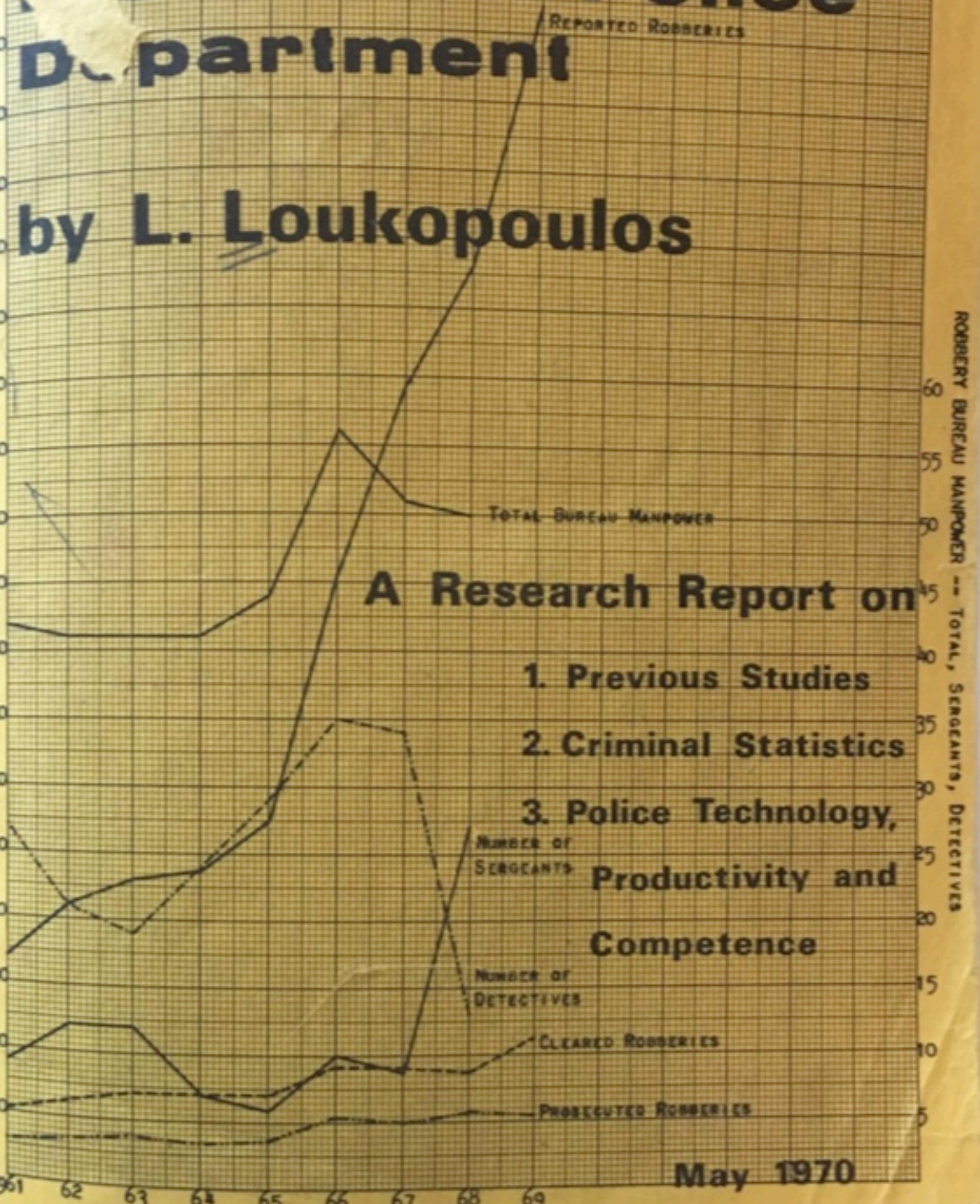


The Detroit Police Department

by L. Loukopoulos



Detroit Police Department appropriations proposed for 1970-71 total \$99.5 million as compared with \$82.1 million for 1969-70. This is an increase of 21.2% over last year and it represents an additional \$17.4 million. Increasing expenditures, however, will have little effect in curtailing crime without significant changes in the attitudes and practices of top police officials.

The police administration has consistently refused to adopt any significant recommendations for institutional and operational improvements. At least four major, expensive, and competent studies have been conducted by outside police and professional consultants in the past six years. These include studies by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Cybernetics Development Corporation, Wayne State University, Arthur D. Little and various masters' and doctoral theses. The effect of these studies upon the Department has been infinitesimal. The officers in charge of the Detroit Police Department want to give the appearance that the Department is willing to undergo change by reluctantly allowing studies to be made. However, it actually does not undergo change because only token recommendations are implemented or adopted.

In spite of large expenditures on manpower and technology, crime solving and crime prevention have been minimal. Since 1961 the Department's performance in terms of justifiable arrests, crime clearances and prosecutions has been steadily degenerating, both in terms of quality and quantity. This is especially true for the serious felony crimes. Furthermore, at least 50% of misdemeanor prosecutions are for traffic law violations instead of crimes against people or property. The police are not preventing nor prosecuting felony and misdemeanor crimes which would make Detroit safer.

This Committee has spent eight months on this research. All statistical data -- such as it is -- was obtained from Annual Reports of the Detroit Police Department. The basic findings are:

1. The precinct commander's authority and span of control have been systematically undermined and reduced. Authority has been centralized, and all decisions are made by few people. The precinct station has been reduced to a locker room and garage in an effort to cut all bonds between precinct officers and the community.

(Examples of this are the fragmented, elite, and specialized patrols such as the Tactical Mobile Unit, Precinct Support Unit, and Community Oriented Patrol which are responsible only to the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent and the Chief Inspector. Other more subtle examples are the Public Information Office and the Community Relations Bureau. The most overt example is total centralized control of all radio communications and the central dispatching of all precinct patrol vehicles.)

2. In spite of overwhelming statistical proof that the largest amount of all serious crimes occurs between 6 and 10 p.m., personnel continue to be misallocated on three equal manpower shifts. All of the top 100 command officers work the day shift thereby leaving an almost total leadership void at peak crime periods.

(This was evident from Monthly Reports published by the Department. Unfortunately, the March, 1970 issue does not contain this information because Commissioner Murphy chose to suppress it.)

3. The elite and fragmented units have been ineffective in reducing or curtailing crime. In particular the Tactical Mobile Unit, Precinct Support Unit and the scooter Community Oriented Patrol have been tactical and strategic fiascos. Their functions are ill-defined and their operations are makeshift and clandestine, totally devoid of policy guidance and procedures. The creation of these units has dissipated precinct resources and created alienation.

(For the months of November and December, 1969, and January and February, 1970, the TMU and PSU activities were as follows: 32.8% of all arrests made were later dismissed by the Department. 37.5% of the total number of arrests made by these two units were for traffic law violations. 22% of the total arrests were for misdemeanors other than traffic violations. 7.7% were for major felony crimes.)

4. Although it has spent millions on technology, the Department has failed to apply it in reducing or preventing crime. The Department's electronic computer with an annual rental in excess of \$350,000 contains useless information. The multi-million dollar "PREP" portable radio system is unreliable and wastefully redundant. Both of these items have been used as status symbols and publicity gimmicks.

(On page 57 of the Report it is noted that the following information is stored in the computer: Personnel Records, Police Vehicle Usage - number and type of police car dispatch, Equipment Inventory, Crime Statistics, Prisoner Data. This information cannot solve the various police problems such as manpower allocation, preventive patrol tactics, and crime prediction schemes. Concerning the "PREP", see the survey results in Appendix III.)

5. Even with more manpower, more experienced manpower, higher salaries and an ever-increasing array of technology, police effectiveness has been sagging over the past nine years.

(See next page)

HOMICIDE:

Clearance Rate has dropped by 20.5% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 93.4% and by 1969 it had dropped to 77.5%.

Prosecution Rate has dropped by 32.2% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 87.5% and by 1969 it had dropped to 66.2%.

The manpower of the Homicide Bureau has increased by 48.5% between 1961 and 1969. The number of detective-sergeants in this Bureau has risen by 780% from 5 in 1961 to 39 in 1969.

The average number of homicide cases cleared per man per year in the Homicide Bureau has increased by 54.3% from 3.85 in 1961 to 6.94 in 1969.

The average number of homicide cases prosecuted per man per year in the Homicide Bureau has increased by 64% from 3.61 in 1961 to 5.92 in 1969.

RAPE:

Clearance Rate has dropped by 31.9% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 49.2% and by 1969 it had dropped to 37.3%.

Prosecution Rate has increased by 43.8% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 14.6% and by 1969 it had increased to 21%.

The number of prosecutions for rape has remained constant since 1965. Since 1965 the Detroit Police Department has prosecuted only 185 rape cases per year.

ASSAULT:

Clearance Rate has dropped by 61.4% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 90.2% and by 1969 it had dropped to 56.2%.

Prosecution Rate has increased by 141% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 10.6% and by 1969 it had increased to 25.6%.

The number of prosecutions for assault has been increasing at a rate of 40 per year since 1964. Since 1964 only 25% of the total reported assaults have been prosecuted.

ROBBERY:

Clearance Rate has dropped by 134% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 30.4% and by 1969 it had dropped to 13%.

Prosecution Rate has dropped by 160% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 16.9% and by 1969 it had dropped to 6.5%.

The number of prosecutions has remained at the 1100 mark since 1966. In 1969 the DFD prosecuted exactly 556 more robberies than in 1961.

The number of clearances has never been above 2,300 per year since 1961. The average number of cleared robberies for the period 1961-1969 is 1,580 per year.

Robbery - Breaking and Entering Bureau manpower has increased by 21.4%. The number of detective-sergeants in this bureau has risen by 333% from 9 in 1961 to 39 in 1969.

The average number of robbery cases cleared per man per year in this Bureau has increased by 81% from 246 in 1961 to 443 in 1969.

The average number of robbery cases prosecuted per man per year in this Bureau has increased by 63.2% from 13.6 in 1961 to 22.2 in 1969.

BURGLARY:

Clearance Rate has dropped by 167% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 25.4% and by 1969 it had dropped to 9.5%.

Prosecution Rate has dropped by 109% between 1961 to 1969. In 1961 it was 6.9%, and by 1969 it had dropped to 3.3%.

The number of burglary cases cleared annually by the Detroit Police Department has remained the same since 1961. In 1961 they cleared 3,884 burglary cases, and in 1969 they cleared 3,924.

With the exception of 1967, the number of prosecutions for burglary has remained practically the same since 1961. In 1961 there were 1,062 prosecutions for burglary and in 1969 there were 1,364.

LARCENY:

Clearance Rate has dropped by 34.1% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 22.4% and by 1969 it had dropped to 16.7%.

Prosecution Rate has increased by 14.5% between 1961 to 1969. In 1961 it was 6.9% and by 1969 it had increased to 7.9%.

The Detroit Police Department cleared 341 more larceny cases in 1969 than it did in 1961. The average number of larceny clearances per year from 1961 to 1969 was 7,436.

The DPD prosecuted 1,426 more larceny cases in 1969 than in 1961. The average number of larceny prosecutions per year from 1961 to 1969 was 2,599.

AUTO THEFT:

Clearance Rate has dropped by 103% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 24.2% and by 1969 it had dropped to 11.9%.

Prosecution Rate has dropped by 158% between 1961 and 1969. In 1961 it was 4.9% and by 1969 it had dropped to 1.9%.

The average number of auto theft clearances per year for the period 1961 to 1969 is 2,448.

The average number of prosecutions for auto theft per year for the period 1961 to 1969 is 374.

6. The Detroit Police Department has been playing games with crime statistics to cloud issues, justify expenditures, create false fears and alienations and to hide its inadequacies.

("Changed" its crime reporting system in 1966. Reported or "paper crime" went up to create fears and provide expenditure justifications, while on the other hand, the Department admitted it was only "paper crime" and therefore their productivity wasn't as low as the statistics seem to indicate. Cases in point: 1 -- In 1964 they placed all Part II Assaults into the Part I Assault category, thus making the serious Part I category jump without any actual increase in Part I Assaults; 2 -- In 1965-66 there was a net increase of 25,292 reported serious crimes - larceny, assault, robbery, burglary, auto theft - over the previous period 1964-65. Yet, in this same period, 1965-66, the Department cleared only 1944 more of these crimes than it had in the previous period 1964-65, and it prosecuted only 926 more people for these crimes than it did in the period 1964-65.)

7. The narcotics statistics of the Detroit Police Department are misleading, self-contradictory, dubious and sloppy. Any inference or assertion based on the Department's presentation of these statistics is necessarily erroneous.

(Statements made by the Mayor and the City-County Health Commissioner on the basis of these statistics have been biased and irresponsible. The statistics submitted to the Governor's Committee on Drug Dependence and Abuse by the Department were misleading and incomplete. Today everyone is blaming narcotics for serious crime. Five years ago the same people were blaming prostitution. On page 49 of the report it is proven that there exists no correlation between "Narcotic Arrests" and serious felony crimes involving property.)