



Police at Gun and Rifle Practice.

New York Police Department Is on a War Footing

Nothing Has Been Left to Chance During the Last Two Years to Prepare 11,000 Policemen for Any Emergency to Come

THE Police Department of New York City is on a war footing. That is the way to put it just now, because we are all thinking of war as the next great calamity that may come to the United States. But it would be equally true to say that the Police Department is on an earthquake footing or a black plague footing or a famine or a riot footing or on a footing to handle the town devastated by fire or flood or—to come back to the war footing—to do the best thing in the case of invasion by a foreign enemy. To lump all these various footings the 11,000 policemen of New York are on their feet, they are right on their toes, for any sort of emergency that may come.

Scientists assure us that this particular part of the earth is finished, geologically, and that there can be no earthquakes here. Nevertheless, Commissioner Arthur Woods has made a study of the things the police of San Francisco were unprepared to do when the earthquake came to that city, and he has his force in readiness to do those things for the rescue of the people should it ever happen that the geologists are mistaken.

Pacifists, a much surer group than the scientists, declare that there can never be an invasion and want to know how an enemy fleet could get by that one gun at Sandy Hook, that can be fired further than any gun now mounted on any foreign war vessel. But in spite of the pacifists and the one gun a careful emergency program has been worked out by the New York Police Department, and it has the official approval of the United States War Department. Furthermore, there is an arrangement in force whereby the soldiers of the Federal Government and the police of this city will co-operate in the matter of defense.

Nothing has been left to chance in the course of the last two years in which Commissioner Woods has been perfecting his preparations. Many remote possibilities were anticipated and worked into the general scheme long before the country was startled by the severing of diplomatic relations with Germany. For one thing a war map of this city, which covers a whole wall at Police Headquarters, was made a long time ago, showing many things that it might be necessary to know in a hurry, and this map, made by the policemen, is so useful that the army has made a copy of it for its own guidance.

It shows all the ramifications of the city's vital organs, its water supply pipes, its telephone and telegraph wires, its land and water lines of communication and a thousand other things.

Nobody should attempt to write about the New York Police Department as it is organized and managed today who has a memory running back very far in the history of the city, because such a memory suggests so many contrasts between now and then that it is difficult not to waste time in comparisons. One comparison, for example, that gets right to the heart of the matter, is between the present-day group of lean and mentally and

physically wiry and alert deputies who are assisting the lean and wiry Woods, and the fat, pudgy-handed persons who were the police heads something less than a generation ago.

Woods has had the time and the opportunity plus the required qualities. He asked himself two questions: What has the city the right to expect from its police army under either normal or abnormal conditions? and, What service can the policemen be trained to give? The obvious things which everybody thinks of in connection with the needs of a city and the duties of the police, Woods cleaned up quickly as a matter of routine—the

off of supplies by siege. Detailed answers to every phase of that question are on file at Police Headquarters. Inspectors, Precinct Commanders and Sergeants all know in advance what they would do in any such emergency. Plans for emptying the town or any given section of the town are perfected. In addition to all the normal traffic lines, elevated, surface and subway, which the Police Commissioner has the right to commandeer if the lives of the people are at stake, he has on record lists of many thousands of motor trucks and other vehicles which would be at the instant disposal of the police. In addition

Of course, these same 11,000 policemen can fight, too, not only as individuals with criminals and in police precinct groups with rioters, but as a military organization armed with rifles, the use of which they all know, and grouped as battalions, regiments or brigades in the command of their own officers, who have been trained by the army in the handling of large bodies of men. The entire force can be thrown together in short order at any given point in the city, and transportation for the 4,000 men always held in reserve at the precincts is always in readiness automatically on an instant call. These reserves can be got together as easily and quickly as a precinct section can be turned out for a tour of ordinary street patrol.

The military training camp for 3,000 of his men, and the sending of a large group to the army camp at Plattsburg the year before, were the Commissioner's devices for remedying what he considered a serious lack in the education of the policeman.

The second part of the war problem for the police, which is not a remote contingency, but something very real to be coped with now (as a matter of fact, something they have been dealing with, face to face, for the last thirty months), is that of foreign espionage in this city and the plotting of destruction of property that may have a bearing on war.

In that connection the war map at headquarters, as an index of what the police know and what they are prepared to do, is a most interesting thing. It shows not only the vitals of the city, the lighting and transportation and water systems and their vulnerable points, the food and coal and oil supplies, but it indicates the storage place of every pound of dynamite and other explosives in the city. It shows where and how and by what groups of police, large or small, and under whose command these various things may be most quickly and effectively guarded against attack.

The most striking illustration of this, which was open for all to see, came on the Saturday afternoon when we severed relations with Germany. The police knew beforehand just what they would do when the diplomatic break came, carrying with it the danger of inciting some fanatic to do mischief, and they did it. As smoothly, and with as much matter of course routine as they would form police lines at a fire, the preassigned squads marched to the various bridges over the East River and to the aqueduct bridge over the Harlem, by means of which the city gets its water, and guarded them until relieved by the Naval Militia.

The map also shows the locations of the great groups of the city's foreign population, where the aliens or the naturalized foreign-born live in large numbers, where they work, where they congregate to enjoy themselves and talk things over, and where the bad spots or danger points, if there are any, in such foreign sections are to be found.

This, of course, applies to all nations.



(Photo International Film Service)

New York Police in Military Instruction Camp.

elimination of graft and the handling of vice and crime affairs.

Then, in the spirit of the times, Woods looked to what may be called preventive police work, which previously had been limited to the ancient practice of the old night watch of trying shop doors to see if they were secure against thieves.

It was then that the Commissioner began to make a thoroughgoing, scientific study of great emergencies and of the best methods of handling them. And the result of that and the work that grew out of it is that the Police Department is on the war footing already referred to and looked upon by the United States Army as a body of men fit for active co-operation with regular troops in the problems peculiar to the country's chief city and port.

So far as war is concerned the problem is in two parts. The first and the one most unlikely to occur has to do with invasion or bombardment or the cutting

to the ferryboats he has the lists of thousands of large and small craft which could at short notice be converted into a great police fleet for taking people from the city or bringing food to it.

By means of this same Police Department with its emergency plans the entire food and fuel supply of the city could be municipalized overnight and its distribution regulated by the authorities in the way to do the most good for the largest number.

Furthermore, the police can not only take that food and distribute it, but they can cook and serve it in such a manner that the people will stay well.

Three thousand of the 11,000 New York policemen have had expert training in military camp at Fort Wadsworth, on Staten Island. They were sent down there in groups of 400 men each to be trained by army officers, and each group kept in camp long enough to learn the lesson it was sent to get.

alities. It would make no difference what country this country might be at war with, the police would know all about the nationals of that particular country in this city. That suggests another thing the ideal policeman has to be. He must be part diplomat. Nothing would be more absurd or fraught with danger of serious consequences in a time like this than for the police to act on the assumption that all Germans are suspects. There are 300,000, or more, of them in this city. The occasional plots of the last two years and a half in this country and city would indicate that perhaps a

very few of these Germans have to be watched—probably not one in a thousand.

The police would fight hard to save the communication system of the city, the telephone and the telegraph, but if they lost that fight, if some unbelievable thing should happen to put the underground wire system or the exchanges out of commission, the police have an answer all written for the question as to what to do next.

Commissioner Woods has had his men trained by men of the United States Navy in flag wigwagging by the Morse code. By the use of lofty building tops,

all designated in the plans for such emergency work, the wigwaggers can relay communication between any precinct in the city and Police Headquarters. And in addition to that the department has a wireless system of its own that is rapidly nearing completion. Already there are the central station, at Headquarters, and sixty other stations.

This, in brief, is a summary of a part of the preparation of the 11,000 police for handling abnormal situations. But in the course of the short two years in which all this has been done, there has been organized a supplementary, unofficial police department. It is called

the Home League, and has a membership of 15,000 men, organized and drilled in companies throughout the city, with at least one, and in some cases several, companies to a precinct. The spirit and motive of these men are very much the same as cause lovers of the Fire Department to become buffs. They receive no pay, they have no official standing with the City Government, but they are recognized by the Police Commissioner, who organized them, as his emergency reserve, as men who would jump in and do the ordinary police work should the uniformed men be called upon for more urgent matters.

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