A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF SELECTED PUBLIC RELATIONS
FUNCTIONS OF THE DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

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Public Information Office. Master of Arts (Journalism),
August, 1973, 78 pp., 12 tables, bibliography, 14 titles.

The problem of this study was to determine how well the
public information office of the Dallas Police Department
performed in three public relations areas: staff consulta-
tion, employee communication, and press relations. Inter-
views were conducted with the command staff of the Dallas
Police Department and with nine mass media representatives
who had regular contact with both the police department and
the public information office. Their answers were compared
with public relations principles taken from literature in
both the general public relations and the police public
relations fields to see if the public information office was
succeeding or failing in performing its staff-consultation,
employee-communication, and press-relations functions.

Though a public information center was first set up in
the Dallas Police Department in April, 1957, it wasn't until
thirteen years later that the first professional mass media
expert was hired to supervise the office. At present five
people, four of whom have had professional media experience,
staff the office.

Answers from the interviews with the command staff
showed that, although the command staff did not have a clear
idea of a true public relations function, the public
information office still performed a wide variety of duties in regard to staff consultation and employee communication. The degree and intensity of these duties varied with the individual chiefs. The command staff's responses also indicated that they were free with the release of information about their bureau.

Answers from the mass media representatives indicated that the public information office's relations with the press were good, but that mass media representatives used the office to get information only when other sources were closed to them. Reporters first sought information from individual units within the police department. Despite this fact, mass media representatives said they found the public information office useful; they used the office either to check information picked up elsewhere or to get official statements from the chief of police. The mass media representatives also indicated they thought the public information office managed the news about the department because it was the office's job to do so. And while most of the reporters found the chief of police's press conference worthwhile, the majority did not feel a weekly briefing from the police chief was valuable.

This study concluded that the public information office was functioning successfully in the three public relations areas indicated above. Because the sample for both interviews was small and selective, however, the findings cannot
indicate the effectiveness of the public information office's efforts. Rather the study showed that the Dallas Police Department command staff expected the public information office to perform effectively regarding staff consultation and employee communication, and that the public information office had established working relationships with mass media representatives.
A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF SELECTED PUBLIC RELATIONS
FUNCTIONS OF THE DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

THESIS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Though the formal practice of public relations began appearing shortly after the turn of the century, it wasn't until recently that police departments started taking an interest in the function. Events after World War II, in part, precipitated this interest. One basis for the change, as outlined by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, was a new ordering of social conditions:

Chapters 2 and 3 of this report have shown that much of American crime, delinquency, and disorder is associated with a complex of social conditions: poverty, racial antagonism, family breakdown, or the restlessness of young people. During the last 20 years these conditions have been aggravated by such profound social changes as the technological and civil rights revolutions, and the rapid decay of inner cities to densely packed, turbulent slums and ghettoes.

It is in the cities that the conditions of life are the worst, that social tensions are the most acute, that riots occur, that crime rates are the highest, that the fear of crime and the demand for effective action against it are the strongest. It is in the cities that a large proportion of American policemen work and that a large proportion of police money is spent.¹

It was these changing social conditions that helped weaken rapport between the police and the public and helped

point up the need for better relations between the two.

Robert Winters, writing in the Texas Police Journal, described this process:

Abuses by the police—either fancied or actual—began to capture the public eye. Civil rights incidents, in which the police were cast in the role of oppressors, were rife... To a generation that had come under the influence of the doctrine of permissiveness—who had adopted the philosophy of the negation of individual responsibility—the police had now suddenly emerged as the "bad guys." Law violators became martyrs and heroes.²

To win back the public's respect, police departments turned to public relations efforts. These efforts took two directions: the establishing of community relations divisions and the setting up of public information offices. Public information responsibilities first centered around press relations, but they gradually evolved into a more general public relations function.

Some of these public relations functions have been described by Wilson, retired superintendent of the Chicago Police Department and until his death dean emeritus of the School of Criminology at the University of California at Berkeley, and McLaren, director of the Field Operations Division of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. In Police Administration they list the following³ among the duties of the police public information officer:

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³A report submitted to the President's Commission on
1. To evaluate public opinion and attitudes with respect to the policies, methods and personnel of the department.

2. To advise the chief with regard to the public relations aspects of new or revised department programs, policies, procedures, and activities.

3. To plan and carry on informational activities designed to keep the public informed on police activities.

Statement of the Problem

This study was concerned with how well the public information office of the Dallas Police Department functioned from selected public relations viewpoints; namely, staff consultation, employee communication, and press relations.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was 1) to critique the staff-consultation, employee-communication and press-relations duties of the Dallas Police Department public information office to determine how closely those duties paralleled the functions listed by Wilson and 2) to evaluate the office's practices in those three areas for successes and failures.

Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice in 1966 by California State College at Los Angeles, quoted in Leonard and More's Police Organization and Management, p. 94, lists these same duties almost verbatim. These duties also parallel those of a public relations practitioner outlined in Cutlip and Center's Effective Public Relations, p. 6; namely, "1) to ascertain and evaluate public opinion as it relates to his organization; 2) to counsel executives on ways of dealing with public opinion as it exists; and 3) to use communication to influence public opinion."

Hypotheses

This study expected to reveal that:

1. Management was unaware of the full spectrum of the public relations function and did not use the public information office fully in either (a) staff consultation or (b) employee communication.

2. While the representatives of the mass media generally felt that their relations with the public information office were good, they used the office mainly for help when the information was not available from other sources and when they needed background information.

Recent and Related Studies

A search through Journalism Abstracts, source bibliographies, and police-libraries, as well as conversations with police, police science, and political science personnel, showed that previous studies allied to police public information offices limited themselves to a discussion of police-press relations.

An early work (1954), Police-Press Relations, by John Keith Pope, was specifically written to acquaint newsmen and policemen with each other's profession. As a basis for his book, Pope sent out two questionnaires, one to mass media representatives and the other to law enforcement personnel.

John Keith Pope, Police-Press Relations (Fresno, Calif., 1954).
administrators. Pope found that most departments had specific press policies and that press-police relations were on the whole good, but that there were exceptions.

In his master's thesis at the University of California at Los Angeles, John E. Michals again sought to define police-press relations. He found by interviewing fifteen policemen and seven reporters that 1) police and reporters often failed to understand either the work or the problems of the other group and 2) each group seldom trained its members in what to expect from the other group or how to react to it. Michals concluded that education by both police and the mass media must be increased for mutual understanding.

Published material concerning police public information, such as the series by the International City Management Association (including *Municipal Police Administration* and *Municipal Public Relations*) and *Police-Community Relations*, by Howard H. Earle, merely outlines the office's responsibilities, usually in relation to the press.

**Significance**

This study departed from previous studies in that it probed reporter relations with the public information office, not reporter relations with detectives, investigators, or similar policemen. This study also probed the public

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information office's relations with police administrators regarding staff consultation and employee communication. This procedure, it was believed, better clarified strengths, weaknesses, and scopes of the police public information office.

Definitions

1. Public information office—that section of the Dallas Police Department charged with providing information to the press and with handling media contacts.

2. Public relations—"the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an organization with the public interest, and executes a program of action (and communication) to earn public understanding and acceptance."7

3. Community relations—the rapport and communication between a police department and the people and the organizations in the locality in which it operates.

4. Press relations—the rapport and communication between a police department and the representatives of the mass media.

Limitations

This study did not determine the public information office's effectiveness in influencing public opinion. Such

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a study would have been incomplete without also considering the Dallas Police Department's community relations programs, which are the department's main programs for gaining public support.

Nor did this study define the effectiveness of the public information office's internal functioning; that is, it did not answer a question like, "Did the public information office have the means for correctly evaluating public opinion?" Rather, this study was concerned with a question like, "Did management turn to public information when it wanted to know what public opinion was?"

Finally, this study did not examine a fourth responsibility given the public information office by Wilson: namely, providing "staff supervision of all police activities that may influence public support." This responsibility had not been the domain of the Dallas Police Department public information office.

Basic Assumptions

This study assumed that staff consultation, employee communication, and press relations were important functions of the Dallas Police Department public information office. It was further assumed that police reporters who regularly contacted both the police department and the public information office were more relevant to the public information

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8Wilson, op. cit., p. 220.
office's press-relations duties than those reporters with less regular contact and that top echelon management was more relevant to the public information office's staff-consultation and employee-communication functions than lower echelon managers. Finally, this study assumed that the concepts found in literature reviewed, which were used to construct the interview guides and to analyze responses, were applicable to the operations of the Dallas Police Department public information office.

Data Collection

Personal interviews with the command staff of the Dallas Police Department and with mass media representatives who had regular contact with the police department and its public information office provided the data for this study. To assist in gathering the data, two interview guides were formulated (see Appendix A and Appendix B).

In constructing the interview guides, police public relations literature was surveyed to seek out guidelines for the functioning of a police public information office. Once a group of guidelines had been gathered that pertained to staff consultation, employee communication, and press relations (see guidelines below), questions were drawn up that were designed to elicit responses that would show whether the functionings of the Dallas Police Department public information office paralleled the guidelines.
The Appendix A interview guide was used with the police command staff, which included the chief of police and those chiefs over the department's five bureaus. The Appendix B interview guide was used with nine mass media representatives, including four reporters from the two Dallas daily newspapers, two newsmen from area radio stations, and three reporters from local television stations. These mass media representatives were selected from a list of names supplied by the public information office, with the intent of picking reporters who had regular contact with both the police department and the public information office.

Data Analysis

In the management interviews, the answers to questions one through sixteen were used to test hypothesis one-a. The answers to questions seventeen through thirty-two pertained to hypothesis one-b's testing. All the answers from reporter interviews were used to test hypothesis two.

Answers that corresponded to the guidelines below meant the public information office was credited with a "success"; those answers that departed from the guidelines meant the public information office was credited with a "failure." For example, question four in the management interviews was, "What is the public information office's primary responsibility?" Management's answers that corresponded to guideline six (see below), "press relations and getting
information to the public," were marked "success." Other answers were marked "failure."

In some instances (see question sixteen in the management interview guide), an answer did not readily follow or depart from any of the guidelines below. In those cases the concepts contained in the answer were compared with the concepts contained in the public relations definition above, in the public information duties outlined by Wilson, and in the guidelines below. If the answer's concepts corresponded to those public relations concepts just mentioned, the answer was given a "success" rating. If the answer's concepts didn't correspond, the answer was marked "failure."

The majority of success or failure answers in each questionnaire was used to evaluate the public information office in the three areas of staff consultation, employee communication, and press relations. For example, in regard to hypothesis one-a, there were a possible ninety-six answers (sixteen questions multiplied by six chiefs). If forty-eight (half) or more of those ninety-six answers had been classified "failure," that would have been one indication the public information office was not being used fully in staff consultation. If forty-nine (a majority) or more of the ninety-six answers had been classified "success," it would have been one indication the public information office was fulfilling a staff-consultation role.
The use of the guidelines below as a rating device served as a reference point for exploring the functionings of the Dallas Police Department public information office. The practice of adding up the successes and failures from each questionnaire was a convenient means for describing the general nature of the responses; an in-depth description of the office's functions was provided by quoting individual respondents. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, statistical analysis was inappropriate.

In addition to the above areas, nine particular topics (see below) were also evaluated. The same system used to evaluate the general areas was also used to evaluate those particular subjects.

The guidelines used to determine the success or failure of respondents' answers were as follows:

For hypothesis one-a:

1. The first job in public relations is to determine what others think of the organization.9

2. Fact-finding and planning largely distinguish public relations from straight publicity.10

3. The chief has to use his public information officer

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as a constant means of communication between himself and the public.11

4. Public relations personnel should review department programs from a public relations viewpoint and modify them if necessary.12

5. The public information officer should participate in general staff meetings and periodically meet with division heads to discuss department programs.13

6. The main duty of the public information officer is press relations and the distribution of information outside the department.14

7. It is incumbent upon police department unit heads to give information to public information.15

For hypothesis one-b:

1. The public information officer has a responsibility to department members as well as to the public and to the chief. He can use the department's newsletter to dispel rumor and gossip.16

2. Department publications are a good means for keeping employees informed.17

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11Wilson, op. cit., p. 221.
12Ibid., p. 221. 13Ibid., p. 221. 14Ibid., p. 221.
15International Association of Chiefs of Police, A Survey of the Police Department, Dallas, Texas (Dallas, 1967), p. 141.
16Wilson, op. cit., p. 229. 17Ibid., p. 229.
3. The department bulletin serves to build an esprit de
   corps. 18

4. Bulletins are best used for official information; newsletters can best communicate information of an unoffi-
   cial nature. 19

5. A department has to have some means for keeping lower ranks informed; reading information in the morning paper is not enough. 20

6. Patrolmen must believe in and respect the department before the public will do so. 21

7. The chief keeps the good will of the men by letting them in on "the know." 22

For hypothesis two:

1. Each department needs a written press policy, which mass media representatives should know and understand. 23

2. Sound public relations practice requires a first-hand acquaintance with members of the mass media. 24

18Ibid., p. 229.


20Ibid., p. 482. 21Ibid., p. 482.


23Wilson, op. cit., p. 224; and Howard H. Earle, Police-Community Relations (Springfield, Ill., 1970), p. 84.

24Cutlip, op. cit., p. 380.
3. Public information personnel should be honest and fair with mass media representatives; they should respond quickly to inquiries, never hold back information unless it would hinder an investigation, and never ask favors.  

4. The public information officer should make frequent visits to news media offices to establish personal relationships. 

5. Press conferences should only be held for important announcements.

Besides the three general topics above, the following nine subjects were analyzed:

1. Management's ideas about public relations; 
2. The role of the public information office in specific public relations functions; 
3. Individual bureaus' openness in regards to giving information; 
4. The role of the department's publication, the Police News; 
5. Mass media representatives feelings about the usefulness of the public information office;

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26 Earle, op. cit., p. 79-80.

27 Klyman, op. cit., p. 43-4.
6. Mass media representatives' sources of information in the police department;

7. Mass media representatives' feelings about public information's distorting or managing the news;

8. The type of mass media representatives' contacts with the public information office;

9. The value of the police department's press conferences and weekly briefings.

Organization

The rest of this study is organized into four sections. Chapter Two contains a history of the Dallas Police Department public information office and its present organization and duties. Chapter Three includes an analysis of the results of the management interviews in regard to the particular topics one through four listed above. The analysis of the results of the mass media representatives interviews in regard to particular topics five through nine can be found in Chapter Four. The final chapter contains an analysis of the three general topics and summary conclusions.
CHAPTER II

THE DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

History

The Dallas Police Department's public information office had an unexpected birth. On April 2, 1957, a tornado twisted a sixteen-mile long path through southwestern and northwestern parts of the city, touching ground in six locations. Nearly two hundred people were injured, eleven were killed, and property damage was extensive. To help cope with press needs due to the tornado, a public information center at police headquarters was created. The idea of a public information office had been suggested previously; but it took the tornado to bring about its de facto establishment, according to Jerry Hill, an administrative assistant in the chief's office at the time. Hill said,

During the two years I had been in the chief's office, I had made several suggestions to set up a public information office. For one reason or another, they were always rejected. But when the chief [Carl Hansson] saw that public information's role was successful that day, he said we should go ahead and write the function into the department's training manual.¹

The public information function remained the responsibility of the administrative assistant's office. Some of the function's goals were:

¹Interview, Jerry Hill, Dallas, October 28, 1972.
To change the policeman's image as the tried and true symbol of authority so people could come to know him as a churchgoer and a taxpayer just like themselves; to portray officers as something different than ticket writers and people who put you in jail; to make the press aware of feature-type articles about the police that never got into print because no one ever called attention to them; and to educate the public in things they could do to make their homes and property safer.2

The office's duties also included writing the department's training manuals; publishing the Police News, the department's newsletter; publishing the department's annual report; and maintaining liaison with the press. Within a few months the office was also producing a weekly television show, "Police Report," aired on KRLD-TV (now KDFW-TV), Channel Four.

Through the years, the office's operations were not as effective as they might have been. One reason for the deficiency was that most persons assigned to the office had no background in public information work. From 1957 to 1970, six supervisors and more than a dozen patrolmen worked in the public information office. Only a couple had any kind of journalism training or professional experience.

Other reasons the public information office was not operating as effectively as it might have were listed in a 1967 survey conducted by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). The survey had these criticisms of the public information office:

2Interview, Jerry Hill, Dallas, October 28, 1972.
In name and function, the Public Information Section is intended to be the primary channel through which information to the news media may flow. In reality, however, the section has a great deal of difficulty obtaining sufficient information to be of any great service to the news media. Department commanders are extremely reluctant to release information to the officers of this section, and when they do, it is usually too late and in too little detail to be helpful.

The present Public Information Section performs too many unrelated functions.\(^3\)

Functions cited in the IACP report included completing surveys requiring outside research, preparing departmental memos, preparing numerous kinds of monthly reports, receiving complaints against police personnel, and interviewing police officers who had real or imagined personal or professional problems.\(^4\)

To correct problems outlined in its survey, the IACP recommended that a civilian who was experienced in public information activities be employed to supervise the public information office. He would advise the chief on public relations problems, as well as coordinate activities with the news media for the chief.

The police department decided to implement the IACP suggestions. In the spring of 1968, a public information section was set up as part of the community services division, the establishing of which had also been recommended in

\(^{3}\)International Association of Chiefs of Police, A Survey of the Police Department, Dallas, Texas (Dallas, 1967), p. 140.

\(^{4}\)Ibid., p. 140.
the IACP survey. Two years were to elapse, however, before the department found a civilian qualified to be public in-
formation supervisor. Bob Shaw wasn't hired until May 2, 1970.

Present Staff and Duties

Since Shaw started directing public information activi-
ties, the section has evolved a two-fold purpose to serve as an umbrella over its functions; namely, "To achieve the highest possible degree of cooperation with members of the news media, while endeavoring to project the best possible image of the department."\(^5\)

Shaw had a head start towards achieving that coopera-
tion when he began his job because he had worked for four years with KDFW-TV in Dallas prior to joining the depart-
ment. His duties at present consist of maintaining liaison with the local news media representatives, answering queries from out-of-town mass media representatives or from the pub-
lic about the department, and writing speeches. Shaw's more than twenty years of journalistic experience is also used to advise the command staff in regard to the public relations aspects of department programs and policies.

For the last two years Shaw has been assisted by an-
other civilian specialist, Ed Spencer. Spencer, who had six years of experience in print journalism before coming to

\(^5\)Bob Shaw, memo to Director Paul Townsend, undated.
the department, handles the overflow of work from Shaw. He also oversees the publishing of the Police News each week and writes most of the section's press releases.

Two policemen continue to work in the section. Patrolman Dave Beidelman, who has been with the section for almost four years, is the only member who does not have any background in communications media. His main responsibility is producing the department's weekly TV program, "Police Report," still aired on KDFW-TV, Channel Four. Besides hosting the show, Beidelman shoots the show's film and slides, edits the film, writes the scripts, and lines up guests to appear. He is also one of the section's two staff photographers.

The other staff photographer is Patrolman Bob Worth, who has been with the section for a year. Before coming to Dallas to be a policeman, Worth had worked for three years for KMTV, Channel Three, in Omaha, Nebraska. His responsibility is to canvass those offices in the headquarters building, seeking items for publication in the Police News. Worth also uses some of the information gained to write a weekly column in the Police News.

The final member of the public information section is John Hilbig, whose primary responsibility is the publishing of the Police News each week. He also performs reporter duties by visiting those offices away from headquarters to solicit information. Hilbig, who was a reporter for the
Big Spring Daily Herald, has been with the section for slightly more than a year.

Other duties of the section include coordinating all tours throughout the department and actually conducting those tours through the headquarters building, publishing the department's annual report, coordinating the chief's monthly press conference, teaching a class on press relations to Dallas police recruits, and speaking to various groups upon request about police work and public information. The section has recently been taken out of the community services division and been assigned to the police chief's office.
CHAPTER III

MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

The first two public relations functions of the public information office (PIO) this study examined were its staff-consultation and employee-communication roles. Data was gathered from personal interviews with the six command staff chiefs of the Dallas Police Department (see interview guide in Appendix A).

Each of the chiefs, who, to keep them anonymous, will be referred to by numbers, had been with the Dallas Police Department for fifteen years or more. Three of the chiefs had from two to five years of experience at their position, while the other three had been at their job for less than two years.

The chiefs' answers were compared to the public relations concepts and guidelines outlined in Chapter One. If their answers corresponded to the concepts and guidelines, they were marked "success"; if their answers did not correspond to the concepts and guidelines, they were marked "failure."

Table One lists the number of PIO successes and failures regarding its staff-consultation role, with little consensus being shown, except concerning the scope of
### Table I

**PUBLIC INFORMATION SUCCSSES AND FAILURES REGARDING ITS STAFF-CONSULTATION ROLE AS DETERMINED BY MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Failure</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Public relations is?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Most important part of public relations?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Who should have public relations duties?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PIO's primary responsibility is?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Reviewed operations with PIO supervisor?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Asked PIO about press reaction?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Asked PIO about public reaction?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Asked PIO to review operations?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Who to discover public opinion?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Who to influence public opinion?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. PIO review project start for public?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. PIO advise on public communications?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Public know all major happenings?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. PIO supervisor know everything?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Whose duty to give news to public?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Reveal bribe to public?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>46</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public relations as seen by the chiefs. If the answers to those first three questions about the scope of public relations, which do not directly concern PIO's duties, were not counted, there would be a greater difference between the total number of successes and failures and would indicate more support for PIO's staff-consultation role.

For only one question, concerning bribes, were all the answers successes because the chiefs indicated they would reveal a bribe to the public. Three of the questions—if a chief had asked the PIO supervisor about public reaction, who should influence public opinion, and who should
transmit news to the public—had more failure than success answers; two questions—if a chief had asked the PIO supervisor to review his bureau's operations and whether or not the PIO supervisor had advised on communications to the public—had an equal number of success and failure answers.

Regarding PIO's employee-communication role, Table Two shows more success answers (sixty-one) than failure answers (twenty-nine). Successes were exclusively recorded for four questions—if there should be a Police News, its purpose, what it should print or not print, and if a chief would reveal a bribe to employees. For two of the questions—if the

TABLE II
PUBLIC INFORMATION SUCCESSES AND FAILURES REGARDING ITS EMPLOYEE-COMMUNICATION ROLE AS DETERMINED BY MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Asked PIO about employee reaction?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Who to discover employee opinion?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Who to influence employee opinion?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. PIO review project start for employees?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. PIO advise on employee communications?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Employees know all major happenings?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Best way officially inform employees?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Best way unofficially inform employees?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Should be a Police News?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Purpose of Police News?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Police News print? not print?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Initiated Information to Police News?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. PIO given information for Police News?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Whose duty to give news to employees?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Reveal bribe to employees?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total                                                                 61     29
PIO supervisor reviewed the start of a project and if a chief believed employees should know everything going on in his bureau—an equal number of success and failure answers were recorded. There were more failure than success answers for four questions—who should discover employee opinion, who should influence employee opinion, if a chief asked PIO to review his bureau's operations, and what was the best way to inform employees of unofficial happenings.

To get a clearer picture of PIO's staff-consultation and employee-communication roles, the data were grouped into four categories. Management's ideas on public relations, PIO's role in public relations functions regarding both the public and employees, management's willingness to release information, and the role of the department's newsletter, the Police News, will each be discussed in detail below.

Management's Public Relations Concepts

If PIO were to assume a formal public relations practice in the Dallas Police Department, the practice would have to be supported and sanctioned by the command staff. This would not likely happen unless the command staff understood the nature of the public relations function. Table Three gives the number of success and failure answers regarding management's public relations concepts, with only failure answers being recorded for all three questions.
While it would be naive to expect management to give a textbook definition in response to question one (what does public relations consist of), none of the chiefs mentioned the two most important parts of public relations practice: fact-finding and planning (see guideline two under hypothesis one-a in Chapter One). Chief Six said public relations was giving the public the facts, while Chief Four said,

Public relations is an effort to get our story told, to acquaint the community with the progress and projects of the department, and to keep the community informed of the true nature and degree of criminal activity and our efforts to cope with it.

Chief Three said public relations was related to public service. "Public relations is the end result of the actual services provided and the values citizens place on those services," Chief One said. "Public relations is synonymous with public service; it's something that's done by demonstration," Chief Five said. Perhaps Chief Two came closest to a complete public relations definition when he said it was the means "by which effective communication takes place with
the public," but he didn't specify of what the means consisted.

Question two also provoked a wide variety of answers from the command staff. Chief Three said keeping the public informed was the most important part of public relations, and Chief Two said getting public understanding of police goals and objectives was most important. How the officer on the street conducted himself was the main aspect of public relations, according to Chief Six. Chief Four said,

The opportunity we have to educate and inform the public on the needs for crime prevention and the methods by which people can make their homes and businesses safer is the most important aspect of public relations. But it doesn't involve communication and feedback.

Chief Five said police response to services requested was the most important aspect of public relations, while Chief One said the main function of public relations was knowing "what is going on in the organization."

Chiefs One, Two, Three, and Five all said each employee should be charged with the public relations function; but only two, Chiefs One and Two, added that PIO also had some responsibility in that area. Chief Six also said PIO had some public relations duties, but named the chief of police as the person ultimately responsible for practicing public relations. This opinion was also echoed by Chief Four: "The public relations function should be under the direct supervision of the chief of police in order to organize and thoroughly disseminate communications."
Public Information’s Public Relations Functions

Several questions from the interviews with management attempted to determine specific public relations uses management made of PIO and specific public relations duties the chiefs expected of the office. Table Four shows that there was little consensus on management’s part concerning specific functions, with forty-nine successes and forty-one failures being recorded.

Chief Two said PIO’s primary responsibility was liaison with the press, but three other chiefs mentioned disclosing information to the public before naming press liaison.

### Table IV

PUBLIC INFORMATION SUCCESSES AND FAILURES REGARDING SPECIFIC PUBLIC RELATIONS DUTIES AS DETERMINED BY MANAGEMENT’S RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. PIO’s primary responsibility is?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Asked PIO about press reaction?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Asked PIO about public reaction?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Asked PIO to review operations?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Who to discover public opinion?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Who to influence public opinion?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. PIO review project start for public?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. PIO advise on public communications?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Whose duty to give news to public?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Asked PIO about employee reaction?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Who to discover employee opinion?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Who to influence employee opinion?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. PIO review project start for employees?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. PIO advise on employee communications?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Whose duty to give news to employees?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chief Four's answer was representative of the other two: "Public information should furnish information to all the community; and at the same time, it should establish working relationships with the local media and assist them in getting information so they can properly report police incidents." Chief Three said PIO's main duty was to find out what was happening in the department.

Questions six, seven, and seventeen all concerned whether or not the chiefs had asked PIO about reaction to their bureau. Five of the chiefs said they had asked about press reaction and employee reaction, but only two said they had discussed public reaction. Chiefs Two and Four alone said they had consulted PIO in all three cases. Chiefs Five and Three both had asked PIO about press reaction and employee reaction, but had not about public reaction. Neither Chief One nor Chief Six had asked PIO about public reaction; Chief One, however, had asked about press reaction, but not about employee reaction. Chief Six had asked about employee reaction, but not about press reaction.

Regarding the second part of question seven (if the chiefs had asked anyone else about public opinion), four of them said "no." Chief Two said he had talked with community leaders, civic club people, and people in the police department; Chief Five said he had contracted a study to be done on his bureau.
Chiefs Six and Four said they had not asked anyone else about press reaction to their bureau. Chiefs Two and Three said they had consulted reporters about press reaction, but Chiefs One and Five said they had asked the command staff. All the chiefs, however, had asked someone other than PIO about employee reaction. Most often named was the command staff, and then other people in the department.

Answers to questions nine and eighteen (who should discover public and employee opinion) also evoked varying answers from the chiefs. Chiefs Three, Five, and Six said PIO should have some responsibility to find out public opinion; but each also said the community services division in the department, with its community relations programs, had a part in discovering public opinion. Chief One named only PIO, while Chief Four mentioned only the community services division in regards to discovering public opinion. Chief Two said PIO shared that responsibility with the planning and research section in the department.

Regarding finding out employee opinion, Chief Four again said it should be the community services division; but Chief Two wasn't sure who should have that responsibility. Chief One and Chief Five both said PIO should have the duty of discovering employee opinion. Chiefs Three and Six felt that no one unit should be charged with that function. Said Chief Six, "Each supervisor should know employee opinion, and each ascending order of administration should know
something about what employees are thinking. This function can't be in one department because that unit would soon isolate itself." Chief Three said, "We shouldn't have one unit charged with that responsibility. Managers would know, if they are functioning properly, what employees' feelings are."

Despite the fact that five of the chiefs had said PIO should discover public opinion, only two—Chief Two and Chief Four—thought PIO should influence public opinion. Chief Two added, however, that individual officers have more to do with determining public opinion than does PIO. Chiefs Five and Six both claimed the whole police department should be responsible in this area; but Chief Three felt that trying to influence the public smacked of propaganda, to which he was opposed. Chief One said,

Those persons that are in any way assigned responsibility for developing new programs and implementing them should influence public opinion. Public information should help them, and PIO would have the primary responsibility for getting the word out.

Regarding who should influence employee opinion, again only two chiefs—Three and Six—mentioned PIO's being the main unit charged with this function. Chief One listed PIO at the bottom of his list, after "the administration, operational personnel at all levels, and special-project people." Chief Two said the responsibility should be shared by the chief and all the bureau commanders, and Chief Four just said all units should keep their men informed.
"Influencing employee opinion has to permeate management," was Chief Five's view.

The questions just discussed were aimed primarily at determining who the command staff thought should be responsible for the public relations function, but other questions were directed at finding out the degree to which the command staff actually used PIO. Question eight concerned the chiefs' consulting PIO about their general operations. Only three said they had talked with PIO in this area in regard to the public, and only two said they had in regard to employees. Chiefs Two, Four, and Six all said they had asked PIO's opinion about their operations regarding the public in specific instances; and they all said they had also talked with other members of the department. Chief One said he had not asked anyone to review his operations, while Chief Three also said he hadn't asked anyone because "there hasn't been any need for it." Though Chief Five hadn't asked PIO to review his operations, he said a series of task forces were overhauling his bureau's functions.

Questions eleven and twenty asked, "The last time you were planning a change in procedures or were starting a new project, did you ask the public information supervisor to review its public relations implications?" While four of the chiefs said they had talked to PIO in regard to the public, only two said they had in regard to employees.
regarding the public; but Chief Two said he had not done so in every case. Chief Six said, "When the change affects the whole bureau, then I consult with public information. When it affects just one section, I don't." Chief Four said he hadn't asked anyone at all, but Chief Five said he had discussed his bureau with the task force.

Chief Four, however, along with Chief Six, were the only two to ask PIO to review a change in their bureau in regards to employees. Chief One and Chief Two said they had only talked in this area with their staff. Chief Three hadn't talked with anyone at all, and Chief Five had the task force working in this area too.

When asked if they had asked PIO about the best way to communicate a change in their bureaus to the public and to employees, three chiefs said they had and three said they hadn't in each case. Chiefs Two and Six answered "yes" to both questions, and Chiefs One and Three answered "no" in both instances. In both cases, however, Chief One had consulted the command staff, while Chief Three had only discussed communicating the change with the command staff in regards to employees; he had talked with no one concerning the public. Chief Five had consulted the command staff, but not PIO, in regards to communicating the change to the public, though he did ask both PIO and the command staff in regards to employees. Chief Four had discussed communicating
a change to the public with PIO alone; in regards to employees, he had asked no one.

Concerning transmitting news to employees, Chiefs Four and Five joined Two and Six in saying they were responsible for getting news to employees. Chief One gave the responsibility to PIO first and then to the administration, and Chief Three said the responsibility belonged to a combination of his bureau and public information.

Management's Release of Information

It was pointed out in the guidelines in Chapter One that PIO's main duties were press relations and the distribution of information outside the department. A precondition for distributing information is that PIO first has to know about it; if management would not give PIO any information, then PIO would be prevented from performing these functions. Table Five lists the number of success and failure answers regarding management's willingness to release information. In only one instance was an equal number of success and failure answers recorded, and that question concerned employees knowing everything that was going on in the chiefs' bureau.

Five of the chiefs said they had talked with the PIO supervisor about their operations, but only four of them said the PIO supervisor should know everything that was going on in their bureau. Only Chief One said he had not
TABLE V

PUBLIC INFORMATION SUCCESSES AND FAILURES REGARDING MANAGEMENT'S RELEASING INFORMATION AS DETERMINED BY MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Reviewed operations with PIO supervisor?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Public know all major happenings?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. PIO supervisor know everything?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Reveal bribe to public?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Employees know all major happenings?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Initiated information to Police News?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. PIO given information for Police News?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Reveal bribe to employees?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>37</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

discussed his bureau with the PIO supervisor, saying, "The public information supervisor did not seek me out, nor did any of his people. He contacted me, but the contact was stimulated by a third party. The public information supervisor only acted as a referral agency." Regarding whether the PIO supervisor should know everything going on in the bureaus, Chief One said, "Yes, he should, because public information should disseminate information to all employees so they can be aware of what's happening in the department." Chief Three said he had "no objection to the public information supervisor having information, as long as he respects my wishes about timing." Chief Four said, "The public information supervisor should know everything that's going on because so many times something happens and then he needs to give information out. Also the public information
supervisor should know what not to release." Chief Five said that the "public information supervisor has to know everything; he is part of the staff and a trusted man." On the other hand, Chief Two said it wasn't necessary for the PIO supervisor to know everything because "it would be a waste of time in many cases." Chief Six echoed that opinion. He said;

There is no way the public information supervisor can have a continuing knowledge of everything in my bureau and still perform his duties because changes are occurring so fast. I don't have time to talk to him daily, and keeping on top of things requires daily contact.

Regarding whether the public and employees should know everything happening in the police department, Chiefs Four, Five, and Six said the public should know if the matter is interesting and would help the department's image. Chiefs One and Three, however, dissented. Chief One said he hadn't informed the public of one change because the intent of such changes had been distorted in the past; and Chief Three said the public shouldn't be informed of internal discipline problems. Said Chief Two, "Operational objectives and management goals should be very open to the public as a routine matter."

Chiefs One, Two, and Three said they would not inform employees of projects still in the planning stages--Chief One, because "there are administrative matters that are not the proper kind of material to give to the operational level
in great detail; and Chief Two, because "there is a time to release information. If something didn't materialize, it could do more damage than good." Said Chief Three; "There are times when you have to decide to do or not to do something, and you don't have time to communicate it to the whole organization." Chiefs Four, Five, and Six were on the positive side. "There's no reason to keep a project in the planning stages secret," said Chief Four, "as long as you make it clear that the project is in the planning stage."

Chief Five said employees should be included in the planning, and Chief Six said that "employees should be informed as much as is feasible. But secrecy is not the answer; it only breeds distrust."

Another indication of the command staff's willingness to give information to employees was whether or not they had asked for information about their bureau to be printed in the Police News. Chiefs Two, Four, Five, and Six said they had done so on several occasions, but Chiefs One and Three both said "no." Along these same lines, five of the chiefs said they had been asked by PIO to print information; and all had agreed for the information to be printed. Though Chief One said he had been approached by PIO because of a third party, he hadn't given PIO any information because it would have stirred up more controversy.

One area in which all the chiefs agreed, with only success answers being recorded, was that of revealing bribes to
the public and to employees. Chief Six's response was typical of the others. He said, "At the outset of the investigation, I would not reveal the tribe publicly. When the investigation was completed, then I would release the information."

Management and the Police News

The final area studied in management interviews was how the chiefs got information to employees and what role the chiefs thought the Police News should play. Table Six indicates that management's answers generally followed public relations concepts, with twenty-five successes being registered, compared with five failures. In three areas, only successes were recorded; and just one question had more failure than success answers.

A factor that possibly brought on a greater degree of consensus in this area than had been found in previous

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23. Best way officially inform employees?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Best way unofficially inform employees?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Should be a Police News?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Purpose of Police News?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Police News print? not print?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
discussions was that the interviewer could have been known to the respondents as having jurisdiction over the Police News. For most of the questions, however, any influence should have been minimal because there was no value judgment requested of respondents (except for question twenty-five) regarding the correctness of the Police News' operation.

Four of the chiefs said the best way to inform employees of official happenings was face-to-face communication, after which the information could be communicated in writing. Chief Two's answer was typical of this group. "It's best to inform employees of official happenings in person from the chief," he said. "Then comes the memo, though these memos may result in misunderstandings if they are not written clearly." Chief Four said a combination of the memo and the Police News was the best way for informing employees of official doings, while Chief One said it should be done through those communication techniques and methods developed by his bureau. He was referring to a communications coordinating committee, which acts as go-between management and line personnel.

Regarding informing employees of unofficial happenings, Chief Four said the Police News was the best tool. Chief One said that PIO should have responsibility for transmitting news of an unofficial nature and that the office should maintain contact with one or two men in each bureau for this purpose. Chiefs Three, Four, and Six said managers and
supervisors were responsible for getting unofficial news to employees, while Chief Two said the communications coordinating committee was the best vehicle.

All six chiefs said there should be a Police News. Chief Two said, "The Police News helps bring employees closer together and helps build an esprit de corps." Said Chief Four, "The Police News generates employee interest in the department and keeps them informed of what other employees are doing; it's a morale builder." Chief Six said that everybody liked to see his picture in the paper and to read about his unit. Though Chief One thought there should be a Police News, he said he didn't think it should be published on a regular basis because it was hard to fill the paper with items and to keep reader interest in it.

All of the chiefs said the purpose of the Police News was giving facts to employees. Chief One's and Chief Five's answers were typical. Said Chief One, "The Police News should be used as a vehicle for communicating things employees need to know; it should be used primarily as a vehicle for communicating projects, programs, and status reports." Said Chief Five, "The Police News should bring items of interest to employees and give them an opportunity to learn what's happening in the department; it's a cross-section of communication."

Regarding what the Police News should print or not print, Chief Two said that "the Police News should print
only those things about the agency and its personnel, or it will lose its appeal." Chief Four and Chief Six said the paper should not print rumors or things of no interest to the readers. Said Chief Five, "The Police News should build interest in the department so that when the paper comes out, everyone wants a copy. But it should not print personnel matters or matters of discipline." Chief Three said the Police News should not print what was in bad taste, "nor should it attack other people in the department." Chief One said, "The paper should not print little gossipy things, like who went to the water fountain with whom. Also, there is no place in the paper for negative criticisms."

Conclusion

Management's answers regarding PIO's staff-consultation and employee-communication roles revealed many differences of opinion among the chiefs, both as a group and as individuals. For example, while five of the chiefs had asked PIO about press and employee reaction to their bureau, only two had asked about public opinion. Similarly, while all six of the chiefs said the Police News' purpose was to inform employees, only two listed the paper as the best means for informing employees of unofficial happenings. The same seeming contradictions were also evident on an individual basis. Chief One throughout his interview kept emphasizing that PIO
should be disseminating information to employees, yet he had had the fewest contacts with PIO.

Perhaps one reason for the differences of opinion was that management did not have a clear understanding of the public relations function. One chief during his interview openly admitted that the idea of public relations was "fuzzy" to him. Also the role of PIO does not appear to have been defined exactly. That same chief also said that there had been recent discussions about PIO's duties, especially in regard to internal communication, and that the issues had not been definitely resolved. Perhaps this state of affairs had something to do with one of the chiefs saying PIO's main responsibility was giving out information, with three saying it was press liaison and the distribution of information, with one saying it was press liaison alone, and with one saying it was internal communication.

Another reason for the differences of opinion could be that the chiefs had not been at their jobs for a long time. As their tenures lengthen, their relationships with PIO should stabilize.

Despite all the differences, the inconsistencies, and management's lack of a clear idea of a complete public relations practice, the chiefs' answers indicated PIO did fulfill certain staff-consultation and employee-communication duties.
CHAPTER IV

PUBLIC INFORMATION'S PRESS RELATIONS

The last public relations function of the public infor-
mation office this study dealt with was PIO's press-relations
duties. To determine how PIO fared in this regard, nine
representatives of the mass media were interviewed, includ-
ing four newspaper reporters, two radio newsmen, and three
television reporters (see interview guide in Appendix B).

To maintain reporters' anonymity, they will be referred
to by letters and numbers; for example, R-five and T-nine.
The letters refer to the mass medium the reporter repre-
sents: namely, "n" is for newspaper, "r" is for radio, and
"t" is for television. Four of the reporters had been cov-
ering the Dallas Police Department from seven to twenty
years, while the other five had been assigned at the depart-
ment from one to five years. The reporters' contacting the
department varied from daily to once every two weeks.

Table Seven lists the number of PIO's successes and
failures regarding its press relations as determined by the
reporters' responses. The reporters' answers were analyzed
according to whether or not the answers showed that PIO's
functionings corresponded to the public relations concepts
and guidelines described in Chapter One. If the functions
TABLE VII
PUBLIC INFORMATION SUCCESSES AND FAILURES REGARDING ITS PRESS RELATIONS AS DETERMINED BY REPORTERS' RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Contacted whom in department?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Call PIO at any time?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PIO honest and fair?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. News sources in the department?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. PIO's news or purpose?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. PIO only news source?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. PIO respond quickly?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. PIO help at major incidents?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Information source at major incidents?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. PIO release information?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. PIO have policy on information release?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. PIO contacted reporter to do story?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Other official contacts?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Reporter acquainted with PIO?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. PIO acquaintance help reporter?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. PIO try to influence story publication?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. PIO not manage news about police?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. PIO comment on reporter's police story?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Comment on story favorable? Justified?</td>
<td>2*</td>
<td>3*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Press conference worthwhile?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Weekly briefing valuable?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Reporter need PIO?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Reporter not suggest PIO improvements?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Four answers were not counted because one reporter answered the previous question "no," and three others were unable to classify PIO's comment as "favorable" or "unfavorable."

While the interviewer was personally known to some of the reporters as working in PIO, it was felt that this
knowledge would not appreciably influence the reporters' answers. The interviewer had few official dealings with any of the reporters; and the majority of the questions concerned facts, not opinions and value judgments. In fact, those reporters that might have been tempted to a more favorable response were consistently more critical of PIO than the other reporters.

Reporters' answers indicated PIO's press relations with them had been favorable, with the overwhelming majority of the answers in the success category, 145 to 58. In three cases—news sources in the department, information sources at the scene of an incident, and personal acquaintance with PIO personnel—all nine of the reporters answered favorably. A detailed analysis of these questions will be considered below.

In five of the twenty-three questions were more failures than successes recorded. Three of these questions were about PIO's managing and releasing information, another was about the value of a weekly briefing, and the final one concerned improving PIO. Each of these questions will be investigated in more detail below.

Usefulness of Public Information

One indicator used to gauge PIO's relationship with mass media representatives was PIO's value to them. Table
Eight gives the number of successes and failures regarding PIO's usefulness to the reporters.

**TABLE VIII**

PUBLIC INFORMATION SUCCESSES AND FAILURES REGARDING ITS USEFULNESS AS DETERMINED BY REPORTERS' RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Contacted whom in department?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Call PIO at any time?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. PIO respond quickly?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. PIO help at major incidents?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Reporter acquainted with PIO?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. PIO acquaintance help reporter?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Reporter need PIO?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Reporter not suggest PIO improvements?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>53</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most direct indication of PIO's usefulness was question twenty-two, "Is it good for the department to have a public information office, or do you feel you could do better without it?" Eight of the reporters answered affirmatively—that they needed PIO—while only one reporter, N-one, said he could do without it. His reason was not any inherent malfunctions of PIO, but his longevity in covering the police department. N-one said,

Public information would help the young reporter who would be oriented to rely on the office; he would use public information to get information from the miniscule corners of the department that he himself would not know about. But I've been here long enough to have my own sources and to know what's available.

Most of those reporters who answered favorably simply said
they needed PIO. T-nine, however, said PIO was needed because in some cases, the press can get in the way of efficient law enforcement because of a lack of a middle man; and N-three added that there were some functions only a professional public relations man could handle, like speaking for the chief of police.

In answering question one, the reporters again indicated the usefulness of PIO. Seven of them mentioned contacting PIO when calling or visiting the department, while two, R-five and T-eight, did not name PIO specifically. Only one, T-seven, named PIO as his only source in contacting the department because "public information can find out things. Other people play footsie with us; they don't want to mess with the news media. Using public information saves time because we let them do the leg work." The other eight reporters all named additional sources contacted in the police department, as will be made clearer in the discussion of Table Nine below.

Seven of the reporters also indicated they felt they could call PIO at any time for help in obtaining information, though N-four and R-five said they didn't; and T-eight said he had never tried. The two reporters answering the question less positively, N-one and N-three, said they could call on PIO only occasionally. N-one said his problem was that after normal office hours, it was difficult to locate the contact man. He was referring to PIO's practice
of having the entire office staff work during days and then at night assigning one person to be on call to handle whatever might come up.

Opinions regarding PIO's response time to requests for help were almost evenly divided, although the majority thought PIO acted quickly and said they had never had any trouble in this regard. N-three, however, was more critical. "I've had to wait two or three days sometimes," he said, "when I felt that they should have had the information on hand." N-one said PIO only did a "fair" job, but that he didn't call PIO that much. T-eight found that "some people in the office are fast, and others are slow"; and N-four said that "sometimes he needed to prod them."

Regarding PIO's help at the scene of major incidents, PIO's policy is to send someone to the scene only when it feels that the mass media representatives may need help in getting information or when they might get in the way of authorities. Typical incidents are airplane hijackings and plane crashes.

Seven of the mass media representatives did feel PIO was a help in getting information at the scene of major incidents. N-two and T-seven said PIO filled them in on what had been happening when they arrived late. R-six said PIO was someone to fall back on to verify information. N-three claimed PIO helped him keep abreast of what was happening out of his eyesight, and T-eight said it was easier to get
an interview with police officers because they felt more confident in talking to him if PIO said it was okay. On the other hand, N-four said PIO was a hindrance because "there are cases when we might have to check our information with them or ask them questions, and they won't have seven tenths of the answers." N-one said he had never seen PIO personnel at the scene of a major incident.

Another indication of PIO's relationship with the mass media representatives was that all nine of the reporters felt personally acquainted with PIO personnel. But only six felt that this acquaintance helped in getting information. N-one said PIO helped in this way:

I can use the public information supervisor to get a reading on an issue. I presume he has some understanding of a situation, and so I use him as a sounding board. If I go off on the wrong interpretation of something, he can help steer me back the correct way.

Other reporters said the acquaintance helped them because they felt freer to call on PIO personnel for help and PIO felt more willing to talk to someone they knew. In contrast, N-three and N-four said their acquaintance with PIO neither helped nor hindered their getting information; and N-two said the acquaintance could work against him:

If they know you too well, they are skeptical about giving out too much information for fear of letting something slip that is confidential. If a person is not acquainted with them, they can give him the bare facts without being afraid of saying something they shouldn't.
Finally, the only area regarding PIO's usefulness that received more failures than successes was reporters' suggestions for improving PIO. The answers from those reporters who had suggestions were marked "failure" because each suggestion was something that PIO should have been doing already. Four of the reporters, N-two, R-five, R-six, and T-seven, either said they were getting good service from PIO or could think of nothing to improve it. Those reporters that wanted improvements generally indicated that they would like the office give out more news. Said T-nine, "PIO should be more thorough and less slanted about presenting news. But I also realize their job is to make the department look good." N-one said,

Whoever is public information supervisor should have more direct communication with the chief of police. If we are going to rely on the public information supervisor to be the spokesman for the chief, then he has to be on the top of things and has to be able to know what's going on.

N-three echoed N-one's thoughts:

The public information officer needs to be capable of speaking for the chief of police with a minimum of having to run check with the chief. The public information officer should keep abreast of every iota of department happenings, from top secret to mundane; he should not have to be told by the press, which has sometimes happened.

N-four and T-eight each took a different direction. N-four wanted public information to spend more time with rank-and-file policemen to keep tuned to what they were feeling, and T-eight wanted public information to act quicker.
Reporters' Sources of Information

This area of the study may cause some confusion because the reporters' answers were marked "success" if PIO was not their primary news source within the department. The justification for this procedure was that unit heads within a police department are ultimately responsible for seeing that information from their bureau gets to the press (see guideline seven under hypothesis two in Chapter One). Whether the unit head goes through PIO or not is a matter that must be determined by each department.

The Dallas Police Department's policy does not require most unit heads to consult PIO before releasing information; in fact, reporters are urged to seek information directly from the person concerned, not from PIO. The PIO supervisor stated the department's policy this way:

We encourage reporters to go to the various departments for their information; we intervene only when they are blocked in their attempts to get what information they need or when they encounter difficulties of one kind or another. It is neither our function nor our desire to become a news-gathering agency.\textsuperscript{1}

In the course of his interview, reporter N-one said that it was fruitless for PIO to try to be the only news source within the Dallas Police Department:

Any effort to use public information as the prime pipeline for either criminal or administrative news is preposterous. Unless we have direct access to the source, errors will result. Middlemen can give different versions of what happened, and we can be misled.

\textsuperscript{1}Interview, Bob Shaw, Dallas, November 3, 1972.
Table Nine, then, gives the number of successes and failures as regards the reporters' sources of information. T-seven was the only reporter to say that public information was his only source of news. The reason T-seven gave for this limitation was that he received the run-around from other people in the department, and so he found it easier to let PIO "do the leg work."

**TABLE IX**

PUBLIC INFORMATION SUCCESSES AND FAILURES REGARDING REPORTERS' SOURCES OF INFORMATION AS DETERMINED BY REPORTERS' RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. News sources in department?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. PIO only news source?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Information source at major incidents?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rest of the reporters cited various units within the department as their primary news source. Most often named was the criminal investigation division, followed by the drug abuse division. At the scene of a major incident, most reporters said they tried to get their information from the people directly involved in the incident.

Media Contacts with Public Information

Allied with the section just finished are the types of contacts PIO had with the mass media reporters. Question five—"What kind of news do you most often seek from public
information, and for what purpose do you use public information?"—was aimed at discovering what kind of contacts mass media representatives initiated with PIO. Questions twelve, thirteen, and eighteen were an effort to determine how many contacts PIO initiated. Table Ten gives the number of PIO successes and failures in its contacts with mass media representatives.

TABLE X
PUBLIC INFORMATION SUCCESSES AND FAILURES REGARDING CONTACTS WITH REPORTERS AS DETERMINED BY REPORTERS' RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. PIO's news and purpose?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. PIO contacted reporter to do story?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Other official contacts?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. PIO comment on reporter's police story?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the reporter-initiated contacts, only T-seven went to PIO to find out the details on a crime—a fact that was pointed out above as being contrary to PIO's purpose. The rest of the reporters gave a variety of reasons for contacting PIO. Said N-two, "I seek assistance from public information concerning background information and official statements from the chief of police." Said T-nine, "I use public information to check out statements by the chief, to get a response from the chief, and to get general information about the department." Said R-six, "I consult public
information when I run into a roadblock in getting news and when I need to find out whom to contact to get information. I also go through them to talk to the chief." Said N-three; "I check out information with public information and get official statements." The other four reporters echoed these reasons.

Regarding the number of PIO-initiated contacts, seven of the reporters said PIO had contacted them about doing a story since the beginning of the year. Of those seven contacts, two were about news items concerning the department and two were about feature ideas; three others were about law enforcement in general. Regarding other business contacts (question thirteen), N-four, who had not been contacted about doing a story, said he had been contacted about an article he wrote. R-five and T-nine said PIO had contacted them to pass on information, while the rest of those who had been contacted merely said they had a good relationship with PIO.

The final area of this section, that of PIO's commenting on a reporter's story, was also PIO's weakest, as it recorded three failures. Of the six successes, three reporters said PIO's comments concerned an administration story; the other three said PIO's comments concerned one of their crime stories. The nature of the comments are treated more fully in the following section.
PIC's Management of News

If PIO's release of information to the mass media is to be effective, mass media representatives have to feel that the information is true, accurate, and complete. Table Eleven indicates a wide divergence of opinions about PIO's managing the news concerning the police because there is an almost equal number of successes and failures.

TABLE XI
PUBLIC INFORMATION SUCCESSES AND FAILURES REGARDING NOT MANAGING THE NEWS AS DETERMINED BY REPORTERS' RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. PIO honest and fair?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. PIO release information?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. PIO have policy on information release?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. PIO try to influence story publication?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. PIO not manage news about police?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Comment on story favorable? Justified?</td>
<td>2*</td>
<td>3*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 26 24

*See footnote, Table Seven, p. 44.

Questions three and seventeen perhaps best indicated the diversity. Eight of the reporters felt PIO was fair and honest, yet eight also thought PIO managed the news. N-four, the only reporter to feel PIO had been dishonest, said it had not been fair in giving out information. T-seven was the only reporter to feel PIO had not managed the news.

Most of the reporters would not give a specific example of how PIO managed the news; rather they said it was
PIO's job to do it. Said N-four, "PIO manages the news because that's its job. They try to give the impression for the chief that all in the department is happiness." N-one echoed that opinion, but in different words. "Managing the news is PIO's whole concept," he said. "They make everything look pleasing to the public, but we are not informed of disciplinary actions or of complaints by the public that would require an investigation." R-five added, "PIO is paid to manage the news; they do it or they're lax in their job."

Two reporters did give an example in which they believed PIO had managed the news. T-nine cited the release of the department's Five Year Plan, which had not been made immediately available to reporters. N-three said the chief's monthly press conference was an example. "The aim of the monthly press conference is to put the chief and the department before the TV audience to make him and the department look good," N-three said. "But the chief never discusses morale problems or mismanagement."

Regarding PIO's releasing information, reporters' opinions were mostly favorable, as only two failures were reported. N-four claimed that information had been withheld about the department's Five Year Plan. "Both public information and the chief withheld information," he said. "PIO acts as the mouthpiece of the chief, but it should speak for the whole department. There is a distinction there." T-nine did not give a specific example of information being
withheld (though earlier he had cited the release of the Five Year Plan as a case when PIO had managed the news); he just said he could recall times when a "scant amount of information was given out."

An area of PIO's managing news where opinion was about equally divided—five successes and four failures—was PIO's trying to use its influence to have a story published or not published. Five of the reporters' answers were marked "success" because those reporters said PIO had not tried to influence the publishing or broadcasting of one of their stories. Fifty-five elaborated, saying, "PIO is intelligent enough to know it would be an exercise in futility. I don't believe they would try to influence me."

Four of the other reporters, though, did have specific cases in which PIO tried to influence the broadcasting of a story. N-two, who said PIO was concerned about one of his administration stories, was particularly emphatic in his dislike of the technique. He said,

Their attempt to influence me was unreasonable for the most part—because the public has the right-to-know, no matter what cloud or shadow the story throws over the police department. I don't see any reason why PIO should seek out a reporter to try to stop a story.

N-three also used the public's right-to-know as a reason that PIO's comment regarding a story about a man who had been kept in jail too long was uncalled for. He said, "Their request bordered on the unreasonable because the item was news. I understand PIO's not wanting to show the
department in a bad light, but my responsibility as a news-
man prevented my covering up the information."

T-eight and T-nine both said they complied with PIO's
request not to use a story—T-eight, because he wasn't going
to use it anyway; and T-nine, because mass media representa-
tives had already agreed not to use all of the information
regarding some black demonstrations.

Along these same lines, two of the reporters said PIO
had commented favorably on one of their stories; and so
they, of course, considered the comment justified. Three
others received unfavorable comments from PIO, and they did
not agree with PIO's verdict. N-two said, "From PIO's
standpoint, its comments might have been justified; from my
vantage point, they weren't." N-three also said that PIO
felt its comment was justified, but "my job is to cover the
news." N-four merely said that "PIO had no right to make
its comment." Regarding this question (nineteen), four an-
wers were not considered—three, because the reporters
couldn't classify PIO's comment as either favorable or un-
favorable; and one, because he said PIO hadn't commented on
any of his stories.

Finally, the last area concerned with PIO's management
of news was whether or not PIO had a policy regarding the
release of information. N-three, N-four, and T-eight said
PIO had a policy, but N-four didn't comment further. N-
three and T-eight said PIO wouldn't give out anything to
damage a case regarding criminal news; and regarding administration news, PIO only released what the chief of police authorized.

The other six reporters either didn't know or weren't sure if there was a policy. R-six admitted that the rest of the department had a policy about the release of crime information, but he didn't connect PIO to this policy. He said PIO was "more liberated" than other units in giving out information. N-one and N-two said PIO had no set policy, and that the release of information fluctuated according to the wishes of the chief of police.

Press Conference and Briefing

The final area of concern regarding media relations with PIO were the press conference and the weekly briefing. The chief of police always presided at both of these events, but PIO set the dates and times for them and advised the chief when necessary. Table Twelve gives the number of PIO successes and failures in regard to these two gatherings with mass media representatives.

Two reporters, N-one and N-four, said the press conference was not valuable to them—N-four, because his counterpart covered the event; and N-one, because it had little news value. Six of the other reporters said the main reason the conference was valuable was that it gave them a chance to talk to the chief. T-nine best expressed the
TABLE XII
PUBLIC INFORMATION SUCCESSES AND FAILURES REGARDING
THE PRESS CONFERENCE AND THE WEEKLY BRIEFING AS
DETERMINED BY REPORTERS' RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Success</th>
<th>Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. Press conference worthwhile?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Weekly briefing valuable?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

majority view: "The conferences are valuable mostly because they are with the chief, and I have the opportunity to ask questions that have been on my mind." R-five said he could always "make something out of the conferences."

Regarding the weekly briefing, a dual situation existed. The four newspaper reporters and one of the radio newsmen were having a weekly briefing at the time of the interviews, while the other four reporters were not. Of the five having the briefing, N-one, N-three, and the radio newsman said the briefing was not satisfactory. According to N-one,

Under the present arrangement, you really don't get to the grit in discussing something with the chief because it opens you up to the competition. When the briefing is held with other reporters, you can't probe because it puts the other guy onto what you know. The briefing should be on an individual basis.

N-three and the radio newsman generally had the same complaint, that not much came out of the briefings because the chief didn't comment on a lot of things. On the other hand, N-four said he liked the briefings to get background
information and to find out what would be happening in the near future. He added that with the briefing, he could always get to the chief.

Of the four reporters who didn't have the weekly briefing, two, T-seven and the other radio newsmen, said they didn't think a weekly briefing was necessary. T-eight and T-nine, however, both said they would like to be able to talk with the chief oftener than the monthly press conference.

Conclusion

In general, PIO press relations with those reporters interviewed were good. This was especially true regarding PIO's contacts with mass media representatives and concerning the sources reporters used to get their information. The reporters also gave answers that indicated PIO was useful to them.

One explanation for these results could be that both the PIO supervisor and his assistant, besides being professional communicators, worked in Dallas before joining the police department. This experience would have given them an opportunity to have already established rapport with some of their former colleagues and to have become familiar with the peculiarities of the local mass media system.

The greatest weakness in PIO's press relations was what the mass media representatives considered PIO's attempts to
manage the news. The problem is one of investigative reporting versus putting the best front forward. At this stage of development, the news-managing of PIO does not seem to pose a real threat to reporters' gathering their news. Only two reporters gave specific instances of PIO's managing the news; the rest said it was PIO's job to do so. The public's right-to-know and freedom of the press would not seem to be in real jeopardy until PIO was the only news source in the police department. At present, however, reporters are urged to get their information from sources other than PIO.

The most-mentioned change reporters sought in PIO was the release of all information, bad as well as good. This desire on the reporters' part is a logical corollary to their feelings about PIO's managing the news. From PIO's viewpoint, however, this release of bad-image information would probably be a self-defeating proposition. Also, in Chapter Three it was pointed out that this type of information was precisely what the command staff didn't think should be released. On the other hand, a selected release of unfavorable news by PIO might help reduce the information's adverse effects, both with the reporters and with the public.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Hypothesis one of this study held that the Dallas Police Department public information office would not be used to its full potential in either staff consultation or employee communication because management was unaware of a complete public relations function. The results of this study did not support that hypothesis. The results reported in Chapter Three showed that, although management was unaware of a complete public relations function, the public information office still performed most duties associated with a public relations concept.

The degree to which the public information office was involved with the command staff as regards staff consultation and employee communication depended, however, upon the individual chief. In this sense the public information office was not used to its full capacity. For while one chief had asked PIO about public opinion, another had not. In another case, a chief had asked about press opinion, but had not about employee opinion. There was, in fact, no discernible pattern in the chiefs' answers concerning either staff consultation or employee communication; none of the chiefs was consistent in his relations with PIO.
A contributing factor to this state of affairs was probably the fact that PIO's duties regarding staff consultation and employee communication were not spelled out in writing. Rules concerning a public information office's dealings with the press, such as Klyman's in *Police* magazine, are fairly common in literature about police public relations. But that is not the case concerning the public information office's relations with management; literature is vague and general. Specifically concerning the Dallas Police Department, nowhere do its general orders say PIO should pass on the public relations implications of new programs and procedures or on duties of a similar nature.

Though the interviewer was known to the command staff as working in PIO, this fact should have had minimal influence upon management's responses. Most of the questions were designed to probe for facts, not for opinions or value judgments. It was believed that questions of this nature would minimize or negate any friendly feelings management might have felt toward the interviewer.

One area that this study barely touched was the effectiveness of the internal functioning of the public information office. Management might consult PIO; but if PIO people lacked technical competence, that consultation would be in vain. There is some reason to believe that PIO personnel

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1Fred Klyman, "Optimizing the Criminal Justice Agency/News Media Relationship," *Police* XVI (January, 1972), 42.
would not score well in regard to a formal public relations practice simply because their background is in journalism, not in the broader field of public relations. Journalism is a common entry into public relations because journalists are presumed to have a detailed knowledge of the needs, functions, and workings of the mass media, which a public relations practitioner must know. On the other hand, the day-to-day activities of a journalist would not require that he become familiar with the complexity of the public relations process, which, according to Cutlip and Center, consists of researching a problem and getting feedback from those concerned, planning a program to meet the problem, executing that program, and then evaluating the results. If the frequency with which management consulted PIO can be taken as an indication of the effectiveness of PIO's internal functioning (assuming that management would consult PIO oftener the more effective the chiefs felt PIO was), then this study would indicate that PIO was not functioning totally effectively. One of the chiefs actually said he did not consult PIO every time something came up, and none of the chiefs consulted PIO in every case they were questioned about. Reporters' answers also indicated something was lacking in PIO's relationship with management when they said that PIO was not always informed by management of everything.

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One reporter said that the press was sometimes the first to tell PIO about an incident.

Along these same lines, this study did not attempt to probe PIO's effectiveness in its dealings with the public; that is, it did not determine how PIO's public relations efforts affected either employees or the public. The best means to test this aspect of PIO's functionings would be a full-scale opinion survey; but care would have to be taken to isolate PIO's efforts from the effects of the police department's community relations programs and the contacts of individual officers. Another factor that would also have to be included would be the effects of the mass media's reporting, upon which PIO almost exclusively depended to get its message to the public. The main focus of a study in this area would have to determine not only what the public or employees thought of the police department, but also how they were influenced to that opinion.

The second hypothesis of this study was that, although the mass media representatives felt that their relations with the public information office were good, they used the office mainly when the information was not available from other sources. The results of the study supported this hypothesis; the study revealed that most reporters tried to go to the original source of information and turned to public information only when they were blocked in their first efforts. One factor that definitely influenced the nature
of the results, however, was that the survey was extremely selective and limited; only those reporters were interviewed who had regular contact with both the police department and with PIO. Naturally, as two reporters indicated, because they had been assigned to the department regularly over a period of time, they tended to build up their own sources of information, which lessened their need for PIO. If a study were undertaken to determine how news from the police department reached the public, results would probably indicate that those reporters who had fewest contacts with the Dallas Police Department were those who most depended on PIO for news.

Though this study was not designed to determine which reporters had the best relations with PIO, the results showed newspaper reporters to be consistently more critical of PIO than reporters from other media. Again, the survey was limited, so an enlarged study would have to be undertaken before this result could be verified or disproven. It is natural, though, to assume newspaper reporters would be more critical of a public information office because they require more details for their stories and would tend more to probe beneath the surface and demand the whole story.

As indicated above, another area of PIO's press relations that needs more study is just how much of what PIO puts out is used by the mass media. Such a study would have to include not only PIO's press releases, but also its
formal and informal requests for stories made to reporters. The present study indicated that many reporters thought PIO presented a biased picture of the news, and it could be concluded that most reporters would look critically at PIO's story requests and news releases.

In summary, this study found that management did use the public information office in a consulting role and to communicate with employees, and that the public information office's relations with the press were good. This study also revealed that:

1. management was unaware of the complete range of public relations practice;

2. the frequency and kinds of use management made of the public information office in regards to both the public and to employees varied with the individual chief;

3. management was generally free with the release of information;

4. mass media representatives used the public information office as a backstop when other sources of information were cut off;

5. mass media representatives got most of their news from individual units in the department, particularly from the criminal investigation division and the drug abuse unit;

6. mass media representatives felt that the public information office managed the news, but they excused the office because they said that was the office's job;
7. mass media representatives used the public information office mainly to check out information, to get official statements from the chief of police, and to get background information.

8. mass media representatives generally thought that the chief's monthly press conference was valuable because it gave them a chance to talk with the chief, but reporter opinion was about equally divided as to the value or the desirability of a weekly briefing.
APPENDIX A

GUIDE FOR INTERVIEWS WITH POLICE MANAGEMENT

1. What does public relations consist of?

2. What is the most important aspect or function of public relations?

3. Who within the Dallas Police Department should be charged with the practice of the public relations function?

4. What is the public information office's primary responsibility?

5. In the past month, have you informally discussed the operations of your bureau with the public information supervisor?

6. Since the first of the year, have you asked the public information supervisor about press reaction to your bureau's operations? Have you asked anyone else?

7. Since the first of the year, have you asked the public information supervisor about public reaction to your bureau's operations? Have you asked anyone else?

8. In the past year, have you asked the public information supervisor to review existing operations within your bureau to see if they could be improved from a public relations viewpoint as regards the public? Have you asked anyone else?
9. Which unit within the Dallas Police Department should be charged with discovering public opinion?

10. Which unit should be charged with influencing public opinion?

11. The last time you were planning a change in procedures or were starting a new project, did you ask the public information supervisor to review its public relations implications as regards the public? Did you ask anyone else?

12. The last time you initiated a change in operations or started a new project, did you ask the public information supervisor the best way to communicate that fact to the public? Did you ask anyone else?

13. Do you think the public should be told of every significant happening within your bureau, even if it's purely an internal matter? Why? Are there any exceptions?

14. Do you think the public information supervisor should know everything going on in your bureau, regardless of whether publicity is sought or not? Why?

15. Who should be responsible for seeing that information about your bureau is transmitted to the public: public information or your bureau?

16. If you were to discover one of your directors taking a bribe, would you try to keep the fact secret from the public while taking appropriate action?
17. Since the first of the year, have you asked the public information supervisor about employee reaction to your bureau's operations? Have you asked anyone else?

18. Which unit within the Dallas Police Department should be charged with discovering employee opinion?

19. Which unit should be charged with influencing employee opinion?

20. The last time you were planning a change in procedures or were starting a new project, did you ask the public information supervisor to review its public relations implications as regards employees? Did you ask anyone else?

21. The last time you initiated a change in operations or started a new project, did you ask the public information supervisor the best way to communicate that fact to employees? Did you ask anyone else?

22. Do you think employees should know everything that's going on in your bureau, even if changes or projects are still in the planning stages? Why? Are there any exceptions?

23. What is the best way to inform employees about official happenings within your bureau: the newspaper, a memo, or the Police News?

24. What's the best way to inform them of unofficial happenings?

25. Do you think there should be a Police News?
26. What should be the main purpose of the Police News?

27. What should the Police News print? not print?

28. Since the first of the year, have you asked or directed a subordinate to ask the Police News to print something about your bureau?

29. Has anyone from public information approached you about printing information about your bureau in the Police News? Did you give them the information sought?

30. Who should be responsible for seeing that information about your bureau is transmitted to employees: public information or your bureau?

31. If you were to discover one of your directors taking a bribe, would you try to keep the fact secret from employees while taking appropriate action?
APPENDIX B

GUIDE FOR INTERVIEWS WITH MASS MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES

1. Whom do you contact when you call or visit the police department?

2. Can you call public information personnel at any time for help in getting information?

3. Has public information been honest and fair with you when you have sought information?

4. Where do you get most of your crime news? most of your administration news? most of your background information for your crime stories? most of your background information for your administration stories?

5. What kind of news do you most often seek from public information, or for what purpose do you use public information?

6. Is public information your only news source in the Dallas Police Department?

7. Does public information usually respond quickly to your requests for information or help?

8. Are public information personnel a help or a hindrance at the scene of major incidents in getting a story? In what ways?
9. From whom do you get most of your information at the scene of major incidents?

10. Since the first of the year, have there been times when public information withheld information when you thought it should have been given? Give a specific case.

11. Does public information have a policy regarding what information they can give you about crime news? about administration news?

12. Since the first of the year, how often has public information contacted you about doing a police story?

13. Since the first of the year, has public information contacted you in an official capacity at a time other than when you were seeking information? What was the occasion?

14. Do you feel you are personally acquainted with public information personnel?

15. Does this acquaintance (or nonacquaintance) help or hinder you in getting information? In what ways?

16. Since the first of the year, has public information tried to influence you to publish or not to publish a police story? regarding what type of news? Was the request reasonable? Why?

17. During the past year, have you felt that public information at times tried to manage the news to make the department look more favorable? In what ways?
18. Since the first of the year, has public information commented to you on any of your police stories? What type of news was involved?

19. Was the comment favorable or unfavorable? Was it justified?

20. During the past year, have press conferences called by public information been worthwhile to you? In what ways?

21. Would a weekly briefing from the chief be valuable to you? What purpose would you use the briefing for?

22. Is it good for the department to have a public information office, or do you feel you could do better without it?

23. If you could suggest one thing to improve public information, what would it be?
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