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THE POLICE IN THE JAPANESE HOME ISLANDS

Japanese police supervision over the lives of the Japanese people extends from the maintenance of public order and the prevention and detection of crime to the overseeing of commerce, education, religion, morals, health, and politics. The organization that wields these broad powers is a closely centralized, national mechanism which is entirely free, both politically and financially, from municipal control. Through the police the leaders of Japan have been assured of the tractability of the Japanese population in the face of ever-increasing privation and danger. In the event of Allied occupation of the Home Islands, both the structure of the police organization and the Japanese people's habitual discipline may be great assets in the re-establishment of civil order.

Organization

There are two entirely separate police organizations in Japan, the civil police and the military police (*Kempei*). The civil police system is supervised by the Bureau of Police Affairs in the Home Ministry. The *Kempei* organization is under the administration of the Provost Marshal General in the Ministry of War. Although in the Home Islands the *Kempei* has jurisdiction primarily over military and naval personnel and installations, the organization also possesses the power to take action in civil affairs. The *Kempei* and the civil police therefore work closely together on many occasions, and their relations in the prosecution of criminals are elaborately defined by law.

Authority in the civil police system runs from the Home Ministry to the prefectural governors to the chiefs of police. The functions of the Bureau of Police Affairs in the Ministry are policy making and administrative. The actual operation of the civil police is managed by the prefectural governments in accord with the major policy decisions emanating from the Bureau. Close relations between the prefectures and the Home Ministry are assured by the fact that both the prefectural governors, who are ex-officio heads of the police within their prefectures, and the prefectural chiefs of police are appointed by the Home Minister. All appointments to local positions are made by prefectural authorities except in the case of Tokyo, which has a superintendent-general directly responsible to the Home Ministry. Not only are there no municipal police systems in Japan, but even the funds for operating the civil police come directly from the national and prefectural treasuries, not from municipal funds. The prefectural police systems, however, are administratively independent of each other, and in the event of a breakdown of national authority each could continue to operate by itself.

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Personnel

The personnel of the civil police must meet certain physical, moral, and educational requirements. After acceptance they are sent to the prefectural police training schools where, prior to the war, they received six months' training in police science, crime detection, law, fire prevention and control, and physical fitness. Upon completion of this training all members of the regular police force begin as ordinary policemen. The degree of advancement from this position is dependent largely upon the previous education of the policeman. Those with elementary school educations are advanced slowly and cannot rise above the rank of chief inspector, a position about midway in the hierarchy of the civil police. University graduates are advanced more rapidly and may rise to the rank of chief superintendent. Chiefs of police are regularly career officials in the national government, and almost never come up from the ranks.

The pay of the civil police, even according to the low standards of the Japanese civil service, is extremely poor. Although the low pay may be partially compensated by the dignity and importance of the policeman in Japan, the men attracted to the profession are generally mediocre in ability. The war has seriously reduced the number of available men, and has thereby lowered personnel standards even further. Notwithstanding the number of duties undertaken by the civil police, the size of the police forces is not disproportionate to those in the United States. The police of the Tokyo prefecture, with a population of approximately 7,000,000, numbered roughly 15,000 in 1937. The police of Metropolitan New York, with a comparable population, numbered nearly 20,000 in the same year.

Powers and Functions

Because the Japanese place a greater emphasis upon public order than upon personal freedom, the delegation of extensive powers to the police has been a logical development in Japan. The recourse of the individual from these broad powers is relatively slight. In addition to the detection and prevention of crime in the occidental sense, the civil police in Japan are charged with the maintenance of diverse controls ranging from health regulations to political supervision.

The civil police have the power to hold all criminal suspects for long periods of time without placing a specific charge. In addition to their power to detain, the police have summary jurisdiction over certain minor offenses. The police chief may sentence such an offender to detention in the police jail or may impose a fine.

The civil police are primarily concerned with the prevention of crime. Through the licensing of taxicabs, prostitution, pawn shops, and similar commercial enterprises and through their periodic inspections of all such licensed businesses, the police not only exert control over the businesses themselves but also secure valuable sources of information in maintaining order. Through their control of the Japanese system of

neighborhood associations (in which the heads of families are responsible to the heads of neighborhoods for the maintenance of order and discipline within their families, and the heads of neighborhoods are responsible to the police for the maintenance of discipline within their neighborhoods), the police are usually assured of information in advance of the crime or prompt arrest following it.

Outside the fields of the maintenance of order and the apprehension of criminals, the police concern themselves principally with the enforcement of special regulations and with political supervision. In enforcing special regulations such as economic controls, banking laws, and health laws, the police assign specialists in these various fields who work under the supervision of the ministry concerned. The political activities of the police include the supervision of social and labor movements and the detention of individuals suspected of holding subversive ideas. This latter activity is frequently described as "thought control." The police are also responsible for such political functions as the enforcement of the election laws and the censorship of printed material and public entertainments.

The methods employed by the civil police in carrying out their manifold duties include the use of modern scientific equipment and third degree investigations. Fingerprint records, centralized criminal records, and separate police telephone and telegraph systems are common throughout Japan, and lie-detectors and police cruising cars are used in Tokyo. Ordinary patrolling is done by the policemen assigned to the police boxes which are situated in each locality throughout Japan. As many as three officers may be assigned to each box. Although third degree methods are not sanctioned officially and policemen proved guilty of them are subject to disciplinary action, their use is fairly general.

Because the duties of the civil police touch upon every aspect of life in Japan, the Japanese people are in frequent contact with the police and feel their influence in innumerable ways. As representatives of governmental authority, the police hold a position of considerable social importance in the community and act as arbiters in neighborhood disputes. The respect of the population also derives from the relative freedom of the police from graft and corruption.

The war has inevitably brought about certain changes in police supervision in Japan. The more obvious of these has been a reduction in the number of available personnel, a fact which has necessitated both the curtailing of certain functions and the recruiting of women and boys for replacements. The police burden was increased when the manpower shortage made necessary the use of many criminals for labor service. Furthermore, the civil police have been assigned a considerable portion of the task of organizing home defense and have been formed into police defense units. The war has also brought about a change of emphasis in the type of crimes prosecuted. As the Japanese leaders have called upon the people for increased loyalty and spiritual

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unity, the police have paid increased attention to "thought offenses" and to offenses against the economic control laws.

The police will undoubtedly be called upon to tighten their supervision over the Japanese people as the war becomes increasingly unfavorable to Japan. Its broad range of function makes the police system well suited for such a task. Furthermore, the structure of the police organization, with its central administrative control and prefectural operational control, would enable the continuance of police supervision within the prefectures even if communications had broken down. Finally, the habitual fear and respect of the Japanese people for their police will be a strong factor in the control of disorder and panic both in the face of intensified Allied bombings and ultimate invasion of the Japanese Home Islands.

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