43652

The Personal Problems Of The Police Officer: A Plea For Action

Jeffrey A. Schwartz and Cynthia B. Schwartz

Law Enforcement Training and Research Associates, Inc.

San Francisco, California

INTRODUCTION

In the last ten years the criminal justice system, and the police in particular, have received a tremendous amount of attention, research, and analysis. This attention has come from the general public, the media, federal agencies and commissions, the academic community, and police administrators themselves. The criminal justice system has been rather clearly labeled as a dysfunctional nonsystem. The role of the police in society has been debated endlessly, and community relations, crime prevention and diversion have become bywords without which grant funds may be lost. The past decade has also seen an unparalleled infusion of federal funds into police agencies. The result of these forces has been a period of remarkable innovation and change for law enforcement. Many police departments are experimenting with team policing, with major juvenile programs, with organizational development retreats for administrators, with crime prevention programs to combat burglary, and with far, far more.

It is ironic, although perhaps predictable, that most of these changes have little or no effect upon the field police officer. It is not uncommon to ask a patrolman from a large police department about the Chief's departmental reorganization (to flatten organizational structure and improve communication) only to have the patrolman respond, "What did you say the Chief's name was?" Much of the police innovation of the past several years appears to have occurred within a closed system; a system comprised of police administrators, consultants, funding agencies, academicians, and the media. Line police officers seem to receive few benefits from this system and to have little access to the decision makers and planners.

There is no question but that the conclusion drawn above is a generalization, and that there are notable exceptions to it. For example, police equipment has improved markedly of late and the move towards professionalization has definitely reached the rank and file officer in many departments. Yet, it is difficult to see much real change in the tasks and procedures of an uniformed officer. Most of the success stories in the police literature are illusion, while others present a veneer of change which does not penetrate below mid-management levels. Certainly the society has become far more violent and far more complex in recent years. Concurrently, the police job has become more complex, more violent, and more stressful. It is less clear that police agencies are providing line-level officers with the necessary tools to meet these more difficult job conditions.

Among the areas which might be expected to have maximum influence on the day-to-day performance of line officers would be patrol procedures, training and personnel practices. With the exception of technological improvements in equipment, patrol procedures for most officers in most departments in the United States are very much as they were in the 1950's. Police training has received extremely large amounts of money and attention, but little improvement. Most police training remains irrelevant for the job at hand and badly done to boot. Police personnel practices are not as good as police training.

This paper addresses a broad area of police personnel practices and non-practices related to the personal problems of the police officer. These problems include alcoholism, divorce and other family problems, suicide, adjustment to retirement, individual psychological problems, burnout and a number of others. The first section of this paper discusses priorities of these personnel problems and general strategies for effecting change. The second section of the paper presents a brief description of the most significant of the personal problems of the police officer. The third section of this paper discusses specific remedies for these problems.

PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

The personal problems of police officers should be attended to with high priority by police agencies. Generally, this is not the case. There are several reasons for this lack of attention. First, there is a broad class of personnel procedures which every agency must deal with. These include establishing selection standards, administering entry-level and promotional exams, tracking probationary periods, appeal procedures, etc. Thus, most of the time of a personnel bureau or division is occupied by day-to-day requirements. The second reason is that employee problems are a long-term issue. Usually, it is only problems which reach crisis proportions that intrude successfully upon day-to-day business. Third, there is a strange historical precedent that every police officer should be able to manage his personal life competently and without serious problems, and that if he cannot, he does not belong in police work. Although this attitude is less prevalent today than it was 15 years ago, it survives and remains a factor. Also, individual officers are well aware of this attitude and do not want to face peer pressure by acknowledging problems or seeking help. Thus, most police departments do not recognize the severity or frequency of personal problems of their own employees.

The personal problems of the police officer lead to a number of results, almost all of them negative. The officer who is drinking on duty is a danger to himself and to his fellow officers as well as to the community. If his problem becomes public knowledge he may lose his credibility in court and his effectiveness in the field. The officer who is having serious personal or family problems may be ineffectual in general, or may create serious difficulties during citizen contacts. The officer who develops physical problems such as back trouble or hypertension may be unreliable in attendance and may be rendered useless for any assignments except light duty. To the degree that individual officers are experiencing personal problems, overall departmental morale will be negatively affected. The organization may be compromised by

supervisors who are aware of personal problems of subordinates, but are at a loss about their own role. In the absence of direction, supervisors will often take no action and, in doing so, implicitly condone the impaired performance of the subordinate. This state of affairs leads to a number of negative consequences, not the least of which is considerable civil liability. Efficiency is also an important consideration. In light of today's municipal budgets, it is particularly important that police departments be able to use every officer as efficiently and productively as possible. Also, disability retirements increase the already severe fiscal problems that many municipalities already face. This is by no means an exhaustive list of the consequences of employee problems within police agencies, but it should be sufficient to demonstrate the importance of this topic to police administrators and communities alike.

Fifteen years ago the largest impediment to change in this area would have been the attitude within police ranks that every police officer should be able to manage his personal life competently and without serious problems, and that if he could not he did not belong in police work. This attitude survives, but is far less prevelant today. Also, police officers are much more likely now to see themselves as part of a labor force that demands programs and services from management. In considering the personal problems of the police officer it may be more important to specify what is not needed than what is needed. What is not needed is to turn this into an abstruse academic research area. It will not be surprising if in the next three years someone publishes a paper entitled, "An analogue study of the psycho-biological cellular concomitants of stress in a cohort of computer-simulated probationary sergeants." But at that point we have lost it, have we not? This is not a criticism of basic research, nor is it an attempt to put value judgements upon areas of basic research. It is a reminder that this is not a basic research area. That is, the personal problems of the police officer are important because of the social significance of the police and their role. If we are attending to this area because of its social significance, then we should attempt to achieve socially significant goals, rather than use this topic as a jumping off point for basic behavioral research. In short, there is a need to do something about these problems now rather than to relate them to a larger, pre-existing body of basic research which has not yet developed socially meaningful outcomes.

In this same regard it may be useful to differentiate between a police officer's personal problems and police stress. It is tempting to assume that, at least epidemiologically, personal problems are related to police stress; and that some of these personal problems, marital difficulty for example, may then also contribute to on-the-job stress. While this seems eminently reasonable, even probable, it must be remembered that this remains an assumption. The evidence relating on-the-job stress to personal police problems is far from definitive, and there is no body of evidence ruling out other possibilities. For example, it may be that many of the personal problems discussed in this paper are simply characteristic of the population that enters police work. It is also possible that many of these problems are related to nonstress aspects of the police officer's job. It is possible that one might alleviate many of the personal problems of police officers without in any way reducing

on-the-job police stress or even identifying stressors. Conversely, one might significantly reduce police stress (an important end in and of itself) only to find that the incidence of personal problems remained essentially unchanged.

The discussions above are simply a plea to deal with the social issues that have brought us to this topic. A concern with the identification of the various types of stress impinging on the police officer, with the personality characteristics of police populations which might predispose them to personal problems, or with the mechanisms through which these stressors operate, makes excellent sense if it appears that this strategy will lead to the quicket, the easiest or the most complete solution to these problems. However, in the face of glaring identified problems, the primary emphasis should be upon treatment rather than etiological explorations. If the majority of efforts in this new and important area are given to clearing swamps then perhaps some more philosophic researchers will later be able to specify the role of the mosquito.

Before considering individual problem areas, it is important to recognize that the nature and incidence of personal problems may be expected to vary with area of the country and, perhaps more importantly, size and type of police department. For example, alcoholism may be a far less serious issue in moderate-sized suburban departments than in large urban agencies. Divorce and family problems would be expected to be much more frequent in urban and suburban areas of California than in rural areas of the Midwest. The same qualifications may need to be applied to solutions, even for those problems that seem universal.

PERSONAL PROBLEM AREAS

1. THE WORKAHOLIC: This is probably the most common, and certainly the least understood, problem which disproportionately affects police officers. In any police agency of moderate size there are individual officers who consistently come in to work early, stay at work late to talk to officers on the next shift, socialize almost exclusively with other police officers, volunteer for extra assignments and spend inordinate amounts of time preparing for work. These officers are often encouraged by supervisors or administrators who convey the impression that total 24-hour-a-day commitment to and immersion in work is the only path to advancement within the police department. This problem usually becomes more severe when an officer becomes a supervisor or administrator himself. He may then spend 10 to 16 hours a day, six to seven days a week, regularly, on the job. The officer who spends his off-duty time with other officers and whose primary interests are police-related is not necessarily a workaholic; it is the almost total dedication of time and energy to the job that distinguishes this problem. Officers who have this problem are high risks to have multiple divorces and to become extremely bitter when their career advancement does not match their individual commitment and expectation.

2. BURNOUT: A police officer who has six or eight years of seniority and has not been promoted may develop into a serious problem. No matter how good an officer he has been until the point at which he realized that he would probably

never gain promotion, he may quickly turn into one of the most destructive forces in the agency. Alternately, he may simply choose to "retire in office", and draw his salary until he reaches twenty years of service even though he stopped working some twelve years previously. This is by no means a universal phenomenon and there are many agencies in which the older experienced patrolmen form the backbone of the department. Nevertheless, there is an incredible waste of talent, resources and energy among lower-ranking members of police agencies who burn out due to perceived inattention, perceived unfairness of promotional policies, a cumulative dissatisfaction with the job, the department and the city or for a number of other related reasons.

3. DIVORCE AND OTHER FAMILY PROBLEMS: Although there is some contradictory evidence on this point, divorce appears to be a very high-frequency occurrence for young police officers. In large departments it is easy to find numbers of patrol officers who are on third marriages before age thirty. There is no particular mystery with regard to the breakup of marriages exisiting prior to entry into police service. Many police officers are married within a few years after finishing high school, and typically neither spouse had any realistic notion of what police service would mean in terms of its effect on family life. Police agencies that provide any orientation or counselling for the spouses of recruits are still the exception rather than the rule, and until very recently there were no such programs. Older police officers frequently report that their children have received negative reactions either from peers or from school teachers because of the father's police job. When the children of police officers reach adolescence, juvenile problems seem also to be unusually frequent. While many of these problems are between parents and juveniles, serious delinquency is not uncommon. There has been a great deal of speculation about the cause of family problems among police officers. It has been suggested that the job breeds cynicism and callousness, and that too many officers take these parts of the job home with them. Another frequent explanation is that the police culture encourages philandering. Programs which have attempted to alleviate or remedy this situation have been much less frequent than speculation about the cause of the problem.

4. ALCOHOLISM: Drinking is a major problem in some police departments, particularly large departments, and almost non-existent in other departments, usually small suburban or rural agencies. Some police departments have such strict rules against the use of alcohol on duty or before duty and such clear traditions prohibiting such behavior, that officers may have significant drinking problems when off the job but not bring these problems to work with them in any direct form. An officer who is under the influence of alcohol while on duty is a menace to himself and to everyone around him, officer and civilian alike. His fellow officers may be concerned about his inability to effectively back them up, drive safely or handle firearms competently, but they are in a dilemma in many departments because of the tradition against reporting fellow officers for drinking or similar indiscretions. A police department that has significant alcohol problems within its ranks and does not acknowledge and cope with the problem will then face citizen complaints about drinking officers, incidents involving violence in which the officer's drinking habits may be more central to the incident than the actions of the citizens involved, preventable

auto accidents, absenteeism and early retirements. Many large industries have found that they could not afford to ignore employee alcoholism for purely financial reasons. It is surprising that police agencies have given so little attention to this issue.

5. PHYSICAL PROBLEMS: Police officers exhibit an uncommonly high incidence of heart disease, back trouble and hypertension for a group that is initially selected on stringent physical fitness criteria. Back problems and heart disease account for high percentages of disability pensions in most police agencies, and relegate other men to special light duty assignments. They are also responsible for absenteeism, and increased turnover rates due to early retirements. While the personal costs of these problems to individual police officers must not be overlooked, the aggregate economic cost is overwhelming.

6. INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS: This category includes the officer who becomes psychotic (although this problem appears to be an extremely low-frequency event in police populations), the officer who is depressed because of job dissatisfaction or because of family problems, the officer who develops "the shakes" about the dangers of the job, and the officer who becomes agitated and erascible. Martin Reiser's description of the John Wayne syndrome is another excellent example of a serious and encompassing personal problem, although it is neither a typical psychiatric issue nor an emergency of any sort. There are a variety of other individual issues, many of them rather minor, which individual police officers define as significant problems for themselves. These initially minor personal problems tend to be exacerbated by the fact that police officers are unlikely (for personal and professional reasons) to utilize public mental health agencies. Many problems which are not unique to police officers, and are not generally considered serious, become very serious for a police officer because of the demands and responsibilities of his job.

7. SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF FEMALE AND MINORITY OFFICERS: No matter how severe the pressures that one assumes befall the typical patrolman, they must be dwarfed by the pressures faced by minority and female officers. Minority and female officers are subject to all of the other personal problems that face the White male officer. The special and severe forces with which minorities and women additionally contend are rather obvious. In many police agencies a Black police officer is regarded suspiciously by fellow officers and does not have the kind of peer support that most patrolmen identify as critically important. Further, the Black officer may face occasional bigotry in the white community even when he is responding with emergency service. Parenthetically, it is interesting to note that it is widely believed that Black officers receive more hostility from the Black community than do White officers. Black officers suggest that this is almost completely a myth and that they are, with occasional exceptions, received more positively than are White officers. However, the Black officer is much more likely to find that his job is a source of harassment and unpleasantness for his wife and children than is the White officer. Other minorities appear to fall in between the Black and White officers on these issues, although there are some areas in which Mexican-American communities are more negative about Mexican-Americans becoming police officers than

is true in the Black communities. Female officers are still regarded by most male police officers as freaks. They may expect little initial support and a great deal of testing by their male counterparts. Many of the police departments which have hired female patrol officers have done so because court orders or because the chief of police himself has decided that it would be done. Neither of these decision-making processes does anything to build mid-management or supervisory enthusiasm for the new female officers. It will probably be several years until there is a clear indication of the effect of police work upon the women who go into it, just as it will probably take several years before reliable general conclusions can be drawn about the performance of female patrol officers. (That is, women in police work are still so unusual in most jurisdictions that they may not be typical of the women who will enter the field when the situation has become more commonplace.) Police agencies that have hired women for patrol work under federal grants have seldom included as part of the program some method of attempting to provide personal assistance and support for the female rookies. Police programs to provide support and assistance for minority officers are very rare and have usually been organized and run by minority officer organizations.

8. RETIREMENT PROBLEMS: Police officers do not retire well. This fact is widely known within police departments, and it is not a surprise to see newly retired officers becoming depressed and losing physical condition. Like other occupations, police do not plan realistically for retirement. However, unlike other occupations, police officers are generally very deeply involved with their work until the actual moment of retirement. It is a real shock to suddenly be estranged from a job that has occupied a major portion of one's life, been active and involving, and was the source of many social activities as well. Here again, major industries have recently begun to come to grips with the retirement problem, but police departments have not.

9. SUICIDE: Suicide as a problem for police officers is a bifurcated issue. Suicide among young police officers is not particularly common and may often be related to divorce or other family problems. Among older police officers suicide is more common and may be related to alcoholism, physical illness or impending retirement. Many police officers believe that suicide rates among police immediately after retirement are extremely high (as portrayed graphically in The New Centurians), and definitive data on this point would be most useful.

10. CAREER UNCERTAINTY: There are very few occupations in which individual work histories are as varied as in police work. Although there is some recent reduction in the number of sources from which officers enter police service, because of both the lowering age of the average recruit and the increased emphasis upon college preparation in criminal justice programs, it is still common to find all varieties of blue-collar and lower-income white collar job histories co-mingled in a police force. A police department is usually an educational melting pot as well. Many officers have a combination of armed services college credits, trade school college credits, credits earned during police training and credits from several different educational institutions.

All too often the officer will have many more credits than are required for graduation, but no major, no program and no degree. Similarly, officers within police work who are hoping to develop an alternative livelihood, either to retire into or because they know they do not want to continue in police work, often flounder with no realistic plans for acquiring credentials or skills or opportunities that would lead to their goals. Even those officers who wish to remain within police work and who are involved in career advancement, often feel uncertainty about the best methods for promoting their own career advancement. In many agencies there is a strong tradition of talking about leaving the department for state or federal enforcement agencies, private business, a firefighter's job or whatever. To the uninitiated it frequently sounds as though two-thirds of the officers in a given department were going to resign within the next three months. This kind of career uncertainty frequently leads to bitterness, a lack of clear direction or expectations, and an unwillingness to commit oneself to long-term career development opportunities, such as education, that are only sensible within the context of long-term career goals.

POTENTIAL REMEDIES

Before discussing specific methods that might ameliorate or solve the problems identified, a few general comments are in order. The preceding section has reviewed ten areas in which police officers experience serious, and in some cases critical, personal problems. Arrayed against this litany of employee dissatisfaction, illness and anguish is a barren landscape of services not proffered, alternatives not tried and ideas not tested. There is no indication that these problems will yield only to brilliant and innovative new concepts nor that only extraordinary individuals will be able to come to grips with these issues. The need is simply for sound, humane personnel policies. Most communities and most police administrators demand far more from police officers than from workers in other occupations. It is then no more than reasonable that police departments should establish personnel policies that are as progressive and supportive as those found in many other occupations.

If police departments or individuals chose to approach this area by attempting to reduce the stress upon police officers, it must be remembered that there are a number of potent competing determinants of police stress that will not be under programmatic control. For example, any important change in departmental procedure, organization, or policy may be expected to influence both the stress upon an individual officer and his perception of that stress. Similarly, a significant change in case or statutory law, a controversial incident between police officer and citizen in the community, or a municipal election may serve to alter the incipient stress upon police officers. Because of this lack of control over some of the central determinants of stress and because of the inferences involved in relating stress to the problems described above, it appears that initial efforts should be focused upon the problems themselves. It is tempting to view such efforts as stop-gap in nature and as dealing with symptoms rather than underlying causes. However, it has already been pointed out that many of these problems may produce stress as well as

238-571 O - 77 - 10

result from stress. Successful attempts to alleviate these problems may be expected to have a number of constructive by-products, and stress reduction would seem to be one logical example of these.

It is also tempting to regard these problems as an equation soluable by proper application of selection procedures; e.g., a belief that more sophisticated selection will result in choosing individuals whose attributes are better suited to the needs and demands of the job. That expectation is simply unrealistic given the state of the art of psychological selection and personality theory. The use of psychological instruments for occupational selection remains far more art and craft than science. Personality variables, trait measurements if you will, are only very weakly related to behavior under the best of laboratory conditions. Since industrial psychologists have been notoriously unsuccessful in producing precise, reliable and valid selection criteria for insurance salesmen, business executives and stewardesses, it seems rather unlikely that the miracle will occur in police selection. For some time now police selection has been viewed as the potential solution for far too many problems, and has in fact served as an excuse for not attending to the more mundane but necessary and realistic goals of properly training and managing those men who are selected.

Listed below are a number of potential methods for reducing and preventing personal problems of police officers. This list is obviously not all-inclusive, and it implies no evaluation of existing programs. It should be regarded as a possible starting point for planning in this area.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING: Major changes in personnel procedures will be impossible without broad support at the command level. Most police administrators are inexperienced in, and unfamiliar with, personnel management skills. For most police agencies it will be important to provide administrative training centered on the problems discussed in this paper to the command staff as a whole.

2. COMPREHENSIVE LONG-TERM PERSONNEL PLANS: The natural result of the administrative training described in (1) above should be the development of short-term and long-term strategies for dealing with the personal problems of the police officer. Methods for evaluating such efforts should be included in these plans.

3. MID-MANAGEMENT TRAINING: The next logical step in many police agencies would be the provision of training to mid-management personnel. This should not preceed the development of specific short-term and long-term personnel plans in strategies. (Although it would be extremely useful to secure information and opinions from mid-management level officers, as well as line-level officers, prior to the formulation of such plans.) Ideally, the mid-management training should provide these officers with the skills and information with which to support and help implement the overall plans. Further, it is the supervisors and mid-managers in most police organizations that really determine whether patrol officers are treated as individuals or are regarded impersonally and mechanically.

4. INVOLVEMENT OF THE POLICE OFFICER ORGANIZATION: In many police departments the police officers' association rather than the administrators have forced attention to these issues. It is important to note that this is one of a considerable number of areas in which the police officer association and the police administration are natural allies and may be able to support each other's efforts in front of the city government or the community at large. If the police officer association in a given department is not already involved in programs and policies dealing with the problems of the individual officers, the administration should attempt to secure that involvement.

5. CAREER DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES: Non-promotional career development alternatives should be explored. The creation of positions involving increased status, responsibility and/or compensation may be feasible. A number of police departments have experimented with this concept, and their methods and results could be examined profitably.

6. PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES: A few police departments have convinced their city governments that individual psychological problems and family problems of the police officer are a job-related health need just as clearly as is a back injury sustained in a bar fight. These cities are providing confidential and free counselling and other psychological services, usually within the police agency. Such programs should begin with a mental health professional who is at least partially familiar with police work and police organizations and who can earn the confidence and trust of the rank and file members of the department. It is important that officers and/or their families may go for counselling without any feedback whatsoever to anyone within the police department. The importance to individual officers and to the organization of confidentiality and anonymity cannot be overemphasized. Supervisory or administrative access to such information will lead to underutilization of services, and is unethical as well. It may be useful for the department administration to know the total number of visits per week or per month that the mental health professional is providing and some sense of what kinds of problems are most frequent. Whether or not administrative referrals are permitted within such a program is a controversial issue and a clear decision should be reached and should be made known throughout the department. Similarly, there should be a clear understanding of the nature of the records kept by the mental health professional and the consequences of a subpoena to testify about an officer who has undergone counselling or treatment.

7. POLICE OFFICERS' SPOUSES: Many police academies are now experimenting with orientation programs for the wives of police recruits. (This group should shortly include husbands as well as wives.) These programs have been extremely well received in most places and are usually followed by requests for more efforts in the same direction. Police departments should consider longer-term programs to involve spouses and should attempt to develop useful activities, training or other programs for wives of experienced officers, and perhaps, teenage children. A word of caution is in order. These programs should, without exception, be voluntary. It is a thin line between providing services, opportunities or involvement for the families of police officers and interfering unnecessarily in officers' personal lives. This line must not be crossed.

8. CAREER COUNSELLING: Most moderate-sized and large police agencies could provide professional career counselling for their officers without cost, by simply coordinating counsellors from nearby educational institutions. Smaller agencies could band together regionally to organize such services, or could attempt them on an intermittant, as available, basis. It is also obvious that police departments have within their own sworn ranks a great deal of expertise about educational and career opportunities within and outside of police service. These resources could also be brought to bear without cost. For example, it is inexcusable that many police agencies continue to convey the message to young officers that an academic specialization in police science is in their own best interests when most departments prefer to provide their own training for their officers, and when the kick-out and drop-out rate from police service is very high. An ex-police officer with a four-year degree in Police Science is not the most saleable commodity on today's job market.

9. PHASED RETIREMENT PROGRAMS: Industrial experiements with this concept have been promising. Many police agencies have numbers of positions which are informally reserved for officers near retirement or for officers physically restricted to light duty. Some of these positions might be split so that an officer could work a 30-hour week for a year and then a 20-hour week for a year and then a 10-hour week for a year, preceding full retirement. The logistic problems would be considerable but not insurmountable, and the idea stated here is by no means the only manner in which such a program could be implemented.

10. OTHER PERSONNEL PRACTICES: This category includes several other possible personnel practices, most of which have been discussed at length in other forums. Police agencies might consider establishing sabbatical programs which would either voluntarily or mandatorily remove an officer from police work for some period of months every so many years. A similar and exciting notion is a wide-spread use of exchange programs between police departments. Lateral entry has been discussed a great deal but remains more a theoretical possibility than a reality. Departments might consider giving summer vacation priority to officers who have school-aged children rather than to older officers because of seniority. It would be easy and relatively inexpensive to establish retirement counselling programs. Short exchange programs with other elements of the criminal justice system would broaden perspectives as well as provide a break from the routine of patrol duty. The possibilites for programmatic attention to personal problem areas are limited only by an agency's commitment.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has reviewed some of the more common personal problems which beset police officers. It has suggested that some of these problems are of relatively high frequency in police populations and that most police agencies do little or nothing to combat these problems. The final section of this paper briefly discusses some possible remedies for various problems identified earlier.

There are three broad recommendations which are imperative.

I. Someone must do a comprehensive survey and analysis of existing programs in this area. A few departments have had good luck with alcoholism programs. Other departments have developed models for delivery of psychological services to officers. Still other agencies have experimented with programs for reducing over-aggressiveness in citizen contacts. Yet, for each of these known programs there are certainly a large number of other, unknown programs that have successful elements; and a still larger group of programs that at one time sounded reasonable to someone but have long since failed. It is essential that someone collect data which would identify the various models that have been tried in dealing with each individual problem, and the essential elements of each model. The study should include the availability and adequacy of evaluation results for every program that seems noteworthy. This kind of effort could be completed relatively quickly and would provide a blueprint for police agencies in some personnel areas, potentially promising ideas in other areas, and procedures to be avoided at all cost in still other areas. Lacking such data, most police departments will continue to plan personnel programs in a vacuum of information.

II. Police agencies should carefully assess which personal problems are frequent and serious for their own officers. This assessment should precede hard planning. Information for this kind of assessment must come from all levels and elements of the department.

III. In the light of the assessment described above police agencies should formulate short-term and long-term methods for alleviating the most serious and most frequent of their officers' personal problems.

END