CHAPTER X

Improving Communication within the Police

I. Introduction

1.1. Background: It is the experience of managers that even the most comprehensive and benevolent of personnel policies do not eliminate conflicts between the management and employees. "A total absence of conflict would be unbelievable, boring and a strong indication that such conflicts are being suppressed."¹ The hallmark of progressive leadership is its attitude towards dissent and dialogue. A mature employer welcomes collision of ideas and encourages internal debate on policies that dictate the organization's philosophy. Many practising managers and Management scientists alike are known to believe that an organization stands to benefit through such a process because a diagnosis of conflict and action to resolve it that necessarily follow, contribute greatly to employee morale.

Logically, the first step of a scheme that aims at reducing conflict is its early identification, exposure and discussion. This process is best facilitated through effective communication, a subject that is of absorbing interest to active managers whose one major concern is how to sustain the motivation and therefore the morale of individuals administered by them.

¹ Flippo, p.357.
1.2. **Definition:** Communication is looked upon as the exchange of information between persons. While it is generally regarded as "the process of meaningful interaction among human beings," good communication is defined as "the interchange of thought or information to bring about mutual understanding and confidence." The need for satisfactory communication can hardly be exaggerated whatever be the nature of the organization. Managers are conscious of this but a few of them have tended to take it for granted, a reason why many organizations have done precious little to improve the effectiveness of available channels of communication. This apathy accounts for the misfortunes which they have invited upon themselves. Police forces, particularly those in India, amplify the truth of this statement.

1.3. **Types of Channels:** Channels of communication may normally be categorized into three. They are:

- i. **downward,** i.e., for communication originating from the top and meant for the subordinate rungs of an organization;

- ii. **upward,** i.e., for communication set off from the lower levels for the consumption of superiors in the hierarchy;

- iii. **two-way,** i.e., channels which can be used for both downward and upward communication.

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2 McFarland, p.566.
3 Koontz et al., p.396.
4 Monappa and Saiyadain, p.257.
A bureaucratic organization is characterized most by the downward channel. This is because delegation is synonymous with downward communication which facilitates managers to "put their delegated authority to work". In such an outfit, managers suffer from the disadvantage of a lack of information which militates against meaningful decisions being taken at the appropriate time. It is this situation that heightens the need for managers to explore methods by which subordinates could be encouraged to speak out on all matters which affect themselves and the activities of the organization. This calls for the creation of upward channels of communication and continual care to ensure that such channels are open and not closed most of the time. This is a subject of utmost relevance to establishments such as the Army and the Police where traditional canons of discipline stifle freedom of expression and dialogue. In a treatise on police administration it is but natural that upward channels of communication receive greater attention than the others.

1.4. **Upward Channels**: These help an employee to make his superiors know what he thinks of the organization, its activities and its attitudes towards him. They are a means by which subordinate levels throw up suggestions that aim at an improvement of work procedure. More importantly they

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5 McFarland, p. 575.
serve to enlighten the hierarchy of what the former desire in terms of incentives which would enhance motivation and morale. Normally, the following are looked upon as upward channels that are of immense value to the top-brass of an organization:

i. face-to-face contacts;
ii. grievance machinery;
iii. labour unions;
and
iv. morale and attitude surveys.

Each one of these is complementary of the others. A judicious use of all of them has been found in practice to be of great value in sustaining employee morale.

1.5. Relevance to the Police: A major characteristic of police organizations all over the world is their rigid hierarchy. The practice of unquestioned obedience to one's superior that has come to be established in police forces, a tradition derived from the military model, had remained undisputed till recently. But the question now asked by many of the highly educated recruits is whether this should be so at a time when democracy is the dominant theme. The demand is for a liberal atmosphere within the Force that would not only bring about a greater upward communication but would allow the lower functionaries a voice in its management. This is a development that has caused consternation among the higher echelons and is somewhat analogous to the situation one witnessed in private and public industry not long ago when the concept of Participative Management (PM) was first talked about and a little
later, put into practice. Whether, even in police organiza­
tions, there should be a scheme which permits a share in the
administration for subordinate levels is a proposition that
would be analysed here. How far can PM strengthen upward
communication in a police force would also invite the
Researcher's major attention in this chapter.

II. The Theory of Participative Management

2.1. Definition: 'Participation' may be defined as a bila­
teral process in which two parties put their heads together
and formulate a plan or policy. Later they act in concert
to implement that plan or policy. "Participation is the term
used to designate the process by which people contribute
ideas toward the solution of problems affecting the organi­
zation and their jobs ..... it includes not only the physi­
cal contribution of the person but also his intellectual and
emotional involvement in the affairs of the organization."
6 The concept is possibly better understood when related to
a productive unit where it is referred to as "workers' parti­
cipation in management", a phrase that implies "the physical
as well as psychological participation of workers' representa­
tives in an industry in decision making at all levels, from
the shop-floor to the Board of Directors."

2.2. Implications: PM in an organization connotes the preva­
ience of effective delegation, a degree of autonomy to

6 Dale S. Beach, Personnel: The Management of People
subordinate units, a machinery for consultation with lower level functionaries and the involvement of the latter in decision making and its implementation. The tcp-brass make a conscious attempt to modify the traditional nature of their ties with subordinates so that the latter acquire substantial influence in directing the affairs of the organization. The aim is one of creating a climate of goodwill and establishing an active channel of communication so that employees, particularly those in the lower rungs, justifiably believe that their ideas are sought by supervisory officers and put into practice whenever possible.

2.3. Advantages: The chief benefit of PM is one of promoting positive attitudes and higher morale. By whetting and satisfying the ego of an individual employee or of a group, this programme helps in curbing apathy. The belief is that if an employee knows that a particular plan projected by his organization is one in whose formulation he has had a say, he puts in his best effort and assumes responsibility for its success. Allied to this is the experience that PM makes introduction of changes relatively easy. Where a change is the result of a phase of consultation with all levels, there is a definite chance of it being accepted without many questions being asked. The other specific advantages which accrue are:

1. the establishment of an efficient channel of communication, up and down the organization;

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7 Margaret Butteriss, p.35.
8 Ibid., p.41.
ii. the quick detection of an operational problem and action thereon to solve it;

iii. improvement in workers' satisfaction and productivity;

iv. greater trust between supervisors and those supervised;

v. reduced absenteeism and resignations;

vi. the promotion of greater readiness on the part of Management to institute changes beneficial to the workers; and

vii. cordial relations between the Management and Unions.

2.4. Barriers: Although PM is an attractive proposition in view of the many advantages which it brings with itself, it is not easy of implementation. Apart from the need for fulfilling certain preconditions cited earlier, there are problems which have to be overcome before it can really have an impact on an organization. There are normally the following four kinds of barrier:

i. organizational (i.e. tradition, philosophy, values, quality of personnel and lack of a supportive climate and a reward system);

ii. managerial (i.e. failure to understand 'participation', cynicism over subordinates' ability to work hard, fear and lack of security);

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iii. subordinate (i.e., lack of desire and competence to practise participation and unawareness of being expected to participate); and

iv. situational (i.e., lack of time, unsuitability of tasks for being covered by 'participation' and uncongenial environment).

A major problem is however one of convincing the higher echelons that they need not be unduly apprehensive that the programme would lead to a loss of control over their employees. Supervisory level fears on this score are real. It requires considerable patience to sell the idea to them and make them understand that the programme is one which need not necessarily lead to a dilution of their authority. The next factor that has to be tackled is a certain measure of disarray that is bound to develop in an organization where PM is introduced for the first time. There is an initial period of confusion, particularly if the programme is not well planned. This indicates the need for a gradual switch-over and the drafting of a contingency plan which would take care of any 'disorientation' that may be initially witnessed. An important factor that has to be kept in mind is that PM is not very welcome to labour union leaders who apprehend that such a programme may lead to a decline in their influence. It has very often been found that trade union leaders would prefer to negotiate with the Management themselves and not share this role with their members. Further, the fact that PM heightens the measure of responsibility that rests in the
lower levels is not welcome to trade-unions. Responsibility brings with it accountability and this is a situation which trade-unions would normally like to avoid. Finally, the introduction of PM in an organization which had been traditionally authoritarian is more difficult than in one which is used to a liberal atmosphere and where two-way communication is not stifled but is actually encouraged. (This is a very relevant observation with regard to police forces.) In such an environment, there is the task of preparing the ground carefully before a PM programme is conceived. There is a need also to impart knowledge on what PM is and what its advantages and limitations are. Simultaneously, a spirit of inquisitiveness and debate is to be promoted. "If employees have been expected to be yesmen for years, they cannot suddenly transform themselves into independent, thinking, creative people."

2.5. How introduced: Basically, there are two ways of introducing PM:

i. informal and semi-formal methods which are addressed to individuals as well as groups;

ii. formal programmes, which take the form of collective bargaining, Union-Management cooperation and suggestion plans.

Informal and semi-formal methods generally extend to relations between a superior and the subordinates. These are put into practice at unscheduled intervals when a particular

10 Dale S. Beach, p. 566.
issue or problem is discussed by a superior officer with one or more of his employees. Informal and semi-formal methods also encompass special meetings which a supervisor convenes for an exchange of views on a specific problem with a group of his subordinates. Such meetings may be arranged to discuss a decision which the supervisor may have already taken but throws it open for a discussion with his subordinates to effect any needed modification. There are also occasions when the supervisor may not have been able to arrive at a solution but he resorts to a dialogue with the subordinates to derive one, after due discussion of the various factors involved in the situation. In this process of Consultative Management, the manager does not abdicate his authority but only seeks to fortify it by obtaining the collective wisdom of his subordinates before implementing a decision. Allied to this system of Consultative Management is Democratic Management which is different from the former only in that the decision making, after due discussion, is left to the group itself and the supervisor acts 'primarily as a conference leader'. In this respect, Democratic Management may be viewed as a "radical departure from traditional leadership". ¹¹

¹¹ Dale S. Beach, p. 570.

A formal PM programme envisages the creation and the nurturing of a regular organizational structure to create an atmosphere of participation. Collective bargaining is an important method by which this is put into practice. The only important difference from other methods is that collective bargaining is not the result of management endeavour but is more
often than not, the offshoot of trade-union efforts to protect member interests. Union-Management co-operation is only a slightly different version and is aimed at bringing about a dialogue with a view to solving production problems. The encouragement of suggestion plans is one way of promoting PM in an organization. These plans normally suggest ways and means of improving the achievements of an organization. There is a provision for monetary rewards for those suggestions which are considered useful and are therefore accepted. A major advantage of suggestion plans is that they establish a two-way communication which is normally absent in many organizations, whether in government or in private industry.  

III. Scope of Participative Management in the Police

3.1. Background: The massive expansion of police forces in the past few years has brought in a large number of well educated youth even to the lower ranks. These have come in with fresh ideas and an active mind. They would not like to be herded but would prefer to lead wherever an opportunity arises. They would desire to know the rationale of every decision that affects their working conditions and if possible, take part in the decision-making process. This is the reason why a majority of subordinate police personnel clamour for the creation of forums through which they can air their ideas and press their acceptance. It is easy to suppress such sentiments under the guise of discipline.

12 Dale S. Beach, p. 574.
But this can be done only with peril as witnessed in India in 1979 when there was widespread police revolt. It is to prevent a recurrence of unrest of such proportions that efforts should be made to impress upon police subordinates that they have a say in managing their affairs and that their views would be taken into account while taking major decisions concerning them. This is the background against which it is proposed to examine how to introduce PM in police administration.

3.2. Areas to be covered: Basically, there are two broad areas which demand attention. They are:

i. the internal management of police forces;

and

ii. operational matters which determine the performance of every member of the Force.

Internal management would include recruitment and selection, training, placement, rewards, promotions and punishments as also issues concerning manpower planning. These are matters in which higher levels in the hierarchy enjoy considerable discretion, even though certain broad limitations in the form of the basic law of the land and departmental regulations exist. There is, therefore, considerable scope for the process of consultation which is the essence of PM.

Operational problems are generally those issues which arise from time to time regarding the manner of discharging one's responsibilities. The quantum of discretion that is
available to the members of a police force, including those at the top of the hierarchy, is very limited because of the various statutes such as the Criminal Procedure Code and the Indian Evidence Act that lay down the procedure which police personnel should follow in performing their duties. To an extent this dilutes the applicability of PM to operational matters. Further, since the present project relates wholly to personnel problems, the attempt here would be to examine how far PM can be extended to improve personnel management in the Police.

3.3. Specific Issues: This Researcher, after lengthy interviews with police personnel of different ranks in Tamil Nadu and elsewhere the country, believes that following are particular aspects of personnel management which are suitable for a PM process:

Recruitment:

a. Should there be a quota of reservation in favour of the children of police personnel?

b. If such a quota is permissible under the country's Constitution, what is the extent to which such reservation should be made?

c. Whether, for filling this quota, any preference should be shown to a particular class of policemen in view of the greater hardship to which they are subject to than others in the Police.

Training:

a. Which aspect of training needs greater emphasis than is provided for in the syllabus?
b. Which feature deserves to be altogether removed in view of its obvious lack of utility to work in the field?

c. What basic facilities are needed to be extended to training institutions and whose absence puts trainees to great hardship?

Placement:

a. Should any criteria be laid down to determine the first posting of a trainee after he finishes his spell of training in an institution and later in the field?

b. Should the ground on which a transfer is ordered be communicated to the concerned member of the Force, except when it is not in public interest to do so?

c. What criteria should be given weight to when a member of the Force represents against a transfer?

Promotions:

a. Should there be any levels in the Force to which promotions can be automatic and subject only to the availability of vacancies?

b. What are the criteria that should be taken into consideration in determining the number of personnel who are to be allowed to sit for a promotional examination?

c. What should be the weightage given to factors such as seniority, past performance and performance at the promotion examination?

Rewards:

a. Which are the items of good work that deserve a cash award and which are those for which a mere commendation letter or an entry in one's personal file is sufficient?
b. What are the suggestions for ensuring that rewards are sanctioned only to those who really deserve it and that it is not given to all and sundry as a matter of routine?

c. Should recognition of good work be in any form other than the sanction of a cash award or an entry in one's personal file?

**Punishments:**

a. What measures can be adopted to ensure that the system of punishments is operated in a fair manner?

b. Is there a need to review classification of delinquencies as 'major' and 'minor'?

c. Is there a need to recast the system of appeals that is available against an order of punishment?

The above list is not comprehensive. Nevertheless it provides the basis on which a system can be evolved and worked.

3.4. **Means to introduce P.M:** Some of the informal methods that are already in vogue are listed below:

a. The Superintendent of Police in a District speaks to his Constabulary during weekly parades of the Armed Reserve at its headquarters and during inspection parades at Police Stations. On such occasions, apart from listening to individual grievances, he invites views of the Constabulary and subordinate levels a little above them, on how to improve their working and living conditions; and

b. During the monthly meeting held at District headquarters, officers from different parts of the District are present. On such occasions, both crime and law and order matters are discussed in great detail. These provide the occasion for a free discussion on how to improve police performance.
Unfortunately, as has been mentioned at the outset, police tradition is one which does not normally encourage a two-way communication. Orders are issued by the top-brass and these are meant to be executed without demur. The belief is that even in matters which are meant to promote the welfare of subordinate personnel, it is the former who know what is best for them and there is no need for any discussions whatsoever. This is a culture which is difficult to get away from, although a few recent trends inside police forces point to a slight shift in favour of an element of inner departmental democracy. This has been promoted more by the arrival of new militant groups of educated young subordinates than because of a distinct change in the mental make-up of the leadership. The realisation, rather late in the day and following the 1979 police agitation, that one way of ensuring a greater voice in the affairs of the department to subordinate levels is to formalise Police Associations, (also referred to as Unions in the U.S.A and Federation/Associations in the U.K) is welcome. Such Associations constituted with a great concern for details could play an important role in fostering a spirit of participation. It is the awareness of the significance of Police Associations as a means to promote PM that induces this Researcher to take a close look at their working. To enable a purposeful analysis it is necessary to study their history, not only in India but also in the U.S.A. and U.K which are pioneers in the area.
IV. History of Police Associations/Unions

4.1. The U.S. Experience: Although in a strict sense, Police Unions are a recent phenomenon, even as early as the end of 19th Century, police personnel in different parts of the U.S.A. had started forming rank and file organizations. Since policemen were being continually employed to break strikes, they were becoming the most hated group in society. Consequently, a sense of alienation and isolation from the community grew within Forces. Their reaction was distinctly human as they gathered together in social, fraternal and benevolent Associations.¹³

Immediately after the end of World War I, the American Federation of Labour (A.F.L) drafted charters for Police Unions in Boston, Washington D.C. This produced bitter reactions from police chiefs who saw in this development a challenge to their authority. The ruthless manner in which the 1919 Boston strike was put down forced the A.F.L. to retreat from the scene.¹⁴ For nearly two decades and until the beginning of World War II, precious little happened in the direction of unionising the Police.

During the war, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, an affiliate of the A.F.L.,


initiated yet another campaign to unionise the Police. Although official reaction was sharp and adverse, a large number of police officers welcomed the move because they found that unless they had an organization to clamour for higher wages and other benefits, there was no means by which they could improve their lot. The authorities, however, had other ideas. For instance, in Los Angeles, the Mayor and the Police Chief combined to bring about a ban of the Union and went on to dismiss a few personnel who refused to resign from it in spite of a deadline. Similar developments were seen in Detroit, Chicago and a few other cities. The Courts endorsed the ban on Police Unions on the ground that police officers were different from other public employees and hence, like the Army, they could not also form Unions. Finding the position hopelessly difficult, the Unions disbanded themselves around the time when the War ended.\footnote{R.M. Fogelson, p.196} In the place of these Unions, several benevolent and fraternal organizations came into being. Apart from providing insurance against sickness and death and looking after the physical well-being of the members, whenever possible, these organizations carried rank and file demands to the authorities.

As the years went by, police working conditions became increasingly difficult and discontent snowballed. Policemen were quite clear in their minds that only recognized labour union would be able to bring about an improvement. Hence the leaders of Fraternal and Benevolent Associations started pressing Municipal and State authorities for a
formal grievance procedure. There was bitter opposition from the International Association of Chiefs of Police (I.A.C.P.), and a few groups demanded a firm stand by the authorities. They were of the view that the installation of a grievance machinery would totally dilute the Police Chief's authority. But, having granted such a machinery to firemen, teachers, etc., during the '50s and early '60s, the authorities found it difficult to weave satisfactory grounds for denying the same right to policemen. Therefore, by early 1970s, Police Unions, as successor to the traditional Fraternal Associations, became a reality in many cities such as New York, Detroit, Boston and Los Angeles. Most of these were independent and affiliated with the Fraternal Order of the Police (F.O.P.) or International Conference of Police Associations (I.C.P.A). They decided against associating themselves with any national Union. The major characteristics of the police labour scene in the U.S.A. at present are: 16

1. Police unionisation is extremely fragmented. As a result, it is difficult to identify any one of them as the spokesman for the majority of law enforcement personnel;

ii. Police Unions are identical with their counterparts in the private sector in their demands for larger economic benefits and an improved working environment. Apart from clamouring for higher salaries, better insurance and pension plans and other fringe benefits, working conditions such as the state of police vehicles, the quality and style of uniforms and safety matters, are also of interest to Unions;

iii. The tactics employed by Police Unions are almost the same as those of private sector agencies. Lawful activities (public appeals, picketing, etc.) and illegal activities (work slowdowns or total abstention from work) are freely resorted to by them.

4.2. The U.K. Experiments: The first instance of unrest among the U.K. policemen was noticed in 1872. Appalling conditions of service had led to a lot of discontent and a few self-styled leaders of policemen sowed the seeds of Unionism through their fiery speeches. Although there was a demand for better service conditions, the strike which one witnessed at this time was more for the grant of a 'right to confer'. Dissatisfaction led to a further strike in the Metropolitan Police in 1890. For nearly two decades there was no means by which the average policeman could ventilate his grievances, chief of which was the absence of a forum where policemen could meet, discuss and give vent to their feelings. In 1913, a dismissed young Inspector Syme of the Metropolitan Police
gave lead and floated a clandestine Union which circulated caustic write-ups. The Union found ready support and this was frowned upon by authorities. The events that followed have been described in detail in the chapter on police agitations. The strike of 1918 ultimately led to the formation of the Desborough Committee whose recommendation, in turn, resulted in the establishment of a grievance machinery which has stood the test of times.

The following is the set-up of police representative organizations and the negotiating machinery in the U.K:

a. The Association of Chief Police Officers (A.C.P.O.) represents all ranks above that of Chief Superintendent. It serves as a forum to consider professional topics of common interest, to examine policy matters and to articulate demands on behalf of the service.17

b. The Superintendent's Association represents the ranks of Superintendent and Chief Superintendent organized on a district basis. District conferences in which each Force is represented by one delegate are held twice a year. A conference for the whole country is held once a year.18

c. The Police Federation represents all ranks below those of Superintendent and Police Cadets. This came into being following the Police Act 1919. Its charter


was defined in such a way as to include "all matters affecting their welfare and efficiency, other than questions of discipline or promotion affecting individuals." The terms 'welfare' and 'efficiency' have however not been defined by the Act. All members of police forces in England and Wales below the rank of Superintendents automatically become members of this Federation on joining their respective forces. There is a Branch Board in each Force and it is permitted to combine into various Joint Branch Boards. There is an annual conference at which a Central Committee is elected for each rank.

d. A Police Council was established in 1953 to consider questions of leave, pay, hours of duty, allowances, pensions, etc. It comprises an Official Side (representatives of Government - Central and local) and the Staff Side (representatives of the A.C.P.O., the Superintendents Association and the Police Federation). The Council plays an important role in personnel matters by virtue of the fact that the Secretary of State is required to take cognisance of its recommendations before making any regulations on matters which are within the purview of the Council.

e. There is also a Police Advisory Board which advises the Secretary of State who is its Chairman, on general questions affecting the Police. Its members represent the Central and Local Governments as well as the three representative organizations mentioned above.

Although the system has generally worked well, the Federation seems to be unhappy that its bargaining powers as compared to those of trade-unions are negligible. A few
police officers have questioned its traditional status and suggested that the Police should demand a trade-union accompanied by a measure of freedom of action that is normally afforded to other working classes and which would also confer on the Police the right to strike. Phases of discontent over the pay structure seen from time to time have resulted in a challenge to the limitations on the collective bargaining power of the Police. The shades of militancy witnessed in the U.K. Police in 1975 and again during 1976-77 have led to a clamour for downright and undiluted trade-unionism. This has been accompanied by the demand for enlarging the Federation's scope. In July 1976, the Federation withdrew from the Police Council and demanded direct negotiations with the government. Subsequently, during 1977, a large majority of the 43 Police Federations in England and Wales conducted referenda on the issue of a right to strike. These revealed majorities (normally 60 to 80%) supporting the move. It is against this background that the U.K. Government has appointed a Committee headed by Lord Edmund Davis to look into all problems concerning pay and recognition of Associations.

4.3. The Indian Scene: The Bengal Police Association established in 1921 is the first Association known to have been set up for police personnel in India. It received government

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19 R.S. Bunyard, p.49.
20 Robert Reiner, p.166.
recognition in 1923. The next was the Bihar Police Association which came into being in 1925. A Non-Gazetted Police Officers' Association was set up in Uttar Pradesh in 1926 and was given official recognition. Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors were permitted to become members. Ramanand Tiwari, a former Chief Minister of Bihar, himself once a policeman, was responsible for the formation of a Bihar Policemen's Association in 1946. A Calcutta Police Association covering all ranks from Constable to Assistant Commissioner was formed in 1947. In the early 1950s, the Madras City Police had an unrecognised Constabulary Association which engineered a pay strike in January 1953. In Delhi, a Non-Gazetted Karmacharis' Sangh came into existence in 1964. This was accorded recognition only in 1966. In March 1973, a Rajya Police Karmachari Parishad was formed in Uttar Pradesh. This was not given recognition and as a sequel, one saw trouble in the form of a mutiny by the Provincial Armed Constabulary. This body was banned following the agitation but was subsequently revived.

The National Police Commission (1977) which examined the issue in detail found no uniformity in practice. Its review indicated that some kind of an Association existed only in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Tripura, Manipur and Delhi. While some of these Associations enjoyed recognition, many others did not.\(^{21}\) Taking into account the views expressed by the various Police Commissions

which had been appointed in the country since Independence, the National Police Commission recommended that there could be four separate Associations for each of the following categories of personnel:

i. Constables, Head Constables and equivalent rank;

ii. Assistant Sub-Inspectors, Sub-Inspectors, Inspectors and equivalent ranks;

iii. All officers of the State Police Service of and above the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police (i.e., those who do not belong to the I.P.S);

and

iv. I.P.S Officers.

While Associations covering the first two categories could be formed on a District basis, with representatives of District Associations later constituting the State Associations for these ranks, the State Police Service Association could be at a State level. Membership of these Associations was to be restricted to serving policemen. The members would not have the right to strike work or withhold their services or otherwise delay the performance of their duties in any manner. The Associations were to be absolutely non-political in character and were not to resort to any coercive method of agitation for obtaining redressal of their grievances.

The Commission also recommended the creation of a Staff Council for every District or a comparable unit. At the State Police Headquarters, the Commission recommended
the creation of a State Police Staff Council. The Commission prescribed a Joint Consultative Council (J.C.C.) at State Headquarters as the apex body to deal with police grievances. The Council was to consist of an Official side and a Staff side. The Official Side appointed by the government was to include the Chief Secretary, Secretary in charge of Police, Finance Secretary and Personnel Secretary and the Minister in charge of the Police as the Chairman. The Staff Side was to be the entire body of the State Police Staff Council. The J.C.C. could meet as often as was necessary, to deal with matters that arose from the deliberations of the State Police Staff Council or otherwise. The J.C.C's scope was to include all matters relating to conditions of service and work, welfare of police personnel and an improvement of efficiency and standards of work.

Following the countrywide agitation of police personnel in April-May 1979, Government of India convened a conference of Chief Ministers in Delhi on June 6, 1979. This conference decided on a 7-point programme to ameliorate police service conditions. Two aspects of the programme dealt respectively with permission to form Associations subject to the restrictions specified by the National Police Commission, and the provision of a suitable machinery at the District and State levels for the quick redress of police grievances. This led to a flurry of action. Orders were passed by different State Governments permitting the formation of Associations for policemen. These were generally based on the guidelines enunciated by the National Police Commission.
V. Performance of Police Associations/Unions

5.1. Expectations: In theory what can a well run Police Union/Association achieve? This is a question that is difficult to answer, particularly in the Indian context where Associations are yet to organize themselves in a real way. Basically, however, they can produce a distinct psychological gain. It has been the experience of U.S.A and the U.K police forces in particular, that wherever Unions are active, they ensure that no major changes in the working conditions of their members are introduced unilaterally by the leadership. In essence, they see to it that the tradition of 'autocracy' does not any longer hold sway and there is greater democracy in police operations.22 Although this does not mean that while taking every decision concerning police operations superior officers consult Unions, it does imply that the latter will always be conscious of the fact that any reform proposed is bound to be resented if it does not find support with the Unions or its members.

Allied is the belief that Police Unions can play an important part in making an average member of the Force more articulate about his rights than he would otherwise be. There is the criticism that while he has been repeatedly told what he owes to the community, seldom is he made aware of what he could expect in return. In the U.S.A, many

collective bargaining contracts have, therefore, started carrying a 'Policemen's Bill of Rights which seeks to afford protection to policemen in respect of disciplinary matters, particularly internal probes. This is an invaluable service rendered to lower police functionaries who are quite often unwittingly victimised and who get bamboozled by complicated departmental regulations. When this role of educating policemen of their legal rights is well performed by a Union, there is the added service of saving them from the tentacles of extraneous elements. Experienced officers in many State Police forces in India know that there are individuals, who are either retired police employees or rank outsiders, who capitalise on the ignorance of the Constabulary and even officers of the level of Sub-Inspectors facing disciplinary action and put the latter to considerable avoidable expenditure in presenting their defence at departmental enquiries.

Unions can help to achieve better working and living conditions for subordinate police personnel. This is an area where there is pronounced discontent and a scope for improvement. There is no doubt a constraint that exists in the form of limited financial resources of governments. Notwithstanding this, quite a few improvements can be brought about, particularly if a scheme is well drafted to usher in a reform based

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on a phased programme. It is not that the police leadership are not aware of the need for the quick amelioration of poor working and living conditions. Going by the old adage 'Only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches', the degree of hardship is best brought home by police subordinates themselves or the Unions which represent them. There is a need for a word of caution here. Unions should understand that ideal working and living conditions are a myth and that sheer numbers of our police forces make radical improvements very difficult. This calls for balance and a care to avoid propping up extravagant demands.

5.2. The Disappointment: It has been repeatedly dinned into the ears of policemen that they owe a responsibility to the community and that they should strive satisfactorily to fulfil the demands made on them by the common man. This position requires the gradual attainment of high professional excellence. It implies that policemen should not only be conscious of their rights but should keep in mind their duties as well. The validity of this philosophy has not been understood either by Police Unions or their members. Unfortunately, Police Unions have, over the years, acquired the reputation of resisting measures which are meant to bring about an improvement in the quality of performance by members of police forces. This state of indifference to the need to improve employee knowledge of his work counters the argument that he should have a say in every major decision concerning the Force. Unless he is articulate and professionally
sound, how can he 'participate'? Relevant here is the study conducted by Juris and Fouille in the U.S.A. The latter found that "much of what the Unions have actually accomplished to date has been to gain ground in meeting the traditional concerns of all Unions for wages, hours, and improved working conditions. Broader issues of change in operating policies have been touched on only incidentally". The tendency of Unions to "adopt an ultra conservative position" and their "contentment to look out - first and foremost - for the short-term job-related interests of its members" are looked upon by many with concern.

5.3. Impact of Associations in India: The general feeling, both among superior and subordinate levels, is that those bodies are yet to make a real impression. A fairly exhaustive investigation indicates that they have not generated any enthusiasm among the police leadership. There are strong sections of the latter who believe that Associations can be ignored so that they fade out in course of time. They are, however, not clear as to how to deal with them as long as they exist. Most of the senior police leaders had joined the Force at a time when there were no Unions or Associations. Even many of the younger members of the hierarchy did not have to deal with them during the first five or six years of their service. This piquant situation has many implications for internal management. A few of these leaders have


25 Ibid., p.314.
attempted to steamroll but with disastrous results. The others have tried to softpedal, leading sometimes to a loss of control. While it would be easy to suggest a golden mean, in practice, this is difficult to achieve. Hence the present confused situation that we watch in India.

The Associations themselves have not displayed the amount of wisdom that is required to raise their degree of effectiveness. Perhaps most distressing is the fact that Associations have attracted a kind of leadership which believes more in militancy than in the efficacy of persuasion and which prefers to fritter away energy on trivial issues at the cost of matters which are of long-range import. Further, they have not given evidence of a genuine effort to ascertain the views of their members on various live issues.

One final reason which is adduced for the unsatisfactory performance of Police Associations is that the latter are looked upon as the product of a hasty and ill-planned effort to temporarily assuage the wounded sentiments of police personnel. "In most of the States, no organised consultations took place, no effort was made to educate and enlighten both those who were to regulate their conduct and to deal with them. The result was individualistic approach .... many officers developed an attitude of intolerance, fear and confrontation right from the beginning, mostly arising out of ignorance, being deprived of the benefit of prior consultation and involvement in policy formulation." 26 This situation

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reflected a definite lack of appreciation of the measures which are a precondition to the success of P.M.

5.4. The Tamil Nadu Experience: In Tamil Nadu, three Associations were accorded recognition by the Inspector-General of Police in October 1979. There was the fourth Association called the Tamil Nadu Police Subordinates Association which was not recognised. One witnessed intense activities by these Associations for a brief period during 1979-80. But, since then, activities have been on a low key. Several factors are responsible for this. Chief of those, however, is the State Government's action to extend various facilities to police personnel, including a scheme for the provision of subsidised rations.

A study of the Associations functioning in Tamil Nadu reveals that the branch units are active mainly in urban centres, particularly Madras City. Meetings have been held at periodic intervals and these have been fairly well attended. The issues generally raised by these branch units cover the following:

i. need for more staff; particularly in the motor transport branch, to avoid excessive workload;

ii. alleged arbitrary transfer on grounds other than official contingency;

iii. delayed payment of arrears of salary, allowances etc. due to the personnel; and

iv. more amenities at places of work and living quarters.
Survey by the Researcher: At the Opinion Survey which this Researcher conducted, the respondents, who were subordinate personnel of the Tamil Nadu Police, were specifically questioned on various aspects of Police Associations. Their reactions can be summed up as below:

a. 89% of the samples were categorical that an Association was an absolute necessity to voice their grievances.

b. 67% did not subscribe to the view that an Association invariably led to indiscipline in the Force. 11% however agreed with the latter statement.

c. 45.4% believed that Associations (as they existed at the time of the survey) were functioning well. However, 41.3% opined that they were useless.

d. Asked to state the reasons why Associations did not perform well, a few factors cited were:
   i. leadership of the Associations was poor (17.4%);
   ii. these bodies did not have adequate authority (49%);
   iii. they did not have the requisite facilities (8%); and
   iv. they did not receive adequate encouragement from the higher echelons (25.4%).

e. 71% urged that Associations should concern themselves only with matters that are of interest to a group or groups of personnel. However, 20.8% desired that matters pertaining to individuals also should be handled by them.

f. To a question as to which area of personnel welfare should receive the greatest attention of Associations,
a majority, viz., 71% stated that their living conditions should get the utmost priority. The others desired that better pay scales and promotion opportunities should be the issues which Associations should concentrate upon.

57.8% demanded that office-bearers of the Associations should be accorded special privileges in order to enable them to discharge their functions effectively. Surprisingly, a sizeable number, viz., 36%, did not consider this necessary.

h. When asked to come out with specific suggestions on how to make Associations more efficient, some of the respondents stated as below:

i. Office-bearers should periodically visit Police Stations to ascertain the Constabulary's grievances.

ii. Each Association should meet at least once a month.

iii. It should have a building of its own within the District Police Office complex.

iv. There should be no political interference with the work of the Association.

v. The office-bearers should not be burdened with official work and should be allowed to look after Association affairs on a whole-time basis.

vi. Every Association should offer prompt relief to families in distress following accidents or premature death of police personnel.

5.6. Outcome of Interviews: In addition to the above survey, this Researcher spent time on personal interviews with office-bearers and individual policemen at different levels. The
views expressed by them generally tallied with those collected at the Opinion Survey. There was obvious and widespread disillusionment with Associations and a lack of faith in their ability to deliver the goods. The interviews did not indicate that the subject was one which was capable of exciting emotions.

The position in Tamil Nadu could be summed up as below:

i. Following the 1979 agitation police subordinates developed the belief that Police Associations were the only instrument which could help to redress their long-nursed grievances. Their expectations were very high. After the experience of nearly two years, they however feel that Associations have not given a good account of themselves. There is, therefore, visible disillusionment.

ii. The quality of personnel assuming leadership of Associations is far from good. Many who had acquired an unsavoury reputation in their career have come to occupy positions of importance.

iii. Associations no doubt interest themselves in matters relating to the working and living conditions of their members. But such concern appears more as an ad hoc reaction based on the need for sheer survival than one flowing from a well laid down policy.

iv. Associations do not consider that it is their responsibility to educate members on professional matters or issues which are
5.7. **Conclusions**: This Researcher's firm belief is that Associations/Unions can play a vital role in promoting P.M. in police forces. But this will have to be necessarily muted unless there is first a change in the attitude of higher echelons. The latter should be made to understand that the Police cannot remain insular from the strong forces of trade-unionism which are holding sway all over the world. It would therefore be futile on their part either to break Police Associations or totally ignore them. However much police leaders may resent Associations/Unions, there is no possibility of going back on them. "The days of arbitrary, authoritarian and unilateral management styles are on the wane. Concurrently, the time of Police Unions or Associations has arrived in mass and in force. Basically the stage has been set for management-labour relations, relations that, in turn, can vary from being highly mutually supportive, to being laden with conflict." 27 "The situation demands enlightened leadership. The present times call for the utmost realism and sagacity on the part of police leadership .... their concern should be how to fuse Associations into the management of the Forces so that they serve to heighten morale and thereby police performance on the field." 28

27 Whisenand and Ferguson, p.322.
What is required is a strategy which would regulate
unions so that they achieve their objectives without eroding
discipline. This is essential because any attempt to outlaw
them would only encourage clandestine activity of an insidious
variety. Although these harsh realities of the situation
seem to have been fairly well understood in the U.K and
the U.S.A. which have had a longer history of police unions,
the present investigation supports the belief that Indian
police leaders still appear to nurse the hope that they can
afford to ignore them. This is supported by the fact that in
many states, associations have not been formed and in a few
where these have been set up, they are permitted only a
subdued level of activity.

Experience in the U.S.A has been that police unions
have not shown themselves over-keen to support radical reforms
in police operations. They have not evinced any enthusiasm
towards an improvement in the quality of service rendered to
the common man. The unions in U.K have shown themselves to
be slightly different and a little positive to issues which
ultimately aim at improving police services. In India, associ­
ations are in an infant stage. They are still bogged down
with issues which are of a short-range concern, an articulation
of which alone impresses their members. Further, if one con­
siders the background and calibre of men and officers who
occupy positions of importance in these bodies, there is
reason to believe that they may not, for quite some time, show
any interest in bringing professional problems during nego­
tiations with the department.
VI. Attitude Surveys

6.1. Background: PM in the Police can become a reality only if steps are taken for receiving an active feed-back from all police personnel. As has been said earlier, traditions in police forces tirelessly emphasize the virtues of rigid discipline based on a respect for the hierarchy. This philosophy held good as long as the lower rungs were manned by individuals who were not well educated. In the past decade or so, there has been an appreciable influx of young men with relatively high educational qualifications and who possess a marked degree of awareness. Further, they have come into the Force at a time when militant trade-unionism is the characteristic of the industrial sector, whether private or public. Hence these young men have been asking several questions on internal management, an act which would have been considered sacrilegious till a few years ago. It is but reasonable that the feelings of these new and young elements are respected and their emotions properly guided so that they are enabled to give their best. It is imperative, therefore, that police leaders constantly engage themselves in the task of finding out what issues agitate the minds of subordinate personnel and what measures are needed to redress their grievances. Such information is not easily obtained because of various difficulties, chief of which is the fear complex among a majority of policemen. It is against this background that this Researcher would like to draw on the concept of attitude surveys as a tool to promote P.M. and thereby strengthen
upward channels of communication.

6.2. Objective: The purpose of attitude surveys is one of measuring the degree of employee involvement in organizational affairs. This is done by eliciting answers to various questions which cover almost all the activities of the organization. Since the "acid test of commitment to real participation is the involvement of employees at the rank and file level, ..... measuring degrees of involvement becomes important". The questionnaire framed for the purpose can relate both to operational problems and matters impinging on the management of personnel. This being a project purely on the latter subject, the attempt here will be to point out how attitude surveys can help to enhance the efficacy of personnel policies.

6.3. Technique: The utility of an attitude survey will depend very much on the careful choice of issues covered. Little is gained if those taken up are misoriented or seek to focus attention purely on short-range matters which are of a momentary importance. Whether the survey would be based on interviews or would take the form of a questionnaire, would largely depend on the number of personnel involved and the time available to the investigator. Where large numbers are involved, interviews become cumbersome. Another disadvantage

of the interview system is that such a process does not encourage a free expression of views by the respondents. This is particularly true of police organizations where fear of victimization for holding radical views is rather pronounced and where subordinate personnel are hardly ever known to air views which may be branded as anti-establishment. To meet such a situation, the questionnaire which does not require the respondent to reveal his identity and is merely filled in and handed over by him to the investigator is ideal. (This was a method successfully adopted by the Study Group constituted by the National Police Commission in Tamil Nadu. This again was the technique employed by this Researcher in conducting a survey on various aspects of personnel administration covered by this thesis and whose findings find a place in the different chapters.)

6.4. Choice of Issues: It is the firm belief of this Researcher, one he shares with many senior Police Officers and Management experts interviewed by him, that areas related to recruitment, training, working and living conditions and grievance machinery offer a fertile ground. To be specific, all those referred to earlier in this chapter as ones which are fit for working the concept of P.M. are suitable subjects to which such attitude surveys can relate. The idea is that broad policy matters which have been evolved over the course of many years are left undisturbed and that issues which otherwise have a long-range value are directly or
indirectly related to the morale of personnel from the subject matter of such surveys. A typical questionnaire on the subject of working and living conditions of police personnel is given in Appendix XIII.

6.5. The Police Experience: Attitude surveys are not entirely unknown to police forces. From time to time, enlightened police leaders have resorted to such surveys in order to gauge the feelings of subordinate personnel. In India too there have been a large number of surveys. The various Police Commissions appointed by State Governments and the National Police Commission of 1977 have floated many such surveys. The then Central Police Training College, Mount Abu and its successor, the Sardar Vallabai Patel National Police Academy, Hyderabad, have encouraged this. The Bureau of Police Research and Development and Research Centres run by State Police forces have also a few surveys to their credit.

6.6. A few Suggestions: The above studies have thrown up valuable ideas for being absorbed by police administrators. Some of these have no doubt been taken into account in a small measure while initiating reforms. However such surveys are too few and far between to make any lasting impact in a country of the size of India which has so many State and Central Police forces. The efforts of Police Research Centres are mostly ad hoc and do not form part of a system. Further, these centres suffer from the disadvantage of a lack of expertise in conducting surveys. There is also the
fear that, being manned mostly by serving Police Officers, they may not succeed in getting the uninhibited views of subordinate police personnel. There is, therefore, a case for setting up a specialised cell within each police force for this purpose or for invoking the services of an outside agency which has the relevant experience. In both the cases, senior Police Officers of proven ability can render assistance to the agency to which the task is entrusted so that a lack of knowledge of police practices does not affect the quality of the investigation.

Attitude surveys should be done at regular intervals and cover various segments of the Force so that opinion that is representative of a majority is available on any particular subject over a course of a year or two. Unless such a sustained programme is put through, surveys conducted once in a while covering small segments of the Force would hardly reflect the true state of feelings. Frequent studies and follow-up meetings convened to discuss their findings also help to create a climate which nurtures free expression, provides meaningful data for administrative action to redress grievances and heighten employee morale. Such a programme implemented vigorously for a few years would pay dividend in the form of a new democratic culture in police forces, a culture which is badly needed.
SUMMARY

Conflict is the essence of any progressive organization. A mature leader always encourages dissent so that he has the benefit of a collision of ideas before he arrives at any decision. It is this factor which highlights the importance of 'Communication' as a subject of great importance in personnel administration. Police forces are no less in need of an exchange of opposing views, particularly in respect of matters concerning personnel administration. Unfortunately, however, the police culture over the years has been such that discipline has become synonymous with subservience. As a result, only downward communication is dominant inside police organizations. While this was taken in their stride by men who entered the Police in the past, the new recruits who are more articulate and educated than their predecessors were, desire a change in the style of administration. Taking the cue from their counterparts in private industry, subordinate police personnel demand a greater voice in the internal management of Forces. In effect, they want the establishment of active channels of upward communication. Police leaders in U.K. and U.S.A., learning a lesson from the past, have succeeded in
setting up a machinery which would institutionalise such channels. Till 1979, the top-brass of the Police in India were openly averse to allowing internal dialogue between them and the lower rungs. Widespread police revolt that year brought about some change in their attitude and that of the government. Consequently, Police Associations, as a means to improve upward communication, have been formally allowed. But a study of their working reveals that they are yet to become a force to reckon with as a device to improve communication. The situation calls for introspection all around so that police leaders and Association men shed their mutual prejudices and ensure that Associations become a sound and live channel for exchange of ideas. Another means of improving rapport between the hierarchy and police subordinates is the conduct of attitude surveys at frequent intervals so that these reveal to the police personnel manager which issues are of real import and on which sustained administrative action is called for so as to keep police employees in a state of high morale.

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