

# Arthur Woods Tells How Police Force Should Work

## Essential Basis of Department Is Character and Physical Power of Individual Men, Says Former Commissioner; Not All Crime Can Be Prevented

[Herewith is the first of a series of articles by Arthur Woods, who made the New York Police Department the most efficient and cleanest in its history. Mr. Woods was made Police Commissioner by Mayor John Purroy Mitchel, who gave him full authority to develop the department without fear of political influence. These articles are particularly interesting at this time, following closely the demotion of "Honest Dan" Costigan by Commissioner Enright, and during the time when the Commissioner is trying to explain why he chose to reduce the one man in the department in whose honesty and integrity the average citizen of New York has the most confidence.]

By Arthur Woods  
Former Police Commissioner of New York City

The essential basis of all good police work is the character and physical power of the individual men. They must be strong of body, stout of soul—sturdy, two-fisted specimens, knowing how to hold themselves in restraint even under severe provocation, yet prompt and powerful to act with force and uncompromising vigor when only that will maintain order and protect the law abiding.

Every one is familiar with the figure of the policeman on post. Fundamentally he represents law, protection, order. He is there on behalf of the regular, orderly life of the neighborhood, to prevent any one from being disorderly, and to catch any person, if he can, who tries to break the law or who interferes with the rights of those who obey it. A person with crime in his mind will hardly try to commit it in the presence of a policeman.

Personality Has Power  
I suppose it depends upon the individual officer and the individual thief, on their personal characteristics and temperaments, as to just how far away and how strongly the officer's presence restrains the thief from committing crime. But however short a distance the influence goes, and however weakly it operates, it is restraining and preventive. Conceivably, if there were an alert, capable patrolman on each city block, no crime would be committed in our streets.

Adequate policing of the streets cannot, however, be expected to prevent all sorts of crime. The patrolman, to be sure, can prevent or hold responsible a hold-up man, a knocker-down man, a burglar, a thief, a person who is prevented by the regular patrolling force. Or, if a store is broken into by a burglar working from the street, the patrolman assigned to that post must be held to have been lax in the performance of duty. On the other hand, if the burglar gains access to a house from a fire escape which leads up from the back yard, the patrolling force is, to say the least, far less responsible for the crime than if the house had been broken into from the street—uniformed patrolmen do not patrol back yards. Still further, if the crime is committed by a dishonest servant, it is what is commonly called an "inside job," it is a variety of crime still less preventable by the conventional methods of patrol.

The regular uniformed patrol is always supplemented by a detective force, which also exerts a preventive influence, although detective work is primarily for the purpose of detecting the criminal who has already committed a crime. This detective preventive work adds strength to the preventive efforts of the uniformed force.

Lazy Detectives Scored  
Good detective work always keeps the criminal from taking chances that he would take without an uneasy thought in cities where the men in plain clothes were lazy or incompetent or were willing to come to a gentleman's agreement with him. If a pick-pocket feels that there are a lot of innocent-looking detectives prowling around who know the ways of the

trade and are acquainted with the facts and the figures of the principal operators, he will be apt to forego the temptation even of large and careless crowds in that city and will cleave to the towns where the police are not so fussy about protecting property.

And if a criminal of any kind feels that the detectives of any city are a relentless lot of spoil-sports, who won't be good fellows, who will keep everything on the trail of the law-breaker, not just while the newspapers are featuring the crime, but after it has been forgotten by all except the poor family who were victims of the crime, he will be more likely to choose to reduce the one man in the department in whose honesty and integrity the average citizen of New York has the most confidence.]

Other factors, however, besides the size of the population must be given at least equal consideration, such as mileage of streets, the currents in which the population flows, the density of population, the difference between the day population and the night population—lower Manhattan, for instance, and Brooklyn, the amount of traffic on the streets. Then, we must realize that scientific policing of a city is comparatively a new phenomenon in our American life and that whereas with present methods of patrolling, it may seem to be a matter of numbers, yet when sounder methods are devised a smaller number of more efficient men may do the work better. As things stand, we must judge largely by results, and if the uniformed force is to exert the preventive pressure which we expect it to do, there must be enough men for this particular method of crime prevention, street patrol being a form of patrolling which from its very nature calls for a large number of officers.

Uniformed patrol of the streets used to consist simply of having policemen assigned to posts and required to stay on them, walking up and down in a prescribed way. I have always believed that the largest amount of freedom of action and of discretion, consistent with proper control, should be given to the individual officer. He works alone, without superiors at hand to whom he can look for orders; he is not held to a formula, with the limits of his post of protecting the lives and property of people who live there or pass by.

The soldier could not be tied up with minute instructions, or confined to narrowly prescribed methods, but should be given latitude for action commensurate with his responsibility, and then he held to results. The old methods not merely gave him less discretion, but enforced the same scheme of patrol throughout all parts of the city, irrespective of the peculiar characteristics of different neighborhoods and neighborhoods in big modern cities vary radically in character and need different police treatment.

In the "Wilds of Manhattan"  
One afternoon, for example, I was out on a trip of inspection covering the whole island of Manhattan during the early part of the afternoon. I was in the crowded lower East Side, and went the whole length of Rivington Street, which is one of the world's most densely populated streets. I have

been told that one block in Rivington Street contains more people than any other equal area in the world. I reached the upper portion of the island of Manhattan, and while climbing up a hill on a narrow, soft, muddy road, shut in by bushes and trees on both sides, with no house in sight, a wild rabbit suddenly scuttled across the road in front of me. It is evident that the inhabitants of Rivington Street and the rabbits of north-west Manhattan do not need the same kind of policing. Thickly populated parts of the city need foot patrol, and the posts must be short enough for effective work, not more than a few blocks long, the outlying parts of the city, however, places such as you will find in some parts of Queens, Richmond, or the Bronx, would not be as well served by this kind of policing as they would by an entirely different method.

What a district of this kind needs is not a large number of policemen patrolling the streets, where nothing ever happens; it needs a patrol on bicycle, or in automobile, that is capable of covering a lot of ground, and needs frequent sub-stations scattered all over the territory in each little settlement, connected by telephone, so that the wrongdoer knows that policemen are planted all through the territory, and that the neighborhood knows that the wrongdoer is near enough so that he can reach any part of the district in certainly not more than five minutes.

Precinct Needs Vary  
In New York I have given intensive study to the various precincts in the greater city, and have tried to apply to each the particular method of patrolling which could best be applied to it. It is impossible to have these never lines of demarcation, but improvement has been made, but greater progress remains for the future, and a continual revision and readaptation of methods are necessary as conditions change.

Detective work also has improved in skill and in method. About ten years ago I was Deputy Commissioner in charge of the Detective Bureau in New York. I was a bit shocked, very early in my career there, to find that no proper record was kept of the assignments of cases to detectives and of the results achieved by these detectives working on them. Such a system was at once installed, and one morning while talking to an experienced detective about a case he was working on I asked him what he thought of this new system of keeping account of cases.

"Well, Commissioner," he answered, "it may be all right, I guess, perhaps, it's a new thing, but certainly keeps us guessing, but it's a good thing, a new way. In the old way when a 'squeal' came in over the phone the lieutenant at the desk wrote it down on a piece of paper and handed it to a detective. 'Here, Bill,' he'd say, 'look that up.' Bill took the paper, put it in his pocket, and when the paper wore out the case was closed."

Science Helps Policeman  
The detective in his modern case can be helped just as much by modern science and modern improved methods of organization and operation as can any other profession or line of business. Modern methods won't make a good detective out of a poor one, but they will make a poor one a good one, or a poor electrician, but they will help a capable man to do his job better, whether that job be protecting life and property in a city or saving life attacked by disease.

Notary Public, Kings County.  
Certificates filed in New York County, County Clerk's No. 29. Register's No. 9024.

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Appeals for Journalistic Support  
Hackett here turned to one of the group of newspaper men known to him and appealed for support.

"There will be absolutely nothing more," Hackett answered, evidently nettled. "It's a dead issue like the funeral of a man who has died."

"How about further statements?" Hackett asked.

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Citizens Ask Moran to Act On Costigan  
The Citizens Union yesterday sent the following letter to Acting Mayor Robert A. Moran, New York, asking a impartial investigation of the facts surrounding the demotion of former Inspector Daniel E. Costigan.

Commissioner last night attempted to have repudiated. After a slight hesitation Hackett consented to carry out the plan in his private office. He returned with it in a minute and handed it back without a word of comment.

Following is the affidavit made by the State of New York, in the County of New York, in the City and County of New York, in the Borough of Manhattan, City, County and State of New York, and an now and since May 1917, by Deputy Commissioner of Police, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

I reside at 6 East Thirtieth Street, in the Borough of Manhattan, City, County and State of New York, and am now and since May 1917, by Deputy Commissioner of Police, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

On Sunday, February 9, 1919, I personally interviewed John W. Goff, Jr., formerly Third Deputy Police Commissioner of the Police Department of the City and County of New York, who has recently resigned his office as such Deputy Commissioner. Said interview took place at the home of said Goff, at Lawrence Park, Bronx.

An account of said interview was published in said newspaper New York Tribune, in the issue thereof of Monday, February 16, 1919, under the heading "COSTIGAN, GOFF UNDER-SET FOR COSTIGAN, GOFF UNDER-SET." A true copy of said article is hereto annexed, marked "Exhibit A" and made a part hereof.

Dependent upon the same, for publication in said newspaper, all of said interview with Goff except the headings or captions of said article.

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Entertainment of Liberty's Fighters Marks Lincoln Day  
Tribute to Abraham Lincoln, the Great Emancipator on Anniversary of His Birth  
Earlier in the day the Women's Republican Club of the City of New York will hold its annual Lincoln's Birthday dinner at the club, 54 West Fourth Street. The speakers will be the Rev. George F. Nelson, Senator William L. Calder, James M. Beck, General Francis B. Greene, Allan R. Hawley and Captain A. W. Johnson, U. S. N.

Entire Nation Once More to Join in Homage to the Great Emancipator on Anniversary of His Birth  
In this city there will be scores of services, entertainments and other observances in honor of the Civil War President at which the country's most prominent men and women will be participants.

Subway Workers Strike  
One hundred men employed by Booth & Flinn, Ltd., in the construction of a shaft at the North Seventh Street, Brooklyn, end of the Fourteenth Street Eastern Parkway subway have gone on strike. Forty-five drill runners were the first to quit work, and as a result the remainder were forced to lay off.

Scouts to Honor Soldiers  
The Boy Scouts of America have planned a parade of their army and navy sailors and marines in Bryant Park, in the rear of the Y. M. C. A. Eagle Hut. Here the youngsters will mobilize in the afternoon and accompanied by the bands of the United States Army and their own combined troops will serenade the soldiers.

McDonald's Vice Squad Raids Private House in Henry's District  
Detectives attached to Chief Inspector Daly's special squad and Inspector MacDonald's vice squad last night raided an alleged gambling resort at 127 West Seventy-seventh Street in the heart of Inspector Henry's district. Speculation is rife in the department on Inspector Henry's status with Commissioner Enright, in view of the latter's statement on Monday that it is up to an inspector to "do the big stuff in his district."

Hillis to Speak at Rochester  
The Rev. Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis will speak at a mass meeting in Rochester, N. Y., and there also will be meetings at Barnard College, the Jewish Centre, 131 East Eighty-sixth Street; the Educational Alliance, East Broadway, and at Public School 169, Brooklyn; Jonas Lippman, E. C. Baldwin, Joseph T. Cashman and Dr. George Egbert are the speakers assigned to these meetings.

Board of Education and Controller Craig at Odds  
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