruth Cruger case and the investigations that followed.

By the reorganization Commissioner Woods will rob Tammany Hall of its most prized campaign issue—the bungling in the Cruger case and the failure to check the epidemic of burglaries through which the city is suffering.

The changes are expected to shatter the rock of internal strife on which past administrations have been wrecked, by creating a spirit of harmony between the old-school detectives and those who are being trained in modern crime investigation methods.

Briefly, Commissioner Woods will eliminate most of what The Tribune's investigation, published on July 15, showed to be contributory factors in bringing about the conditions disclosed by the investigations resulting from the finding of Miss Cruger's body buried in the cellar of Cocchi's motorcycle shop.

The Tribune at the time gave as these factors: The division of administrative authority over detectives; Lack of confidence on the part of detectives in their commanders—civilian and police;

Lack of cooperation between the uniformed force and the detective bureau, resulting in there being in reality two departments—one made up of the uniformed men, whose duty was confined to patrol duty and crime prevention; the other composed of crime investigators;

Compelling detectives to devote too much time to statistical work in the form of daily, weekly and monthly reports;

Abolition of the precinct unit system, under which detectives were assigned to station houses.

Remedies Developed The Tribune's investigation developed as remedies for existing conditions:

A change of system that would result in there being one man in absolute charge of the detective bureau, as in the days of Inspector McCaffery;

The return to the precinct unit system, whereby a detective was always in order to meet citizens with complaints, earning as his reward a chance of being transferred to headquarters for good work;

The reestablishing of the one-time famous special squads to handle homicides, burglaries, pickpockets, etc.;

The simplifying of the report system, so that detectives could devote almost all their time to crime investigation;

A change of system that would permit detectives to go on a "floating assignment" for a period to be decided by the head of the bureau in order to familiarize themselves with the habits of the criminals whose activities they are charged with checking.

Commissioner Woods by an investigation extending over a period of more than eighteen months found practically the same conditions as outlined above. This probe was conducted quietly and apart from the department members knew it was going on. The investigators for the most part were policemen of both branches of the

running wild, and we'll show the town records that'll knock 'em dead," said one old timer, who can be counted on to do just that.

"I'm ready to do my bit by working twenty hours a day, if necessary, on a case," he continued. "But what do I know about making out reports? I can and will sit down and write out the progress of the case, but how do you expect me to make out a half-dozen cards and a recapitulation sheet on each case? I never handled a job like that in my life. They should have men who know something about such things to do that work."

Commissioner Woods, in discussing the situation, said that the question of clerical work for the detectives was most difficult to solve in the more important branches. It became evident very soon, however, that nothing was being gained. The detective would come in and tell the clerical man about the work of the case, but how do you expect me to make out a half-dozen cards and a recapitulation sheet on each case? I never handled a job like that in my life. They should have men who know something about such things to do that work."

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Boston and New England Points via Inland Water Routes Fall River Line Providence Line

EASTERN STEAMSHIP LINES METROPOLITAN LINE BOSTON

MAINE STEAMSHIP LINE PORTLAND

DAY STATE LINE BOSTON

Bear Mt. SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Keansburg, N.J. SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Sight Seeing Yachts

COUNTRY BOARD REST AND DIET SANATORIUM

TRAVEL Sunday Excursions

TRAVEL Iron Steamboat Co

TRAVEL SUNDAY SAIL UP THE HUDSON

TRAVEL SUNDAY SAIL NEWBURGH BEACON

TRAVEL On Long Island Sound

TRAVEL "Mandalay"

TRAVEL CATSKILL EVENING LINE

TRAVEL VACATION TRIPS

TRAVEL VISIT WEST POINT

TRAVEL Hudson River Day Line

TRAVEL SUMMER TOURS

TRAVEL WARD LINE

TRAVEL AMERICAN LINE

TRAVEL WHITE STAR LINE

TRAVEL CUNARD

TRAVEL FRENCH LINE

far as consistent the "floating assignment" system. Under such arrangement a detective will not be checked up until such time as the head of the bureau feels that sufficient time has elapsed to have cleaned it up.

Under Inspector McCaffery this system was very successful. A man would get an assignment, and if at the end of a stipulated period he did not bring in the men wanted he had to prove to the inspector that it was next to impossible to get results in order to stay in the bureau.

It is planned, too, to widen the scope of the line-up. Just how the Commissioner plans to get more detectives at Headquarters each morning to look over the suspects captured the night before has not yet been announced, but it is known that the line-up will be one of the important features of the new school.

To Have Greater Freedom While no orders will be issued, it is known that there will be a less strict enforcement of personal property regulations of suspects hereafter in investigating a felony. In the old days, the detectives took chances of facing civil suit in order to solve their cases.

Commissioner Woods characterized as unfounded the report that he planned to abandon at this time the branch bureau system.

The branches were formed, one by one, as the work demanded it, he said. "As matters develop, it may be decided to drop a branch or two, while, on the other hand, if the work justifies it, we may organize still another branch."

The Commissioner does not like the word "reorganization" to be applied to the changes he is making in the bureau. He points out that he is only eliminating here and there as well as new problems which prove established systems ineffective.

To the old school detectives it is reorganization. And by that reorganization Commissioner Woods has accomplished what others tried and failed to do. He has won the support and hearty cooperation of the men who felt they were being whipsawed to satisfy the whims of a Commissioner.

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LAWYERS S. D. OPPENHEIM

DIAMONDS

RESORTS The Mountain Paradise KITTATINNY

RESORTS TOUR NEW ENGLAND

RESORTS THE GLEN SPRINGS

RESORTS The Jackson Health Resort

TRAVEL Boston and New England Points

TRAVEL EASTERN STEAMSHIP LINES

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