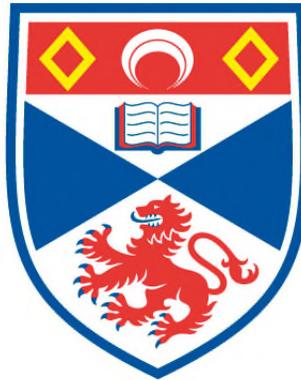


# THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CROWD POLICING

Patrick Declan Cronin

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
at the  
University of St Andrews



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University of St. Andrews

The Psychology of Crowd Policing

by

Patrick Declan Cronin

**Thesis submitted to the University of St. Andrews for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy, September 2000**



## Declarations

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## **Abstract**

Traditional psychological explanations of crowd theory have decontextualised events and obscured the fact that crowd incidents are typically inter group encounters. This has led to research being rooted in the crowd whilst ignoring the other parties who may be present - including the police - and how events develop as function of the interaction between the two. The studies reported in this thesis attempted to provide insights into the decision making of senior public order officers of the Metropolitan Police utilising a variety of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Four main studies are reported. In the first study (of police training) a grounded theory analysis revealed that the police have a fear of the crowd which is seen in a concern with provoking violence by being too harsh or permitting violence by being too lenient. The balance of harshness and leniency is informed by accountability considerations arising from internal and external sources and the phase of violence the officers perceived themselves to be in. In the second study, the relationship of accountability and phase was manipulated in a controlled experimental setting providing supportive evidence for the grounded theory model. The third was a series of pilot participant observation studies which looked at the policing of the Muslim festivals of Eid al Fitr and the Sikh festivals of Vaisakhi. These studies raised practical issues and was used in designing the fourth study which looked at the 'in vivo' processes of decision making during the biggest public order event in London of 1999. This confirmed and extended the focus on the importance of accountability concerns in senior officer decision making; firstly by showing them to be more complex than was originally thought, secondly by showing how those in different positions within the police had different accountability concerns, and thirdly by showing that such different concerns could lead to conflict between different sections of the police. The implications of this research and the foundations of future research are also discussed.

## **Chapter 1.**

### **The origins and evolution of Crowd Psychology.**

**“While all our ancient beliefs are tottering and disappearing, while the old pillars of society are collapsing one by one, the power of crowds is the only force which is threatened by nothing and whose prestige will only be magnified. The age we are about to enter will truly be the ERA OF CROWDS” (Le Bon, 1895, translated, 1947, p15, emphasis in original).**

#### **1.1 Classic psychological theories of the crowd.**

##### **1.1.1. Gustave Le Bon**

Gustave Le Bon's book, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, (1895), arrived at an opportune moment in European and especially French history (Reicher, 1987). The social and political upheavals in Republican France both inspired the crowd theorists of the day and provided an audience for their explanations of crowd psychology. This perceived threat to the social and political order was brought into focus as a result of the social and economic changes of increased urbanisation and industrialisation - as these two processes heralded the disruption of traditional modes of social and interpersonal relations (Apfelbaum & McGuire, 1986). The separation of workers and owners promoted the replacement of interpersonal relations with 'anonymous' relationships between proletariat and bourgeoisie (Marx & Engels, 1973). This physical separation produced not only an ideological partition but also a mass that was unknown and unknowable (Giner, 1976, Reddy, 1977). Le Bon had a desire to ascribe a cause to what was perceived as the threat posed to the social order represented by the growth of the socialist and syndicalist crowds and their occupation of the streets (Barrows, 1981).

The challenge to the new discipline of crowd psychology lay in accounting for two processes: who would or would not join in any particular crowd and what behaviours would or would not be supported, or, as Reicher has put more succinctly, the limits of crowd participation and action (Reicher, 1982, 1984).

The answer supplied by Le Bon to these challenges was contained in his argument: *“whoever be the individuals that compose it, however like or unlike be their mode of life, their occupations, their character, or their intelligence, the fact that they*

*have been transformed into a crowd puts them in possession of a sort of collective mind which makes them feel, think, and act in a manner quite different from that in which each individual of them would feel, think, and act were he in a state of isolation” (Le Bon 1947, p.57 emphasis added).*

In other words, by the mere fact of becoming part of a crowd, people would be ‘transformed’ in the sense of having homogeneity of thought which would supercede individual differences. The transformation and fusion of individuals into a ‘common or collective mind’ and emotion was conceptualised as being brought about by anonymity, contagion and suggestibility.

On anonymity Le Bon wrote: *“the individual forming part of a crowd acquires, solely from numerical considerations, a sentiment of invincible power which allows him to yield to instincts, which, had he been alone, he would perforce have kept under restraint. He will be less disposed to check himself, from the crowd being anonymous and in consequence irresponsible, the sentiment of responsibility which always controls individuals disappears entirely” (p.33).*

As regards contagion, Le Bon noted that it *“is a phenomenon of which it is easy to establish the presence, but which it is not easy to explain. It must be classed among those phenomena of a hypnotic order, which we shortly study. In a crowd every sentiment and act is contagious, and contagious to such a degree that an individual readily sacrifices his personal interest to the collective interest. This is an aptitude very contrary to his nature, and of which man is scarcely capable except when he makes part of a crowd” (p.33-34).*

On the effects of suggestibility he wrote: *“a third cause, and perhaps the most important, determines in the individuals of a crowd special characteristics which are quite contrary at times to those presented by the isolated individual. I allude to that suggestibility of which, moreover, the contagion mentioned above is neither more nor less than an effect” (p.34).*

It is worth pausing to emphasise the psychological change envisaged by Le Bon. He claims that anyone who happens to find themselves in a mass of people, irrespective of his or her own beliefs or characteristics, would be susceptible to becoming anonymous and ‘submerged’ in the larger organism (the crowd) and losing their sense of individual responsibility. In losing that which renders them distinctive all crowd members become psychologically alike and sovereign individual differences in

conscious behaviour disappear. The loosening of individual responsibility and the rise of atavistic impulses through the process of contagion is a consequence of the process of suggestibility which refers to the domination of the racial or collective unconscious - in which individuals regress both intellectually and culturally (Le Bon, 1947). As a consequence of this primitive collective unconscious the behaviour of crowds is pathologised as mindless, irrational and led him to the negative conclusion that they *"are only powerful for destruction"* (p.19).

It will be remembered that the new discipline of crowd psychology had to explain the limits of crowd participation and action (Reicher, 1982, 1984). For Le Bon the mere presence of people in crowds would result in the homogeneity of thought and action that was absent in people who were socially isolated. The inference was that action is uniformly 'mindless' and destructive. Le Bon then went on to describe how these actions could be controlled by the 'power' and 'prestige' of an orator's rhetoric addressing it by a process similar to hypnotic suggestion (Le Bon, 1947). This is made clear in his observation that *"an individual immersed for some length of time in a crowd in action soon finds himself - either in consequence of the magnetic influence given out by the crowd, or from some other cause of which we are ignorant - in a special state which much resembles the state of fascination in which the hypnotised individual finds himself in the hands of the hypnotiser"* (p.31).

In other words, for Le Bon, the theoretical repercussions in locating and fixing rationality in the conscious social isolate, was that he could point to the instability of all individuals regardless of intellect in the crowd. There are two important points to be made about this. First, he was able to provide ambiguous limits to the crowd phenomenon and blur the distinction between group and crowd psychology. This extrapolation can be seen in his attempts to ascribe 'group mind' to groups as diverse as juries and parliamentary assemblies. Second, in dealing with the perceived threat posed to the French Republic by the rise in the socialist and syndicalist crowds of the time he could decontextualise their experience by excluding, a priori, social and political aspects of the phenomena (Apfelbaum & McGuire, 1986).

However, Le Bon's analysis involves a glaring omission. Whilst focusing the spotlight on the emergent socialist and syndicalist crowds in France, and the psychological transformation of their members, he says nothing about the role of the police or the other agents of social control.

The social and political disruption which provided the antecedent conditions for the birth of crowd psychology were to intensify over the next decades (Geary, 1981). In these circumstances, the research into crowd psychology was to grow and Le Bon's concepts were to play a fundamental part in shaping this process. That is not to say that everyone agreed with him. Perhaps his biggest challenge came in the form of a theoretical attack, which disputed his notion of a collective consciousness, and replaced it with an explanation fixed in the individual pathological personalities of the people composing the crowd (Allport, F, 1924). These positions may be regarded as being "*diametrically opposed to each other*" (Reicher, 1984, p.2). In other words, for Le Bon, individuality is overwhelmed or extinguished in a crowd, while for Allport individuality is accentuated.

The polarisation between 'group mind' and 'individualistic' explanations of crowd or collective behaviour stimulated a polemical debate between the two sides. The first is that which is exemplified in the writings of Le Bon and the 'group mind' crowd theorists. The second exemplified by the counter arguments of Allport and the 'individualistic' challengers. Such a simple classification cannot accommodate all the research into crowd psychology. Two examples in particular stand out. The first corresponds to the work of Turner and Killian (1972), who provide a clear break with the notion of the homogeneity of crowd action, by stressing the heterogeneity of action structured by the emergence of social norms. The second represents a more recent attempt to contextualise the social, normative and intergroup nature of the crowd experience within the framework of social identity and self-categorisation theory (Reicher, 1982, 1984, 1985, 1987, 1996, 1997). Their relative positions will be examined after analysing in more detail the challenge provided by Allportian approaches to crowd psychology to the position of the 'group mind' theorists exemplified by Le Bon.

### 1.1.2. Floyd Allport

Allport's counterblast to the 'group mind' tradition focused on amplifying the 'group fallacy' he associated with it. He suggested that the notion of a metaphysical 'crowd consciousness', separate from the consciousness of individuals, was ludicrous and meaningless, or as he himself noted a mere 'babble of tongues' (Allport, 1933). In other words, Allport specifically rejected the notion that people in the crowd suffer a loss of personal consciousness which is replaced by the rise of a common or collective consciousness. Instead he saw the common emotion proposed by Le Bon to be passed to others in the process of contagion and suggestibility to be but the effects of arousal due to the presence of others upon individual response tendencies (Allport, 1924).

The aims of his own 1924 text were to destroy the worst excesses of the 'group mind' position and are stated clearly at the beginning of his book. He wrote: *"the standpoint of this book may be concisely stated as follows. There is no psychology of groups, which is not essentially, and entirely a psychology of individuals. Social psychology must not be placed in contradistinction to the psychology of the individual; it is a part of the psychology of the individual, whose behaviour it studies in relation to that sector of his environment comprised by his fellows..... Within his organism are provided all the mechanisms by which social behaviour is explained"* (1924, p.4, emphasis in original).

Allport's own notion of individuality was based on a social instinct approach. In common with other behaviourists, he saw individuals differing in character traits, due to different conditioning profiles. However, for Allport, such individual differences, are ultimately dependent upon six basic, 'pre-potent', reflexes, which are present in all neonates. These are starting and withdrawing, rejecting, struggling, hunger reactions, sensitive zone reactions and, finally, sex reactions (Allport, F, 1924).

In accounting for behaviour in collectivities, Allport conceived that this was simply the aggregation of the individuals involved. He writes: *"collective consciousness and behaviour are simply the aggregation of those states and reactions of individuals which, owing to similarities of constitution, training and common stimulations, are possessed of a similar character"* (p.6).

However, Allport did propose a difference between individual and collective behaviour, which is a result of heightened emotional excitement, and which results

from the mutual inter-stimulation of crowd members . This process, which he labelled 'social facilitation', was conceived to work in the following way. First, when a large number of people are packed tightly into a small physical space, those people who initially stimulated their neighbours observe an intensified response in others. Second, this heightened response is reflected back to the 'initiators' who are again restimulated to even greater heights, "*by a kind of circular 'reverberation' until an unprecedented violence of response is developed*" (p.301). The consequence being that the strength of excitement is a geometric function of the number of individuals present .

It should be stressed that such excitement serves to alter only the degree, not the kind of response, in Allport's own words "*nothing new or different was added by the crowd situation except an intensification of a feeling already present, and the possibility of concerted action* " (p.295).

It is worth pausing to think about the significance of Allport's observation. He was proposing that, it was not as Le Bon had conceived, a 'crowd consciousness', which had stormed the Bastille, but rather the individual citizen whose 'pre potent' responses had been liberated. This led Allport to conclude that "*the individual behaves as he would alone, only more so*" (Allport, 1924, p.295). This quotation is often all Allport is remembered for today and is frequently cited by people following in the Allportian tradition. It is however crucial to draw a distinction between how Allport has been represented by those following in this tradition and what he actually said happened to people in the crowd. These will be discussed in turn.

For many, 'the individual behaving in the crowd', was taken as indicating that as a result of arousal in the crowd, specific response tendencies of individuals become more clearly defined. As a consequence, the homogeneity of crowd action must be put down to the fact that they are composed of similar sorts of people. Therefore, in accounting for crowd behaviour, which is mindless or violent, you need to look for people who possess these attributes. However, it has proved notoriously difficult in uncovering these common psychological attributes of crowd members. For example, a comprehensive review of over 288 crowd incidents in America failed to reveal any aspect of crowd participation being linked to personality characteristics of crowd members (Mc Phail, 1991).

Allport's own account of crowd action is rather different. It will be remembered that he conceptualised a person's behaviour as a set of specific response tendencies

built upon six fundamental 'prepotent' reflexes. To recall, they are: starting and withdrawing, rejecting, struggling, hunger reactions, sensitive zone reactions and, finally, sex reactions. Therefore, when he talks about the crowd revealing the nature of the individual, he is talking, literally about a common human nature. Put another way, in applying the criteria of the limits of crowd participation and action, Allport was explicitly locating these within the individual.

To be more specific, Allport saw crowd behaviour as based upon the 'struggling' reflex, which occurs when another of the basic drives, sex, is thwarted. He writes: *"it is always a struggle of some sort against limitation, oppression, and opposition to the free satisfaction of original or derived drives"* (p.294). On most occasions the desire to remove anything which conflicts with such 'original or derived drives' will be constrained by learnt responses. For example, people learn that is wrong to steal and that they would be punished if they did so, thus the 'struggle response' is socialised.

For Allport, the effect of the crowd was as follows. First, the socialised inhibition to action, which kept behaviours in check in individuals, would be greatly attenuated in the crowd. Second, due to the interstimulation of crowd members the focus of individual attention would narrow due to the presence of others in the immediate vicinity. It will be recalled that the strength of this interstimulation, was he thought, driven by the excitement spiralling up by 'circular reverberation' and was a geometric function of the number of individuals present. Lastly, once the actions of crowd members are seen to break through the socialised inhibition of others it would be replaced by an 'egoistic (or unsocialised) drive' and led Allport to prophesise that the urge *"to kill or destroy now spends itself in unimpeded fury"* (p.312).

In sum, Allport saw human behaviour to be based on underlying biological instincts, which are normally socialised. However, in the crowd this learnt edifice breaks down and the socialised inhibition to action is replaced by unsocialised atavistic behaviour.

In common with other theorists already reviewed, Allport used examples of actual crowd events in support of his claims. However, he substituted the Revolutionary crowds of France for industrial conflict between mine owners and miners in the Southern United States of America, at Williamson County Illinois, in the early 1920's (Reicher, in preparation).

Allport gives a graphic account of what actions a crowd will undertake by underlying the precipitating blocking of the food and family pre potent tendencies and the resultant 'social facilitation' of the strikers leading to the brutal murder of nineteen of the 'strikebreaking' or 'scab' workers. He writes: *"in a comparatively recent strike of coal miners in a Middle-Western state a mob of armed strikers raided the company's property and seized forty of fifty imported, non-union workmen. The intention was to force them to march ahead of their column exposing them to ridicule and abuse through the streets of the mining settlement. Before they had gone very far, however, the shouts of rage from the strikers became so violent that those marching at the head advised the 'scabs' to fly for their lives. This they did, taking to the fields and woods on either side of the road. One of the strikers fired a shot, and immediately the column broke, pursuing the fugitives in all directions and shooting them down without mercy"* (p.310).

Let us pause and consider Allport's example. The strike breaking non-union workers were threatening the strikers 'prepotent' demands for food, sex and love interests in the family. The desire to crush them pre-existed the crowd, and was inhibited. However, the first gunshot signalled social approval for doing so and hence the massacre occurred. Put another way, Allport was predicting that given a sufficiently powerful stimulus to release the 'pre potent tendencies', a crowd would go as far as murder, and he characterised the incident at Williamson County as a typical incident in illustrating the murderous potential of crowds in general.

The historian Brecher (1972) provides a more detailed analysis of the Williamson County incident. His findings reveal that this incident came about after a long and protracted dispute between the mine owners and striking miners. The years between 1919 and 1922 saw almost continuous conflict within the American coalfields. This conflict had involved mine owners using a variety of defence forces, including private individuals, armed police and Federal troops. Similarly, striking miners had armed themselves to deal with the threat posed by such armed forces. The ferocity of the resulting violence can be exemplified in an incident in 1921 when an open battle raged between several thousand troops who used machine guns and aircraft to quell the miners (Brecher, 1972).

Against this background of general unrest a national strike was called by the United Mine Workers in 1922. Some weeks later the Southern Illinois Coal Company

reopened the mines in Williamson County and employed strikebreakers from outside the state who were under the protection of armed guards. Attempts by the striking miners to have a dialogue with the 'strikebreakers' resulted in machine guns being fired and two strikers killed. Some time later, a striker, standing half a mile away, was shot and killed. In response over a thousand striking miners converged on Williamson County with arms and attempted to march on the mine. They were initially met by resistance from the mine guards using machine guns, but they surrendered, as the mine was about to be overrun. At the mine, the mine superintendent was executed, but the guards and 'strikebreakers' were led back toward the town. A short distance from the town the armed strikers were met by a crowd who had not been involved in the conflict. As they did so, they instructed the 'prisoners' to run and began to shoot, killing 19 of them (Brecher, 1972).

The evidence from Brecher shows that it is not the typical crowd incident Allport would have us believe. More precisely, it arose after the culmination of a long and protracted dispute in which the striking miners had been the subject of violence from the mineowners and 'strikebreakers' which had resulted in the deaths of striking miners. As such the incident can only be understood in relation to the ideological definitions of the striking miners, which provided the legitimacy of their actions, in the form of retaliation for the previous behaviour of the 'strikebreakers'. Thus, rather than Allport's explanation in terms of the 'prepotent' tendencies of the striking miners being released and 'reverberating' into murder, this incident can only be understood by taking account of the socially constructed nature of their actions, which evolved as the conflict between ingroup (striking miners) and outgroup ('strikebreakers') developed over time (Reicher, 1996, 1997).

### 1.1.3. Summary group mind and individualistic approaches

In summary, the 'group mind' and 'individualistic' approaches to crowd behaviour have argued that one only needs to look at the crowd in and of itself to explain collective behaviour. To be more specific, it will be remembered from the introduction, that for Le Bon individuality is lost in the crowd, whilst for followers in the Allportian tradition, individuality is accentuated. Although, as I have argued, such followers have misrepresented the complexity of Allport's crowd psychology, as they took Allport's general group psychology and presented it as his crowd psychology, which it will be recalled is different to what he says.

To recap, Allport actually said that individuals behaviour is shaped by learnt responses. In groups individuals would respond in terms of their idiosyncratic tendencies which would be heightened. In the crowd so much energy would be in the system that the whole edifice would break down, exposing the underlying individual unsocialised reflexes.

Nonetheless, Allport is more important for the 'individualistic' tradition he provoked than for what he himself said. Thus both the Le Bonian and the Allportian tradition share a key underlying assumption, namely that individuality is the sole basis of behavioural control and that, while social conditions may affect the way in which individuality operates, they do not constitute our sense of who and what we are. That is, there is no social basis of behavioural control.

The legacy resulting from the identity dichotomy which has arisen between the traditions of 'individualism' and 'group mind' has had two important consequences. First, crowds have been removed from their social and ideological contexts (Apfelbaum & McGuire, 1986, Graumann & Moscovici, 1986; Reddy, 1977). Second, these theoretical perspectives have encouraged the belief that all crowds are inherently, or if not, potentially dangerous (Stott & Reicher, 1998). Efforts to resocialise and depathologise the crowd experience can be identified in the work of Turner and Killian (1972) and Reicher (1982, 1984, 1987, 1996 & 1997), who provide a distinct break with the categorisation system of 'group mind' and 'individualistic' approaches of crowd psychology. These theoretical positions will be discussed in turn overleaf.

## **1.2 Normative theories of crowd action**

### **1.2.1. Emergent Norm Theory: Turner and Killian.**

Turner and Killian (1972 & 1987) need to be considered for two reasons as differing from previous theorists. First, they develop the insight of Robert Park who saw crowds in relation to the general question of the social order (McPhail, 1991). Second, they reject the proposal of all the other theorists previously reviewed, that crowds produce homogeneity of thought and action (McPhail, 1991). Instead they argued that the crowd could only be understood in relation to the heterogeneity of such thought and action. The impact of these theoretical insights will be discussed in turn below.

In order to contextualise the social insights of Turner and Killian's model, it is necessary to take a quick detour to briefly outline the work of Robert Park. The theoretical debt owed to Park is acknowledged by Turner & Killian in the preface to their influential 'Collective Behaviour'. They write: "*the ideas in this book reflect most directly the tradition established by Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess and subsequently extended by Herbert Blumer*" (Turner & Killian, 1972, p. x.). Park was interested generally in the way that the social structure comes to be broken down reformed and changed (McPhail, 1991). Rather than seeing crowd actions as asocial and destructive – as Le Bon had – Park sees them as a 'social impulse' and as the well from which new forms of social institution will spring (McPhail, 1991).

The development of a 'social impulse' - a prerequisite for crowd action - arises as a consequence of the development of a new social interest which cannot be expressed in terms of existing channels of communication in the social structure. In the crowd, these impulses are constructed in an initial 'milling' period through what Park labelled the 'circular reaction' (McPhail, 1991). Put another way, Park suggested that far from being the desocialised and pathologised entities of previous theorists, crowds create and change the nature of their social world.

The insights provided by Park provided Turner and Killian with a platform to merge "*symbolic interactionism with psychological research on the formation of group norms*" (Reicher, in preparation). Essentially, Turner and Killian reject the notion that crowd action is pathological, rather they see it as normative, albeit that these norms arise in collective situations. Or, put slightly differently, Turner and Killian propose that crowd behaviour is structured by the emergence of social norms, hence

‘emergent norm theory’.

For Turner & Killian, crowd or collective behaviour often takes place in the context of uncertainty so that “*redefining the situation, making sense of confusion, is a central activity*” (1987, p.26). In order to make sense of that confusion they propose that an initial period of 'milling' in the crowd takes place. In this phase, prior to crowd action, people engage in both physical and verbal milling, which involves communicating with others and asking questions about the situation. Turner & Killian propose that while this phase is going on that particular individuals or ‘keynoters’ are more prominent than others in influencing action. The actions of these individuals provides a method of replacing individual ambivalence about actions with certainty expressed through the 'keynoters' activities.

In other words, emergent norm theory “*restores the link between the self understandings of the subject and actions in the crowd*” (Reicher, in preparation). In doing so it restores the sociality of such understanding so conspicuously ignored by other theorists previously reviewed. However, there remains a problem. It explains this sociality in relation to the micro social actions of individual crowd members. This decontextualises the relationships between individual crowd members and wider or macro aspects of sociality (Reicher, in preparation). Efforts to recontextualise this relationship, whilst at the same time explaining how norms are constrained in the crowd, have been attempted within the theoretical framework of Self-Categorisation Theory (SCT)/Social Identity Theory (SIT).

### 1.2.2. Self-Categorisation Theory (SCT)/Social Identity Theory (SIT)

The main argument of Self Categorisation Theory (SCT), is that identity cannot be conceptualised in single terms, but rather as a complex construction (Reicher, 1984, 1987; Stott & Reicher, 1998, Tajfel, 1978, Turner, 1982; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987). More specifically, self-categorisations exist at different levels of abstraction, which relate to the nature of the self. First, identity can operate at the individual level, where people define themselves on an interpersonal level of comparison with others. Second, individuals belong to various social groups, and therefore define themselves in relation to other groups. Third, at the 'superordinate' level, individuals can define themselves in terms of humanity as a whole. At different times identities will be salient at different levels. Thus it can be seen that individuals do not possess a single identity, but rather define themselves at several levels, the salience of which differ according to the social context.

Group behaviour depends upon categorisations and self-categorisations deployed by individuals. The mechanism by which this occurs involves a process in which a social identification or a cognitive act of self stereotyping occurs, as individuals define themselves as belonging to specific social categories. In defining oneself as a member of a specific social category, individuals come to act in terms of the norms and values associated with the category (Reicher, 1982, 1984, 1987, Tajfel, 1978, Turner, 1982). Or, to put it slightly differently, in defining oneself as a member of a social category, individuals accept the norms and values associated with the category membership and this is used to guide behaviour.

Within this theoretical setting the challenge to the traditional notion of identity can be reconceptualised as follows. Instead of the shift between identity accentuation (Allport) and submergence (Le Bon), individuals shift from individual to social identity, and at the same time behavioural control moves from the individual to a shared understanding of cultural norms defined in terms of the relevant social identity (Hogg & Abrams, 1988, Reicher, 1984, 1987; Tajfel, 1978, Turner, 1982; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987).

As crowds exist in ambiguous situations and often have no leaders, the obvious question is how do the norms of the crowd occur? The answer is found in the 'inductive process' where people infer norms from the actions of others believed to be prototypical members of the category (Turner, 1982). However, the process of 'induction' is

constrained by a process of 'referent informational influence' (Turner, 1982). This was conceptualised as working in three ways. First, individuals categorise themselves as members of a social category. Second, they learn the stereotypical norms associated with that category. Lastly, they assimilate these ingroup norms and regulate behaviour with reference to the salience of the category membership (Turner, 1982).

Put another way, people might infer norms from the acts of others, but only to the extent that these can be seen as reflecting the larger social identity within the specific social context. In this way the micro - social processes of norm creation is constrained by larger scale factors. Using a social identity approach Reicher (1982, 1984) has developed a model of how norms are created and how they guide behaviour in the crowd.

The model developed by Reicher arose after he investigated the circumstances of the St Paul's riot in Bristol in 1980 (Reicher, 1982, 1984). The specific details of the riot are not important but suffice to note the damage caused between 3.30pm and 11.00pm resulted in sixty police officers injured and twenty-one police vehicles destroyed (Reicher, 1982, 1984). However, even if there was violence, the violence was not indiscriminate or without limits. This is made clear in Reicher's observation that *"as police cars were burnt and officers stoned, cars flowed through the area, people walked home, families did their shopping, neighbours watched and chatted about the events"* (1984, p.10).

The St Paul's analysis also provided evidence that crowd actions 'consonant' with the social identity of the crowd generalised, whilst crowd actions 'dissonant' with the 'St Pauls' conception of 'community' did not (Reicher, 1982, 1984). In the words of Reicher: *"the attributes of this concept are clearly reflected in the crowd's behaviour. The geographical basis is translated into the decision of crowd members not to move beyond St Pauls. The opposition to the police is seen in the selection of police officers and vehicles as the sole targets of collective violence. The notion of control is reflected in the way in which participants took over the area once the police had left directing the traffic through...and advising not to go down certain roads and checking obvious strangers in the area"* (Reicher, 1984, p.18).

It will be recalled from the section on Turner and Killian, that their formulation, whilst concentrating on the norm creation process, was not able to deal with how those norms would be limited. Reicher's formulation is different. More specifically, the norm

creation under the framework of SCT/SIT also allows the limits of these norms to be explained. Put another way instead of the destructive and uncontrolled nature of the crowd's targets articulated by Le Bon, the insights of a crowd psychology based on SCT/SIT provide a basis for defining the limits of crowd participation and action, by predicting behaviour generalising in terms of the shared conception of the St Paul's identity. In this particular case the geographical limits of St Pauls marked the boundaries of this crowd's action which was directed at selected targets in this area (Reicher, 1982, 1984).

This opens up an important topic, namely the role of the outgroup in crowd action. The St Paul's study infers the role of the outgroup by highlighting the selection of buildings and targets for the crowd. However, we need to understand the intergroup dynamics within the crowd and to explain how social identity can change through crowd action. These points have been addressed by a further study, which has elaborated the social identity model of the crowd (ESIM), and which will be discussed below, after outlining the methodological limitations of the St Paul's study.

There are three main weaknesses to the St Pauls study. First, whilst providing an in depth insight of crowd members' perceptions of the riot, this analysis was conducted after the event, and thus provided a post hoc context for residents to allocate blame and justify individual actions (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Second, these limitations were further compounded by an inability - due to access refusals by the police - to obtain their versions of the events. Thirdly, the study shows evidence of change in the St Pauls identity as a result of the crowd event. However, it does not explain that change and indeed if one argues simply that collective behaviour reflects social identity it is hard to see how collective behaviour can produce new social identities. It is to address this issue that an elaborated social identity model (ESIM) of the crowd was developed.

### 1.2.3. Elaborated Social Identity Model of the crowd (ESIM)

More recent studies have sought to understand how change happens and crucially how people act collectively relative to their social position and how their social position changes relative to others. In other words, how is it you start in one set of social relations and find yourself in a new set? The answer is to be found in the intergroup nature of the crowd and other groups present during crowd events particularly through crowd - police interactions (Drury & Reicher, in press, Reicher, 1982, 1984, & 1996, Stott & Reicher, 1998). Analysis of action therefore needs to include how details are framed by intergroup relations, only by analysing the development of intergroup interactions is it possible to understand crowd behaviour in particular, and group processes more generally.

ESIM is based on a conception of social identity as a model of social relations. Crowds do not always produce change in the nature of social identity. When they do it is because social identity has changed in response to the shift in social relations, as a result of intergroup behaviour. This dynamic was explored in an analysis which looked at the circumstances surrounding the events leading up to the so-called 'Battle of Westminster' - the 1988 National Union of Students demonstration to protest against the removal of student grants (Reicher, 1996). For the students they initially entered the demonstration as simple non-conformists expressing rights as protesters, including the desire to lobby Parliament in opposition to the cuts. At the beginning of the demonstration the police were seen as 'neutral' defenders of the democratic right to protest. The social identity of the students was defined in relation to their immediate social relations as protesters from differing campuses, and initially, crowd members distanced themselves from demonstrators perceived to be 'extreme' in behaviour. This is captured by one of Reicher's participants who noted: "*what happened was, sort of left wing people – some people had decided, had got to the front of the blockade under the bridge that had been shut off, and they came back and they were chanting 'storm the bridge, storm the bridge'*" (p.126).

In the case of the police, they perceived the right to lobby parliament to be illegitimate, as it was sitting, and they therefore believed that the sessional order (a requirement that when parliament is in session business is not disturbed within one mile of the Palace of Westminster) had to be enforced (Waddington, P, 1994). The crowd was seen as dangerous and oppositional and therefore a threat to the social order.

Moreover, the police had the power to impose their understandings of their social relations with the crowd by utilising indiscriminate tactical options (horses sent in to the crowd). As a result, the students shared a common experience and the police actions united a previous heterogeneous group into a psychologically homogeneous one (Reicher, 1996). Moreover, their social relation to the police was fundamentally altered, and hence crowd members own identity was fundamentally altered. The police were no longer neutral they were an opposition. Students thereby came to see themselves as uniformly oppositional. All students, including those previously seen as 'radicals' came to be seen as fellow in-group members.

Consequently, support for behaviour exhibited by all sections of the crowd was now perceived to be legitimate (Reicher, 1996). This is expressed succinctly by one of Reicher's participants who now noted: *"as you are in a crowd like that people get isolated very quickly so that all the people with you are students and basically they are all the same and the reason why you were there was to go and oppose the government's plans and you acted as a collective body and that was seen throughout in the way people chipped in to help each other"* (p.127).

In other words, in explaining the dynamic of identity change it is necessary to stress the perceived denial of liberal rights to 'lobby' parliament, which threatened the social position of the protesters. How students reacted in their self-understanding is crucial in understanding change in crowd behaviour. The dynamics of the self changed in relation to the intergroup encounter, which changed the way in which this crowd reacted. Thus crowd events can only be understood in terms of the dynamics between police and crowds as they develop over time (Reicher, 1996).

These conclusions have now been confirmed by several further studies (Drury & Reicher, in press, Stott & Reicher, 1998). However, the great weakness of these studies is that they are not genuinely intergroup. They infer the position of the police from what crowd members say, but do not look directly at the police perspective, let alone explain the basis for police action.

The one exception is a study by Stott & Reicher (1998) which gives valuable insights into the role of the police in the intergroup context. This was an interview study with junior officers (constables and sergeants), which showed that police issues at these levels are important in crowd events. These officers see crowds as heterogeneous, with a small minority of troublemakers capable of influencing the majority, and thus all

crowds are seen as possibly dangerous, and when conflict occurs, all crowd members are homogeneously dangerous (Stott & Reicher, 1998).

In other words, the Stott and Reicher (1998) study provides evidence that police perceptions and actions may play a part in creating homogeneous and oppositional crowds out of disparate groupings. However, there are methodological limitations to this study. To be more explicit, this was a post hoc interview study with junior officers (constables and sergeants), who were not involved in the riot in question, therefore the results must be treated with caution. Or, put slightly differently, while the Elaborated Social Identity Model (ESIM) of crowds demands an intergroup analysis in theory, it has not delivered on that in practice.

### **1.3. Chapter Summary**

Classic psychological models of the crowd have desocialised the nature of crowd events. Recent models socialise crowd events, and point to the importance of the intergroup dynamics as to how crowds behave, and also to explain change. This implies that analysis of both crowd and police is crucial, but as we have seen, recent work does not analyse the police. This is a surprising absence. Let us now turn from psychology to other disciplines, sociology, history and police studies, to see if there is anything to fill this gap.

More specifically, let us investigate whether there is any evidence which bears on how indiscriminate the police are in their treatment of crowds, and if they are indiscriminate, why this should be so. These issues will be explored in chapter 2 overleaf.

## **Chapter 2.**

### **Historical, sociological and police studies review of public order policing.**

#### **2.1 Introduction.**

It will be recalled from chapter 1, that I concluded that having looked at crowd behaviour in a social context, that the intergroup level of analysis, including the position of the police, was crucial. To be more explicit, I have a hunch that if the police treat the crowd in an indiscriminate way, as dangerous, they will provoke violence. However, is there evidence that the police do act indiscriminately, and if so, why?

In order to address this question I will first look in other disciplines to see if the answer can be found in sociology, history and police studies. The vast literature on the police role in riots in these disciplines makes a review reduction strategy sensible. Accordingly, I will look at general trends in both American and British rioting in the 20th century. In the second part of the chapter I will narrow the focus and examine practical issues of how crowd policing has evolved, the history and also current organisation and tactics, in order to facilitate my studies of the police role in the United Kingdom context, as this thesis concentrates on this area.

#### **2.2 Historical overview.**

##### **2.2.1. 20<sup>th</sup> Century American urban disorders**

A taxonomy of the American urban riots over the last century has proposed two distinct phases (Waddington, 1992). First, the period 1900 – 1943, which Waddington characterises as involving ‘community’ and ‘commodity’ riots. Second, the period post 1943 to date, which he characterises as conflict between black people and the agents of social control. This review will look at general trends within the two periods identified by Waddington and look in more detail at specific riots of 1919 in Washington, D.C. and the Watts riot in 1965.

In the period 1900 – 1920 an escalating number of the estimated 10 million black people living in America, began to migrate from the southern states stimulated by the twin attacks to the cotton industry of crop pests and the development of artificial

fabrics (Feagin & Hahn, 1973, Waddington, 1992). The push of natural disaster and competition from synthetic fabrics was met with the pull to the North American towns and cities as industries required labour to replace the dearth of white immigrants being granted access to America from continental Europe to take up employment in 'unskilled' industries (Feagin & Hahn, 1973).

Most of what Waddington has termed 'community riots' in the period 1900 to 1943, involved interracial conflicts between "*white aggressors and black victims*" (Waddington, 1992, p.57). In particular, the four years between 1915 – 1919 saw twenty two major riots and "*resulted from perceived challenges to the status quo (in terms of jobs, housing and political power) accompanying large migration*" (Waddington, 1992, p.57).

Of the twenty-two riots in this period, seven occurred in the summer of 1919, at Charleston, South Carolina; Longview, Texas; Philips County, Arkansas; Washington, D.C; Chicago Illinois; Knoxville, Tennessee and Omaha, Nebraska (Feagin & Hahn, 1973). In Washington, D.C., a doubling of the black population since 1910 had put pressure on local amenities, which was compounded by the white population's refusal to allow blacks to make use of a whites only beach (Feagin & Hahn, 1973). The riot in 1919 occurred after a young black man was drowned whilst trying to use the beach and "*a police officer refused to arrest the white man held responsible, and chose instead, to arrest the black complainants. The blacks attacked the arresting police officers, provoking a massive white backlash*" (Waddington, 1992, p.57).

Put another way, whilst many of the American riots of this period reflected differential inequality in terms of power and access to resources for blacks in a white American dominated society, the role of the police and military in reinforcing these inequalities has to be taken into account. In fact, in reviewing the 'ghetto' revolts in America in the period 1900 – 1920, Feagin and Hahn (1973) write: "*governmental agents, particularly coercive agents, have seldom been absent from violent clashes, either in the triggering of violence, in the channelling of violence, or as involved intimately in issues of power and influence lying behind or emerging out of group violence*" (p.80).

The 1935 Harlem riot was quite different from the riots prior to 1920. There was little interracial conflict, rather *“the focus of the violence was generally on white owned businesses and policemen”* (Feagin & Hahn, 1973, p.89). At this time, lack of political representation for blacks to air grievances, was exacerbated by the police actions of shooting and killing a black youth who had been suspected of shoplifting. Feagin and Hahn comment that the resultant police actions to repress the crowd resulted in *“looting, the attacks on white owned stores.....and was a precursor to the ghetto riots of the 1960’s”* (p.90). This pattern was repeated eight years later by a further riot in Harlem, following the shooting of a black soldier intervening on behalf of a black woman being beaten by white police officers. Police efforts to restore order again resulted in the escalation of conflict (Feagin & Hahn, 1973).

Put another way, the two riots in Harlem, in 1935 and 1943, were signs of the power of collective violence as a strategy to alter the power inequalities felt by many black Americans at this time. This warning to America, about the dormant power of the ghettos, was not heeded as the 1960’s saw rioting return on an unprecedented scale in towns and cities across America.

One of the worst of these incidents was the Watts riot of 1965, which followed the arrest by police of a young black man for drunk driving (Waddington, 1992). On hearing of the young mans arrest, local people, including the young mans mother and brother, went to the scene and a confrontation between the arresting officers and the family resulted in one of the officers hitting the arrested man and his brother with a police baton (Waddington, 1992). Whilst the police were leading the brothers away from the scene an officer was spat upon and according to eyewitnesses at the scene, the police went back to the crowd and *“dragged a young woman in a barber’s smock, which resembled a maternity dress, from the crowd and threw her into a police car. Upon seeing this, the crowd became an outraged mob. Someone threw a bottle at the departing police vehicles and then a stream of rocks, bottles, bricks and other missiles burst from the mob. The Watts riot had begun”* (Sears & Mc Conahay, 1973, p.5, quoted in Waddington, 1992, p.61).

Initially, the police withdrew from the scene of the rioting. However, the following day they returned in a show of force, as outlined in their own contingency plans, and met with considerable opposition from a large crowd. This strategy

inadvertently had the opposite effect as the crowd resisted police attempts to reimpose order and soon afterwards *“a large portion of Los Angeles was in flames and thousands of people were in open revolt against the agents of law and order”* (Waddington, 1992, p.61). Only with the introduction of the National Guard was the violence brought under control after six days of rioting, which had resulted in the deaths of thirty-four people and with over a thousand injured (Waddington, 1992).

The political response to the Watts riot was seen in the establishment of the Mc Cone inquiry to examine the causes of the disturbance. Whilst this inquiry, on the face of it, was looking at the structural inequalities prevalent in Watts in particular, and in America in general, it has been suggested that the agenda was hijacked by selecting an inquiry chairman, who was a former head of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (Feagin & Hahn, 1973).

The apparent political inaction to the widespread ghetto riots in the 1960's and the perceived bias in the Mc Cone commission's findings did nothing to halt the rioting in the ghettos of many American towns and cities. The scale of these further riots prompted President Lyndon Johnson to create the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (NACCD), chaired by Governor Otto Kerner of Illinois (Feagin & Hahn, 1973, Waddington, 1992).

It is worth pausing to consider the impact of what became known as the Kerner commission and report, as it had influences into the British report into the riot in Brixton in 1981, conducted by Lord Scarman, and which will be discussed under the review of the British riots in the second part of this chapter (Scarman, 1981).

The Kerner commission was ostensibly different from the earlier Mc Cone inquiry (Feagin & Hahn, 1973). Initially, having the support of President Johnston in seeking answers to the large number of disturbances throughout America, the report findings were diluted by attempts to discredit the inquiry team by removing staff, support and funding (Feagin & Hahn, 1973). Despite these attempts, the analysis concluded that the influence of white racist policies, which had led to segregation and the development of 'ghetto' in many American towns and cities, was a major contributory factor (Feagin & Hahn, 1973). These conditions were compounded by a sense of powerlessness of many black Americans, who could collectively make their voice heard through violence (Feagin & Hahn, 1973). The final constituent to many of

these 1960's riots was police behaviour, which was seen as racist, and symbolising the power of whites in general (Feagin & Hahn, 1973).

The political significance of this report has often been overlooked. The need for funding for the Armed forces in Vietnam, motivated politicians supporting the continued involvement in the war, to prepare a strategy of disruption (Feagin & Hahn, 1973). This was achieved by the sacking of 120 report staff members, whilst at the same time ordering a veto on the employment of social scientists and research staff active in the anti Vietnam war effort, and as a last resort, a "*secret plan of Commissioner Charles (Tex) Thornton to torpedo the report just before launching*" was made (Feagin & Hahn, 1973, p.216). The success of the political disruption can be measured in the fact that the billions of dollars required to address the fundamental inequalities signposted by Kerner were reassigned for the war effort in Vietnam (Feagin & Hahn, 1973).

Kerner's second point about the behaviour of the police also fell on deaf ears. In fact in parallel with the increase in military expenditure in Vietnam, the immediate response of the police and other agencies throughout America was to increase expenditure on acquiring more repressive measures of crowd control (Feagin & Hahn, 1973).

This extra money spent by the agents of social control was utilised to provide a forum for the development and sharing of information about riot control procedures and training. As an example, a course set up in the summer of 1967 was described as one "*which included training in crowd or mob behaviour, in weapons and security control, in riot formations, in riot control agents and munitions, in anti sniping and anti looting measures, in intelligence planning, and in the detention and arrest of rioters*" (Feagin & Hahn, 1973, p.229).

The national and local co-operation between the agents of social control to control rioters was matched by politicians at these levels passing more punitive legislation to identify, prosecute and incarcerate suspected rioters (Feagin & Hahn, 1973). Whilst this political response made it easier to control the movement of people across state boundaries and repress crowds gathering to protest, it did nothing to address the fundamental inequalities within American society. This denial of collective

voice was to surface again in the 1980's as the ghetto riots returned with a vengeance to the American scene, this time in Miami in 1980.

The Miami riot in 1980 was provoked by the acquittal of five police officers accused of the manslaughter of a black insurance salesman (Waddington, 1992). This riot had echoes of the ghetto riots of the 1960's with one commentator noting that *"as in the 1960's, there was a great deal of looting and property destruction, some 100 million dollars of it. But, in addition, there were brutal killings: three young whites dragged from a car and stomped to death, a Cuban man pulled from a car and mutilated, an elderly Cuban burned alive. In all, eighteen people died. The Miami riot had elements of both the 1960's riots and the anti black riots of the earlier part of the century, except that the ethnic identity of the offender was reversed"* (Horowitz, 1983, p.70, quoted in Waddington, p.70).

The acquittal of the police officers for killing a young black man was seen to be the final straw in a catalogue of police transgressions against the black people in Miami (Waddington, 1992). This coupled with a large influx of Cuban workers competing for jobs with local blacks in the leisure industry, just prior to the acquittal, provided the antecedent conditions of this riot (Waddington, 1992).

Throughout the 1980's and 1990's disturbances were to occur in South Florida Washington DC, and Los Angeles (Waddington, 1992). In Los Angeles the rioting again followed a similar pattern. A motorist Rodney King was videod being beaten by several white officers. The resulting video was broadcast on national and international television, before a trial in which the officers were acquitted of the assault. The widespread destruction of property, deaths and injuries to people resulted in a second trial in which the officers were convicted of the assault and imprisoned.

### **2.2.2. Summary of American urban rioting in the twentieth century**

It will be recalled that Waddington (1992) proposed that the history of American rioting could be split into two distinct periods. The early phase 1900 to 1943 was characterised by “*inter racial conflict between whites and blacks, involving competition over employment and housing opportunities*” (Waddington, 1992, p.72). The second phase from the mid 1960’s to date characterised by conflict “*involving black people and the agents of social control*” (Waddington, 1992, p.72).

Such a clear-cut distinction may be inappropriate. What is striking about both periods is that such a clear dichotomy hides the fact that even in the early phase of American urban rioting the police were involved, albeit that the police were not the direct targets, they were seen to be on the side of the white Americans. In addition to their involvement, it would seem that they are a problem by treating crowds as inherently violent, and thus legitimising brutal repression.

However, the review of the American riot control literature leaves two questions unanswered. First, what is it about police behaviour that influences crowds? Second, why do they behave the way they do? We will now turn to the British riot literature to see if there are any answers.

### 2.2.3. 20<sup>th</sup> Century British urban disorders

Just as my review on 20<sup>th</sup> century American riots concentrated on urban rioting, due to the vast literature on the subject, so the vast literature on British rioting in the 20<sup>th</sup> century makes it sensible to concentrate the analysis on the urban riots occurring within this historical period. Waddington (1992) has proposed that British riots, like American riots, in the 20th century, can be categorised into two periods. First, the period between 1900 and 1962 which he classifies as involving interracial conflict. Second, the period between 1970 to date, where violence has been between black people and the police (Waddington, 1992). This review will look at general trends within the two periods identified by Waddington and look in more detail at the specific riots of 1962, in Dudley West Midlands, and the Brixton riot of 1981.

In the same way that migratory patterns in America, were an important explanatory variable to the subsequent riots, it has been suggested that migratory patterns in Britain also need to be considered in the same vein when seeking to explain the riots that occurred throughout the towns and cities of Britain in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Waddington, 1992).

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the need for cheap labour aboard steamships encouraged the migration of "*West Indian's, Arabs, Somalis, Indians and Chinese responding to capital's need for cheap, exploitable labour*" (Waddington, 1992, p.75). The low levels of pay and the political segregation by whites ensured that these early 'Brits' "*created immigrant colonies in the poorer housing areas of major British seaports (e.g. London, Cardiff, South Shields, Liverpool and Glasgow*" (Waddington, 1992, p.74).

The decision by many ex servicemen from the West Indies etc. to settle in Britain after the two world wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century meant, that by the end of the second world war, in 1945, approximately 10,000 blacks were resident in Britain (Waddington, 1992). The period of post war recovery and prosperity encouraged a large expansion in the numbers of black African Caribbeans seeking a new life in Britain. These new Britons were recruited to jobs "*rejected by white workers; health, transport, textiles, clothing and foundry work and in newer industries motor car manufacture and chemical processing*" (Waddington, 1992, p.75).

The patterns of migration therefore centred on the locations of the available work and thus the British immigrants settled in the South East, the Midlands or the major ports of Glasgow Liverpool and Bristol (Waddington, 1992).

The first twenty years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the United Kingdom, marked a period which was to see the accelerating rise in the organisation of working class protest as *“strike activity reached unprecedented heights and the trade union movement came to embrace ever larger numbers of industrial workers”* Geary (1981, p.90). The arrival of immigrants was seen by many white trade unionists as a threat to the power they wielded against employers, who could employ non union labour to break strikes. These were the circumstances in which the 1911 anti Chinese riot took place in Cardiff fuelled by *“whites... disapproving of relationships between Chinese men and white women. Rumours were deliberately spread by the trade union that Chinese were doping white children and using them as unpaid labour. Tensions rose and spilled over into conflict. Members of the Chinese community were assaulted and their laundries set ablaze”* (Waddington, 1992, p.75).

The fear engendered by interracial sexual activity was also said to have been a component part in the British seaport riots of Limehouse, Liverpool, Newport, Cardiff, Tyneside and Glasgow in 1919 (Waddington, 1992). He writes that: *“the media and the police responded unsympathetically, accusing the blacks of bringing the violence on themselves and with the police arresting more blacks than whites, supposedly for their own safety”* (p.76).

The interracial conflicts seen in the first thirty years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were to see a change of emphasis in the 1930's. This was brought about by the rise of Fascism in mainland Europe which stimulated a British offshoot in the form of Oswald Mosley and the British Union of Fascists (Townshend, 1993). The focus of the collective hatred of the white 'Black shirts' was seen in large-scale marches throughout the East End of London to protest about the perceived Jewish domination of the local economy (Townshend, 1993).

The scale of the resulting violence between Fascists and anti Fascists in London prompted the politicians to reach for the statute book and create the first formalised laws to prevent and restrict the gathering of crowds (Townshend, 1993). As well as providing the background for the first Public Order Act passed in 1936, to limit and

impose restrictions on people congregating in public, it formalised the previous common law offences of riot and rout making it easier for the police to prosecute offenders (Townshend, 1993).

Further interracial conflict was to surface again in Britain, in the late 1940's. As an example, the 1948 Liverpool riot was provoked by attempts by the National Union of Seaman, to prevent the employment of black immigrants. Three nights of rioting followed a fight outside a blacks only club. On the third night the police attempted to regain control of the club and eyewitnesses testified that as they did so they were met by, *"a volley of hundreds of bottles and stones thrown from the windows which halted their advance for a time. But when the defenders ran out of ammunition the police burst their way in, breaking down doors, hitting out right and left with truncheons and throwing people down stairs"* (Fryer, 1984, p.369 quoted in Waddington, p.76).

Although the 1950's saw similar patterns of protest with interracial clashes in Nottingham and London in 1958, Waddington cites the West Midland riot in Dudley, in 1962, as providing the last example of his 'interracial' riot categorisation in the period 1900 – 1962. Here he notes that: *"here rioting occupied four nights, but largely involved crowds of white, working - class men confronting police officers who were preventing them from attacking small black enclaves in the area"* (p.77).

The second period identified by Waddington has run from 1970 to the present date. He classifies this period as one in which the focus moved from 'interracial' conflict to one involving black people and the police. It has been suggested that the antecedent conditions to these clashes can be traced to the increased surveillance of illegal immigrants (with the passing of the Immigration Acts of 1962, 1968 and 1971) and the economic downturn, which effected young blacks disproportionately in the search for jobs (Benyon, 1984).

Against this background, disorder on a large scale broke out at the 1976 and 1977 Notting Hill Carnivals, commentators have noted that *"on both occasions, the formidable police presence was regarded as oppressive by blacks who reacted to arrests they perceived as wrongful by smashing the windows of vehicles and throwing missiles at the police"* (Waddington, 1992 p.79).

Four years later, in April 1980, the first of the inner city riots occurred in the St. Pauls area of Bristol (see chapter 1), and followed a police raid on the 'Black and

White Café' looking for illegal drink and drugs (Reicher, 1982, 1984). This was followed almost a year later in the Brixton riot in London and more widespread disorder throughout Britain. This heralded the return of public disorder to the political agenda and resulted in the Scarman inquiry focused on seeking the causes of the Brixton unrest alone (Fielding, 1991, Northam, 1988, Scarman, 1981).

It will be recalled from the review of the American urban riot literature that the Watts riot was important to stimulating a political response in the form of setting up of the Kerner commission of inquiry and report into the causes of the widespread rioting throughout America. Similarly, the Brixton riot in April 1981, was important in British urban rioting as it led to the setting up of the Scarman inquiry. However, what was different in the British case was that the focus was narrowly prescriptive. In fact it sought the causes of the Brixton disturbances alone. The circumstances of the riot and the impact of the Scarman report in allocating blame for the riot will be discussed in turn.

On Friday the 10<sup>th</sup> April 1981, conflict arose between police and local black people. This was alleged to have started when *“a police officer patrolling the Brixton area saw a black youth running across the street towards him, evidently being chased by two or three other youths. The constable PC Stephen Margiotta, was uncertain what was happening but sensing that an offence may have been committed, grabbed hold of the youth, 19 year old Michael Bailey, and managed to overpower him”* (Waddington, 1992, p.81).

Having confirmed that Bailey was badly bleeding from a knife wound, the police were forced into allowing him to go by the actions of other black youths who had been drawn to the area (Scarman, 1981). The injured youth then made his way to a nearby flat where a mini cab was called to convey him to hospital. Alerted by the concern of the first officer to stop this youth (PC Stephen Margiotta) a police van stopped the mini cab and a police officer rendered first aid, whilst at the same time alerting the ambulance authorities (Scarman, 1981).

At this stage a crowd of about forty youths surrounded the police officer and injured youth. According to witnesses: *“the crowd was unresponsive to police explanations. They (the police) hailed down a passing car and whisked Bailey away. The youths were pursued in turn, by officers responding to a call for assistance. This*

*resulted in a skirmish in which some forty police officers, including two dog handlers and several in riot gear, were confronted by one hundred black youths. Four vehicles were damaged, six people were arrested and six police officers injured”* (Waddington, 1992, p.81).

Further skirmishes, between the police and local black and white people, were to occur on the following Saturday and Sunday. On the Saturday, from about 4pm, looting of shops and burning of buildings spread throughout Brixton. On the Sunday minor confrontations were reported between the police and local black and white people.

It is worth pausing to consider the extent of the Brixton riot, *“in total, 145 buildings were damaged, 207 vehicles were damaged or destroyed, 450 people were reported injured and 354 arrests were made. It had been necessary to deploy 7,300 officers to put down the riots”* (Waddington, 1992, p.82).

Scarman’s overall analysis of the riots was captured in his finding that *“the disorders were communal disturbances arising from a complex political, social and economic situation, which is not special to Brixton. There was a strong racial element in the disorders, but they were not a race riot. The riots were essentially an outburst of anger and resentment by young black people against the police”* (Benyon, 1984, p.234).

Put another way, having looked at the background factors effecting this inner city area, Scarman concluded that severe unemployment combined with poor housing stock provided the antecedent circumstances of structural inequality felt by many black people. Additionally, the lack of political representation to articulate black concerns and grievances compounded the sense of hopelessness of many of the young black unemployed residents of Brixton. These factors were further exacerbated by anger at police brutality in enforcing stop and search laws on young blacks prior to the riots, and the resistance of many black and white Brixton residents to the police efforts to restore order following the incident with the injured youth.

Scarman’s conclusions about the deterioration of police black relations went unheeded. Further outbreaks of disorder were then seen later in 1981 in Merseyside, (Toxteth) Manchester (Moss side) and Birmingham (Handsworth) (Benyon, 1984). A common theme of commentators seeking the causes of the unrest was the behaviour of

police before hand and attempts to repress the crowds in all three cases resulted in severe violence and damage to buildings (Benyon, 1984).

Rioting returned to the political agenda four years later. In 1985 Handsworth was to see a return to the front pages of the newspapers as the *“riot was sparked off when a young black youth became involved in an argument with a police officer over a parking ticket. A crowd developed and more police arrived. A black woman was allegedly assaulted by one of the officers and, within 3 hours, forty buildings were burning down”* (Waddington, 1992, p.91).

Later the same year rioting was to return to London when Cynthia Jarrett died whilst police were searching her home on the Broadwater Farm estate in North London, following the arrest of her son on suspicion of stealing a car (Waddington, 1992). Prior to the death, police had *“implemented a stop – and – search operation at the entrance to the estate. The local black population had complained of its arbitrary nature and made allegations of abusive and rough treatment by police officers”* (Waddington, 1992, p91).

The riot following the death of Mrs. Jarrett started at about 7pm that same evening. In the violence that followed a community constable (Keith Blakelock) was murdered and several other officers badly injured by firearms and knife wounds. The rioting continued for several days and resulted in large parts of the estate being damaged (Waddington, 1992).

The political response to these renewed disorders was seen in the passing of the second public order act of 1986, fifty years after the introduction of the first (Townshend, 1993). This new legislation strengthened the laws contained in the first Public Order Act, by making it easier to prosecute suspected offenders for the offence of riot and related public order act offences.

#### **2.2.4. Summary of British urban rioting in the twentieth century**

In my review of the American case, I concluded that a division into two phases, the earlier pitting black against white, and the latter pitting black against the police, was too simple. The police are always an ingredient. The same can be said of Britain.

Thus, the historical literature from both America and Britain shows and confirms that police behaviour is crucial in understanding crowd events in two ways. First, that they are always involved whether directly or indirectly. Second, there is some evidence of brutality and indiscriminate action by police when they intervene against crowds.

However, whilst confirming my suppositions of the need to look at the police by describing their role in crowd behaviour, it does not explain that behaviour. Put slightly differently, the historical literature on urban rioting suggests that police behaviour may have provoked riots, we therefore need to provide a psychological explanation to the remaining question of, what it is about police behaviour that influences the dynamics between the police and the crowd?

We therefore need to understand police action and how it affects crowds. In order to do so we need to look at how the police treat crowds: what strategies and tactics do they use? How are they organised? My review will concentrate on the evolution of public order training and tactics, riot technology and intelligence gathering in the United Kingdom, or rather, in England and Wales in the second part of the chapter overleaf.

## **2.3 The evolution of United Kingdom public order training, tactics, and intelligence systems.**

### **2.3.1. Police public order training and tactics.**

The lack of public order training available to the police was quickly remedied following the outbreak of the mainly inner city riots of the 1980's. The most tangible symbol of these disorders for the Metropolitan Police today is the nine-acre training site, used by the police for training in public order/disorder tactics, and which is situated at Hounslow, west London. This training facility colloquially referred to as 'riot city' is a mock up of a town in which the police train for the 'Armageddon' scenario - bricks and petrol bombs (at the rate of 3,000 milk bottles per month) being thrown by instructors and officers in plain clothes at officers in flame retardant overalls, helmets and shields (Townshend, 1993). The covert circumstances in which this para military training facility and tactics arrived on mainland Britain will be charted below.

Concern following the disorders in 1981 prompted the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) to invite the Royal Hong Kong Police to address an emergency meeting in response to the outbreaks of public disorder throughout 1981 (Northam, 1988). The officer sent by the Royal Hong Kong Police addressed Chief Constables, Deputy Chief Constables and Assistant Chief Constables and the Metropolitan Commissioner and his deputies at their conference (Northam, 1988). This presentation, according to observers included, "*the distillation of British Colonial policing as practised in the most important remaining outpost of the empire*" (Northam, 1988, p.39).

The debate that followed this presentation resulted in ACPO deciding to set up a working party to "*review British riot control tactics in the light of experience of other countries and come up with a programme of action*" (Northam, 1988, p. 40). After two years, the result of this extensive research was prepared for distribution by ACPO under the title "Public Order Manual of Tactical Options and Related Matters" (Northam, 1988). This was presented to members of ACPO with a series of training measures for officers of all ranks by another working party chaired by the then Metropolitan Assistant Commissioner, and later Chief Constable of West Mercia, Geoffrey Dear. It will be remembered, that West Mercia was later to be the scene of

the Handsworth riots in Birmingham in 1985, in which two people died, and CS agent was used for the first time in mainland Britain by the police (Northam, 1988).

The resultant manual contained “*a total of 238 tactics and manoeuvres set out in its thirty sections, arranged in order of escalating force, from normal policing up to plastic bullets, CS gas and live firearms. ACPO had produced its national manual of public order tactics for the eighties*” (Northam, 1988, p.42, emphasis in original). The manual was, and still is, restricted to officers of ACPO rank - Assistant Chief Constable (in London Commander) rank or above (Northam, 1988).

A flavour of the contents of this manual may be gauged by the following chapter headings: Section seven, control of Public/Private transport, Section eight, Protected vehicles, Section nine, Police Support Units, Section Ten, Saturation policing, Section eleven, Stand-off/regroup, Section twelve, Artificial lighting, Section thirteen, Cordons, Section fourteen, Checkpoints/interceptor tactics and motorway disruption, Section 15, Barriers, Section sixteen, Barricade removal, Section seventeen, Controlled sound levels and Section eighteen, Shield tactics (Northam, 1988).

The new document written for ACPO arrived at a timely juncture. In 1984, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) - led by Arthur Scargill - had begun to picket the Orgreave coking plant in South Yorkshire as the dispute with the National Coal Board (NCB) intensified. The Conservative government of the time, led by Margaret Thatcher, was anxious to avoid any repetition of the defeat for the police inflicted by the miners at the Saltley coking plant a decade earlier. In essence, although the strike was an industrial dispute between the two parties - employees (NUM) and the employers (NCB) - indirectly it was challenging the Conservative government of the day. Fresh from the victory secured in the South Atlantic against the Argentine forces, in the Falklands battle for sovereignty, Margaret Thatcher was keen to “*defeat the enemy within*” (Northam, 1988, p.52).

The chance to defeat the miners came with the specific incident of the Battle of Orgreave on 18<sup>th</sup> June 1984. Different analysts have supplied conflicting accounts of what happened on that particular day. What is not in dispute is the coming together of two cultures based on masculine identities and the resulting serious violence, which resulted in both sides suffering severe casualties. Orgreave was, and still is, significant

for the resulting furore surrounding the first use by the ACPO officers in charge on that day of tactics advocated in the lengthy Public Order manual (Northam, 1988). In the subsequent trial of miners arrested for riot - the ACPO officer in charge at Orgreave (Tony Clement, Assistant Chief Constable of South Yorkshire) was forced to reveal the existence of this previously secret document and to divulge some of its contents (Northam, 1988). Only the direct intervention of Tony Benn MP via the speaker of the House of Commons, resulted in this document being placed in the House of Commons Library (Northam, 1988).

The significance of the above parliamentary intervention was twofold. First, it challenged the ACPO and Home Office secrecy surrounding the introduction of these tactics to British policing, and the apparent by - passing of the local accountability structures of police authorities (Northam, 1988). Second, it revealed the inter and intra group differences between senior officers of ACPO, middle ranking officers of the Superintendents Association and junior officers of the Police Federation. These differences became apparent in the comments in the Police Federation magazine that *“neither the Superintendents Association nor the Police Federation had been vouchsafed a sight of its contents”* (quoted in Northam, 1988, p.60).

The ensuing debate between all three professional associations revealed deep schisms within the police, as chief officers argued over whether the remaining contents should remain secret from their own officers. Cross cultural studies of American riot control procedures have highlighted the contrast between this manual’s secrecy and the openness surrounding the one compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which is a public document and readily available on request to the State Department (Northam, 1988).

The miners strike was also important as it revealed the extent to which the police service of forty-three different regions was able to be co-ordinated throughout England and Wales in a policy of ‘mutual aid’. The need for such aid between forces was recognised early and formalised within the Police Act of 1890 (Fielding, 1991). More recently, the method by which this aid was provisioned and co-ordinated has been through the use of the National Reporting Centre (NRC), now known as the Mutual Aid Co-ordinating Centre (MACC) at New Scotland Yard (Fielding, 1991). The decision to open the NRC rests with the President of ACPO in consultation with

colleagues in the ACPO Public Order sub committee (Northam, 1988). Previous researchers (Fielding, 1991) have highlighted several problems associated with using the NRC, especially during the 1984-5 miners strike. These will be discussed in turn.

First, and perhaps most seriously, the NRC represents a challenge to the tripartite system of police accountability enshrined in the Police Act, 1964 (Alderson, 1979). The use of the National Reporting Centre (NRC) affected the statutory description of the three arms of police accountability, local authority, Chief Constable and Home Office by ignoring the first and prioritising the latter two (Northam, 1988). The perceived loss of local control of the police allowed Government Ministers, in the guise of the Home Secretary, to influence Chief Constables through the Inspectorate of Constabulary (Northam, 1988).

Second, the denial of local democratic control over the various Chief officers enabled the new NRC to mobilise Police Support Units (PSU's) for deployment throughout England and Wales. The export of officers to Constabularies with coalmines led to police involved in areas where they were not locally accountable to their respective communities (Northam, 1988). The development of the Police Support Unit system and the impact on the intra and inter group relations of the police will be discussed in turn below.

The histories of the Police Support Units (PSU's) have been shrouded in controversy. The first PSU's in London were formed by the Metropolitan Police in 1965 and were known as the Special Patrol Group (SPG) (Northam, 1988). Many forces throughout Britain had their own versions and titles for these groups perhaps the 'Commando Squad' of Lancashire being the most notable (Northam, 1988). These units or groups deploy junior officers in squads of one inspector; three sergeants and twenty-one constables who are carried in three police vans. The potential pitfalls of groups of officers working together for some time was captured early on by Alderson (1979) who writes: *"operations in numbers embolden police who as individuals exhibit exemplary control but in concert might tend towards excessive aggression, thereby inflicting undue damage on persons to the detriment of the goals of police activity, perhaps in both the short and long term. It is for this reason that special groups should from time to time be disbanded and reformed with fresh personnel so*

*that the conditioning created by recourse to power and force is not habituated"*  
(p.25).

The prophecy of Alderson appeared to have been realised when several members of the SPG were suspected of involvement in the murder of Blair Peach - although no one was charged - during a demonstration in Southall, west London in 1979 (Fielding, 1991). The infamy and controversy of the SPG resulted in their being replaced in 1987 by a larger mobile reserve of officers (800 officers) known as the Territorial Support Group (TSG), which is still in existence today, but in smaller numbers, approximately 500 officers (Metropolitan Police, 1999). The advice of Alderson in defining limits of service appears to have been adhered to, as service on this group is now set at a maximum of four years (Metropolitan Police, 1999).

The move by the British police to a more military or para - military style in dealing with the disorders in the early 1980's owed much to the introduction to the existing PSU's of training and tactics developed in Hong Kong to control 'illegal' entry by Chinese citizens to the former colony (Northam, 1988). These methods - based on the riot suppression units of the former Royal Hong Kong police - require the application of a paramilitary structure of control, with decision - making subordinated to the senior officer in command (Fielding, 1991, Northam, 1988, Waddington, 1994). Structural analyses of the consequences of collective rather than individual decision making, have highlighted two areas of concern: first, the inter and intra group tension caused by the duality of the police command system of discipline and hierarchy; second, the impact of military or paramilitary tactics of control.

In illuminating the inter or intra group structure and relations of the police it is clear that they are not a homogeneous group. The duality of the police command system of discipline and hierarchy operating within the three Staff Associations, the Police Federation (which represents Constables, Sergeants, Inspectors and Chief Inspectors), the Superintendents' Association (which represents Superintendents) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (which represents Assistant Chief Constables, Deputy Chief Constables and Chief Constables and in London Commanders, Assistant Commissioners and the Commissioner), provides the framework for considerable differences between officers.

These differences can be seen to operate at a number of levels. The command relationships within the internal structure of the police differs from other disciplined 'armed' services due to the autonomy of the office of constable (Alderson, 1979). Previous research has suggested that the police may be alone amongst organisations in the fact that the visibility of the lowest level of the police - constables and hence their accountability - may be obscured during ordinary patrol duty because of the wide discretionary application of statutory powers given to the office they hold (Alderson, 1979). In contrast, in utilising junior officers in a public order role, the reliance on para or quasi-military tactical deployments requires individual discretion to be subordinated to the collective decisions of public order commanders (Townshend, 1993). This in turn places all officers, regardless of rank, in a different relationship, one that is quite distinct from the normal roles of junior and senior officers, and relies on leadership rather than supervision for its success (Townshend, 1993, Waddington, 1987, 1994).

Officers at the PSU or serial level (constables, sergeants and inspectors) bear the physical and psychological brunt of crowd duties, which are rated perceptually, to be the most stressful of all police duties they are called upon to perform (Crowe & Stradling, 1993). It would not be surprising therefore, if in dealing with crowds, junior officers concentrated on the proximal nature of violence and criminal behaviour, defined in terms of individual and police unit safety, to the exclusion of strategic considerations (Stott & Reicher, 1998).

The setting up of 'mutual aid' between forces during the miner's strike required the police service to institute a common training package for public order policing (Stott & Reicher, 1998). To recap, the training 'imported' from the former Hong Kong police emphasises the aggressive application of colonial tactics (Northam, 1988, Waddington, 1994). The training received by this level of officers (Constable, Sergeant and Inspector) concentrates mainly on the tactics described above in the ACPO manual and is based on nationally agreed standards (Stott & Reicher, 1998). The control of these junior public order officers is maintained by a senior officer command system which is based on three levels, gold, silver and bronze and which will be discussed in turn overleaf.

### **2.3.2. The senior police command structure of gold, silver and bronze**

The control of Police Support Units (PSU's) or public order serials is achieved through what seems externally to be an impressive organisational hierarchical structure at the following three levels, gold, silver and bronze (Metropolitan Police, 1999, Waddington, 1994). The role of gold, the officer setting the strategy for any public order event, is crucial in understanding the police command structure of discipline and hierarchy. He or she is responsible for formulating the strategy, which can be changed as the event unfolds if necessary. The strategy of the police revolve around the concepts of maintaining the peace, minimising disruption to the community in which the event is scheduled to pass, and dealing with any infractions of the law that may be committed (Waddington, 1994).

Once the strategy has been set, the police appoint the silver or ground commander and she or he is responsible for co-ordinating the tactics for policing that particular event in support of the strategy. The delineation of the roles and responsibilities of gold and silver may be seen in relation to decision making. Thus gold makes decisions in 'slow time', away from what is happening on the ground, and silver makes them in 'fast time', on the ground as they unfold (Waddington, 1994).

To support silver, in the immediate decision making and deployment of serials, a number of bronze commanders will be appointed who have geographical responsibility for specified areas or sectors. These commanders deploy officers at the Police Support Unit or serial level to deal with specific incidents. On a large-scale event this command system may be further subdivided, and sub-sector bronzes used to deal specifically with problems on smaller areas of the sector (Metropolitan Police, 1999, Waddington, 1994).

In addition to the mechanics of the police tactics described in the public order manual and carried out in training at 'riot city', the selection and training of senior officers (Chief Inspector and above) to be employed on 'live' events is controlled by utilising a variety of different strategies (Waddington, 1994). Firstly, by restricting the selection of senior officers to join the public order 'cadre' of advanced senior-trained officers; secondly, by controlling public order operations by detailing the roles and responsibilities of officers deployed on events in terms of an operation order for the

incident; thirdly, by planning for contingencies; lastly, by controlling who can authorise particular tactical actions. These will be discussed in turn.

The first method employed by senior officers for ‘on the job training’, and the one in which senior officers at the ‘gold’ and ‘silver’ levels prefer, is by inexperienced senior officers being shadowed by more experienced colleagues (Waddington, 1994). Although, these inexperienced senior officers often have extensive public order experience at more junior levels (Constable, Sergeant and Inspector), on promotion to Chief Inspector, these officers receive advanced training in the deployment of serials at ‘riot city’ in the tactics outlined above. They are then given the opportunity to experience sector command by acting, for example, as a sub bronze in the first instance, and reporting to a more experienced bronze. To recap, the bronze commanders are responsible for the deployment of PSU’s or serials for a specific geographical location. The sub bronze is therefore only responsible for a geographical part of the sector. In this way the responsibility and impact of decisions made by the less experienced officer are minimised.

The second method of ‘on the job’ training can arise when an inexperienced senior officer is put in charge of a police station where there is a high likelihood of public order events i.e. at police stations responsible for football grounds. These inexperienced senior officers can be provided with experienced junior support staff to assist them in running specific events. These officers can be prevented from exposure to larger more problematical events, which often occur in central London, by not being selected by silver as a bronze commander.

The desire to work for and with experienced as opposed to inexperienced public order senior officers can also be seen to work in the reverse direction. Bronze and sub bronze commanders have identified personality characteristics that they desire in silver commanders. Specifically, bronze commanders seek officers who are “*brave and up front*” (Waddington, 1994, p.134). However, there are limits to this bravery and visibility. The possibility of silver commanders becoming too involved in the role of the bronzes, and the breakdown of the command structure, has been highlighted by an internal investigation following the Trafalgar Square riot (Metcalf, 1991). This report discussed in detail the breakdown of the command structure between silver and bronzes and the confusion that followed was captured by the reports author, who

wrote: *“in an orderly demonstration, line command responsibilities present no difficulties. However, when disorder breaks out immediate decisions are necessary to prevent escalation of trouble and officers naturally look to their senior colleagues to take such decisions, particularly if they are in the vicinity. Some senior officers felt inhibited by the presence of more senior colleagues. It is crucial for those involved at the more senior level of command that they know what is required of them and the level of decision making within their authority”* (Metcalf, 1991, p.13).

The third method of on the job training involves the subtle use of the pre event threat assessment provided by Special Branch (SB) and the Intelligence Co-ordinator (controlling the Forward Intelligence Teams - FIT's) which determines the extent of the contingency planning (Waddington, 1994, Metropolitan Police, 1999). This process colloquially known as the 'What If's?' provides a method of exploring such contingencies in a safe environment. On many events the contingencies may be anticipated and *“the resulting mantra which often includes, disorder at the rally sit down on route and disorder on route”* (Waddington, 1994, p.136), has been observed to lack flexibility and to be rigidly applied to all events. However, the rehearsal of police tactics to deal with contingencies provides another means of ensuring, that come the event, senior officers at more junior levels, understand what the preferred and agreed action should be.

The last method of intra group control of senior officers revolves around deciding, prior to the event, the 'protocols' for deploying the various tactical options available. More specifically, by removing from the bronze commander (s) the ability to authorise officers to wear protective equipment, the structure of the command system is preserved with silver and gold. The circumstances surrounding the introduction of such equipment, both overt and covert, to the British police will be discussed in turn overleaf.

### 2.3.3. Police riot technology

The 1976 and 1977 Notting Hill carnivals resulted in an increase to the police in injuries, prompting the police to introduce Perspex riot shields (Waddington, 1992). Following the riots of the early 1980's improvements were made to these shields and officers were supplied with flame retardant overalls affectionately known as 'babygros', visored and radio receiving helmets, boots and leg guards (Waddington, 1992). The provision of shields both long and short has practical implications for deployment. The tactics for using the long shields are slow, due to the requirement for the PSU to regroup when turning corners at junctions, and officers carrying long shields are vulnerable to attack from behind (Waddington, 1987).

The tangible signs of the defensive capability of the police, during the 1980's, were augmented by the provision of offensive equipment in the form of 'baton' rounds colloquially known as rubber bullets and CS agent. The police also acquired armoured landrovers and tested the feasibility of using water cannon before rejecting it as being of little practical benefit (Northam, 1988, Waddington, 1992).

The outward signs of police technology have been matched by the adoption of more sophisticated information gathering equipment which has enabled the surveillance of crowds to become increasingly more covert (Waddington, 1992). The continuing use of video cameras to provide information about crowd members has been matched by the investment in 'command and control' systems of increasing complexity.

The 'Special Operations' room at New Scotland Yard known affectionately by the acronym GT is able to process video data from static and movable cameras. This flexibility is enhanced by the provision of 'Heli - teli' pictures from the police helicopter. This technology provides the ability to cover any demonstration in whatever part of London - 24 hours a day (Metropolitan Police, 1999). To cope with the increasing complex information sources, the control room at Scotland Yard has systems, which are able to isolate relevant particular information, 'command channels' for gold, silver and bronze and the working channels for the serials. Despite this outward sign of sophistication the reliance on such systems can pose potential difficulties during crowd disorder.

The potential loss of control of the police command system due to 'communication' problems during the 'chaos' of disorder has been highlighted by

several internal debrief reports into both the Trafalgar Square riots (1990) and more recently the disorder in Park Lane (1994) respectively (Metcalf, 1991, Kendrick, 1994). Metcalf (1991), in reviewing the police response to Trafalgar Square incident, commented on the fact that: *“several minutes of radio transmission were lost due to severe interference and the signal quality was generally poor. Defective radios and the limited life of batteries exacerbated the problem. Because of these difficulties, control was not always up to date on the deployment of personnel. As disorder spread across the West End, the control room was swamped with hundreds of messages from the Central Command Complex at New Scotland Yard and from surrounding stations”* (p.14).

Put another way, the Metropolitan Police control room facility is able to control all the radio communications during a public order event through trained computer operators. This is normally where the gold commander will sit during an event and will be supplied with information concerning the event from a variety of sources. The development of both covert and overt sources of information in the field of public order policing will be discussed in turn.

#### 2.3.4. Police information

Intelligence services throughout the world have operated a series of ‘agents’ spies and police informers to alert them to the potential threat from domestic social movements (Townshend, 1993). In Britain, the Special Branch (SB), originally set up in 1870’s, is mandated to keep information on social groups who may be a threat to the state in terms of subversive activity (Townshend, 1993). The secrecy surrounding the way Special Branch operates, and the lack of accountability of this area of the police, was illuminated by the general finding of the former Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall, John Alderson, that Special Branch intelligence files contained mainly rumour and gossip. In fact, investigations by previous researchers have highlighted the fact that Special Branch, in supplying information for public order operations, “*was notable for its absence*” (Waddington, 1994, p.105).

Other sources of information available for public order policing have developed from the Divisional Information and Intelligence Officers (DIIO's) system, set up in the 1980’s by the Metropolitan Police throughout London to monitor ‘tension indicators’ following the riots in Brixton. Initially, these indicators included the rise and fall of incidents involving the physical and verbal abuse of officers as well as monitoring the increase of complaints against police and the perceived reduction in public co-operation (Metropolitan Police, 1999, Waddington, 1994). The collated information was then supplied to the Central Information Unit for monitoring located within the Public Order Branch based at New Scotland Yard (Metropolitan Police, 1999, Waddington, 1994).

The purpose of the monitoring system outlined above was to identify ‘symbolic locations’, or areas in London, considered to be susceptible to outbreaks of rioting. Following the Broadwater Farm riot of 1987 - and the murder of Constable Keith Blakelock - the police identified eleven such ‘symbolic’ sites around London. (Waddington, 1994). This system has been refined over the intervening years with police stations in London collecting information which is considered to be indicative of a change in public support for the police, and providing it for collation and evaluation to the Public Order Branch, to make decisions about the allocation of resources for particular public order events (Waddington, 1994).

The increased use of surveillance technology by the police, has allowed for the creation of a more 'live' time system of collecting information about people in crowds, with the provision of the Forward Intelligence Teams (FIT's). These teams of Constables and Sergeants led by an Inspector can be deployed at public order events to gather information, about known or suspected 'targets', which can then be supplied to the gold and silver commander to decide whether action should be taken immediately or later on. This 'live' time information can be then used to gauge the need for any increase or decrease in the number of police resources deployed on the event in question (Metropolitan Police, 1999).

### **2.3.5. Summary of British public order policing**

It will be recalled that in reviewing the American riots two distinct phases emerged. First, an early phase between 1900 to 1943 involving 'interracial' conflict. Second, a later phase from the mid 1960's to date, involving the agents of social control and black Americans. This simple dichotomy was challenged as it failed to account for the fact that the police are always involved in these incidents, albeit in the early phase, they were seen to be representing white American power and domination. Crucially, it will be recalled that in both these periods reviewed, there was evidence that the police were indiscriminate and brutal in repressing these crowds.

When I looked at the United Kingdom we saw a similar pattern emerging. To be more explicit, this also showed that the police are important in understanding crowd events, but does not explain that role or how they act. In order to do so I looked in detail at the police, which showed the structure, hierarchy, technology and role of police intelligence in crowd events.

We can conclude that the police have responded to the perceived threat caused by crowds in the last twenty years by an increased militarisation of their structure and the adoption of tactics and technology reflecting this military drift. The danger of utilising such tactics which are practically indiscriminate, without being psychologically informed, is a lack of flexibility in their blunt application against different crowds.

### **2.3. Defining the question and thesis aims**

In conclusion, the predominant themes of the literature on the police from the historical, sociological and police studies perspectives have concentrated on the practicalities and politics of an institution with a complex structure and levels of accountability. These analyses are descriptive and say little at the psychological level concerning the processes, which affect the treatment of crowds. Combining the sociological, historical, police studies and psychological research into the police in the past, produces the following dilemma. On the one hand, psychology has failed to consider the role of police in crowds. On the other hand, previous historical/sociological structural analyses have looked at the police, but failed to address either the psychological antecedents of their actions or their psychological consequences, especially for how crowds act.

The aim of this thesis, then, is to begin to remedy this omission by investigating the psychological factors governing police decisions and actions within the structural aspects of the police at the strategic (gold), and tactical (silver and bronze) command level during the policing of crowd events. Only by analysing the development of intergroup interactions is it possible to understand crowd behaviour in particular and group processes more generally. These studies are clearly of theoretical and practical importance in their own right. However, it is also a necessary step towards developing a fully interactive model of the collective process.

In other words, we need to explain how police make decisions as a precursor to explaining how this affects crowds, but recall from chapter 1, that treating crowds as all dangerous, and treating all in the crowd as dangerous, could be problematic. Therefore, I will look particularly for factors, which might lead to indiscriminate tactics of repression to all crowds and all members of a crowd.

This is therefore exploratory research and I will adopt a methodological strategy that starts off with exploratory methods. To be more specific, in order to ask the right questions about the nature of this phenomenon to generate hypotheses, I utilised a mix of methodologies which saw me go from the field, to the lab, and back to the field.

The field studies made use of a qualitative technique of participant observation which was then subject to systematic analysis using Grounded Theory. This process of

hypothesis generation was then subject to testing in a controlled experimental setting. The last part of the research strategy involved moving back into the field, this time for a 'live' event, to test the generalisability of the results in making decisions during an actual event.

The methodological strategy was designed to provide a triangulated approach to the research process so that by combining methods, both between methods and researchers, the strengths and weaknesses of all the techniques could be combined (Denzin, 1970). Chapter three overleaf, outlines and discusses the methodological strategy, and outlines both the qualitative and quantitative methods utilised to achieve it.

## **Chapter Three. Methodological strategy.**

### **3.1. Introduction**

As I have stressed in the previous chapters, issues of theoretical myopia, of disciplinary bias and practical problems of access mean that there is precious little to guide us in a psychological study of crowd policing.

The lack of data in this area makes it particularly pertinent to follow Blumer's advice to "*respect the nature of the empirical world and organise a methodological stance to reflect that respect*" (1969, p.60). Accordingly, the methodological strategy for the thesis has been one of focusing on both hypothesis generation as well as hypothesis testing. In order to achieve this combination between hypothesis generation and hypothesis testing, I utilised a variety of different methods of data collection and analysis including participant observation, grounded theory techniques and experimental studies, thereby providing a 'triangulated' approach to the research design (Denzin, 1970).

The term coined by Denzin derives from a loose comparison with navigation. To locate oneself in space it is better to have two points of reference, as opposed to a single one; as the exact position on a map can be calculated, rather than just the information that they you are on a single line. If the analogy is taken back to the social research setting, relying on a single piece of data could lead to undetected error which renders the analysis incorrect (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). However, if in using multiple data sources, the same conclusions can be drawn, it gives greater weight to them as it has arisen by mixing the errors to be found in all research methods (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). In other words, it is better to combine research methods to overcome the inherent weaknesses that all techniques have in order to minimise these effects.

Another notion of 'triangulation' refers to within method, using different observers as well as combining methods. In the case of this thesis this technique was utilised in the participant observation studies of Eid (the festival marking the end of Ramadan, see chapter 6)), and Vaisakhi (the festival commemorating the birth of the Sikh nation, see chapter 6) and the 'Carnival against Capitalism' (see chapter 7).

The strength and weaknesses of participant observation and Grounded Theory, as methods of data collection and analysis will be discussed in turn overleaf.

### 3.1.1. Participant observation techniques

So what do we mean when we talk about ethnography or participant observation? For the purpose of the thesis I am using it as a descriptive term to outline *“one social research method, albeit an unusual one, drawing as it does on a wide range of sources of information”* (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p.2). More specifically, Hammersley and Atkinson suggest that the *“ethnographer participates overtly or covertly, in peoples daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions, in fact collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues with which he or she is concerned”* (p.2).

In looking at the definition of ethnography a number of obvious issues arise. First, once the subject of study has been identified, how does the researcher go about gaining access to the required population. Second, what counts as data, how is it recorded and in what form. Third, what are the practicalities of conducting research using this method and specifically the constraints on gaining data from senior police officers arising in the context of policing public order events. These will be discussed in turn.

First, the issue of gaining access in ethnography is one that *“is often acute in initial negotiations to enter a setting and during the ‘first days in the field’, though the problem persists, to one degree or another, throughout the data collection process”* (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p.54). In other words the issue of gaining access to conduct the required research is a problem at all stages of the research process. Once the initial negotiations with those able to grant access to the organisation, or ‘gate keepers’, has been obtained, the researcher still faces the very real problem of how to continue to negotiate access to field settings, which may be sensitive in nature. The potential consequences to the research design foundering due to access problems is succinctly captured by Barbera – Stein (1979) who noted respectively that the research she was conducting in day care centres was blocked on

several occasions. She wrote: "*the access negotiations can be construed as involving multiple views of what is profane and open to investigation and what is sacred or taboo and closed to investigation unless the appropriate respectful stance or distance is assumed*" (Barbera Stein (1979) p15, quoted in Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p.15).

Initially, the access negotiations to the Metropolitan Police focused on the need for the research to be conducted with senior public order trained officers in a variety of contexts. First, the researcher wanted to gain access to the training of senior officers and the ways in which strategy and tactics were formulated and enforced. This required the researcher to be given access to training courses and materials involving simulation studies and confidential sources of information concerning the gathering of information on suspects, and the decisions surrounding the use of specialist weapons and tactics (the use of horses, baton rounds, firearms and CS agent).

Second, whilst the use of training studies provided an environment in which the decisions of officers concerning these sensitive decisions could be recorded in an open forum and debated by the participants, it did not recreate the immediacy of a 'live' situation. The next access negotiation therefore involved being given a free reign to select public order events which could look at the decision making process in 'live' events. This threw up considerations regarding access to situations in which, for practical policing reasons, and security considerations, the researcher was excluded from situations. For instance, one study in which I was following a senior officer through his policing of two events on the same day, the 1997 Vaisakhi festival and Coca Cola Cup Final, had to be suspended because of a perceived terrorist threat (see chapter 6).

The access granted to senior police officers posed other practical problems. In utilising participant observation techniques in this particular population, it could not be certain that they would explain and articulate the reasons for their decisions, because of their fear that their words could be used against them in a public inquiry should major problems arise. This was a problem encountered while observing the Vaisakhi celebrations on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 1997 (see chapter 6). In the heat of the event the reasons for different decisions were not articulated. The lessons from this event were

incorporated into the research design for 'Carnival against Capitalism' to avoid similar problems arising (see chapter 7).

### 3.1.2. Field relations

The relations of researcher to people in the field can be problematic. To a certain extent this can be dependent upon the knowledge that individuals have about social research. This point is made clear by Hammersley & Atkinson (1983) in their observation that: "*anthropologists are frequently suspected, initially at least, of being government spies, tax inspectors, police informers*" (p.77). Impression management therefore becomes an important consideration in the researchers repertoire of skills.

The issue of what to wear and how to wear it is captured by an example provided by Hammersley and Atkinson. They write of the first meeting with an important 'gatekeeper' of a hospital where it was proposed to conduct research with one of the authors. The appearance of one of the authors was described as someone who: "*was dressed extremely casually (as having extremely long hair). He had absolutely no intention of going onto the hospital wards looking like that. But the gatekeeper was taken aback by his informal appearance, and started to get cold feet about the research altogether. It took a subsequent meeting, after a hair cut and the donning of a lounge suit, to convince him otherwise*" (p.80).

The dress code proposed by these researchers is a useful point for social researchers to consider. In fact, in dealing with the initial negotiations with senior police officers in uniform, the use of a collar and tie with a jacket and trousers provided a useful way of conducting successful access talks. It also proved valuable in the field where again the use of a collar or tie provided the necessary distance between the researcher and participants. In case the reader is wondering, the advice of Atkinson as regards hair length was not necessary in my case due to natural causes.

### 3.1.3. Field roles

Having negotiated access to the organisation and setting to be studied, the next major hurdle for the researcher is to identify the process by which he/she can make sense of a particular social setting. Or, put slightly differently, how is it that a 'novice' to the area of study, is able to "*get to know the ropes and become old hands*" (Hammersley & Atkinson, p88/89).

In previous social research into different cultures, the passage to becoming an 'old hand' has often been described as involving a 'culture clash' of the Westerner and the 'exotic' nature of the culture being investigated. In researching the police this can be translated into a problem of uncovering the organisational facts and rules, and seeing the method in which they are expressed both officially and unofficially. Due in part to my previous experience as a senior police officer, the problem can be further refined into translating what had been 'second nature' to me and recording comprehensively the way in which these social facts and rules operate in this highly disciplined and structured group. This tendency has been described as losing the 'marginality' of the researcher or 'going native', and can be a serious impediment to the ability to retain critical and analytical perspective (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

The method I chose to overcome this was to design a comprehensive system of recording as much as possible in terms of describing settings, and the intra and inter group rivalries that became apparent when public order police officers were being trained or policing 'live' events. To be more explicit, this included the use of 'primary' sources of documentation, in the form of comprehensive field notes and a field journal, as well as 'secondary' sources, in the form of material gleaned from police sources.

The primary sources of documentation included field notes, and journals. For the field notes these were recorded in notebooks, supplemented by audio recordings. These notes consisted of descriptions of social processes and their context in relation to senior public order officers during training, interviews and 'live' events.

Whilst on the one hand seeming self evident, the process of writing field notes, like all intellectual scholarship, requires continual refinement (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). At its most basic level it challenges the field worker to ask him or herself "*what*

*to write down, how to write it down and when to write it down*" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p.146).

In line with the general research strategy of inclusiveness, a decision was made to record as much as possible in the field notes. This included recording the times, places and the officers present before recording interactions in as much detail as possible. As the field note taking process was refined, the use of more condensed recording in the form of single words or phrases, or even the dress of a person was enough to trigger a set of images, that could be used to recreate the observed scene (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

To the sceptical reader, it may seem remarkable to claim that the use of a single word or description of dress could provide much material in the form of data. Perhaps an example from my own field notes could illustrate this point. In the training observation (see chapter 4), after the first day, when all the officers attended 'riot city' in uniform, a dress code was decided for the rest of the week. This was agreed by all, that they would wear plain clothes for the remaining four days. On the remaining four days of the course all the participants, bar one, wore plain clothes. The one dress 'dissenter' wore uniform all week with the insignia of the rank that he was 'acting up' for. This was the subject of many debates during the week, by the rest of the group, who interpreted it as a deliberate mechanism to display a visible difference from them.

In the training inputs for the rest of the week this officer was seen by the other participants to be 'dominating proceedings', and lively exchanges took place, when this officer offered his analysis and rationale for justifying actions. In the final group exercise, which was video recorded, transcribed and analysed, he again attended the group exercise in uniform and attempted to dominate the discussions. The other officers were again hostile to his attempts to hijack the 'group exercise' and met these with group resistance.

After this exercise finished subsequent discussions in the canteen were centred on this officers display of authority throughout the week and his insistence that he be addressed as 'sir', rather than by on first name terms, as all the other officers had agreed.

The above example illustrates the next problem identified by Hammersley and Atkinson, namely how to write things down. Again, using the example above, the initial classroom discussion and agreement on the 'dress code' was recorded in the field notes as 'dress – plain clothes, apart from participant 'A', who insists on wearing uniform'. At the next tea break, the field notes were expanded, as was their quite open discussions about the significance of the decision to wear uniform and be addressed in terms of the rank of office, rather than by name. In this period, conversations were recorded contemporaneously indicating the source and the general outline of what was said and by whom.

The third problem raised in writing notes is addressing the question of at what stage are they written. The advice from previous researchers is that if possible they "*should be written during the actual participant observation*" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p.146). On many occasions, due to the social nature of the research setting and the social position of the researcher, as a guest, it has been acknowledged that this may not always be possible. In my case the field notes were written overtly at the time in a field notebook. As soon as possible afterwards they were expanded during refreshment breaks. This system was augmented, normally on the tube home, with audio notes of the day into a tape recorder and a field journal was completed in the evening, outlining the main themes emerging. At the conclusion of the field interventions all the field notes, journals and audio and video recorded material collected was transcribed.

The primary sources of data outlined above were complimented by secondary sources. To be more explicit, for the training study (see chapter 4), background reading materials and manuals were supplemented by written inputs from the various training 'experts'. In the case of the 'live' participant observation of Eid and Vaisakhi (see chapter 6), the police strategy briefing papers for these events were obtained, as well as intelligence assessments from Special Branch and the local units. The Intelligence Time Line report was also obtained for the Vaisakhi event of the 13<sup>th</sup> April 1997 (see chapter 6). In the final intervention (see chapter 7), police briefings were attended and notes recorded as well as conducting in depth interviews with the Metropolitan police gold and silver commanders. On the day field notes, both written

and audio, were recorded from the observation of the police gold commander and the intelligence co-ordinating unit. All these notes were later transcribed.

Having transcribed the vast quantities of data collected, the next step was to identify an analytical method, which would allow me to deal with the process by which I could generate hypotheses. A suitable analytic method appeared to be offered in the form of 'Grounded Theory' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

### **3.2. Grounded Theory**

In the 1960's two sociologists, Glaser and Strauss (1967), developed a Grounded Theory methodology "*that was derived from data systematically gathered and analysed through the research process*" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.4). Essentially, the three elements of data collection, analysis and theory construction are seen to stand in close relationship to each other (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). To be more explicit, Strauss and Corbin (1998) have described this process as follows: "*the researcher begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data. Theories derived from data are more likely to resemble the reality than is theory derived by putting together concepts based on experience or solely through speculation.... Grounded Theories, because they are drawn from data, are likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action*" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.12).

The method in which the theory emerges can be broken down into three main areas, open coding of the data, axial coding and the emergence or grounding of the theory or model. These will be discussed in turn below and follow the guidelines for the presentation of Grounded Theory analysis by both Miles and Huberman (1994) and Strauss and Corbin (1998). Following these guidelines this presentational structure will be used for the purposes of illustrating the data in chapter 4 (participant observation of police training) and chapter 7 (participant observation of the policing of the riot in the City of London).

### 3.2.1. Open coding

Having gathered the data and transcribed it, the researcher is able to begin to code the data in an open format. To be more explicit, the text is examined on a line by line basis and descriptions of the text are recorded on record cards, which can be stored in written or computer format. The descriptions recorded *‘use words to convey a mental image of an event, a piece of scenery, a scene, an experience, an emotion, or a sensation; the account related from the perspective of the person doing the depicting’* (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.15).

One of the first steps in theory building is taking the open codings or descriptions and conceptualising them in more abstract ways. More specifically, a concept is a labelled phenomenon, which represents *“an event, object or action /interaction that a researcher identifies as being significant in the data. The purpose behind naming phenomena is to enable researchers to group similar events, happenings and objects under a common heading or classification”* (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.103).

Put another way, data are broken down into discrete incidents, objects or behaviours and given a name or label that represents or stands for them. This name may be invoked by the analyst due to the circumstances in which it arises, or they maybe the actual words spoken by the participants themselves (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). These latter concepts are often referred to as ‘in vivo’ codes or concepts (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). If another incident, event or behaviour shares a common characteristic with a pre existing concept, it is given the same name and cross-referenced on the concept card indicating the source.

### 3.2.2. Axial coding

The function of axial coding is to begin to reassemble the data that were generated in the open coding. In this process, categories are related to their subcategories and is termed axial because coding occurs around the axis of a category (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In doing so the relationships between different categories can be explored and leads to more selective coding and the emergence of the theory or model.

### 3.2.3. Selective coding

It will be recalled from above that in the open coding phase, categories and their properties and dimensions were coded, to look at how they differed. In axial coding categories and their subcategories were linked. In the final phase of more selective coding, the major categories are integrated to “*form a larger theoretical scheme*” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.143). After the concept cards were generated by hand, in chapter 4 and on the computer, chapter 7, a process of more focused or selective coding concentrated on selective core categories. Links between the categories were identified in a process involving constant comparison between the categories until they became ‘saturated’ (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In this more abstract selective coding, theoretical accounts of public order policing emerged in an inductive method and are therefore ‘grounded’ in the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

### 3.3. Layout of the thesis

The studies presented in the thesis are as follows. First, the analysis of a training exercise involving senior police officers who had to plan the policing of an anti Fascist march. This study had the advantage of being able to follow the decision making process in this environment in detail, as officers articulated the reasons and factors underlying their decisions. These decisions were made under pressure. The exercise was video-recorded, transcribed, and analysed using Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This study has the obvious disadvantage of not being 'real', but did provide an environment for hypothesis generation. This analysis revealed two factors effecting police decision making in this environment, accountability considerations and the phase of the training exercise the officers perceived themselves to be in.

Second, an experimental study, which took the elements of the hypothesis generation in study 1, the training study (accountability and phase) and used them to test these in an experimental study to provide quantitative evidence bearing on this relationship.

Third, a set of interviews with forty-five senior public order trained or 'cadre' officers (representing over 90% of all the senior commanders on the 'active list' for command in Central London. For reasons of space and length these are not included in the thesis. However, extracts from the interviews are occasionally used for illustrative purposes.

Fourthly, a series of participant observation studies. Initially, these followed the policing arrangements for the Muslim religious festival of Eid (marking the end of the Ramadan fast) and the Sikh festivals of Vaisakhi (marking the birth of the Sikh nation). The lessons from these studies were then utilised to design a final study (chapter 7), following the Metropolitan police commander in charge of the 'Carnival against Capitalism', which resulted in some of the worst scenes of violence in London since the 'Poll Tax' riots of the early 1990's.

The implications of this research are discussed in Chapter eight. The research will have obvious theoretical and practical applications. Theoretically, in explicating the intergroup dynamics of crowd action, which is necessary in formulating a dynamic

model of the collective process. Practically, in terms of both the training of public order officers and the development of operational procedures. The implications of this research and the foundations of future research are also discussed. The studies are separated, and are in order, beginning with the training study in chapter 4 overleaf.

## Chapter 4.

### A Study of police decision making in a public order training exercise

**“Police showed a capacity to strongly resist a ferocious attack on the 31 March, 1990 and there were many instances of bravery and courage. Even though the performance of officers trained in dealing with public disorder and supporting units was commendable, there is still scope for the development of a more co-ordinated response to the level of violence experienced which could be addressed in training” (Metcalf, 1991, p19).**

#### 4.1. Introduction

In this initial study, a deliberate decision was made to conduct a participant observation study of senior police officers in a training environment to allow for the generation of hypotheses. The big advantage of such an environment is that these officers are presented with a series of hypothetical situations and scenarios in which they have to make decisions and discuss in detail and in an open forum the reasons for them. We are perhaps unlikely to see this detail during the ‘chaos’ of a real event involving public disorder, when the police never know what is going to happen next, and when they hardly have the leisure to discuss matters and explicate their reasons at length.

The training study selected, took a group of eight senior police officers (and two members of the Scottish Prison Service, being trained by the Metropolitan police) and followed the training course they were attending for a week. This course is designed to give senior police officers an understanding of what is required of them as bronze commanders in a non-threatening situation. To recap, a bronze commander is responsible for a specified geographical sector or sub sector of a particular public order event. All these officers were experienced and of the rank of Chief Inspector or above, and would on successful completion of the course, be responsible for acting as bronze commanders on public order events throughout London.

The course was run over a period of five days between Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January to Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January 1997, and was held at the Hounslow public order training centre (‘riot city’ – see chapter 2) situated in west London. A longitudinal design was adopted for the purposes of the study and in consequence data was collected prior to, (in the form of course

background material), during and post training (participant observation studies outside of the formal course setting). This data was collected by way of written field notes, which were augmented by audio and video tape recordings. For the purposes of this chapter, only the data gathered during the training exercise, and which was subject to systematic analysis, will be used in explicating the Grounded Theory model.

The course aims for the week, included allowing senior officers the opportunity to experience sector or bronze command of public order events utilising live exercises and computer simulation technology (Williams 1995). Additionally, officers received specialist inputs from relevant experts in the planning of such events, including the guidance for the deployment of shield-trained officers, horses and vehicle tactics against crowds.

All the officers were male and successfully completed the course. The age range of the police participants on the course was 37-54 years, mean 44 years, and (standard deviation (SD) 6 years). The participants range of length of service was 16 - 29 years, mean 22 years, and (SD) 5 years.

The culmination of the course on the Friday morning was the planning and policing arrangements for a march and rally involving 5,000 anti Fascists. According to the scenario provided to the participants, these protesters were demonstrating against the local British National Party (BNP) candidate for the Hackney and Stoke Newington ward, and to express their opposition to the police decision merely to caution him for an offence of threatening behaviour. The exercise was run as a group problem over a period of about three and half-hours, with written and verbal information being provided by two instructors. The eight officers on the course (two members of the Scottish Prison Service - SPS) and myself were sitting in a classroom with the two instructors for the duration of the exercise.

The scenario, which was provided to participants in the form of written and verbal information by the instructors, can be broken down into three distinct phases of the training exercise.

First, there was a period as the demonstration formed and moved off prior to any conflict with the police. Second, there were a series of minor confrontations as the protest march went past a local library which had held a meeting in which the local BNP candidate had made racist comments against local people. Third, there were a series of conflictual incidents arising from a threatened attack on the home of the candidate and the use of petrol bombs and the alleged use of firearms. These will be discussed in turn overleaf.

**No overt conflict**

Initially, following an overnight downpour, the agreed assembly point for the march, had to be changed. The trainee officers had to achieve this, knowing that no organiser had been identified. They therefore had to deal with strategies to inform the 5000 demonstrators expected for the march.

The verbal information given to the officers by the instructors at this stage included the new information that, on arrival at the end of the march route, a rally for the five thousand demonstrators expected would be held.

**Incipient conflict**

Following the initial difficulties regarding the waterlogged assembly point, the officers were then informed by the instructors that the march was going to move off. Having done so, the march was then taken past a local library, a potential trouble spot. It will be remembered that this location had been identified as a source of concern, as a meeting had previously been held there involving the BNP candidate who had made racist comments regarding local residents. As the march was taken past the library by the instructors, they informed the trainees that placards, bricks and bottles were being thrown at unprotected police serials (Constables, Sergeants and Inspectors) deployed outside the library. These serials were not public order trained and did not have public order riot equipment to protect themselves and their colleagues with. During these hypothetical scenarios the trainees were also informed that damage was being caused to the fabric of the library and that the disorder had been contained after the police sustained casualties.

**Sustained overt conflict**

The instructors then notified the trainees that the march had moved further along the road past the library. At this point, the trainees were informed that the crowd had split into two sections of approximately two thousand each, and they had to deal with a variety of different scenarios as a sustained period of rioting broke out. This included having to deal with petrol bombs and an attack on the home of the BNP candidate. At this time the trainees had to decide the police responses to the violence in terms of the use of public order riot trained officers and whether to use police horses to disperse the crowd.

In the last stage of the exercise the instructors informed the trainees that firearms had been seen in possession of crowd members. They then had to explicate their reasons for

seeking authority or not, for the deployment of specialist firearms teams and officers with plastic bullets. The exercise then ended with considerations concerning the preservation of the scene of the disorder for criminal inquiries.

## **4.2. Analytic issues**

### **4.2.1. Data collection**

The purpose of this study was to look at the 'in vivo' processes concerning the decisions during public order training as they took place. Practically, this involved sitting in the classroom with the officers being trained during the week long course. The protocols for recording the field notes were as follows. A small hands free tape recorder was used to record data where practicable. Where this was not possible, due to officers not wishing to be tape recorded, or for practical reasons such as interference with the exercise, these notes were augmented by written field notes made in note books. Whether the notes were recorded by audio or written means these notes were either spoken into the tape recorder or written up as soon as practical and later transcribed.

For the training exercise at the end of the week these methods of data recording were augmented by the use of a wide angled video recorder placed at the back of the classroom. This was later transcribed. It will be recalled, from the introduction, that for the purposes of this analysis only the data collected during the training exercise was the subject of systematic analysis utilising a Grounded Theory approach.

### **4.2.2. Data analysis: Grounded Theory**

The completed field notes and video recording were transcribed onto a word processor yielding eighty pages of text (70,000 words).

In this section I am going to follow the guidelines set out in chapter three in explicating a grounded theory analysis. It will be recalled that this included a number of phases: open coding, axial coding and a process of selective coding in which a model of the data emerges. I am going to present the results of this analysis in four parts. First, I will look at the process of open coding and the generation of the concepts. Second, I will list the resulting concepts and definitions. Third, I will show how the concepts fit together. Lastly, and in more detail, I will use extracts from the text of the transcription to support this model.

#### **Open coding**

Following the transcription, the next stage in the process involved labelling the material in order to provide a framework to build an indexing system for the data. More specifically, the text was allocated consecutive page and line numbers before coding conventions, broadly similar to Strauss and Corbin (1998), were utilised to organise the data.

This process started in a fine grained analysis in which data concepts were coded, prior to being transferred and stored onto concept cards, which were then labelled with a provisional concept, date, source and topic. Figure 1 overleaf shows an example of a concept card labelled 'troublemakers' and how this links to other concepts generated in this fine-grained analysis.

**Figure 1: Example of Grounded Theory concept card 18: Troublemakers**

Page 60. Paragraph 1 M (C Insp.) 48 PO1 28

Need to isolate identified troublemakers or in police argot 'hard core' left from the rest of the crowd.

Page 60. Paragraph 2 M (C Insp.) 48 PO1 28

Minority of the crowd 'trouble' but able to influence the reasonable majority.

Page 61. Paragraph 3 M (C Insp.) 45 PO1 25

Crowds can always potentially act together **despite** distinction of troublemakers from the rest, due to the perceived nature of the **common** grievance against the police.

Cross-references: Links with Card 17 Intervention.

Card 23 Categorisations.

Card 31 Unlimited danger.

Card 36 Tactics.

Card 46 Models of the crowd.

Card 50 Hard core.

Card 57 Trouble.

In this period of open coding written on record cards, a total of fifty eight concept cards emerged, as shown in table 1 overleaf. This table shows the detail, variation and complexity of public order policing.

**Table 1: Concept Cards: Grounded Theory.**

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Card Number</b>	<b>Concept</b>	<b>Card Number</b>
Intergroup dynamics	1	Troublemakers	18
Intra group control	2	Danger	19
Decision making	3	Strategy	20
Surveillance	4	Casualties	21
Intra group structure	5	Management	22
Intelligence	6	Categorisations	23
Crowd organisation	7	Psychological merging	24
Perceptions of danger	8	Quantity of missiles	25
Anonymity	9	Noise levels	26
Crowd context	10	Expectations	27
Types of missiles	11	Perceptions of safety	28
Assumptions	12	Contagion	29
Levels of violence	13	Suggestibility	30
Differentiation	14	Unlimited danger	31
Reflexivity	15	Junior Officers	32
Leadership	16	Senior Officers	33
Intervention	17	Tension	34

**Table 1: Concept Cards: Grounded Theory (continued)**

Concept	Card Number	Concept	Card Number
Conflict	35	Armageddon	47
Tactics	36	Protective equipment	48
Hierarchy	37	Escalation	49
'Worst case'	38	'Hard core'	50
Specialist weapons	39	De-escalation	51
Caring for officers	40	Criteria for danger	52
'Kitting up'	41	Symbolic locations	53
Spatial control	42	Normality	54
Leadership in crowd	43	Crowd dynamics	55
Temporal control	44	Allocation of blame	56
Communication	45	Trouble	57
Models of the crowd	46	Accountability	58

#### **Axial coding or how the concept cards were grouped.**

Following the process of open coding and the generation of the concept cards outlined above, a process of more abstract or axial coding was used in order to put the data together again by concentrating on selected core categories (see chapter 3). Links between these categories were identified in a process involving constant comparison between the categories until they became 'saturated' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

**Table 2 Concept Card groupings**

**Theories of the crowd**

Crowd danger  
 Crowd organisation  
 Perceptions of danger  
 Anonymity  
 Crowd context  
 Leadership of crowd  
 Psychological merging  
 Differentiation  
 Categorisations  
 Perceptions of safety  
 Contagion  
 Suggestibility  
 Unlimited danger  
 Models of the crowd

**Information**

Intelligence  
 Troublemakers  
 Communication  
 'Hard core'  
 Symbolic locations  
 Surveillance

**Acceptance of damage**

Types of missiles  
 Levels of violence  
 Casualties  
 Quantity of missiles  
 Protective equipment  
 Escalation  
 De-escalation  
 Criteria for danger  
 Leadership

**Control**

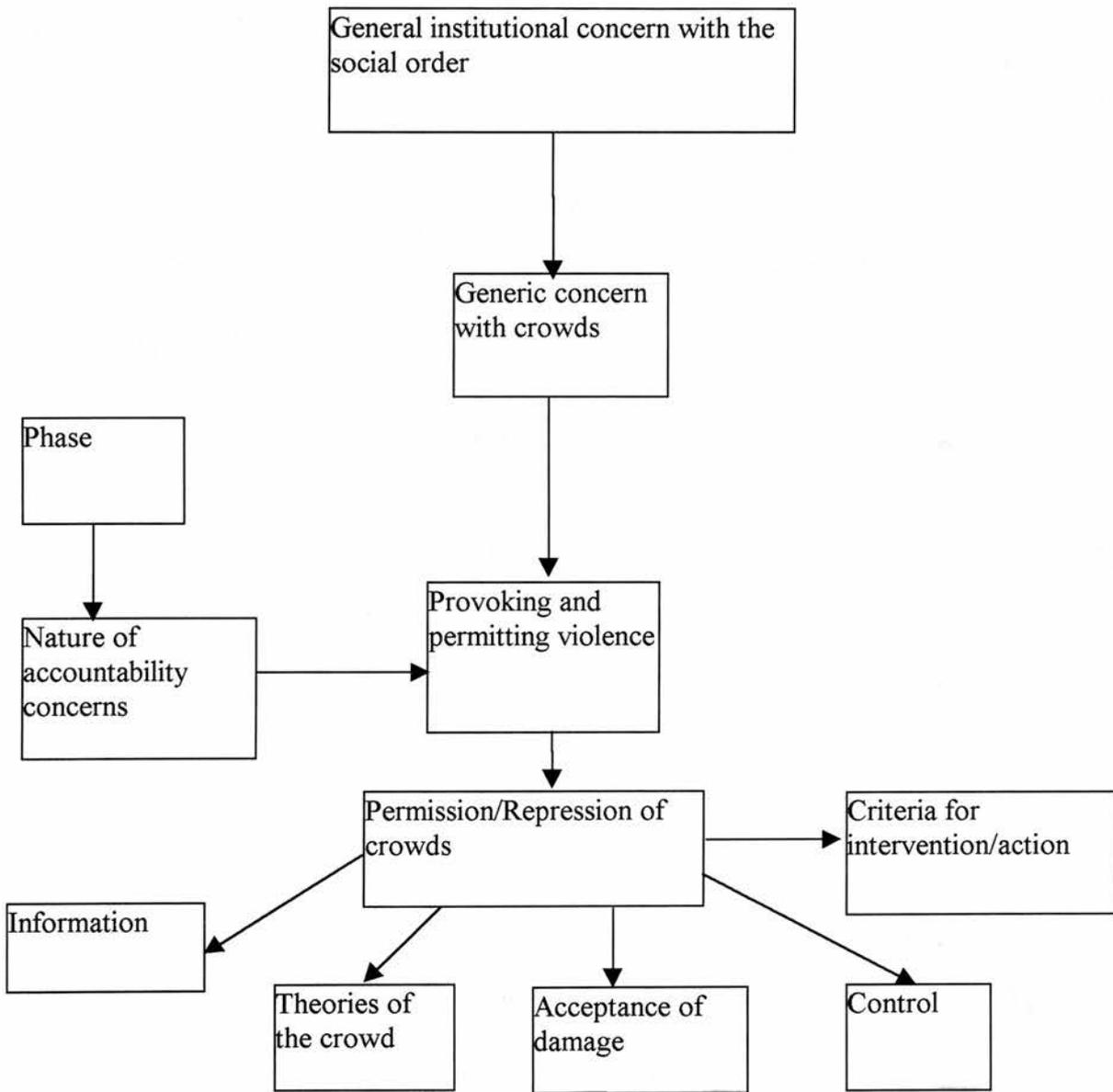
Spatial control  
 Intra group control  
 Intergroup dynamics  
 Intra group structure  
 Noise levels  
 Junior officers  
 Senior officers  
 Hierarchy  
 'Kitting up'  
 Temporal control  
 Normality

**Table 2 Concept Card groupings (continued)****Criteria for intervention**

Intervention
Accountability
Caring for officers
Decision making
Reflexivity
Strategy
Management
Expectations
Tension
Conflict
Tactics
Allocation of blame
Trouble
Danger
Worst case
Specialist weapons
Assumptions
Armageddon

In this more abstract axial coding, theoretical accounts of public order policing emerged in an inductive method and resulted in the grounded theory model of the training exercise emerging, as shown in figure 2 overleaf.

**Figure 2. Grounded Theory model of Public order Policing**



### **4.3. Analysis**

In this section I will explicate the grounded theory model in four parts. First, I will consider the police concern with the social order. Second, I will explicate the balance of permitting or provoking violence and the factors, which affect this balance. Third, I will explore the role of phase. Lastly, I will look in detail at the outcomes or consequences of accountability.

To illustrate that this theory is 'grounded' in the data, selective quotation from the police participants will be utilised (see **appendix b** for acronyms and abbreviations). Anonymity is maintained by using coding conventions for rank, age, level of public order training and length of service as follows.

**(Cmdr.) 42 POA 20 years service = Commander aged 42, Advanced Public Order trained, 20 years service.**

**(C Insp.) 49 POA 29 years service = Chief inspector aged 49, Advanced Public Order trained, 29 years service.**

#### **4.3.1. Crowds seen as a concern for the social order**

The police by their very nature have a concern with the social order, which leads them to have a generic concern with crowds per se. This can be seen in the police assumptions about crowds being dangerous in all contexts and is expressed implicitly in a desire to dominate and control the crowd. It is clearly expressed by the following comment by an officer (who was responding to a query by the instructors about the criteria for dealing with the crowd).

##### **1. (Cmdr.) POA 20 years service**

*"We dominate and control."*

The implicit concern with crowds as posing a concern for the social order, and thus the need to dominate and control them is seen in the exercise, by the way in which the trainees decided on a police strategy for the exercise that was based on 'hard' policing. In the initial phase of the exercise, when the location of the start of the march was found to be waterlogged, a discussion between the officers resulted in one of them suggesting that the

crowd should be allowed to mill around the area. The remaining officers disagreed with this as they felt it might compromise the message they wanted to send out to all the crowd members that the police were out in force. Consider the following quotation which explicitly reinforces the message about the use of a 'hard' policing strategy to the 'dissenter' and rejects the suggestion that the crowd should be allowed to mill around.

## **2. (C Insp.) 49 POA 29**

*"We have a situation here where in our planning stages I think we were planning to police this quite hard. The best description, what we are looking for is to send a message at the assembly point in relation to that, bearing in mind that the assembly point for everybody has basically gone out of the window and we are all having now to redeploy ourselves. From your argument about letting them mill around for a little, are we not actually deviating from our proposed strategy which was to police them hard."*

To reinforce this hard policing style, at the start when the march is waterlogged, the trainees agreed to make use of tactics and technology which emphasises the superiority of the police resources. To be more specific, they agreed to send police vans assigned to the march to drive around the streets to send out a clear explicit message, to all the demonstrators, that the police were out in force.

## **3. (C Insp.) 49 POA 29**

*"I would actually use the mobile reserve, pubs and side streets up Green Lanes, just so that they can see that we're out in force, and they can monitor and feedback information, and it sends out a message when they see lots of carriers wandering up and down Green Lanes. It sends a clear message from here if we are there in strength."*

The reason why the police are so focused on domination and control is that they see the crowd to be inherently dangerous. Put another way, the police have a number of theories of the crowd all of which see the crowd as dangerous in all contexts. In a later section I will examine these theories in more detail. I will look at the differences between them, how they affect the way in which officers balance permission against repression in the treatment of the

crowd, and how the usage of different theories depends on factors such as phase of the event.

For now however, I simply want to show what these theories have in common. In effect, officers vary between seeing the crowd as comprised of 'bad' individuals - or at least under the sway of such people - and seeing all individuals as becoming 'bad' in the crowd. We have encountered these accounts before. In effect the former reflects the Allportian tradition and the latter, the Le Bonian tradition (see chapter 1). This first extract overleaf, is Allportian, in the sense of controlling troublesome individuals.

#### **4. (Cmdr.) POA 20 years service**

*“No, they’ve got to be people that you have identified as key players, key orchestrators and there’s a history to them that forms the basis for you suspecting the breach of the peace by their presence or demonstration.”*

The next extract uses a more Le Bonian account, by stressing how even those who might initially seem peaceful remain liable to turn dangerous.

#### **5. (C Insp.) 45 POA 25**

*“These people have got a grievance against the police as well remember, you’ve got people who have turned up on a march that is against the BNP, they’ve also got a grievance against the police, so whilst there are only 900 people in category A and B the other 4,100, they’re not our best buddies and they will work to a common purpose with the others, and if they see their other buddies getting nicked (arrested), getting pushed by the police, they’ll push back.”*

However, irrespective of which account is used, what they have in common is a view of the crowd as generically dangerous - as always having the potential for conflict - whatever it may appear like on the surface.

### 4.3.2. The balance of provoking and permitting violence

In the next two sections I will look at the balance of provoking and permitting violence and how this balance is affected. There are two key factors. Firstly, and crucially, the balance of provoking and permitting violence depends upon accountability concerns. Secondly, in the different phases of the exercise there is a different sense of accountability, which leads to a different balance of provoking and permitting violence. In this section I will look at accountability concerns, and how they influence the balance of provoking and permitting violence. In the next section I will consider how this balance is affected by the phase of the exercise.

In maintaining control, the police are constrained by the need to avoid provoking or permitting disorder. The police seek to maintain order or control by acting in ways to avoid the loss of control or disorder. This is achieved by setting specific objectives, which attempt to ensure that police action is seen not to provoke or permit disorder, but this is not a private belief, these objectives must be seen to happen, as the police are accountable both internally and externally.

Internal constraints arising in the police context can be seen at two levels. Firstly, in maintaining the collective decision making required in public order policing, it is important to provide leadership to junior officers. This is particularly so when junior officers are injured and make a personal decision to don protective equipment, despite the reluctance of senior colleagues to authorise the use of such equipment. The following comment, which was made as officers discussed (whether riot gear should be issued as violence flared outside the library) illustrates this clearly.

#### 6. (C Insp.) 48 POA 28

*“Officers who self kit, put the gear on (riot protection equipment), that they decide themselves, say sod this I’m gonna go in there kitted up. When trouble starts, you’ve lost control of your officers, that’s what happened in Euro’ 96, the lack of leadership with the Sergeants and Inspectors and they just went in there, PCs (Constables) were in there deciding what they were gonna wear and went in. So part of your briefing initially should be that you have got to give clear directions that they cannot kit up unless they are authorised to do so. Make it clear to the Sergeants and Inspectors that they are leaders of the officers and they must lead them, not stand next to the PCs and do what their PCs would do.”*

Secondly, it becomes important not to be seen to have over reacted by senior colleagues and peers in the public order 'cadre'. The intergroup use of situated vocabularies which in the normal sphere of policing merely signal that an officer requires assistance, but becomes a management perception of a loss of control in the public order context, are therefore to be avoided as they signal a loss of control by the police management team. In any large scale disorder the police will be subject to internal investigation by a 'neutral' senior officer, either from the Metropolitan police or an outside force if merited in terms of serious complaints arising from the disorder (Metropolitan Police, 1999). Consider the following quotation, which clearly illustrates this.

**7. (C Insp.) 48 POA 28**

*"Can I just come in there. This is a pre-planned event. There is no such thing as urgent assistance. Assistance may be required and the police under pressure but when you start using the word urgent you get the blues and twos (blue lights and sirens used on police vans) and you get them doing the wrong thing and you have lost control. Sorry Steve, this is what happened at Park Lane where the sound of urgent assistance led to the carriers going up and down Park Lane like a bloody yo-yo. If that is the case, it is on tape the management have lost control."*

As well as internal constraint there is also external constraint. Officers are acutely aware that their actions may come under the scrutiny of politicians, the media and of public inquiries. Such external accountability concerns can be seen as the march is first re-routed in the initial phase of the exercise, when there is no overt conflict, and the police employ strategies to deflect any blame that might be levelled at them for the change of assembly point. Consider the comment below, which seeks explicitly to place the blame for the re routing of the march on any other organisation apart from the police.

**8. (Cmdr.) 42 POA 20**

*“One of the things that you’ve got to do is make sure that they all understand that it is nothing to do with the police. Blame the Council, blame the cat, they are not happy with the Old Bill (Police) anyway and they’ll use that and assume it was us.”*

In shifting any blame away from the police, junior officers can be used to provide 'misinformation' to crowd members they are walking beside, as the following quotation illustrates.

**9. (Cmdr.) 42 POA 20**

*“You’ve got the street closed, but then you might as well in my mind, use the serials that are gonna march with them to take this opportunity to try and build up a rapport, in other words, be seen as non-threatening, to be helpful, to be guiding, spread the rumour about who to blame. It’s an opportunity there, to get around them with the marching serials, build up a rapport and then stay with them as we follow them into Stoke Newington.”*

The theme of blame allocation continues as missiles are thrown at the library, which causes damage to the fabric of the building, the police seize this as an opportunity to represent the attack as a general assault on the local community. Now it becomes important to convey their message to a wider audience. Trainees propose that this is achieved by firstly contacting members of the consultative group, purportedly representing the local ‘community’ and secondly, by using police press officers to spread the message through the local media.

**10. (Cmdr.) 42 POA 20**

*“Not forgetting the warm and cuddly side of dealing with the community out there, what they have actually done at the library is present you with a current and subsequent opportunity, they’ve attacked the local community if you want to put it that way, and if you’ve got your Area Press and Publicity Officers (APPO’s) out and the local press there and you’ve got your Police Consultative Group (PCCG) representatives out, you can spread that message.”*

The police are ultimately accountable through public scrutiny in the form of any inquiries, which might be instituted after any event involving disorder. It is important that the police are seen not to have lost control of the situation and therefore lay themselves open as an organisation to such an accusation. The use of conversations on the 'secret' police communication channels must therefore avoid any situated vocabulary that may convey such an impression if it was required to be disclosed to such an inquiry. As the officers come under attack outside the library, the trainees remained focused on external accountability in framing vocabulary, which on the one hand indicates that police serials require assistance, but on the other which does not convey the message that they lost control of the situation to any subsequent enquiry. From the quotation below we can see how (as officers came under severe attack at the junction past the library) the trainees remained focused on external accountability in framing their response.

#### **11. (C Insp.) 48 POA 28**

*“So tell your officers if they require assistance fine, they require assistance because the serials are under pressure or whatever it is, but do not use urgent assistance because you would have lost control if that happens and at any enquiry you will be criticised because you had no control of the situation.”*

It can be seen, then, that different accountability concerns lead to different emphases on repression and permission of crowd action. Broadly speaking, internal accountability leads to a focus on protecting officers and downplaying the consequences of police tactics for crowds. It leads to a prioritisation of repression over permission. Conversely, external accountability leads to a focus on not being seen to have provoked violence, to ensure that the police cannot be blamed for conflict, and hence a relative prioritisation of permission over repression. In the next section, I will reinforce this message by looking at how different phases of the event affect the balance of repression and permission through the way in which they impact on different accountability concerns.

### 4.3.3. The role of Phase

Initially, when there is no signs of overt conflict, when the marchers have assembled, the police must balance provoking and permitting violence because they are both accountable internally for the safety of their own officers, and to external sources such as the media, courts and public inquiry. In deciding upon whether to arrest a group of 40 'hard-core' troublemakers who are seen going towards the assembly area, the police have to consider the logistics of doing so and any danger posed to their officers as the following quotation makes explicit.

#### 12. (C Insp.) 48 POA 28

*"If you arrest them in these early stages you are going to wipe out several reserves of officers because you are going to need two officers to each prisoner. Also you may get some injuries to officers when they try to arrest these 40 hard core as they may get help from their mates in the crowd."*

However, the strategy of arresting these 40 hard-core troublemakers also has implications in terms of external constraints on the police. More specifically, several of the trainees debated whether arresting these people on suspicion of being about to commit a Breach of the Peace would be a legitimate tactic which could be justified to both the Metropolitan Police Solicitors department (who had to defend any civil action for damages for wrongful arrest) and any subsequent criminal court proceedings.

#### 13. (C Insp.) 48 POA 28

*"That's an interesting concept. I wonder if we could get away with it. I think our intelligence about those individuals would have to be very strong for us to justify, lets say in the eyes of solicitors branch and any subsequent court proceedings, where we would be held accountable for these decisions."*

In what might be termed the incipient phase, when bricks and bottles are thrown at the unprotected officers outside the library, the balance of accountability and hence of permission and repression of crowds shifts. Officers are still aware that they could be held to account for permitting violence, both by their own officers and by external agencies. However, it is ambiguous to them as to whether they could be held to account for provoking

violence. After all, to some extent the violence is already there. On the other hand they could be seen to inflame a trivial situation. Nonetheless, overall, the relative balance between repression and permission has shifted with comparatively more weight on the former than the latter as compared to the first phase of the events. Tangibly this is seen in responding to information about bricks and bottles being thrown at officers in ordinary uniform, by a group of forty 'hard-core troublemakers' and agreeing on the need to arrest them but showing uncertainty as to exactly where, how and when.

**14. (C Insp.) 48 POA 28**

*"I mean 40 is not a great deal at this stage, there are in excess of 5,000 people on this march. You might want to get those past the library as quickly as possible and that would exacerbate the situation. It might be better to take them out (arrest and deal with them) at a later stage at a place that is more convenient to us, because here you have not got the resources and we may actually lose control. It might be better to deal with them by gaining information and intelligence and then at some later date dealing with them."*

In response to the instructors providing further verbal information regarding the fact that these unprotected officers were being injured by bricks and bottles, senior officers again seem unwilling to confront the 40 troublemakers identified within the crowd. They waver between using repressive tactics and backing off from being seen to inflame the situation as the following extract illustrates.

**15. (Cmdr.) 42 POA 20**

*"I would be wanting to ask at this stage for the reserve officers to be kitted up (allowed to don protective riot gear) because you seem to be in escalating violence. Your officers have already been injured and you have to balance being seen to protect them, with inflaming the whole crowd. It is a balancing act, you have to ask for these officers to be kitted up while at the same time ensuring they are tucked away around the corner so as not provoke the crowd. If they are kept out of sight of the crowd you can always de-escalate by not using them with kit (protective riot gear)."*

In the final phase, when the police are faced with petrol bombs and the alleged use of firearms, the trainees are not concerned with provoking violence, as it has already happened, but seek to avoid being held to account for permitting violence. To be more explicit, in response to verbal information from the instructors that petrol bombs are being used against officers, the police seek to avoid any suggestion that they permitted violence. The officers quickly decide to debate the use of all possible options including the use of horses and bringing the Designated Senior Officer (DSO) to the scene. In the following quote, the officer is responsible for assessing whether situation with the crowd has reached such a level as to require the DSO to be called to the scene, to assess whether the criteria for the use of baton rounds and firearms to repress the crowd have been met, as the following quotation makes explicit.

**16. M (Cmdr.) 42 POA 20**

*"They are now chucking petrol bombs at me .... I would consider whether the horses were an option at this stage, if they were not because of the crowd dynamics, because we have people trapped in burning buildings, I think I would be saying to Silver (in charge of tactics) I want a DSO (Designated Senior Officer - responsible for the deployment of firearms and baton round officers) here so we can depart and leave him to make the decision about authorising the use of specialist weapons and tactics (baton rounds and firearms)."*

Crucially, the change in the balance of provoking and permitting violence, as a result of the changing phases, has implications for the balance of permission and repression of crowds which are seen as the consequences or outcomes from accountability concerns, and which brings me on to the next part of the analysis.

#### **4.3.4. The consequences or outcomes from accountability concerns**

In the previous section I have shown the balance of provoking and permitting violence, the phase of the exercise the officers believed themselves to be in, and its impact on accountability concerns. As well as affecting judgements of officers in these ambiguous circumstances, these concerns have real consequences in a number of areas.

Put another way, the antecedent concerns of the police, in the form of maintaining order, affect the balance of provoking and permitting violence with the outcome that a series of dilemmas emerge in relation to police interpretation and action. What constitutes a dilemma and the ways in which they are resolved changes in relation to the different phases of the exercise. I will explicate this relationship by exploring these dilemmas of interpretation and action during the different phases of the exercise; when there is no overt conflict (at the assembly), incipient conflict (missiles thrown outside the library), and where there is overt sustained conflict (petrol bombs and the alleged use of firearms).

##### **4.3.4.1. Information**

###### **Phase: No Overt Conflict**

The dilemma involving information revolves around the fact that the police have various sources of information, which give different indications of danger, Special Branch (SB), Forward Intelligence Teams (FIT's) and what they see. Therefore what information do they prioritise? This changes according to the phase.

In the initial phase, information regarding greater danger, in the form of Special Branch (SB) assessments of potentially 900 troublemakers, are balanced by evidence of lesser danger in the form of direct evidence supplied by the Forward Intelligence Teams (FIT's) of only 40 'troublemakers'. Both of these estimates are out of a total of 5000 protesters. This can be seen in the comments of one trainee contemplating the evidence of possible trouble.

**17. (C Insp.) 49 POA 29**

*“I mean 40 is not a great deal at this stage, there are in excess of 5000 people on this march. You might want to get those 40 past as quickly as possible, and that would exacerbate the situation, then you would start talking about how we are gonna take these people out at a later stage at a place that is maybe most suitable to us because here, what you don’t what to do is make a stand, because maybe you haven’t got the resources and indeed actually lose it in a place that isn’t really suitable for us. So all the time you’ve been clocking information, intelligence, finding out, getting evidence of these people, taking them past the library as quickly as possible and then at some later date deal with them.”*

**Phase: Incipient Conflict**

When conflict first occurs at the library, information from Special Branch (SB) assessments (900 troublemakers) are now given more weight than the Forward Intelligence Teams (FIT’s, 40 troublemakers). The SB assessment is assumed to be right and the lesser estimate now becomes merely one to discover the remaining 800 anonymous troublemakers.

**18. (C Insp.) 45 POA 25**

*“What you have to do, you have to reflect back to your information from Special Branch which gave you approximately 900 people who are wanting to have a fight who are going to be there. You have already met about 50 or 60, you may well have a hundred there, you know, don’t know, but you’ve definitely met 50 or 60 so where’s the other 800 and odd.”*

**Phase: Overt Sustained Conflict**

In the final phase, when there is sustained conflict and the police are facing petrol bombs and the alleged use of firearms, they can no longer be accused of provoking disorder, they can however be held to account for permitting it. Thus only information suggesting danger is taken seriously. This extends beyond the 900 troublemakers previously sought, to all 5,000 crowd members, as the following quotation makes explicit.

**19. (C Insp.) 39 POA 20**

*"We have to treat all 5,000 members of the crowd as dangerous, and liable to join in the violence against police. Therefore we have to be careful and disperse the whole crowd (all 5,000), as quickly as we can to regain control of this."*

In summary then, as phase and hence accountability concerns change, so the emphasis on different forms of information changes. Progressively less emphasis is put on information suggesting limited danger and progressively more on information, which plays up the danger of the crowd.

**4.3.4.2. Theories of the crowd****Phase: No Overt Conflict**

It will be recalled from the discussion in **section 4.3.1.** above, that the police have a view of the crowd as inherently violent and dangerous in all contexts. To be more explicit, they see the crowd in terms of crowd models, which see them as 'mad' (Le Bon) or 'bad' (Allport) whatever the context. I now want to look at how the balance between these theories changes according to the phase of the exercise the officers believe themselves to be in.

In fact, the Allportian and Le Bonian models can be seen as lying along a continuum. At one extreme the crowd is seen as made up of a violent minority and a relatively safe majority. At the other extreme the minority can be seen as able to infect the majority such that, through contagion, all are dangerous. Where along this continuum do officers lie? This again varies according to the phase.

In the initial phase, the police emphasise models of crowd behaviour which rely on the assumption that crowds are presumed to be safe unless they are seen to be dangerous. The police differentiate between the various groups contained within the crowd and therefore minorities of troublemakers are identified within the majority of peaceful demonstrators.

**20. (Cmdr.) POA 20 years service**

*“No, they’ve got to be people that you have identified as key players, key orchestrators and there’s a history to them that forms the basis for you suspecting a Breach of the Peace by their presence or demonstration.”*

**Phase: Incipient Conflict**

When the police are first involved in conflict outside the library, the police appear to use a ‘hybrid’ model of the crowd in which the dangerous minorities are seen as capable of infecting the majority of previous peaceful demonstrators. Thus the police are wary of using tactical options which might ‘inflammate’ the other crowd members.

**21. (C Insp.) 54 POA 26**

*“Up to a thousand people who are trouble makers. We have only identified forty of them. If we go and arrest those, that could inflame the others and they could cause trouble here or further on.”*

**Phase: Overt Sustained Conflict**

As the event develops, and the fighting escalates, the police use models of the crowd, which see the minority develop to a situation where all members are seen to be homogeneously dangerous or anti police. This marks a fundamental shift in the theories of the crowd and flies against the direct evidence supplied by the intelligence teams, and greatly exaggerates the threat assessment previously supplied by Special Branch. Put another way, concerns as to the nature of danger appears to shift according to the police perception of control. Thus at the beginning concerns by the police are weighed against the danger posed, whilst later on the theories are used to justify the concerns. When the uncertainty of the danger is most apparent at the height of conflict, the meanings, contexts and models of the crowd appear to shift fundamentally in assuming the worst, and treating the crowd as homogeneously problematic.

**22. (C Insp.) 45 POA 25**

*“These people have got a grievance against the police as well remember, you’ve got people who have turned up on a march that is against the BNP, so whilst there is only 900 people in category A and B (police categories of troublemakers) the other 4,100, they’re not our best buddies, and they will work to a common purpose with the others and if they see their other buddies getting ‘nicked’ (arrested) or getting pushed by the police they’ll push back.”*

Here again we see a shift over phase from theories which suggest lesser danger (and hence imply less repression) to those which suggest greater danger (and hence imply more repression).

**4.3.4.3. Acceptance of damage****Phase: No overt conflict**

In the initial phase, the dilemma for the police of accepting too much, or not enough, damage to property, themselves or members of the public, does not arise as there is no conflict or damage to consider. This dilemma is reserved for the incipient phase, when the police are being attacked outside the library and in the sustained overt phase, when they are faced with petrol bombs and firearms. These will be discussed in turn.

**Phase: Incipient conflict**

When the march passes the library the police serials (constables, sergeants and inspectors) deployed to protect it, are attacked by missiles thrown by a small minority (40-50) previously identified by the police as the ‘hard core’. At this phase of the exercise the police are still concerned with not being seen to provoke conflict and hence are willing to accept some damage in order to make clear that the crowd, and not they, are responsible for the events.

**23. (C Insp.) 48 POA 28**

*“One of the biggest problems that you are gonna have especially in this sort of scenario is pressure on you to get 'kitted' officers (officers wearing protective riot gear) in there quickly. Officers these days want to be 'kitted' up. As managers of the event you are gonna be put under a lot of pressure by your serials to get people kitted up, sometimes I know it sounds horrible, sometimes you may have to take a couple of injuries.”*

**Phase: Overt Sustained conflict**

When the police are facing petrol bombs and firearms they cannot at this stage be accused of provoking disorder, they can however be held to account for permitting disorder. They therefore seek to minimise damage to property, injuries to the public and to officers. Officers previously unprotected and injured are withdrawn and replaced by officers wearing full protective equipment, (flame-retardant overalls, shields and protective helmets). The march and rally is now categorised as a riot to be dispersed.

**24. (C Insp.) 39 POA 20**

*“We can actually start now looking to withdraw those people who are unprotected (not wearing riot gear), and replace them with officers who are protected, because now we've got what is turning from a demonstration into a riot situation, and we need to start enforcing our will on the crowd, so we will start using up the forces we've got to actually deal with that, we'll start looking at dispersal areas, where we'll push people away, break them up as a crowd.”*

#### 4.3.4.4. Control

##### Phase: No Overt Conflict

The dilemma for the police in terms of control can be explicated in the relationship of the police exerting too much or excessive control, and being accused of provoking disorder, as opposed to exerting too little and being accused of permitting disorder. This changes as a function of the phases of the exercise.

Initially, when there are no signs of trouble the symbolic nature of the police as representing agents of the social order requires them to be seen to avoid defeat and in consequence they retain control over the event by deciding what, when and why things happen. This is seen initially, in their prescribing the date, time and route of the march. In the exercise - following overnight rain - the agreed assembly point at Clissold Park was waterlogged, and therefore unsuitable for use. The challenge to the police tactical plan of containing the march within the park was met quickly by the trainees who decided on an alternative assembly for the demonstration, Stoke Newington Church Street, a public road bordering the park. However, at the same time the police need to consider the danger of causing conflict by being too controlling. They must be seen to listen to and respect the views of crowd members. Hence they seek to advise and cajole rather than simply impose their priorities. This is seen in using police vehicles with personal address systems to provide guidance about where to assemble.

#### 25. (C Insp.) 54 POA 26

*“Yeah you could use the PA systems on one of the vehicles again. Not everybody’s so anti, they all need to know where the start is. Let’s just start off with guidance, getting bits and pieces out, and just tell them where it is that they need to go now, so make sure they are not roaming around in the wrong direction because we want them all down at the bottom of the junction of Stoke Newington Church Street.”*

The police take this as an opportunity to shape the geographical decisions made by the crowd by organising the crowd into a disciplined formation. Consider the following quotation, from one of the trainees, which makes this point explicitly.

**26. (Cmdr.) 42 POA 20**

*“ They are gonna form in a natural pack there, and your opportunity to turn them into a discipline file is when they bundle into Stoke Newington, so it’s about policing around that junction to get them in a fairly organised way from both North and South.”*

The police act in similar ways when it comes to determining the timing of events. When police are faced with a request to change the agreed starting time tactics to ensure that the original time is adhered to are used on crowd members. Firstly, the police argue that it is inconvenient for them to change the agreed start time, as the following quotation illustrates.

**27. (C Insp.) 54 POA 26**

*“Well, the time that we are working to. We’re talking about, we want to go at 1.30. We are geared up for this thing to move off at 1.30. Therefore I think that we should be trying to get them to move off at the time that we want, not at the time that they want and I’ll argue on that basis.”*

Secondly, the police seek to persuade the crowd that it is for their own safety to set off at the agreed time, consider the following quotation, which makes this point explicitly.

**28. (C Insp.) 48 POA 28**

*“As Mick said, what you’ve go to do is, if you argue that police are not ready they couldn’t care two monkeys whether you are ready or not, but if you turn it around saying it’s for your own safety because we have still got vehicles on the route, you will have to give us a little more time to clear the route so that you can march.”*

**Phase: Incipient Conflict**

When the police are first involved in conflict outside the library, the police begin to shift from deciding things with the crowd to deciding things for the crowd. Such direct control is exerted both in terms of space and time as the following extracts show. Overall, the police seek to control the flow of the crowd and ensure that the march does not stop.

**29. (C Insp.) 48 POA 28**

*“Can I just come in there. Somebody said stop the march. Your problem if you stop the march is loss of control. You can slow it down but you must keep the march moving otherwise once you stop it the march will turn round on you, you saw what happened at Whitehall when they went to the gates at Downing Street, the front of the march turned round and went back towards them, so if you keep it going the majority of the people would go to where they want to get to. Once we stop it, it gives protesters the chance to go back and join the others so you’ve got to keep the front of the march moving even if it is at a snails pace, you keep it going.”*

**Phase: Overt Sustained Conflict**

As violence escalates so the imposition of control by the police becomes both more draconian in terms of using tactics such as dispersal, and more widespread in the sense of being applied not only to crowd members but to anyone who might enter the area occupied by the crowd. This is achieved by closing roads and other access points and communicating this to the wider public by managing messages delivered to the media.

**30. (Cmdr.) 42 POA 20**

*“You’ve already done that. I mean you’ve done that about managing dispersal, it’s managing the public it’s managing the media, you’ve trained your specialist to get your message out first. It’s about managing that outer cordon to stop the others coming in.”*

#### 4.3.4.5. Criteria for intervention/action

##### Phase: No Overt Conflict.

At the initial phase of events, the police are very concerned to ensure that they only intervene against those who are known to be troublemakers. Hence interventions are very targeted and highly differentiated. Consider the following quotation in which one of the trainees suggests targeting identified organisers, or people with criminal convictions for violence, as a possible way of selecting the arrests to be made.

##### 31. (Cmdr.) 42 POA 20

*“Well no it’s 10 on the whole event with what we were shown the other day by as an example. The principle I am trying to underline here is how would have policing at Welling worked before the Police Bronzes got nicked 20 minutes before the event. That’s what I want to do with them. I don’t want to nick every Inspector and every PSU down there I want to take their bonuses I want every piece of equipment there is. If they have organisers or people with a regular history of serious disorder or been involved, it’s about shooting the chiefs. I’m not talking about nicking 20 or 30, that early in the day anyway, I think you could nick 10 and bring the troops back out.”*

##### Phase: Incipient Conflict

At the library when the police serials are first under attack the police begin to shift their criteria for intervention. Arrests are no longer confined to supposed ringleaders. It becomes possible to contemplate arrest even for minor offences and the police debate the relative merits of arresting for ‘serious’ or ‘minor’ crimes and the practical and logistical difficulties associated with such interventions.

##### 32. (C Insp.) 48 POA 28

*“It comes back to your initial arrest policy, which you made from the very beginning, what offences are you going to arrest for. You can arrest for a very serious crime or minor crime, some of them they will be smoking things like cannabis, just purely to wind the PCs up, so your arrest policy has got to be very clear, what you are gonna arrest for. It comes back to what Ray said at the very beginning, he said get your Forward Intelligence Teams (FIT's) down, your evidence gatherers there.”*

The tactics also become less differentiated and begin to be directed at the crowd as a whole. Thus there is talk of intervening to drive the crowd as a whole past the library.

### **33. (Cmdr.) 42 POA 20**

*“Protected officers out (officers in riot gear), in to the crowd to drive them on past the library. There will be some arrests I think.”*

#### **Phase: Overt Sustained Conflict**

As the conflict escalates, so the police set out to restore order by all available means. Once again their interventions become both harder and wider.

The use of shields and mounted officers are now considered to be a legitimate tactic to achieve the restoration of order. These tactics will be employed directly against the crowd who will be pushed indiscriminately away from the area of confrontation. Those not wishing to go will be involved in fighting with the police even if it might be a surprise for them to be confronted by such officers as the following quotation makes explicit.

### **34. (Cmdr.) 42 POA 20**

*“My intention with the horses would be first to reinforce the shields, have shield serials authorised, use shield serials to stop people coming down Stoke Newington High Street. I know there’s lots of them, but you’ve got a slight advantage because most of them can’t see what’s going on they are still backed up around there, so you are only going to be using the ones at the front they can’t get a lot of momentum up to push, so you could probably stand and fight with the crowd, I suppose, and start trying to force them, to stop them coming south so they’ve got no choice but to stand still, standing still is not getting them where they want to go.”*

If the tactics of the police with the use of shields and mounted officers are ineffective to restore order, the police will ensure that the area is flooded with officers. This will be achieved by calling on mobile level one-reserve officers some of whom, depending on other commitments, remain on permanent standby for such an eventuality.

**35. (C Insp.) 39 POA 20**

*“I would now be considering Commissioner’s Reserve (mobile police reserves) because we are getting a few seats of disorder here and I would be wondering whether I had actually got the resources to deal with this.”*

In response to the perceived need for more resources, one of the Chief Inspectors suggests it is now time to activate the force mobilisation plan. This will result in the call out of officers from their homes to be brought to the scene of the disorder. As one trainee tersely responds when asked what he would do next.

**36. (C Insp.) 54 POA 26**

*“The mobilisation plan.”*

In this area, perhaps more than any other, we see profound phase shifts as officers become progressively less concerned with being held to account for provoking violence. Any concern with alienating or intervening against innocent bystanders is lost. Harsh tactics are used which target all those in the vicinity and woe betide anyone who gets in the way!

#### **4.4. Discussion**

This analysis of senior decision making during a public order training exercise provides evidence that the overall framing concerns of the police are to maintain order as crowds are inherently dangerous and pose the question of control. The police seek to maintain order or control by setting specific objectives, which attempt to ensure that police action, is seen not to provoke or permit disorder. But this is not a private belief as they are accountable internally; from senior officers, peers and junior officers and externally, through public criticism and scrutiny in the form of public inquiries.

Put another way, police must balance the costs of provoking or permitting disorder under conditions of uncertainty. The ways they resolve uncertainty and react is related to how they may be held to account for different outcomes. If this looks familiar it may be helpful to conceptualise this, in terms of Signal Detection Theory (SDT) where false positives = assuming dangerous when it is not, i.e. provoking disorder, and where false negatives = assuming safe when it is not, i.e. permitting disorder (Green & Swets, 1966, McNicol, 1972). Put another way in the language of hypothesis testing, false positives can be conceptualised as analogous to Type 1 errors, while false negatives can be viewed as Type 2 errors (Green & Swets, 1966, McNicol, 1972).

Extending the Signal Detection analogy, the analysis shows that the police in deciding what to do, how to treat information and how to act will depend on a criterion level which itself is a function of a 'pay off matrix'. In other words what are the relative costs of provoking or permitting disorder i.e. false positives versus false negatives? But once again it is crucial to see these in the context of how police may be held accountable by others.

Crucially, the key link in the analysis is how the specific objectives of the police relate to the phases of crowd action, when there is no overt conflict, (at the assembly), incipient conflict (missiles thrown outside the library), and where there is overt sustained conflict (petrol bombs and the alleged use of firearms), and how the 'pay off matrix' changes due to the different ways in which one might be held to be account in these different phases.

In the initial stages of the exercise, the police seek to balance the contradictory nature of false positives and false negatives, in other words not to be held accountable for provoking or permitting disorder. When incipient conflict starts at the library, the objectives of the police not to provoke or permit disorder appear to enter an ambiguous zone. While they can be held to account for not stopping disorder they are not clear whether they can be held to account for provoking it. In other words, while false negatives i.e. permitting

disorder are serious it is not clear whether false positives are. Finally, when sustained overt conflict is happening they cannot at this stage be accused of provoking disorder, so false positives become trivial. The police can however be held to account for permitting disorder, it thus becomes vital for them to avoid false negatives.

This analysis has three main findings. First, it confirms and extends Stott & Reicher's 1998 findings (see chapter 1), that police have a concern with crowds and treat all crowds in a punitive and undifferentiated manner. Second, and more generally, the findings confirm the review from the historical literature in both the American and British contexts that police have a fear of crowds. Thirdly, the analysis shows how accountability concerns influence police decision-making in ambiguous circumstances. These will be discussed in turn.

First, while the findings of the analysis confirm Stott and Reicher's (1998) findings that police have a concern with crowds, and treat all crowds in a punitive and undifferentiated manner, the analysis points to the fact that this previous finding may well be too simplistic. To be more explicit, the analysis in this chapter supports the notion that the police appear to undergo a transition from differentiated to undifferentiated action. So in the early phases, action is considered only against identified targets within the crowd, whereas when trouble begins, the police clamp down and treat the crowd in an undifferentiated way, deploying all available resources in an attempt to restore order.

Second, the findings from this analysis also confirm the review from the historical literature in both the British and American contexts that police have a fear of crowds (see chapter 2). However, what is new in this analysis, is how accountability and phase considerations shape the decision making of senior public order trained officers, and how these in turn affect different outcomes.

Third, and perhaps the key point of the analysis, is how accountability concerns frame police decision-making in ambiguous contexts. We have seen in this analysis that precursors to accountability include phase, there may be others. The outputs and consequences from accountability concerns were seen in a series of dilemmas involving interpretation and action.

Now let me move on to the implications for social psychology in general. We have seen in this analysis that accountability is a central concept. This has not been present in previous crowd theories. Why should this be? In previous social psychological investigations into groups and crowds, researchers have dealt with adhoc groups, which have no formal criteria for membership or group exclusion. By contrast the police, are a

formal institution with group rules that have to be met in order to satisfy others that you should stay in the group. If group members violate these rules then sanctions can include being excluded from the group. Hence it is crucial to be alert to how others view you, how your behaviour is likely to be judged by them and how it might affect your standing in the group.

More generally, it can be argued that where group membership is less a matter of choice and more a matter of satisfying criteria that are judged by others, so accountability becomes a major issue. It therefore needs to be taken more seriously by psychologists interested in group processes.

These conclusions must, however, be tempered by four weaknesses of the present study. First, it may be argued that the data is reactive in the sense that my participation on the course may have influenced the behaviour of the officers undergoing training. It will be recalled from chapter 3 that this was a difficulty highlighted in utilising participant observation techniques. To counter this, in the week leading up to the training exercise, I built up the trust of the officers being trained to ensure that I was treated as an in-group member. This was helped in part by my former experience as a senior police officer.

Secondly, the approach of grounded theory is an iterative one, and it is therefore impossible, although desirable, to interpret all of the nuances and personal allusions present in the video transcription. A crucial requirement for high quality grounded theory is that the initial descriptions of public order policing should approximate or 'fit' this phenomena (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This analysis is therefore open to challenge on the grounds that it may not be reflecting the participants' social reality, whilst accepting the validity of the criticism in general, in this particular study, feedback sessions with the participants produced a unanimous agreement that this analysis provided a close approximation of their subjective experience of policing crowds.

Third, the use of phase in no way implies an inevitable sequence of no violence, incipient violence and sustained violence. The phases can occur in any combination moving from one to the other and back again. The use of phase is utilised to identify differences in violence rather than to carry any implications about their order of progression.

Lastly, the training exercise was an artificial environment where the officers receiving training, had prior knowledge that the levels of violence they would experience would start at a lower level before leading to major violence or in police argot the 'Armageddon scenario'.

This knowledge, along with other factors such as the need to impress the instructors running the course, may well have meant that what trainees did and said may bear little relation to what they would do or say in a 'live' event. There is obviously a need to complement these findings with an analysis of such 'live' events. There is also a need to provide more systematic and controlled evidence of the links between accountability and phase on the one hand, and how officers perceive and treat crowds on the other.

This is precisely what we will look at over the next three chapters. First, I will report the results of an experimental study which manipulated the relationship between internal and external accountability concerns and phase (chapter 5). Second, I will report a series of pilot participant observational studies of the Muslim festival of Eid and the Sikh festival of Vaisakhi (chapter 6). Third, I will complement the lessons learnt in these 'live' events with a further 'live' study, which looked at the 'Carnival against Capitalism' in June 1999 and resulted in some of the worst scenes of violence seen in London since the 'Poll Tax' riots of the 1990's (chapter 7).

## **Chapter 5.**

### **Two experimental studies of Police decision-making.**

#### **5.1. Introduction: Theoretical Model**

The key point to emerge from my analysis in the previous chapter, was that senior police decision making concerning public order is mediated by accountability concerns, which vary as a function of phase. To be more precise, accountability considerations can be broken down into internal and external sources. Under conditions of internal accountability (accountability for their own officers) senior officers are more concerned to look after the safety of their own officers and not with the crowd. Under conditions of external accountability (accountability to politicians, the media and public inquiry) senior officers are concerned with balancing the need to ensure the safety of junior officers with the rights of the crowd, and are, compared to conditions of internal accountability, less punitive towards the crowd.

#### **Effects of accountability on police action**

I would predict that under conditions of internal accountability, senior officers will seek to avoid permitting violence, even if this means being repressive towards the crowd. However, under conditions of external accountability, senior officers will seek to avoid provoking as well as permitting violence, and that this will impact on their actions, in so far as permissive and repressive tendencies will be balanced against each other. This may be formally expressed in terms of an initial three experimental hypotheses:

**H1 Under conditions of internal accountability, police will place more weight on permitting than provoking violence.**

**H2 Under conditions of external accountability, police will place an equal weight on permitting and provoking violence.**

**H3 Conditions of internal accountability will increase the relative concern with permitting violence over provoking violence compared to conditions of external accountability. Therefore police will be more prepared to use repressive actions against the crowd when internal as opposed to external accountability concerns are made salient.**

### **Effects of phase on police action**

Let us now move on to the issue of phase. As I have noted, the nature of accountability concerns varies as a function of phase. The way in which this occurs can be represented schematically as follows (where bold implies greater concern):

#### **Phase 1 (no conflict)**

**Provoking**

**Permitting**

#### **Phase 2 (incipient conflict)**

Provoking?

**Permitting**

#### **Phase 3 (sustained conflict)**

Provoking

**Permitting**

Thus in phase 1 (no conflict), senior officers give an equal weighting to provoking or permitting violence, since they may be held to account for either. In phase 2 (incipient violence) officers are clearly accountable for and concerned about permitting violence, but it is ambiguous as to whether they can be held to account for provoking violence which is, by definition, already beginning to occur. Hence, relatively speaking, they are less concerned with provocation. Finally, in the sustained conflict phase, officers are not concerned with being held to account for provoking violence (as in a sense it has already happened) but permitting violence is to be avoided at all costs.

In other words, I would expect that in these different phases, senior police officers would see the crowd differently. More specifically, I would expect them to perceive the crowd as more dangerous, contagious and homogeneous (liable to get out of hand) as the level of conflict increases, leading them to be more interventionist. This predicted pattern of results can be formally stated in terms of a further hypothesis:

**H4 As the level of violence increases, so the police will become more concerned with permitting as opposed to provoking violence.**

**Therefore, police will be more prepared to use repressive actions against the crowd in more conflictual phases of crowd events.**

### **The phase accountability interaction and police action**

In contrast to my clear predictions about the effects of accountability and phase, the issue of the inter-relationship between the two variables is less clear-cut, and less central to my argument. Nonetheless, there is reason to suppose that in phase 2 (incipient violence), where the nature of accountability concerns is more ambiguous to officers, then the effect of manipulating accountability may be greater than in phases 1 (no violence) and 3 (sustained violence), where accountability issues are more clear-cut.

To be more explicit, in phase 1, it is self evident that whatever issues of accountability are stressed, that officers could be responsible for provoking a peaceful crowd or for allowing an assembly to act dangerously. Similarly, in phase 3 where a full blown riot is in progress, it is again self evident, that permitting violence is the only issue when one is facing ones own officers, the media or politicians.

Yet in phase 2, the incipient phase, ones own officers may be clamouring to don protective riot clothing and disperse the crowd, whereas a public inquiry might condemn such actions as 'inflaming' a tricky situation. Here internal versus external accountability, may well lead to respectively laying more stress on permitting versus provoking violence, and hence may make one more or less repressive. In short I would expect a phase x accountability interaction.

**Accountability, phase and the antecedents of police action**

Thus far my predictions have been concerned with the effects of accountability, of phase and of the interaction between the two, upon the actions as decided by senior police officers during crowd events. However, the argument also has implications for the psychological antecedents of such actions.

Accountability concerns are of significance because of the way in which they alter the value placed on particular outcomes, and not so much the expectation that such outcomes will occur. Thus, internal accountability makes senior officers place more importance on ensuring that they don't permit violence that would cause harm to their own ranks, whereas external accountability makes senior officers balance injuries to their officers with the rights of the crowd.

In so far as phase effects are important because of the ways in which they alter how officers can be held to account, phase should therefore effect the valuation of outcomes. However, it is reasonable to suppose that it should also affect expectations. Thus as the crowd becomes more violent this should affect expectations about how the crowds will act, how they will be influenced and how different tactics will impact on crowd action.

Finally, since accountability effects are only predicted to impact upon values, I would only predict a phase x accountability interaction on such variables. This can be formally expressed in the following four hypotheses:

**H5 Under conditions of external accountability, police will place more value on avoiding repressive measures and not provoking violence, compared to conditions of internal accountability.**

**H6 Accountability conditions will have no effect on expectations of danger or violence in the crowd.**

**H7 As the phases of an event become more violent, so police will both expect the crowd to be more dangerous, and place greater value on using repressive measures and avoiding violence.**

**H8 The interaction of accountability and phase, will only occur for the value of avoiding repression and violence such that the greater value placed on such avoidance under external as opposed to internal accountability conditions, will be particularly apparent in the incipient phase (phase 2) of events.**

### **The experimental studies**

To test these hypotheses, two experimental studies were designed to look firstly, at the antecedents of action and secondly, to look at senior police officers actions. For both experiments the participants were the same 45 senior public order trained officers of the Metropolitan police, and the two studies were run consecutively. Clearly, such a procedure is far from ideal. Performance in the first study may well impact on performance in the second. It is therefore necessary to explain why it was decided to employ such a procedure.

First of all, the decision to run the two studies rather than one large study was due to the number of dependent measures. It was felt that, in a single study, the effects of the manipulations would be all but forgotten - or at least highly diluted - by the time the later measures were completed. Hence, one could not expect to get meaningful tests of my hypotheses by adopting a 'one experiment solution'.

Secondly, the reason why I used the same participants for the two studies, and that I ran the studies consecutively, has to do with the practicalities of using senior police officers as my participants, rather than the more common psychology students for social psychology experiments. Clearly, since I was concerned with how senior officers make decisions, they had to be the participants. However, such people are rather thin on the ground (indeed, rather than being a population sample, the participants constituted the majority of the entire population of active senior public order officers in the Metropolitan police). It was therefore impossible to use different people for the two studies, without reducing the numbers in each study to a level where a meaningful statistical analysis would be impossible. Senior police officers are also very busy people. The training exercise was a unique opportunity to get them together. There was no other time at which they could be assembled, and it was a matter of considerable good fortune to be given one time slot in which to run my studies. In the circumstances, the two studies simply had to be run consecutively.

All in all, while less than ideal, a 'two consecutive study' strategy was the best alternative in the circumstances. However, the drawbacks will have to be kept in mind when evaluating the research findings.

The rest of the chapter is therefore divided into two sections, corresponding to the two studies. The first, looks in detail at the antecedents of police action. The second, looks in detail at police actions. The main design difference between the two studies being that whereas accountability is a 'between' participants factor in experiment 1, it becomes a 'within' participants factor for experiment 2.

The rationale behind this difference is based on the problems caused by running the two studies together. If study 1, like study 2, had treated accountability as a 'between' participants variable, there would have been two possibilities. Either the same groupings could have been used in both studies, at which point, responses on study 1 would have been even more likely to affect study 2, and hence introduce unwarranted confounds, or else respondents could have been put in new accountability groups. However, in the latter case, there is a danger of undermining the plausibility of the manipulation for those who are put in one accountability condition in study 1 and a different one in study 2. Moreover, one might expect major differences between those who either have either 'consonant' or 'dissonant' accountability instructions between the two studies, thus introducing unwanted variance. After deliberation, I concluded that it would be better to be explicit to all participants that I wanted them to focus on, alternatively, internal and external accountability considerations, and then to answer the subsequent questions from one of the other perspectives. Hence in study 2, accountability became a 'within' participants manipulation.

Therefore, experiment 1 is a 3 accountability (internal, external and both internal and external accountability) x 3 phase (violence, incipient violence and no violence) experimental design. Experiment 2, is a 2 accountability (internal and external accountability) x 3 phase (violence, incipient violence and no violence) experimental design. Whilst experiment 2 was designed as a 2 (accountability) x 3 (phase) experiment, I was open to the possible effects of the original manipulations of accountability from experiment 1, and this experiment was analysed accordingly.

For both of the experiments, the opportunity to collect data from such a large number of officers was taken when they were attending training at the Metropolitan Police Driving School, for the 1998 Notting Hill carnival. This event, is the largest

public order operation of the year for the police in London and training for the officers was run over a period of one week. This was a unique opportunity to gain access to such a large number of officers and I was able to gain permission to conduct the experiment by being allocated a 'window' of time for a subset of the officers during each of these five days. In these sessions, the officers were asked about their reactions and responses to crowd scenarios of different levels of violence as portrayed on video.

Ideally, when you do a study like this, it would be desirable to pre-test the videos that were constructed to assess how subjects saw the level of violence being shown, and to ensure that their perception of the videos filled my categorisation of phases. However, once again, practicalities got in the way. On the one hand, I could not pre-test the measures on other officers, since as I have explained, there were no other comparable officers. On the other hand, it was impossible to pre-test these materials on the same officers at another time for reasons of access. Thirdly, there was no time within the sessions to do all the manipulation checks I would have liked. As it was, showing the compilation video and completion of the dependent measures in the questionnaire, for both experiments, took in many cases over one and half-hours per participant. In addition, time had to be allocated for individual and group debriefing sessions, before the officers resumed the training they were receiving in preparation for their roles at the 1998 Notting Hill Carnival.

Due to the fact that I needed senior police officers to run the study, I had to devise a method of manipulating the salience of accountability that was meaningful to them. At the time of the study (June 1998) a concern for the police service as a whole, was the impact of a new European directive, requiring the police and other United Kingdom government agencies to comply with Health and Safety legislation relating to the well-being of employees. Perhaps surprisingly, up until this point in time, the police and many other government agencies had been exempt from adhering to these rules under Crown immunity. This was therefore a 'live' debate and was perceived by senior public order trained police officers to have the potential to make a significant impact on all spheres of policing activity, including how public order events would be policed.

I was therefore able to take advantage of this issue and manipulated the salience of internal accountability concerns (accountability to their own officers) by stressing the impact of Health and Safety considerations concerning junior officers to public order policing.

Similarly, the training course was being run at the time of the Public Inquiry proceedings of the 'Lawrence Inquiry', looking at the Metropolitan Police response and investigation in to the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Again, taking advantage of this 'live' issue I was able to manipulate the salience of external accountability (accountability to politicians, the media and the courts) by discussing the impact of Public Inquiries to public order policing.

In a third condition, of both internal and external accountability, I was able to combine both 'live' issues by stressing the impact of both Health and Safety issues and Public Inquiry concerns to public order policing.

For experiment 1, the participants, in the different accountability conditions, watched videos portraying crowd events of violence, incipient violence and pre violence phases, and then filled in dependent measures concerning the expectation of different crowd outcomes, the values placed on outcomes, and their perceptions of the crowds as contagious (liable to get out of hand), dangerous and homogeneous.

In the second experiment, participants watched the same videos, first under internal, then under external accountability conditions. After each viewing they completed measures relating to the selection of actions such as the use of officers in riot gear, use of horses, use of specialist riot officers, and the use of tactics such as containing the trouble and withdrawal of officers. Following the completion of the dependent measures in relation to experiment 2, the participants were offered the chance to be involved in individual or group debriefing sessions.

The layout of the rest of the chapter is as follows. First, I report study 1, then I will report study 2. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a general discussion of the implications and limitations of the two studies.

## **5.2. Experiment 1**

This study is concerned with the antecedents to officers actions. More specifically, it examines participants expectations about the likelihood that police intervention would provoke or permit violence. Second, how much value senior officers placed on provoking violence and how much value they placed on permitting violence. Third, I looked at how dangerous they saw the various crowds shown on the videos. Fourth, how contagious or liable to get out of hand they saw these crowds. Lastly, how homogeneous they saw these crowds. The method by which this was achieved will be outlined below followed by the results obtained.

### **5.2.1. Method**

#### **Participants**

Forty-five senior public order police officers and their advisors were recruited. These were very experienced senior public order officers of the ranks of Chief Inspector and Superintendent, who were attending training for the 1998 Notting Hill Carnival, which is the largest public order event for the year for the Metropolitan police.

#### **Design**

A 3x3 mixed design was involved, with one 'between' participants measure of accountability (internal, external and both) and one 'within' participants measure of phase (pre conflict, incipient conflict and conflict).

#### **a) Materials**

Compilation video defining crowd scenarios of violence, incipient violence and no violence. Selected clips from existing videos containing riot footage were used to construct the three scenarios. The compilation video showed a high level, medium and a lower level of violence. In the first scenario - an anti Fascist rally - the video showed concerted missile throwing against police lines. In the second scenario, the participants viewed a video which showed a vociferous crowd shouting and making threatening gestures towards the police, along with one or two missiles being thrown, but who were otherwise peaceful. In the final scenario, the video depicted a low level of violence directed towards the police lines. This involved sections of the crowd pushing

and shoving against the police. Attempts were made to standardise these video clips so as to make them all constant, except for the level of violence. These measures included providing long shots of the protesters, so that the protesters looked similar, and having them dubbed with the same crowd noise, and also in such a way that no placards or slogans could be picked out. Each of the scenarios lasted for thirty seconds.

### **(b) Dependent Measures**

For the purposes of this analysis I will deal only with those items which are theoretically relevant to this study. The full questionnaire is shown in full at **appendix c**. The dependent measures included five important types of items, which were respectively: participant expectations about the likelihood of violence developing into full blown conflict, the values or weightings placed by officers on provoking and permitting violence, how contagious (liable get out of hand) officers perceived the respective crowds to be, the officers perception of how dangerous they saw the scenarios; the officers perception of how homogeneous they saw the scenarios. These will be discussed in turn.

**Participant expectations.** There were four items. The first item asked about officers expectations as to whether the use of protective riot equipment or 'kitting' would result in violence reducing, staying the same or increasing. The second item dealt with officers expectations that deciding to use protective riot equipment or 'kitting' would result in the outcomes above. The third item dealt with officers expectations that police intervention would result in the above outcomes. The fourth item dealt with officers expectations that not intervening would result in the outcomes mentioned above. In each case, respondents were asked to estimate the likelihood in percentage terms.

**Participant values or weightings.** This consisted of six items. The first item required respondents to evaluate an outcome where not using police riot equipment or 'not kitting' resulted in the level of violence increasing. The second item asked for an evaluation of 'not kitting' resulting in the level of violence staying the same. The third item asked for an evaluation of 'not kitting' up resulting in violence reducing. The fourth item asked for an evaluation that police intervention would result in violence

staying the same. The fifth item asked for an evaluation that police intervention would reduce the level of violence. The sixth item asked for an evaluation that police intervention would increase the level of violence. All these outcomes were anchored by the words very positive (0) to very negative (100), which was displayed at each end of a dotted line. This line measured exactly 100 millimetres.

Participants were instructed to place a straight line through the dotted line to indicate their weighting of the outcome.

### **Crowd contagion (How liable to get out of hand)**

This consisted of six items. The first item dealt with the potential of people in the crowd scenarios to get carried away and become involved in violence. The second item addressed whether anyone in the crowd scenario who remained was out for trouble. The third item asked about the influence of agitators. The fourth item asked whether non-violent people in the crowd scenarios would be likely to remain non-violent. The fifth item addressed whether the crowd contained decent respectable people. The last item contained the statement that innocent bystanders were in the crowd. All these outcomes were anchored by the words strongly agree (0) to strongly disagree (100), which was displayed at each end of a dotted line. This line measured exactly 100 millimetres. Participants were instructed to place a straight line through the dotted line to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the above statements.

### **Crowd danger**

This consisted of five items. The first item dealt with the proportion of the crowd perceived to be actively throwing missiles. The second item dealt with the proportion of the crowd perceived to be actively involved in the conflict. The third item dealt with the proportion of the crowd perceived to be liable to become involved in conflict with the police. The fourth item dealt with the proportion of the crowd perceived to be involved in illegal acts. The fifth item dealt with the proportion of the crowd perceived liable to be involved in illegal acts. All these items were measured in percentage terms.

**Crowd homogeneity**

This consisted of four items. The first item dealt with the proportion of the crowd falling into the category of anti social. The second item dealt with the proportion of the crowd falling into the category of violent. The third item dealt with the proportion of the crowd seen as anti police. The fourth item dealt with the proportion of the crowd seen as a threat to public order. All these items were measured in percentage terms.

**Procedure**

It will be recalled from the introduction to the chapter, that this study was conducted in a number of separate sessions over a five-day period at the Metropolitan Police Driving School, Hendon North London. This was to take advantage of getting access to such a large number of senior public order trained officers in one place, as they were receiving training for their roles in the forthcoming (1998) Notting Hill Carnival. Would be participants were informed that participation in the experiment was purely voluntary. All officers were told they were taking part in a research project looking at decision making in public order policing. Participants were randomly allocated to one of three experimental conditions, internal accountability, external accountability and a condition of both internal and external accountability. The volunteers were given instructions by the experimenter which included manipulating the salience of accountability.

In the internal accountability condition, this was achieved by stressing the impact of Health and Safety legislation on the planning and preparation for public order events. For the external accountability condition, the impact of Public Inquiry on the planning and preparation of public order operations was stressed. In the internal and external accountability condition, the experimenter stressed the impact of Health and Safety and Public Inquiry concerns.

Fifteen participants were allocated to each of the experimental conditions, and each condition was run on a separate day. The participants sat in a classroom and received instructions from the experimenter both orally and in writing. The information given to the participants included the reason for the demonstration in 'scenario one' - to protest about proposed cuts in funding for higher education. This information stressed the heterogeneity of community support and provided an estimate of numbers expected to attend (in the region of 15,000). Participants were then informed that the Prime

Minster was due to deliver a 'key' note speech at a meeting with a group of interested parties, and that police deployed to the outside of the venue had been heckled and jostled. All the officers were then shown the 'first scenario' from the compilation video. After watching the video clip, participants were handed the questionnaire and completed the dependent measures outlined above in relation to the 'scenario one'.

When they had indicated they had finished, the participants viewed the 'second scenario'. The information given to the participants orally and in writing - included the reason for the demonstration - called to protest about proposed increase in police powers. The information again stressed the heterogeneity of community support and provided an estimate of numbers expected to attend (in the region of 15,000). The officers were given the route of the proposed march and the fact that it had stopped in Downing Street. They then completed the dependent measures outlined above in relation to the 'second scenario'.

Prior to viewing the 'third scenario', information was given to the officers both orally and in writing, which included the reason for the demonstration - called following the murder of a local Asian youth - with local opinion inflamed by racist comments. The information stressed the heterogeneity of community support and provided an estimate of numbers expected to attend (in the region of 15,000). Participants then completed the dependent measures outlined above in relation to the 'third scenario'.

### 5.2.2. Results

The results will be presented, first of all, by recalling the predictions that were made about phase, accountability and the interaction for experiment 1. Secondly, by showing the results for the expectation and valuation variables. Thirdly, by showing the results for the officers perception of the crowds as contagious, homogeneous and dangerous. Lastly, by presenting an overall summary table, outlining the predictions and results for this experiment.

#### Predictions

All forty-five participants were included in the analysis, fifteen in each cell of the design.

To recap, the following hypotheses were outlined in the introduction:

#### Expectation variables

For the expectation variables I would predict a main effect of phase. To be more specific, as the crowd becomes more violent this should affect expectations about how the crowd will act, how they will be influenced and how different tactics will impact on crowd action.

I would predict no main effect of accountability, as accountability concerns are of significance because of the way in which they alter the value placed on particular outcomes, and not so much the expectation that such outcomes will occur.

I would not predict a phase x accountability interaction, since accountability effects are not predicted to impact upon expectations.

#### Value or weighting variables

I would predict a main effect for phase. More specifically, in so far as phase effects are important because of the ways in which they alter how officers can be held to account, phase should therefore effect the valuation of outcomes.

In contrast to officers expectations, I would predict a main effect of accountability for officers values. It will be remembered from above, that accountability concerns are of significance because of the way in which they alter the value placed on particular outcomes, and not so much the expectation that such outcomes will occur. Thus, internal accountability makes senior officers place more

importance on ensuring that they don't permit violence that would cause harm to their own ranks, whereas external accountability makes senior officers balance injuries to officers with the rights of the crowd.

Finally, since accountability effects are only predicted to impact upon values, I would only predict a phase x accountability interaction on such variables. To be more precise, I would predict a phase x accountability interaction such that accountability effects are greater in the incipient conflict phase (phase2).

### **Perception variables**

I would predict a main effect of phase on all the perception variables. In other words I would expect that in these different phases senior police officers would see the crowd differently. More specifically, I would expect them to perceive the crowd as more contagious, dangerous and homogeneous (liable to get out of hand) as the level of conflict increases. I would not predict a main effect of accountability, or an interaction between accountability and phase.

**(a) Officer expectations.**

Reliability analyses were carried out on the items, and indicated these could be treated as a scale. These were adequate to proceed, (Kline, 1993), (for scenario 1, Cronbach's alpha.66, for scenario 2, alpha.68, for scenario 3, alpha.71).

These composite scale variables, were then entered into a two-way, one within phase, (conflict, incipient conflict and no conflict), and one between measure of accountability (internal, external and both), repeated measures factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) program in SPSS 8.0. In line with my general predictions, I would expect a main effect of phase, not of accountability or interaction. This is not what was found (for phase  $F_{2,84} = 1.15$ ; ns, for accountability,  $F_{2,42} = 9.34$ ,  $p < 0001$ ; for phase x accountability  $F_{4,84} = 0.95$ ; ns).

Newman Keuls analysis revealed that officers in the internal accountability condition, expect that intervention will reduce the level of violence, more so than officers in the external accountability condition,  $p < .05$ . Also, officers in the internal accountability condition, expect that intervention will reduce the level of violence more so than officers in both (internal and external accountability) condition,  $p < .05$ . A summary Anova table and a table of the means and standard errors for accountability are shown in tables 3 and 4 respectively below.

**Table 3: Summary Anova table for officers expectations showing source of variation, sum of squares, degrees of freedom, Mean square, F ratio and significance level.**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Phase (P)	4501.17	2,84	2250.58	1.15	ns
Accountability (A)	52609.15	2,42	26304.80	9.34	.0001
P x A	7464.78	4,84	1866.19	0.95	ns
Error P	164370.00	2,84	1956.78		
Error A	118329.00	2,42	2817.35		
Error P x A	164370.00	4,84	1956.78		

**Table 4: Mean and Standard Error of the mean (S.E.) for accountability.**

Accountability	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
	Mean	<i>SE</i>	Mean	<i>SE</i>	Mean	<i>SE</i>
<b>Internal</b>	<b>79.00</b>	<i>7.84</i>	<b>99.66</b>	<i>7.64</i>	<b>79.53</b>	<i>7.21</i>
<b>External</b>	<b>22.66</b>	<i>5.63</i>	<b>37.66</b>	<i>6.36</i>	<b>53.00</b>	<i>6.24</i>
<b>Both</b>	<b>62.00</b>	<i>8.05</i>	<b>60.00</b>	<i>6.99</i>	<b>70.33</b>	<i>7.01</i>

**Note.**

**Mean figure in bold, the higher the mean the greater the expectation that intervention will reduce the level of violence.**

*Standard Error (SE) of mean in italics.*

**(b) Officer values.**

Reliability analyses were carried out on the items and indicated these could be treated as a scale. These were adequate to proceed, (Kline, 1993), (for scenario 1, Cronbach's alpha .62, for scenario 2, alpha .64, for scenario 3, alpha .75).

These composite scale variables were then entered into a 'two-way', one 'within' phase (conflict, incipient conflict and no conflict), one 'between' measure of accountability (internal, external and both), repeated measures factorial analysis of variance using the (ANOVA) program in SPSS 8.0. In line with my predictions, I would expect an effect on officers values that intervention would provoke or permit violence. This would lead to a main effect of phase, accountability and interaction. This is not what was found, (for phase  $F_{2,84} = 8.81$ ,  $p < 0001$ ; for accountability,  $F_{2,42} = 0.24$ , ns; for phase x accountability  $F_{4,84} = 1.31$ , ns).

Newman Keuls analysis revealed that officers in phase 1 (violence scenario) value or weight intervening reducing the level of violence, more so than in phase 2 (incipient violence scenario),  $p < .05$ . Also, officers in phase 1 (violence scenario) value or weight intervening reducing the level of violence, more so than officers do in phase 3 (non violence scenario),  $p < .05$ . A summary Anova table and a table for the means and standard errors for phase are shown in tables 5 and 6 respectively overleaf.

**Table 5: Summary Anova table for officers values or weightings showing source of variation, sum of squares, degrees of freedom, Mean square, F ratio and significance level.**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Phase (P)	15554.41	2,84	7777.20	8.81	.0001
Accountability (A)	2378.68	2,42	1189.34	0.24	ns
P x A	4617.71	4,84	1154.43	1.30	ns
Error P	74143.20	2,84	882.65		
Error A	206425.50	2,42	4914.89		
Error P x A	74143.20	4,84	882.65		

**Table 6: Mean and Standard Error of the mean (S.E.) for phase.**

Accountability	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
	Mean	<i>SE</i>	Mean	<i>SE</i>	Mean	<i>SE</i>
Internal	<b>54.73</b>	<i>6.13</i>	<b>20.53</b>	<i>9.74</i>	<b>31.66</b>	<i>9.32</i>
External	<b>59.73</b>	<i>4.25</i>	<b>40.06</b>	<i>6.49</i>	<b>37.73</b>	<i>4.18</i>
Both	<b>51.60</b>	<i>4.56</i>	<b>44.33</b>	<i>7.90</i>	<b>22.93</b>	<i>7.99</i>

Note.

Mean figure in bold, the higher the mean the greater the value or weighting that intervention will reduce the level of violence.

*Standard Error (SE) of mean in italics.*

**(c) Officers estimation of the level of crowd contagion (how liable it is to get out of order).**

Reliability analyses were carried out on the items to indicate whether these could be treated as a scale. These were adequate to proceed, (Kline, 1993), (for scenario 1, Cronbach's alpha .91, for scenario 2, alpha .89, for scenario 3, alpha .69).

These composite scale variables were then entered into a two-way, one within phase (conflict, incipient conflict and no conflict), and one between measure of accountability (internal, external and both), repeated measures factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) program in SPSS 8.0. In line with my predictions, I would expect as the level of violence increased, the crowd would be perceived as more contagious (liable to get out of hand). This would lead to a main effect of phase, not of accountability or interaction. This is what was found (for phase  $F_{2,84} = 5.94$   $p < .004$ ; for accountability,  $F_{2,42} = 0.70$ , ns; for phase x accountability  $F_{4,84} = 2.59$   $p < .ns$ ).

Newman Keuls analysis revealed that officers in the phase 1 (violence scenario) see the crowd as more contagious than in both phase 2 (incipient violence scenario),  $p < .05$  and phase 3 (non violence scenario),  $p < .01$ . Also, that officers in phase two (incipient violence), see the crowd as more contagious than in phase 3 (non-violence scenario),  $p < .05$ . A summary Anova table and a table for the means and standard errors of phase are shown in tables 7 and 8 respectively below.

**Table 7: Summary Anova table for officers estimation of crowd contagion (how liable it is to get out of hand) showing source of variation, sum of squares, degrees of freedom, Mean square, F ratio and significance level.**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Phase (P)	13036.28	2,84	6518.14	5.94	.004
Accountability (A)	3400.23	2,42	1700.11	0.70	ns
P x A	11352.74	4,84	2838.18	2.58	ns
Error P	92164.31	2,84	1097.19		
Error A	100845.00	2,42	2401.07		
Error P x A	92164.31	4,84	1097.19		

**Table 8: Mean and Standard Error of the mean (S.E.) for phase.**

Accountability	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
	Mean	<i>SE</i>	Mean	<i>SE</i>	Mean	<i>SE</i>
<b>Internal</b>	<b>117.40</b>	<i>5.74</i>	<b>117.66</b>	<i>5.05</i>	<b>124.53</b>	<i>7.02</i>
<b>External</b>	<b>145.93</b>	<i>4.88</i>	<b>132.13</b>	<i>5.88</i>	<b>106.46</b>	<i>8.46</i>
<b>Both</b>	<b>132.60</b>	<i>6.69</i>	<b>121.86</b>	<i>5.16</i>	<b>94.06</b>	<i>6.42</i>

**Note.**

Mean figure in bold, the higher the mean the more officers see the crowd as contagious or liable to get out of hand.

*Standard Error (SE) of mean in italics.*

**(d) Participants estimation of the level of crowd danger.**

Reliability analyses were carried out on the items to indicate whether these could be treated as a scale. These were adequate to proceed, (Kline, 1993), (for scenario 1, Cronbach's alpha, .92, for scenario 2, alpha .91, for scenario 3, alpha .65).

These composite scale variables, were then entered into a two-way, one within phase (conflict, incipient conflict and no conflict), and one between measure of accountability (internal, external and both), repeated measures factorial analysis of variance program in SPSS 8.0. In line with my predictions I would expect that as the level of violence increased the crowd would be perceived as more dangerous. This would lead to a main effect of phase, not of accountability or interaction. This is what was found (for phase  $F_{2,84} = 7.09$   $p < .001$ ; for accountability,  $F_{2,42} = 0.56$ , ns; for phase x accountability  $F_{4,84} = 1.22$ , ns).

Newman Keuls analysis revealed that officers rate phase 1 (violence scenario) as more dangerous than both phase 2 (incipient violence) and phase 3 (non violence scenario),  $p < .01$ . Officers in phase 3 (non violence scenario) also rate the crowd as more homogeneous than in phase 2 (incipient violence),  $p < .05$ . A summary Anova table and a table for the means and standard errors for phase are shown in tables 9 and 10 respectively overleaf.

**Table 9: Summary Anova table for officers estimation of crowd danger, showing source of variation, sum of squares, degrees of freedom, Mean square, F ratio and significance level.**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Phase (P)	42282.05	2,84	21141.02	7.09	.001
Accountability (A)	18739.52	2,42	9369.76	0.56	ns
P x A	14610.18	4,84	3652.54	1.22	ns
Error P	250249.70	2,84	2979.16		
Error A	701737.20	2,42	16708.02		
Error P x A	250249.70	4,84	2979.16		

**Table 10: Mean and Standard Error of the mean (S.E.) for phase.**

Accountability	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
	Mean	<i>SE</i>	Mean	<i>SE</i>	Mean	<i>SE</i>
Internal	<b>141.66</b>	<i>10.39</i>	<b>76.76</b>	<i>11.5</i>	<b>88.61</b>	<i>12.9</i>
External	<b>105.06</b>	<i>10.83</i>	<b>53.30</b>	<i>8.70</i>	<b>77.21</b>	<i>11.9</i>
Both	<b>109.68</b>	<i>12.82</i>	<b>98.68</b>	<i>17.5</i>	<b>105.29</b>	<i>17.4</i>

Note.

Mean figure in bold, the higher the mean the more officers see the crowd as dangerous.

*Standard Error (SE) of mean in italics.*

**(e) Participant estimation of the level of crowd homogeneity**

Reliability analyses were carried out on the items to indicate whether these could be treated as a scale. These were adequate to proceed, (Kline, 1993), (for scenario 1, Cronbach's alpha, .75, for scenario 2 alpha, .65, for scenario 3, alpha .86).

These composite scale variables were then entered into a two-way, one within phase (conflict, incipient conflict and no conflict), and one between measure of accountability (internal, external and both), repeated measures factorial analysis of variance program in SPSS 8.0. In line with my predictions, I would expect that as the level of violence increased the crowd would be perceived as more homogeneous (liable to get out of control). This would lead to a main effect of phase, not of accountability or interaction. This is what was found (for phase  $F_{2,84} = 8.87$ ,  $p < .0001$ ; for accountability,  $F_{2,42} = 0.60$  ns; for phase x accountability,  $F_{4,84} = 0.35$ , ns).

Newman Keuls analysis revealed that officers rate the crowd in the phase 1 (violence) as more homogeneous than in both phase 2 (incipient violence) and phase 3 (non violence scenario)  $p < .01$ . Also that officers in phase 3 (non violence scenario) rate the crowd as more homogeneous than in phase 2 (incipient violence),  $p < .01$ . A summary Anova table and a table for the means and standard errors for phase are shown in tables 11 and 12 respectively below.

**Table 11: Summary Anova table for officers estimation of crowd homogeneity, showing source of variation, sum of squares, degrees of freedom, Mean square, F ratio and significance level.**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Phase (P)	85992.95	2,84	42996.47	8.87	.0001
Accountability (A)	36398.85	2,42	18199.42	0.51	ns
P x A	21557.88	4,84	5389.47	1.11	ns
Error P	368028.50	2,84	4842.48		
Error A	1359181.00	2,42	35767.92		
Error P x A	368028.50	4,84	4842.48		

**Table 12: Mean and Standard Error of the mean (S.E.) for phase.**

Accountability	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
	Mean	<i>SE</i>	Mean	<i>SE</i>	Mean	<i>SE</i>
<b>Internal</b>	<b>274.35</b>	<i>15.06</i>	<b>187.78</b>	<i>15.70</i>	<b>211.57</b>	<i>16.80</i>
<b>External</b>	<b>214.92</b>	<i>18.02</i>	<b>137.23</b>	<i>14.80</i>	<b>200.53</b>	<i>17.50</i>
<b>Both</b>	<b>230.78</b>	<i>16.90</i>	<b>200.78</b>	<i>22.80</i>	<b>210.12</b>	<i>24.30</i>

**Note.**

**Mean figure in bold, the higher the mean the more officers see the crowd as homogeneous.**

*Standard Error (SE) of mean in italics.*

### **Overall summary of results for experiment 1**

Overall, the results of this study diverge from the predictions, whereas only phase effects are expected for expectations, and perceptions, for values I expect main effects of phase and accountability, as well as a phase x accountability interaction. In the event the predicted pattern is only found for the perception variables. For expectations, we actually find an accountability effect but no phase effect or interaction. For values, we only find a phase effect. This unexpected pattern can be summarised by comparing table 13 (predicted actions) with table 14 (actual results) overleaf.

**Table 13: Summary table showing predictions for experiment 1.**

Source	Expectations	Values	Contagion	Danger	Homogeneity
Phase (P)	++	++	++	++	++
Accountability (A)	--	++	--	--	--
P x A	--	++	--	--	--

**Note**

++ Significant effect.

-- No significant effect.

**Table 14: Summary table showing results for experiment 1**

Source	Expectations	Values	Contagion	Danger	Homogeneity
Phase (P)	--	++	++	++	++
Accountability (A)	++	--	--	--	--
P x A	--	--	--	--	--

**Note**

++ Significant effect at .05 or better.

-- Non significant effect.

### 5.2.3. Discussion

The results from experiment 1, were in many ways the inverse of what was predicted. To be more precise, this was particularly so in relation to the effect of manipulating accountability, which it will be recalled, was predicted to have effects on officer values or weightings, and not on their expectations regarding the levels of violence, but actually turned out to affect expectations but not values. Similarly, the predicted pattern of results in relation to the phase x accountability interaction was not seen. Equally, phase does not affect expectations as was expected, however, it does, as predicted, affect perceptions and values.

However, before we draw any conclusions, especially about phase effects, it is necessary to look at the manipulations a bit more carefully, and address whether alternative interpretations could be placed on them and hence their effects.

As explained earlier, the decision to manipulate phase through showing videos was based on the desire to have stimuli which were 'rich' and 'realistic' enough to engage the participants, but 'richness' often equates with lack of control. Despite my desire to make the videos equivalent in all domains except violence, it could be argued that other differences may well have been paramount, especially given the gloss put on events (heckling the Prime Minister over education cuts, anti police powers demonstration, protest over the death of an Asian youth). It could well have been that the nature of the context, the political sensitivity of the issues or the nature of the participants (despite my stress on them as widely representative) may well have been paramount. At best, it can be argued that phase may have been the critical element.

However, even if phase is crucial, it remains questionable as to whether the categorisation of violence levels as violent, incipient and non-violent, maps on to the way senior officers categorise them. Ideally, the videos should have been pre tested but, as explained earlier, this was not possible. In fact, the results indicate that officers tend to rate phase 2 and 3 similarly, and that the key difference is between these two and phase 1. It could be that this is because officers, who have considerable experience of very violent situations, actually categorise phases 2 and 3 as non violent, whereas phase 1, which I saw as violent, is only seen as of incipient violence. This interpretation is supported by some comments made in the debrief sessions.

Bearing these points in mind, then, it is possible to make three provisional conclusions. First of all, phase is important in affecting values and perceptions, though

- unexpectedly, it has no effect on expectations concerning the effects of various tactics on crowd action. Perhaps this is an artefact of the scenarios that were employed, which all involve groups who are typically anti - police: student demonstrators, anti police protesters and black activists. It could be that, whatever the phase, officers see crowd members as liable to become violent given any excuse - such as officers 'kitting up' with protective riot equipment.

Secondly, and more specifically, officers do see crowds as more homogeneous and more liable to act together in violent ways as conflict starts. This confirms the findings of Stott and Reicher (1998) that the police may see crowd members as heterogeneous in many ways, but they are homogeneous in terms of danger, especially in conflictual contexts.

Thirdly, the results point to the fact that accountability is important in effecting the antecedents of police action towards crowds, albeit in unexpected ways. The effect is on expectations. One possible reason is that, if the police concentrate on the safety of their officers when they decide tactics, they may pay less attention to how crowds might react, thus lowering their expectation of violence due to various tactical actions. It is, however, still unclear why values should be unaffected.

However, the obvious criticism of this study is simply, that it only looks at expectations, values and perceptions and not at actions. Therefore, in the next study, I go some way to remedying this defect.

### **5.3. Experiment 2**

As explained in the introductory section of this chapter, experiment 2 was run after a short break (5 minutes) following on from experiment 1, using the same participants in the same groups.

Experiment 1 and 2 were exactly the same save for two important differences. First, in experiment 2 accountability changed from a between to a within participant measure. Second, the dependent measures focused explicitly on officer actions. These will be discussed in turn.

The rationale for changing accountability from a between to a within participants measure has already been explained. To recap, if I had kept the accountability manipulation as a between participants manipulation it might well have been that the results for experiment 2 would have been confounded by the previous results from experiment 1. Also, if the manipulation had been kept as a between participants factor, attempting to place the officers in new groupings from those originally allocated, would probably have seemed implausible to the officers. Therefore, in experiment 2, accountability was explicitly designed to be a within rather than a between participants variable, so that any differences found in the experiment could be attributed to the manipulation of accountability alone.

Second, to ensure that participants concentrated on the task, I made explicit the accountability manipulation by referring to the impact of both Health and Safety concerns (internal accountability) and Public Inquiry concerns (external accountability) on their decisions to use specific actions. These actions can be broken down into actions involving 'interventions' and 'non interventions'.

The 'intervention' actions, focused on decisions by the participants to use junior officers in riot gear, on horses or riot trained officers. The 'non intervention' actions focused on decisions by the participants to use junior officers to contain the situations or to sanction withdrawal of junior officers from the crowd scenes shown on the video.

The layout for the rest of experiment 2 will follow that for experiment 1. I will first outline the predicted pattern of results in relation to the independent variables of phase and accountability, and the interrelationship between the two variables. This will be followed by looking in detail at the dependent measures for experiment 2, before outlining the results and discussing them.

In general terms, I would expect phase and accountability to impact on proposed actions as follows. In relation to phase, I would expect that as the level of violence increases, officers would be more interventionist. Thus I predict a main effect of phase.

In relation to accountability, I would expect the following pattern of results. Under conditions of internal accountability, officers should be more concerned with the safety of their officers and hence be more repressive towards the crowd. By contrast, under conditions of external accountability, because officers have to balance the safety of their officers with ensuring the rights of the crowd, they will be less repressive toward the crowd. Thus I predict a main effect of accountability.

Finally, as I have previously argued, predictions concerning the interaction are less crucial to my argument and more tentative. Nonetheless, it is expected that accountability effects should be greater in the incipient phase, than either the violent or non violent phase, where the situation is less ambiguous and the appropriate tactics more clearly defined. Hence, a phase x accountability interaction is predicted.

However, due to the way in which I operationalised this study, the predictions are slightly different to this general pattern. Since, for reasons already explained, accountability was a within participants variable and participants knew from the start that they would be asked to consider both internal and external accountability, it was felt that respondents would implicitly compare the two, and it would be artificial to ask them to keep accountability concerns separate. Hence, the comparison was made explicit. Respondents were asked for each scenario whether a focus on internal (or external accountability) would increase or decrease their likelihood of using various tactical options. Hence responses were already normed on their expected response at each phase, in which case the phase effect should be controlled for. Hence I would only predict the accountability variable and phase x accountability interaction to produce significant findings.

### **5.3.1. Method**

#### **Participants**

The same forty-five senior public order police officers and their advisors that were used in experiment 1 participated in experiment 2. It will be recalled that these were very experienced senior public order officers (of the ranks of Chief Inspector and Superintendent) who were attending training for the 1998 Notting Hill carnival, which is the largest public order event for the year for the Metropolitan police.

#### **Design**

A 3x2 design was involved with two 'within' participants measures of accountability (internal and external) and phase (pre conflict, incipient conflict and conflict). Whilst the design of the experiment differs from study 1, in the sense that accountability has now become a within participants variable, rather than a between participants one, the design took account of any residual effects of the accountability manipulation in study 1, by including this as a between participants factor in the initial statistical analyses.

#### **a) Materials**

The same compilation video defining crowd scenarios of violence, incipient violence and no violence used in experiment 1 was also used for experiment 2. In the first scenario - an anti Fascist rally - the video showed concerted missile throwing against police lines. In the second scenario, the participants viewed a video which showed a vociferous crowd shouting and making threatening gestures towards the police, along with one or two missiles being thrown, but who were otherwise peaceful. In the final scenario, the video depicted a low level of violence directed towards the police lines. This involved sections of the crowd pushing and shoving against the police. Attempts were made to standardise these video clips so as to make them all constant, except for the level of violence. These measures included providing long shots of the protesters, so that the protesters looked similar, and having them dubbed with the same crowd noise, and also in such a way that no placards or slogans could be picked out. Each of the scenarios lasted for thirty seconds.

**b) Dependent measures**

For the purposes of this we will deal only with those items which are theoretically relevant to this study. The full questionnaire is shown in full at **appendix c**. The dependent measures addressed five types of tactical option, of which three (putting on riot gear, using police horses and using police in riot gear against the crowd) were 'repressive interventions', while two (withdrawal of officers and containing trouble) were 'non interventions'. Respondents were asked about each tactical option twice, for each of the scenarios. Firstly, they were asked to think about Health and Safety issues (internal accountability) and then to consider whether such considerations would make them more likely, less likely or else make no difference to their decision to use the said tactic in the circumstances shown. They did this by giving a percentage figure for each of these three. After respondents had completed these measures for all five tactical options following scenarios 1, 2 and 3, they were asked to think about the prospect of a Public Inquiry (external accountability) and the process was repeated.

**Procedure**

At the end of experiment 1, there was a short break of approximately five minutes, after which experiment 2 began. It was explained to participants that there would follow a final phase to the session. They were told that a number of factors impinge on officers as they make decisions such as thinking about the Health and Safety of their officers and thinking about the possibility of a Public Inquiry. I was concerned with the extent to which these affect their decisions. Hence they would be asked to think about the two issues in turn, and then say whether these would affect their tendency to use various tactics in different contexts. It was explained that they would be shown the three videos they had previously seen and then rate the impact of Health and Safety on their use of the five tactical options. They would then repeat the process while focusing on external accountability (Public Inquiry).

After this had been done, participants were asked a number of demographic questions these were: firstly, the level of training received by officers, secondly the experiences of the officers within the command structure of gold silver and bronze, thirdly, the rank of the officer, fourthly, the number of public order events previously employed on, lastly, the length of time they had been public order trained officers.

Immediately following the completion of the dependent measures in relation to experiment 2, officers were asked for feedback concerning the study and their responses. They could either stay behind afterwards and discuss things collectively or else they could come and have an individual discussion with the experimenter over the following days. Virtually, all the participants gave feedback in one form or the other.

### 5.3.2. Results

The results will be presented in the following order. Firstly, the results for the three 'repressive intervention' variables will be provided. Secondly, the results for the two 'non - intervention' variables will be presented. Lastly, an overall summary table of results will be provided. However, two notes need to be made about the analysis.

First, and as noted in the introduction, the 'accountability' manipulation from study 1 has been included as a 'between' participants variable since, although separated by a break, that variable might still affect the action of respondents. This variable will be labelled "accountability", while the 'within' subjects manipulation in study 2 where subjects are asked to think of Health and Safety or of a Public Inquiry will be labelled "prime". Hence each variable will be subjected to 3 (accountability) x 2 (prime) x 3 (phase) analysis, where the first is a 'between' participants variable and the other two are 'within' participants variables.

Second, since internal accountability, as opposed to external accountability, is predicted to increase repressive action, especially in the incipient phase of action, the main effect of accountability should lead to an increased probability of using the 'repressive intervention' tactics, and a decreased probability of using the 'non - intervention' tactics, with the respective differences being greatest in phase 2.

## Intervention variables

### **a) Use of Protective riot equipment or in police argot 'Kitting'.**

It was decided to combine the three percentage estimates of 'more likely', 'less likely', and 'no difference' in using the tactic into a single scale score. Since being more likely to use a tactic should be inversely related to being less likely and to making no difference, this was done by subtracting the latter two scores from the first. Thus the higher the score, the more likely participants are to employ the said tactic.

Reliability analyses were carried out on the items to indicate whether these could be treated as a scale. These were adequate to proceed, (Kline, 1993), (for scenario 1, Cronbach's alpha, .64, for scenario 2, alpha, .67, for scenario 3, alpha, .73).

These composite scale variables were entered into a three way two within, phase, (conflict, incipient conflict and no conflict) and prime, (Health and Safety and Public Inquiry), one between measure of accountability (internal, external and both) repeated measures factorial analysis of variance in the Anova program in SPSS 8.0. In line with my general predictions I would expect a main effect of prime, and a prime x phase interaction in the incipient phase. No predictions are made concerning the original accountability variable and the interactions involving it. This was not what was found (for phase  $F_{2,84} = 3.70$   $p < .05$ ; for accountability,  $F_{2,42} = 4.13$   $p < .05$ , for prime  $F_{1,42} = 16.09$   $p < .0001$ ; for phase x accountability  $F_{4,84} = 0.39$  ns, for phase x prime,  $F_{2,42} = 1.92$  ns, for prime x accountability  $F_{2,42} = 0.38$  ns, for phase x prime x accountability  $F_{4,84} = 0.57$  ns).

Newman Keuls analysis revealed that officers in phase 1 (violence scenario) value using police in riot equipment more so than in phase 3 (incipient violence scenario),  $p < .05$ . No other comparisons of phase were significant. Newman Keuls analysis also revealed that officers in the original, both internal and external accountability condition, from experiment 1, value using police in protective riot equipment more so than those in the original internal accountability condition,  $p < .05$ . No other comparisons of the original accountability manipulation from experiment 1 were significant.

The 'prime' effect indicates that participants are more likely to 'kit up' when internal accountability concerns are made salient. A summary Anova table is given at table 15. A table of means and standard error of the mean for the phase and prime variables is given at table 16 below.

**Table 15: Summary Anova table for police action of using officers in riot gear, showing source of variation, sum of squares, degrees of freedom, Mean square, F ratio and significance level.**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Phase (P)	13425.74	2,84	6712.87	3.70	.05
Accountability (A)	104428.00	2,42	52213.98	4.12	.05
Prime (Pr)	143520.80	1,42	143520.80	16.09	.0001
P x A	2846.48	4,84	711.62	0.39	ns
Pr x A	6927.22	2,42	3463.61	0.38	ns
P x Pr	4957.22	2,84	2478.61	1.92	ns
P x Pr x A	2977.22	4,84	744.30	0.57	ns
Error P	152194.40	2,84	1811.83		
Error A	531135.60	2,42	12646.08		
Error Pr	374514.40	1,42	8917.01		
Error P x A	152194.40	2,84	1811.83		
Error Pr x A	374514.40	2,42	8917.01		
Error P x Pr	108315.60	2,84	1289.47		
Error P x Pr x A	108315.60	4,84	1289.47		

**Table 16: Summary table of means and standard error of the mean for the phase and prime variables.**

Prime	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
	Mean and <i>S.E.</i>		Mean and <i>S.E.</i>		Mean and <i>S.E.</i>	
Internal accountability	<b>35.11</b>	<i>8.22</i>	<b>30.27</b>	<i>8.25</i>	<b>18.33</b>	<i>6.71</i>
External accountability	<b>6.00</b>	<i>1.85</i>	<b>8.00</b>	<i>1.78</i>	<b>12.00</b>	<i>1.66</i>

**Note.**

**Mean figure in bold, the higher the mean the more likely officers will 'kit up' or use protective riot gear when internal accountability concerns are made salient.**

*Standard Error (SE) of mean in italics.*

**b) Use of horses**

Reliability analyses were carried out on the six items to indicate whether these could be treated as a scale. These were adequate to proceed, (Kline, 1993), (for scenario 1, Cronbach's alpha, .75, for scenario 2, alpha, .73, for scenario 3, alpha, .67).

These composite scale variables were entered into a three way, two within phase, (conflict, incipient conflict and no conflict) and prime, (Health and Safety and Public Inquiry) one between measure of accountability (internal, external and both) repeated measures factorial analysis of variance in the (ANOVA) program in SPSS 8.0. In line with my predictions I would expect a main effect of prime and a phase x prime interaction. No predictions were made for the original accountability manipulation or the interactions in which it was involved. This is what was found, (for phase  $F_{2,84} = 6.76$   $p < .01$ , for accountability,  $F_{2,42} = 3.78$   $p < .05$ , for prime  $F_{1,42} = 4.01$   $p < .052$ ; for phase x accountability,  $F_{4,84} = 1.92$  ns, for phase x prime,  $F_{2,84} = 7.27$   $p < .001$ , for prime x accountability  $F_{2,42} = 0.38$ , for phase x prime x accountability  $F_{4,84} = 1.46$  ns).

Newman Keuls analysis of the phase x prime interaction revealed that in phase three (non violence scenario) officers in the external prime value using the horses as a tactical action, more so than officers in the internal prime,  $p < .01$ . The prime trend indicates that participants are more likely to use the horses when external accountability concerns are made salient. A summary Anova table and a table for the

means and standard errors for the phase and prime variables are shown in tables 17 and 18 respectively below.

**Table 17: Summary Anova table for police action of using officers on horses, showing source of variation, sum of squares, degrees of freedom, Mean square, F ratio and significance level.**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Phase (P)	16280.18	2,84	8140.09	6.75	.002
Accountability (A)	118861.30	2,42	59430.64	3.77	.05
Prime (Pr)	7894.81	1,42	7894.81	4.01	.052
P x A	9214.81	4,84	2303.70	1.91	ns
Pr x A	11761.29	2,42	5880.64	2.99	ns
P x Pr	16952.40	2,84	8476.20	7.26	.001
P x Pr x A	6791.48	4,84	1697.87	1.45	ns
Error P	101205.00	2,84	1204.82		
Error A	660556.70	2,42	15727.54		
Error Pr	82568.88	1,42	1965.92		
Error P x A	101205.00	4,84	1204.82		
Error Pr x A	82568.88	2,42	1965.92		
Error P x Pr	97956.11	2,84	1166.14		
Error P x Pr x A	97956.11	4,84	1166.14		

**Table 18: Summary table of means and standard error of the mean for the phase and prime variables.**

Prime	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
	Mean and <i>S.E.</i>		Mean and <i>S.E.</i>		Mean and <i>S.E.</i>	
<b>Internal accountability</b>	<b>50.33</b>	<i>4.14</i>	<b>55.00</b>	<i>4.16</i>	<b>21.00</b>	<i>5.08</i>
<b>External accountability</b>	<b>51.77</b>	<i>4.06</i>	<b>55.77</b>	<i>4.08</i>	<b>54.55</b>	<i>4.07</i>

**Note.**

**Mean figure in bold, the higher the mean the more likely that officers will use the horses when external accountability concerns are made salient.**

*Standard Error (SE) of mean in italics.*

**c) Use of riot police or level one officers.**

Reliability analyses were carried out on the items to indicate whether these could be treated as a scale. These indicated that it was reasonable to proceed, (Kline, 1993), (for scenario 1 Cronbach's alpha, .73, for scenario 2, alpha, .66, for scenario 3 alpha, .81).

These composite scale variables were entered into a three way two, within phase, (conflict, incipient conflict and no conflict) and prime, (Health and Safety and Public Inquiry) one between measure of accountability (internal, external and both) repeated measures factorial analysis of variance in the Anova program in SPSS 8.0. In line with my predictions I would expect a main effect of prime and a phase x prime interaction. No predictions were made concerning accountability or the interactions in which it was involved. This is not what was found (for phase  $F_{2,42} = 0.24$ , ns, for accountability,  $F_{2,42} = 3.62$   $p < .03$  for prime  $F_{1,42} = 9.02$   $p < .01$  for phase x accountability  $F_{4,84} = 0.38$  ns, phase x prime,  $F_{2,84} = 1.35$ , ns, for prime x accountability  $F_{2,42} = 0.38$  for phase x prime x accountability  $F_{4,84} = 0.45$ , ns).

Newman Keuls analysis revealed that officers in the original internal accountability condition, value using officers who are riot trained, more so than officers in the original external accountability condition, ( $p < .05$ ), and that officers in the original internal accountability condition value using these officers, more so than officers in the original both internal and external accountability condition,  $p < .01$ .

The prime effect indicated that respondents are more likely to use riot trained officers when external accountability concerns are made salient. A summary Anova table and a table for the means and standard errors for the phase and prime variables are given in tables 19 and 20.

**Table 19: Summary Anova table for police action of using officers who are riot trained, showing source of variation, sum of squares, degrees of freedom, Mean square, F ratio and significance level.**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Phase (P)	1506.85	2,84	753.42	1.17	ns
Accountability (A)	133064.60	2,42	66532.31	3.68	.05
Prime (Pr)	72520.83	1,42	72520.83	9.02	.001
P x A	990.37	4,84	247.59	0.39	ns
Pr x A	34035.00	2,42	17017.50	2.11	ns
P x Pr	1537.22	2,84	768.61	1.35	ns
P x Pr x A	1031.11	4,84	257.78	0.45	ns
Error P	53927.77	2,84	641.99		
Error A	758945.60	2,42	18070.13		
Error Pr	337506.70	1,42	8035.87		
Error P x A	53927.77	2,84	641.99		
Error Pr x A	337506.70	2,42	8035.87		
Error P x Pr	47556.66	2,84	566.15		
Error P x Pr x A	47556.66	4,84	566.15		

**Table 20: Summary table of means and Standard Error of the mean (S.E.) for the phase and prime variables.**

Prime	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
	Mean and <i>S.E.</i>		Mean and <i>S.E.</i>		Mean and <i>S.E.</i>	
Internal accountability	<b>16.00</b>	<i>11.07</i>	<b>23.33</b>	<i>11.49</i>	<b>23.00</b>	<i>11.44</i>
External accountability	<b>31.33</b>	<i>11.35</i>	<b>38.66</b>	<i>10.73</i>	<b>40.00</b>	<i>11.12</i>

**Note.**

**Mean figure in bold, the higher the mean the more likely that officers will use riot trained officers when external accountability concerns are made salient.**

*Standard Error (SE) of mean in italics.*

**Non intervention variables**

**a) Contain.**

Reliability analyses were carried out on the items to indicate whether these could be treated as a scale. These were adequate to proceed, (Kline, 1993), (for scenario 1, Cronbach's alpha, .61, for scenario 2, alpha, .72, for scenario 3, alpha .64).

These composite scale variables were entered into a three way two, within phase, (conflict, incipient conflict and no conflict) and prime, (Health and Safety, and Public Inquiry) one between measure of accountability (internal, external and both) repeated measures factorial analysis of variance in the Anova program in SPSS 8.0. In line with my predictions I would expect a main effect of prime and a prime x phase interaction. No predictions are made for the original accountability manipulation or the interactions in which it was involved. This is not what was found (for phase  $F_{2,84} = 0.58$ , ns, for accountability,  $F_{2,42} = 1.63$ , ns; for prime  $F_{1,42} = 0.12$ , ns; for phase x accountability  $F_{4,84} = 1.41$ , ns, for phase x prime,  $F_{2,84} = 0.45$ , ns, for prime x accountability  $F_{2,42} = 1.67$ , ns, for phase x prime x accountability  $F_{4,84} = 0.98$ , ns). A summary Anova table and a table for the means and standard errors for the phase and prime variables are given in tables 21 and 22 overleaf.

**Table 21: Summary Anova table for police action of containing the situation, showing source of variation, sum of squares, degrees of freedom, Mean square, F ratio and significance level.**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Phase (P)	835.51	2,84	416.75	0.58	ns
Accountability (A)	44103.51	2,42	22051.75	1.63	ns
Prime (Pr)	607.50	1,42	607.50	0.12	ns
P x A	4023.14	4,84	1005.78	1.41	ns
Pr x A	15860.55	2,42	7930.27	1.67	ns
P x Pr	607.22	2,84	303.61	0.45	ns
P x Pr x A	2640.55	4,84	660.13	0.98	ns
Error P	59593.33	2,84	709.44		
Error A	576460.00	2,42	13725.23		
Error Pr	199161.10	1,42	4741.93		
Error P x A	59593.33	4,84	709.44		
Error Pr x A	199161.10	2,42	4741.93		
Error P x Pr	56335.55	2,84	670.66		
Error P x Pr x A	56335.55	4,84	670.66		

**Table 22: Summary table of means and standard error of the mean for the phase and prime variables.**

Prime	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
	Mean	<i>S.E.</i>	Mean	<i>S.E.</i>	Mean	<i>S.E.</i>
Internal accountability	7.00	<i>1.56</i>	6.00	<i>1.49</i>	7.00	<i>1.40</i>
External accountability	6.00	<i>1.68</i>	7.00	<i>1.68</i>	6.00	<i>2.67</i>

**Note.**

*Standard Error (SE) of mean in italics.*

**b) Withdrawal**

Reliability analyses were carried out on the items to indicate whether these could be treated as a scale. These were adequate to proceed, (Kline, 1993), (for scenario 1 Cronbach's alpha, .74, for scenario 2, alpha .61, for scenario 3, alpha, .82).

These composite scale variables were entered into a three way two, within phase, (conflict, incipient conflict and no conflict) and prime, (Health and Safety, and Public Inquiry) one between measure of accountability (internal, external and both) repeated measures factorial analysis of variance in the Anova program in SPSS 8.0. In line with my predictions I would expect a main effect of prime and a prime x phase interaction. No predictions were made for the original accountability manipulation or the interactions in which it was involved. This is what was found (for phase  $F_{2,84} = 3.09$   $p < .05$ , for accountability,  $F_{2,42} = 2.17$  ns, for prime  $F_{1,42} = 17.02$   $p < .0001$ , for phase x accountability  $F_{4, 84} = 0.26$  ns, for phase x prime,  $F_{2, 84} = 10.70$   $p < .0001$ , for prime x accountability  $F_{2, 42} = 0.23$  ns, for phase x prime x accountability  $F_{4, 84} = 0.38$  ns).

Newman Keuls analysis of the phase x prime interaction, revealed that in phase one (violence scenario) officers in the prime of Public Inquiry value withdrawal as a tactical action, more so than officers in the prime of Health and Safety,  $p < .01$ . In phase two (incipient conflict) this switches over and officers in the prime of Health and Safety value withdrawal as a tactical action, more so than officers in the prime of Public Inquiry,  $p < .01$ . In the final phase (non violence scenario) this again switches with officers in the prime of Public Inquiry again valuing withdrawal as a tactical

action, more so than officers do in the prime of Health and Safety. A summary Anova table and a table for the means and standard errors for the phase x prime interaction are shown in tables 23 and 24 respectively.

**Table 23: Summary Anova table for police action of withdrawal of officers, showing source of variation, sum of squares, degrees of freedom, F ratio and significance level.**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Phase (P)	10598.51	2,84	5299.25	3.09	.05
Accountability (A)	77084.63	2,42	38542.31	2.17	ns
Prime (Pr)	42814.81	1,42	42814.81	17.02	.0001
P x A	1810.37	4,84	452.59	0.26	ns
Pr x A	1136.85	2,42	568.42	0.23	ns
P x Pr	24287.40	2,84	12143.70	10.70	.0001
P x Pr x A	1759.25	4,84	439.81	0.38	ns
Error P	143807.80	2,84	1711.99		
Error A	45338.90	2,42	17746.16		
Error Pr	105640.00	1,42	2515.23		
Error P x A	143807.80	2,84	1711.99		
Error Pr x A	105640.00	2,42	2515.23		
Error P x Pr	95336.66	2,84	1134.96		
Error P x Pr x A	95336.66	4,84	1134.96		

**Table 24: Summary table of means and standard error of the mean for the phase and prime variables.**

Prime	Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
	Mean and <i>S.E.</i>		Mean and <i>S.E.</i>		Mean and <i>S.E.</i>	
Internal accountability	<b>16.55</b>	<i>3.45</i>	<b>62.33</b>	<i>4.70</i>	<b>35.22</b>	<i>8.90</i>
External accountability	<b>36.21</b>	<i>3.67</i>	<b>35.82</b>	<i>8.91</i>	<b>65.00</b>	<i>6.78</i>

Note.

Mean figure in bold, the higher the mean the more likely that officers will withdraw officers.

*Standard Error (SE) of mean in italics.*

### **Overall summary of results**

Overall, the results for this study diverge considerably from the predicted results. This can be seen by comparing tables 25 (predictions) and 26 (results) below. Nonetheless, three things stand out. First of all, there are strong prime effects on all but one of the variables. Secondly, in two cases the effects of prime are qualified by an interaction with phase. However, this does not follow the expected pattern, whereby the prime effect should be stronger with incipient conflict (phase 2) than with other phases. Thirdly, contrary to expectations, phase continues to exert an effect in three out of five tactics, although the effects are generally weaker (only one at .01 or better) than for prime or the interaction.

**Table 25: Summary table predictions for experiment 2**

Source	Expectations	Values	Contagion	Danger	Homogeneity
Phase (P)	--	--	--	--	--
Prime (Pr)	++	++	++	++	++
P x Pr	++	++	++	++	++

**Note**

++ Significant effect.

-- No significant effect.

**Table 26: Summary table results for experiment 2**

Source	Expectations	Values	Contagion	Danger	Homogeneity
Phase (P)	++	++	--	--	++
Prime (Pr)	++ (*)	+	++	--	++ (*)
P x Pr	--	++	--	--	++

**Note**

++ Significant effect.

+ Trend

-- No significant effect.

(\*) Pattern of results as predicted

### 5.3.3. Discussion

The results from experiment 2, lead to three patterns which need to be explained, the effects of the original between participants manipulation of accountability, the pattern of results against predictions and the prime effects.

First of all, there are a number of effects of the original between participants accountability manipulation. Whilst these are relatively weak (none better than .05) they are supportive of the notion that internal accountability leads to the greater use of repressive intervention.

Secondly, and against predictions, there are a number of phase effects. Perhaps this is not surprising since, although logically the questions involve norming responses on their general response to the scenario, and hence parcelling out the phase effect, the fact that questions were asked about each of the phases in turn, may have encouraged respondents to make comparisons between them.

Thirdly, and in general, there are strong prime effects, in the case of using riot trained officers, the pattern is counter to predictions in this case, and also that relating to the use of the horses. Information from the feed back sessions sheds some light on this.

To take the use of 'riot trained' officers first, participants interpreted this as officers who were 'not kitted up' (given that this was distinct from a previous item which stressed 'kitting up'). The use of such officers to intervene could be dangerous to them and so, with a stress on Health and Safety, they would be unlikely to use this option, especially given other available options, which might be more effective in quelling the crowd. That is, their judgement was made in relation to other equally effective, safer (for officers) and possibly more repressive options like 'kitting up' then intervening.

In the case of the horses, participants did not see this only as a repressive measure but also as a way of calming crowds and stopping unrest occurring, that is, relative to other options, it is non repressive. Hence, horses are more likely to be used in the external prime.

The last point, also helps me to address another matter - the unexpected patterns of the prime x phase interaction. Thus the greater use of horses when external accountability is primed, only occurs under non - violent conditions. In effect, this is because all officers see horses as an effective tactic for quelling trouble, but they differ

in seeing them as a preventative measure, as a function of whether they focus on the safety of their officers, or the need to be seen publicly to do all they can to prevent and not just to deal with trouble.

The case of the interaction in the use of withdrawal as a tactic is more complex, and was less clear or consensual in this matter. However, once again it indicates that while accountability concerns are crucial, and their effects depend on phase, the exact way this happens depends upon a more complex appreciation of the nature of the relevant tactic, how it stands in relation to alternative tactics, and hence the meaning of its use in various contexts. In short my categorisation of 'repressive interventions' versus 'non interventions' proved too simplistic and, in understanding the impact of the key variables, it is crucial to start from participants own understandings.

#### **5.4. General Discussion**

The results from the two experiments reported in this chapter are complex and messy, with the pattern of results rarely coming out exactly as predicted. These results, to a large extent, come down to the fact that the conditions under which the study was operationalised were far from ideal. On the one hand, the sample was in effect the population of senior public order officers, such that validating measures on a matched sample was impossible. Secondly, there was no choice over where and when the study was run, making for a problematic compromise in running consecutive studies on the same participants. Thirdly, the sample were 'powerful', unlike participants over whom we have 'power' (such as undergraduates) they were liable to challenge, reject and reinterpret the measures, such as, what is violence and what is the significance of different tactics? With such powerful people the notion of 'experimental control' is in serious jeopardy.

Despite all this, there are consistent and strong indications that accountability is crucial, especially in regard to the key issue of what officers actually do in tactical terms, that phase is crucial and the effects of accountability depend upon phase. As already indicated, we not only get strong statistical effects but also large effects in absolute terms.

In part at least, these confirm Stott and Reicher's (1998) findings. Police, both see crowds as more homogeneous and are more likely to favour homogenising tactics, such as the donning of riot gear (with which police all look the same to crowds and

crowd members - through a usually scuffed Perspex visor - the crowd look all the same to police) as conflict occurs.

More generally, these studies once again demonstrate the importance of accountability to an understanding of group processes and reinforces the message that it is important to consider how group members are held to account and by whom if one wants to understand the behaviour of members of formal groups. In passing, it is also worth noting that the manipulations also affected a number of general social psychological processes, most notably phase impacted upon perceptions of outgroup homogeneity. While it is not entirely clear why this should be, the finding does indicate that we should not view outgroup homogeneity as a perceptual process, but rather should take into account such factors as theories of the crowd action (i.e. the idea that violence is contagious and will lead all members to behave likewise).

On a methodological level, the difficulties I encountered in running these studies raises some instructive points for the use of experimentation in social psychology. The sample I used were very different from the staple fare of such studies. Unlike most subjects who have less power than the experimenter and are more likely to accede to the definitions and instructions that the experimenter imposes, here the subjects were more powerful. They contested and rejected some of the terms of the experiment. As I have suggested, this may lie behind the way in which some of the results deviated from my predictions. This is a graphic illustration of the way in which experimentation is framed by specific power relations and how it is important to be aware of the way in which these relations affect both our ability to conduct experiments and the results we receive from them.

All in all, then, the results of these studies show that accountability and phase have large effects, but the exact nature of those effects is more complex than I originally examined. The apriori assumptions were too simple, and a more subtle analysis of the exact nature of internal and external accountability concerns, and the situated significance of using particular tactics relative to others, needs to be undertaken before I can see how the one impacts on the other. This need for a situated analysis, and the complexity of both accountability and its effects - but also of its crucial importance - will be a major theme, that will arise again in chapter 7. However first, in chapter 6, I will describe some pilot field studies which helped shape the way

the major study was conducted, as well as delivering some further insights into crowd policing in their own right.

## **Chapter 6.**

### **Pilot Participant observation studies, Eid, and Vaisakhi, Festivals, February and April 1997.**

#### **6.1. Introduction**

The results reported in the previous two chapters provide both qualitative and quantitative support for the notion that accountability concerns are central to the decision making by senior police officers during public order events.

The obvious problems with these previous studies is that they did not look at real events, therefore we can't say that this is what people do in 'live' situations. There are two aims to the studies reported in this chapter. The first and major aim is to act as pilot studies for the major study conducted in the next chapter. In each study a slightly different approach is taken in order to investigate the best way of gaining access, and collecting the richest possible data, on the decisions taken by senior officers and reasons lying behind them. These lessons concerning 'best practice' will then be used to plan the major study. The second and subsidiary aim has to do with the substantive findings coming out of these studies. I simply want to see if the data can be used to confirm, deny, or enrich my emerging model of public order policing.

This chapter is organised in two sections. First, I will look at the analytic protocols for collecting and recording the data. This will follow the arrangement set out in chapter 4, with the exception that it will not include a section on grounded theory, because on this occasion, the data was not subject to systematic analysis.

Second, I will look in detail at four participant observation studies. Two of these looked at the festival of Eid; (a celebration to mark the end of the Ramadan fast) and two observations centred on the Vaisakhi celebrations (marking the birth of the Sikh nation). All four ethnographic studies were carried out in Southall, London, during February and April of 1997. These will be discussed in turn.

## **6.2. Analytic issues**

### **6.2.1. Data collection**

As I have explained, the studies in this chapter are principally pilot studies, which seek to test different ways of studying crowd policing, in order to see which delivers the richest data. For the first Eid event, I followed the briefing officer (a Chief Inspector) as he prepared to brief the officers in charge of the individual Police Support Units (PSU's) on the police aims for the event. On the second day of the Eid festival I looked in more detail at the processes involved in gathering information in the 'intelligence cell' based at Southall police station. These revealed intergroup differences between those collecting intelligence within the police.

The two Vaisakhi celebrations were held on two consecutive Sundays in April of 1997. For the first Sunday, I concentrated on how the gold commander took decisions in relation to the event. This observation highlighted the difficulties involved when the researcher is not able to follow in detail the selected person in question. To be more explicit, this officers concern with national security considerations, in relation to the perceived terrorist threat to the Coca-Cola Cup Final, meant the withdrawal of access to him for this day. He had these concerns because he had also been allocated the role of performing gold for both the Vaisakhi celebrations and the Coca-Cola Cup Final. Due to the very sensitive nature of the information being given to this officer, and the sources from which they were coming, access to this officer was withdrawn and the ethnographic study had to be abandoned.

The second Vaisakhi Sunday saw a change in the observational focus. It was decided to follow the mobile reserve bronze, a very experienced senior officer of Chief Inspector rank, who was responsible for the deployment of the mobile Police Support Units (PSU's) assigned to the event. This observation also raised practical issues of how to follow and record the officers decisions in this environment. At moments of tension, this officer did not articulate in detail the reasons for his decisions, because he was consumed by the immediacy of the situations presented for him to deal with. These four events will be explicated in detail after outlining the protocols for recording the data.

The protocols for recording the field notes were as follows. A small hands free tape recorder was used to record data where practicable. Where this was not possible, due to officers not wishing to be tape recorded, or for practical reasons such as

interference with police control room technology, or the batteries having run out, these notes were augmented by written field notes made in note books. Whether the notes were recorded by audio or written means, these notes were either spoken into the tape recorder or written up as soon as practical and later transcribed. The field notes were supplemented by filling in a field journal, which outlined general themes emerging from the observations and which was completed at the end of every observational day. This was also transcribed.

The above 'primary sources' of data were complemented by 'secondary sources'. These were in the form of intelligence briefing notes from Special Branch (SB - assessing the actual threat of disorder); local intelligence records, briefing materials and internal police correspondence concerning the events. In addition, for the second Vaisakhi Sunday, the Information Time Line – a document collating the police intelligence for the day - was obtained from officers running the local 'intelligence-gathering cell' based at Southall police station.

### **6.3. Pilot 1: Eid al Fitr, Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 1997**

#### **6.3.1. Rationale for Research Strategy**

For the first pilot participant observation study, it was decided to follow one of the bronze commanders (an officer of the rank of Chief Inspector) who was responsible for the briefing of officers assigned to the event. Practically, this involved following him around Southall police station while he conducted a series of briefings for officers. It was decided to focus on the bronze commander because I wanted to see how officers at this level of command influenced the decision making process during a 'live' public order event.

#### **6.3.2. The Events**

The event of Eid al Fitr marks the start of the festival to celebrate the end of the Muslim Ramadan fast, the start of which is decided by the senior Imam (Muslim Priest) for the United Kingdom. Historically, this event has been marked by the majority of the estimated one million Muslims in the United Kingdom by meetings and prayers between family members and friends. In the case of the celebrations centred around Southall in west London, the event had been used by some younger Muslims as an occasion for them to go to this area in expensive hire cars, to wave flags and to insult local Sikhs who own the majority of retail outlets on Southall Broadway.

According to police records the resulting intergroup conflict between the two groups had resulted in serious confrontations which had necessitated police intervention. As an example, the police had made fifty-five arrests the previous year (1996) for a variety of offences including the possession of offensive weapons and serious assaults. The police information for the 1997 festival, included an assessment of worsening relations between the young Muslims based on the Chalvey estate in Slough and the Sikhs of Southall, and had lead them to predict large scale disorder.

To contextualise this intergroup rivalry it is necessary to understand the historical enmity between the Sikh and Muslim followers in this area. This, according to police Special Branch intelligence sources, could not be divorced from the context of intergroup conflict between Sikhs and Muslims which had occurred over many centuries, and had resulted in various atrocities on the Indian sub continent.

### **1. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“There is a history dating back hundreds of years of, I don’t think hatred is too strong a word to use, between the Sikhs of India and the Muslims of India. Both their histories are littered with battles, wars, conquests, and uprisings involving those two groups. Indeed it continues to the current day, when Indira Ghandi was assassinated by her two Sikh bodyguards for her part in storming the Golden Temple in India, this is the holiest of holy shrines for the Sikhs, approximately 4000 Sikhs were killed in India by Muslims and Hindus. Racial violence on such a scale is not unknown. These events colour the attitudes of all sections of the community from adults through to the children.”*

According to this officer, the historical intergroup conflict between the Muslim and Sikhs in India had been relatively self-contained within the sub continent, until an incident in the winter of 1995, when a small series of attacks between Sikhs and Muslims started to occur in Southall. These incidents had got progressively worse with an attack on a young Muslim at a local community college.

### **2. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“Normally they are kept fairly well hidden and up and to the point of January 1995, or it might have been February, there hadn’t really been any friction that had spilled over into violence between the two communities. On that date, a very small event took place, which seemed to spark off a whole series of tit for tat attacks and retaliations that have been continuing and getting more and more serious over the last two years. The initial event itself was an argument between a Muslim and a Sikh at Hounslow College, no hang on, Isleworth College of Higher Education.”*

The consequences of the attack on the young Muslim were seen in an immediate deterioration in intergroup relations. Tangibly, this was seen on the Monday following the Friday attack, with about 150 Muslims gathering at the local college for the purposes of extracting revenge on Sikh men attending the college. Intelligence gathered through police sources enabled several units of public order trained officers of the Territorial Support Group (TSG) to be waiting outside the college for the purposes of preventing the anticipated conflict between the Sikhs and Muslims.

According to eyewitnesses, as the Muslims attempted to gain access to the college, police intervened and the resulting confrontation resulted in the arrests of one Sikh and twenty Muslims.

### **3. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“The upshot was that the Muslims called for reinforcements and on the Monday following the argument on the Friday night, approximately 150 Muslims turned up at the college with a view to extracting revenge on the Sikhs, who make up the majority of the students. Special Branch (SB) were able to warn the commanders that this event was going to occur, as we had received intelligence over that weekend that the Muslims were going to do this. Territorial Support Group (TSG) units were therefore deployed to the area prior to the event. Somewhat unusually, the 150 Muslims attempted to gain entrance to the premises, at that point TSG arrived, a stand up fight took place, the Muslims turned and attacked the TSG. It ended with 20 Muslims being arrested and I think one Sikh. There were demonstrations outside Chiswick police station where the prisoners were taken to, and demonstrations outside the court when they appeared in court.”*

It was widely held by both the local Sikh community and the police, that after the resulting trial, that intergroup relations would improve following the conviction of the Muslims who had been arrested. However, the trial was stopped on the grounds that the defendants could not get a fair trial following the adverse publicity surrounding the event. This was perceived to be unfair by the local Sikhs and wider divisions grew between the two groups.

#### **4. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“Following this strand through, the people that were arrested there, eventually appeared at Crown Court, where the trial was halted by the judge on the grounds that they couldn’t get a fair trial because of prejudicial press reporting in the local newspapers. This decision left everybody flabbergasted but left the Muslims in particular with the opinion that they could get away with anything as far as attacking the Sikhs. The Sikhs were thrown into great consternation about the whole event and decided that this wouldn’t happen again, that they would be prepared for future activities like that with the Muslim, and from that seed grew the two camps. ”*

Set against this historical context of intergroup conflict between local Southall Muslims and Sikhs, the festival of Eid (marking the end of the Ramadan fast) was seen by some Muslim youth to be an ideal way of asserting their presence by driving expensive hire cars and waving Muslim flags along Southall Broadway. The Broadway is symbolic for local Sikhs who own the majority of the shops along this road, and thus the behaviour of Muslims is seen to be very provocative in nature.

#### **5. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“The Muslims had started to celebrate the festival of Eid in Southall itself, they do this by driving up and down Southall Broadway, usually in vehicles that they have hired specifically for the Eid festival, wave Muslim flags and generally assert their presence. This was seen as very provocative by the Sikhs, Southall Broadway has always been a symbolic location and they have tried very hard over the last few years to stop the Muslims from going on to the Broadway. ”*

Perhaps not surprisingly the provocation seen during Eid had resulted in a number of conflicts between the two groups, and on a previous occasion, police narrowly averted a possible confrontation between 300 Sikhs trying to get onto Southall Broadway, already full with Muslims.

### **6. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“The worst case of this occurring was, I think, in 1995, when it was only due to some very good policing to block off the 300 or so Sikhs who were trying to get on to the Broadway from the direction of Norwood Green that kept the two sides apart, and from the intelligence perspective their routes up to the Broadway were passed to the commander who was able to take blocking action with uniform officers.”*

The response of the police to these escalating intergroup conflicts between Sikhs and Muslims had resulted in all religious festivals of the two communities requiring an overt police presence to deter actual confrontation. In addition, outside of these festivals, a series of attacks by both groups on members of the other had resulted in a number of injuries and, in some cases, death was only narrowly averted.

### **7. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“We now have a situation where the Muslim’s festivals of Eid and increasingly the Sikhs festivals of Vaisakhi and Diwali require heavy police presence to ensure that all things pass off peacefully. Between these big festivals there is a constant stream of attacks on one another, these have been getting more and more serious and there are at least two or three people walking around who were seriously injured by attacks and are very lucky that they are not dead, such were the level of their injuries.”*

For the police, violent groups on both sides, such as the Sikh 'Sheery Punjab' and the Muslim 'Chalvey Boys', legitimated their actions on both political and religious dimensions. This led to a progressive worsening of intergroup relations.

### **8. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“Another disturbing trend within the whole issue has been the politicisation of the whole thing and the fact that it’s both national and religious. In the normal context of events, if two groups of youths were trying to fight and were attacking one another, it would be seen as just ‘yobbery’ and nobody would be too bothered, but both these groups, the Sheery Punjab from the Sikhs and the Chalvey Boys from the Muslims, have taken upon themselves this cloak of defending their religion, in particular, and defending their nationality to a lesser extent.”*

Prior to the 1997 Eid festival, police were concerned about how these attacks were being represented as political and religious in motivation, and feared even greater intergroup conflict as places of worship and individual symbols of the two religions were attacked. Tangibly, this had manifested itself in an increase in attacks on both Sikh Gudwara's (Temples) and Muslim Mosques as well as incidents in which the hair of young practising Sikhs (men and women) had been cut off. For practising Sikhs, having uncut hair or Kesh, worn under the turban, is one of the five K's or symbols of Sikhism. The others are carrying a symbolic dagger or Kirpan, having a steel comb to fix the hair or Khangha, a steel bangle or Kara and the wearing of special undershorts or Kaccha. The cutting of hair is therefore seen, not only as a deep insult to the individual in particular, but to be just as insulting to the Sikh community in general. Several instances of this type of attack had been reported prior to the Eid celebrations of 1997 and the police feared further conflict between the two groups during this particular festival.

### **9. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“Because religion is involved, it involves the rest of the community and the potential for serious disorder is increased. Attacks have taken place on Sikh Gudwara's and Muslim Mosques and last weekend a Sikh boy had his top knot cut off, which is seen as a deep insult, the top knot is one of the five religious symbols that the baptised Sikh must have and the girl with him had part of her pigtail cut off, again an attack on women is seen as highly provocative. This has had ramifications throughout the whole community and undoubtedly there will be a further problems.”*

It was set against this background that the first pilot ethnographic study was conducted on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 1997. On my arrival in London a police Inspector, who was assigned as my liaison officer, collected me for the period of the two-day participant observational study and drove me to Southall police station. On the way this officer outlined the latest updated information regarding this event, which had been something of a surprise for the police, as the Southall community leaders had only decided the night before that the Eid festival was to be held over the weekend of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> February 1997. This officer confirmed that tension between young Muslims and Sikhs had heightened and that police information indicated that Sikhs from Leeds

and Bradford had come to London to defend the local Sikhs on Southall Broadway. Interestingly, this officer also highlighted the intergroup tension between the local senior officers and the central control room, of the Metropolitan Police in Scotland Yard known in police argot as GT, which was perceived to be interfering in this event by local senior officers. In contrast, the central control room had insisted that they would monitor the event so that, in the case of disorder, they could arrange for the Metropolitan police response to be co-ordinated in quelling any riot.

### 10. Inspector

*“It was only decided at 8pm last night by the Southall community that the Eid Festival would be today. Tension has been reported between young Sikhs and Muslims. There is information suggesting that young Sikhs have been brought down from Leeds and Bradford to fight. There have already been problems with the role of GT (central police control based at New Scotland Yard) and the local Southall police control. This is seen by gold and silver as interfering in a local event. They have been instructed that GT has a shadowing role in order that the organisation can supply a contingent response as necessary.”*

Whilst driving to the police station I became aware of the large numbers of Sikhs and Muslims being stopped and searched by groups of officers on foot and in police vans. Many of the young Sikhs and Muslims were driving expensive cars (BMW, Jaguar and Mercedes). I also noticed the majority of officers carrying long batons and wearing protective riot equipment, albeit, without the crash helmet.

On entering the back of Southall Police station through a controlled barrier I noticed a large number of police vehicles and officers, the police driver and myself were escorted to the briefing officer's office. This briefing officer informed us that gold had left the police station to go to Scotland Yard, to resolve the issue of control of the event.

## **Briefing**

The briefing by the Chief Inspector began at 3 p.m. This involved this officer providing a pack for the Inspectors and Sergeants present and was split into three parts: first, a general briefing on the background to the event, second, an information update, and third, personnel deployments. The briefing officer began with the news that there had been problems between the local police Chief Superintendent, in charge of the policing of Southall police area, and the central control centre of the Metropolitan police based at Scotland Yard. The view of the local Southall senior officers was that it was the purpose of the central control room to monitor the communications systems of Southall police, so in the case of serious confrontation they could assume the command and control functions from the local officers. It was not the role of the officers at GT (the central control centre) to command the event from the start.

### **11. Chief Inspector**

*“Gold has gone to GT (Metropolitan Police central control room at Scotland Yard) to resolve who is in charge of the operation. GT should be shadowing the event so in the circumstances of serious disorder they could assume command and control function from the local communications.”*

After outlining the purpose of the Eid festival the briefing officer gave the historical data from previous Eid celebrations. He ended this section of the briefing with the latest information update, which predicted that several hundred youths were coming to London from Bradford, Leeds and other parts of Northern England to ‘fight’ with each other.

The second part of the briefing focused on the anecdotal use of incidents to illustrate the power of community figures within the Sikh and Muslim communities to deal with the misbehaviour of the young. The sources of information, available to the police, both overt and covert, were outlined before drawing attention to selected targets, or in police argot ‘faces’, in both the Sikh and Muslim communities, as the photographs of these identified targets were being passed around, the information about the ‘Chalvey Boys’ (Muslim youth from Slough) was given.

The 'Chalvey Boys' history was seen by the police to be 'generically problematic' with evidence supporting this derived from two sources. The first had to do with covert data sources, which provided information as to the 'Chalvey Boys' previous behaviour and projected involvement in the days events. Second, in anecdotal evidence supplied by the briefing officer that a unit of Thames Valley police had been subjected to physical search by this group. An air of silence descended in the room with unanimous agreement "*that this would not happen in the Met.*"

The briefing continued with a reminder from the briefing officer of the need to act sensitively in dealing with people stopped under Section 60 Public Order and Criminal Justice Act 1994. This legislation empowers the police to specify a geographical area in which people can be stopped and searched for weapons, without the need to reach the criteria normally required for stopping and searching suspects under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE). Authority had been given by the local Superintendent who had specified the area in which the searches could take place and prescribing a time limit for the authority.

The use of the above legislation was to provide one of the main sources of input into the 'fast time' intelligence cell located at Southall police station and staffed by local officers. In an ideal world, this was conceived to work in the following way, once a person had been stopped and searched for weapons, the officers having checked the person's details would complete a record of the search. This would be taken by the officers to Southall police station and given to intelligence cell staff to be fed into the intelligence system. The benefits perceived to accrue from such an arrangement would be that the officers grading the information provided on the record of the stops, would be able to compile intelligence updates, which could be circulated quickly for both the benefit of local senior and junior officers.

At this stage of the briefing, the briefing officer pointed out the potential problems of using Section 60 in stopping practising Sikhs. Their religious beliefs require them to carry five items including a 'Kirpan' or large dagger. In the past tensions between officers and Sikhs had arisen when they had been arrested for carrying offensive weapons. The need to deal sensitively with this issue was reiterated by the briefing officer to avoid possible confrontations between officers on the streets and young Sikhs carrying Kirpans of varying size and length.

At the end of the briefing I was invited to go to the canteen to await the arrival of the silver commander (in this case a Superintendent), who would update me as to the conflict between the officer performing the role of gold (the local Chief Superintendent), and the central Met control room (GT).

At about 4.10pm, whilst waiting for this officer to arrive, a large number of officers attached to various Police Support Units (PSU's) entered the canteen. These were mainly of Constable and Sergeant rank, many of whom expressed a general concern about the police tactics of stopping young Sikhs and Muslims. In fact, these junior officers believed, that having been alerted to this police tactic, many of these young Sikh and Muslim men would avoid the chance of detection and arrest for offences of carrying weapons, by encouraging their girlfriends to carry these weapons for them.

## 12. Constable

*“The numbers of officers here today and the use of intelligence means that a lot of young Sikhs and Muslims will be stopped. They know the police will be out in force so others, for example, girlfriends, will carry weapons. If they do fight it will be arranged by leaders of the groups away from the area of the police operation.”*

A short while later, the silver commander sent word to the canteen that he was in a position to see me and I went to his office. Whilst there, he explained that the difficulties that had arisen between the local Southall control room and the central control room at New Scotland Yard (GT) had arisen because the central control believed that it was their responsibility to control the event. To clarify the situation, the local police commander, and gold for the event, had left the police area and had gone to New Scotland Yard (GT).

The local senior officers believed that if the collation of intelligence in relation to the event was controlled by the central control room, they would not be able to respond quickly to any information generated as a result of using the ‘fast time’ intelligence system. This system relied on the local officers collating the results of the record of people stopped in the area using the powers sanctioned by Section 60 Public Order and Criminal Justice Act 1994.

### 13. Superintendent

*“Gold has gone to GT, as they have had a difference of opinion as to who is controlling the event. Our position is that we have to respond quickly to ‘fast time’ information, which is graded for intelligence content and acted upon by control in deploying officers to deal with potential troublemakers. Undoubtedly, if we needed increased resources and the event became protracted, GT would have to step in and take control. We were hoping to have GT shadowing the event so that this could be achieved. Technically, the sophistication of GT would be let down due to the time delay (several minutes), in responding to fast time information and preventing disorder escalating. In utilising a local system we can discriminate and target individuals and groups of individuals and apply selectively the powers under Section 60.”*

Following this discussion I was introduced to the officer in charge of the mobile reserve public order trained officers (PSU's) who was a Chief Inspector with 28 years service. He began to discuss how junior public order officers, Constables and Sergeants had been complaining of the ‘stress’ felt by young officers, and how the group rules within these Police Support Unit groups might effect these officers.

### 14. Chief Inspector

*“Previous research on stress, imposed by public order policing situations, has tended to focus on Bronze and Silver levels and monitored heart rates. The stress of young officers who are actually policing the event is high or so they tell me. There is a need to look at individual officer responses as opposed to group rules of PSU units and how this effects junior officers.”*

During the remainder of the day I took the opportunity to look at the set up, for the 'Intelligence Cell' in gathering information about identified targets from covert sources. In this sense, the word covert covers all police information gathering facilities, that were not in the form of uniform officers stopping young Sikhs and Muslims to search them for weapons. This part of the observation involved being given access to information that was extremely confidential and of possible risk to the source of the information. For these reasons this part of the day will not be explicated in detail.

However, it did provide an opportunity to look at how the intelligence gathering facility was managed, and to decide how to conduct a participant observation study, to look broadly at how information is gathered and categorised before being passed on to different groups within the police. This observation will be outlined below after outlining the summary of findings for the first day of the Eid festival.

### **6.3.3. Implications of Pilot 1 findings**

#### **Methodological issues**

The data from this first day of Eid, highlights the difficulties of following a senior officer who at times was too busy to speak to me and passed me on to other officers to fill in these busy periods. From a practical perspective whilst this officer was part of the gold, silver and bronze command structure, he was not on the ground and was therefore a long way from where the decisions were being made, and in a sense was out of touch with what was happening, as a result he was not in a position to discuss and explicate in detail the decisions that were being taken throughout the day.

#### **Theoretical issues**

The data from this pilot study provides evidence that in the same way that crowds cannot be treated as a homogeneous group, the police are far from the homogeneous group I believed. More specifically, there is intergroup tension between different ranks, junior and senior officers, between the same ranks in different locations, and between local officers at both junior and senior and central officers at both junior and senior levels.

The data also confirms the police fear of disorder and loss of control in crowd events. Even when crowds are peaceful officers perceive them as always having the potential for violence and this fear of violence is uppermost in their minds as they decide on tactics.

## **6.4. Pilot 2: Eid al Fitr, Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February 1997**

### **6.4.1. Rationale for Research strategy**

The rationale for the second day of Eid built upon the lessons learnt from the first day. While these previous days findings were interesting, they did not tell us much about the decision making process on the ground, as the officer was distanced from the decisions made on the ground. It was therefore impossible to follow through these decisions and the rationale for them. The second day therefore concentrated in the main, on the process on intelligence gathering to see how police information was gathered and disseminated for action by officers on the ground. Practically, this involved spending a period of time talking to the officers involved in gathering information and looking at how intelligence was passed on to the senior officers on the ground.

### **6.4.2. The Events**

It will be recalled that the first day of the observation of Eid had ended looking at the intelligence gathering facility at Southall police station. During this observation it became clear that intergroup tension was present between the various different groups within the police gathering information. In addition the weighting given to the information sources (Special Branch, Public Order Intelligence unit and Local Officers) appeared to differ between officers of different ranks.

To be more specific, on the one hand some senior officers give little or no weight to the information provided by Special Branch. On the other hand, some restrict the weight given to their information, to the pre event planning stage of an event.

This distinction is further complicated by some senior officers doubting, whether other senior officers are able to interpret what Special Branch say, in the assessment of the level of threat of violence, also by the fact that junior officers involved in gathering information about events question the process by which Special Branch gathers information as well as the accuracy of their forecasts.

In order to explicate the intergroup differences within these information gathering police groups, the research focus for the second day of the Eid Festival concentrated on the process of intelligence gathering, assessment and dissemination. More specifically, I looked at how the 'fast time' system at Southall police station

dealt with the completed search records of the patrolling officers, and how this system incorporated other methods of intelligence gathering from both overt and covert sources. The intergroup tensions arising from the control of Public Order Intelligence can be illustrated through the relative positions of local officers and Special Branch.

Senior officers at the gold level of command appear to show intraindividual variation in the stress they place on Special Branch intelligence prior to an event. They are sceptical of reports which seem to be written in a style which is probabilistic, and which may be at variance with a senior officers desire to be able to have information of a more concrete nature. Whilst they themselves may wish to manage the information they give to others, due to accountability concerns (see chapter 4), they deny that it is legitimate for others to do likewise.

### 15. Commander

*"I mean, it's a musical joke, they never tell you anything you didn't know before and it's a bit like a surveyors report, it covers everything but commits them to nothing. That's not necessarily true, I have seen some, which are really very good they are spot on. By and large, though, I think perhaps they could be a bit more accurate or precise, if that's the right word. I would prefer it if they were a bit more precise because I don't think anybody's going to get into the game of blame, you know, but if they got it badly wrong, and its based on the information they had available, and its all been assessed properly, that's what has come out of the ink, nobody can actually blame them, all they are doing is giving you the information they had available. Therefore perhaps what I need to say is that they need to be bit more precise that relies on, I suppose years of practice."*

The intergroup conflict within the police between Special Branch officers and other units dedicated to providing intelligence for public order events had resulted in a 'turf war' between certain sections of the police. This tension had arisen because, from Special Branch perspective, they are the only group within the police who are specifically mandated by law to gather intelligence on public order. Perhaps more importantly - and a further source of intergroup conflict between them and officers collating public order intelligence outside of Special Branch - was the exemption

enjoyed by Special Branch officers from complying with the restrictions imposed by the Data Protection Act, 1984.

### 16. Commander

*“I think if they can just work out where their destiny lies then I think that’s getting fairly close now. The debate is going on at the minute, as you probably know, there is a sort of little local difficulty between Special Branch and the Public Order Intelligence unit. They have got this issue, about them calling themselves an intelligence unit, when nobody else is allowed to do intelligence about public order apart from Special Branch. This sort of turf war.”*

The negative view of Special Branch information is echoed by more junior officers, who question the process by which Special Branch arrive at the assessment of disorder, and having arrived at a figure how accurate it is.

### 17. Sergeant

*“I must admit Special Branch threat assessments are a bit of a mystery, in that I’m unsure of how they actually get their actual assessments, for instance at the recent Dockers march (1997), I can’t remember the figure but they gave something like 250 people that were likely to cause disorder. Where does this figure actually come from, I think they need to be more open on where these figures actually come from, do they go round and ask 250 people that they know or have they got some sort of formula. The other thing is the actual information they give, it’s not graded, it’s not evaluated so there’s no way of actually knowing how accurate it is. The other thing with it is that they would say they got all of their information from sources, yet I’ve seen some threat assessments which have actually been written on the information that I’ve given them. Why not say, yes, this has come from a police source or where has this information come from, how accurate is it? That’s my main gripe about the actual threat assessment, you have no way of knowing how accurate it is.”*

However, not all senior officers blame Special Branch (SB) for the tensions with public order officers. They accept that SB is acting under special constraints which affect what information they can give and how it is given. It is the failure of

middle management in the public order division, to appreciate such factors which leads them to denigrate SB and downgrade the information provided by them.

### **18. Commander**

*“I have a real problem with the overlap between Public Order Intelligence and Special Branch, as do Special Branch. Special Branch have a quite specific role, its defined effectively by statute. I can see circumstances where it would not be in the interests of Special Branch, it would not be in the interests of the organisation for us necessarily to have information disclosed to us that they are privy to, because that might possibly prejudice informants, it might not be in the broader interest of the bigger picture, as it were. A lot of Public Order, a lot of people involved in Public Order at middle rank (Superintendents) don't always understand this, they clearly feel that any information must be put through to them. However, the Special Branch role is perhaps not as important as the Public Order intelligence role, the Forward Intelligence Team (FIT) team role, for real time activity. I can imagine, obviously I know, that a Special Branch assessment is useful in the broader planning of an event, but for 'real time' activity I would put my faith in the FIT (Forward Intelligence Teams).”*

This officer also had a problem with the Special Branch assessments of the threat of disorder during an event, which is in some ways exacerbated by the writing of these documents in a code that is not necessarily understood by senior officers in charge of events. Again priority is given to these assessment, prior to the event, but for the actual day greater reliance is given to the flow of intelligence on the day.

### **19. Commander**

*“I understand that the way that they construct their threat assessments, some of it is effectively in code, they are saying things by the use of certain phrases and I understand them. Give them their due, they are largely accurate, there are not too many occasions when they have been very, very wrong in my experience. One or two, but not very many. I take due note of what we are advised to give them. But overall, it is probably better after you have taken that, to rely on the flow of intelligence on the day because things change so quickly.”*

The perspective of Special Branch officers is rather different, they perceive themselves to have been on the receiving end of 'positive dis- information' and to have been heavily criticised in the aftermath of the 'Poll Tax' riots in the 1990's. The position of Special Branch was that they believed that they were accurate in the predictions that they had made regarding these incidents, and the resulting inter group conflict between Special Branch and sections of senior public order police officers, was due to the perceived unfairness of these senior officers in holding the Branch accountable for not providing accurate intelligence.

## **20. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*"Yes, there certainly is and I think that would seem quite strongly, not only rumour but I think positive dis-information after the Poll Tax riots, where Special Branch was heavily criticised, and is still being criticised on training courses for not getting it right. Having been privy to seeing the assessment and knowing what was in it, Special Branch got it exactly right, we told them where the disorder would break out, we told them that Downing Street would be a target, we told them the numbers of people that were likely to come seeking disorder, but it's being used as a, well we can always blame lack of intelligence rather than a lack of doing anything with it."*

The lessons learnt from the 'Poll Tax' riots had resulted in Special Branch providing even more information to senior public order officers, with the claim that senior public order officers are often unsure about what to do with all the intelligence. This increased output from Special Branch is seen as ensuring that accountability for the outcomes of events is placed back with the senior officers in charge of dealing with them.

### **21. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“From my experience, I’m starting to get cries the other way of what am I supposed to do with all this information? It’s putting the onus back on people to brief their own officers, they can’t hide behind the screen of, well, I’ve not been told anything. The vast majority of cases are now fully briefed, particularly through the area liaison system that Special Branch runs and if its not getting down to the officers who are policing the demonstration, it’s not because it isn’t there. I think there is a way to go yet, to get that built in as a natural extension of the way things are done, but it is greatly improved from what it used to be.”*

For Special Branch the requirements of the threat assessment compiled by them for senior public order commanders has to address three fundamental questions. Who are the people turning up, how many and what is the likelihood of violence?

### **22. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“I think the public order commanders requirements are, who are these people? How many of them are going to turn up and are they going to give me any problems? Once those have been answered, anything else is icing on the cake or even might be seen as unnecessary, from my perspective, I would like him to have as much information as possible out of which he can cull what he needs, rather than boil it down to the bare bones of just answering those three questions. I think with those three questions answered, he is then in a position to be estimating the numbers of officers he will need and start to formulate how he will deal with the demonstration or public order event.”*

Special Branch (SB) officers are unequivocally negative about attempts by public order officers to gather their own intelligence - the so called 'Public Order Intelligence System'. In fact, SB officers point out that it may lead to confusion and they question the efficiency of using two systems.

### **23. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“There has been a Public Order Intelligence System in existence for many, many years and its been run by Special Branch. Over and above that, there is another system that has been imposed, which is now called the Public Order Intelligence System. I am not convinced that this second system is desirable or necessary and can lead to confusion.”*

The confusion arising from the two sources is seen to arise for police officers attached to local police stations throughout London, who collect information on public order and who are then in a quandary over what to do with it. According to Special Branch, this information should be sent to them, as they are the only group within the police specifically mandated in law to collect information on public order. The ability to classify individuals in terms of political allegiances, is helped by the Branch exemption of complying with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1984, and for which the rest of the police must comply. The resulting intergroup confusion about what the respective roles were was acknowledged to require resolution.

### **24. Detective Chief Inspector (Special Branch)**

*“At the moment, there is definitely confusion out at (Operational Command Units - OCU's), or local police stations, they are unclear as to where Public Order information is sent. In the past, it has always been to Special Branch and it should continue to come to Special Branch, we are the body, the only body that produces an assessment of a demonstration, that is our role. The Public Order Intelligence System, or (CO.11), does not produce assessments and because of restrictions under the Data Protection Act from which they are not exempt, they are not allowed to classify people according to their groups or their politics, therefore any information can only be partial. There needs to be some clarity or clarification between Special Branch (SB) and CO.11 as to the exact roles, and at the moment I don't think either side are entirely sure as to what the other is doing.”*

As I followed officers in the 'Intelligence Cell' it became apparent that a third tier of intelligence gathering had to be added to those of Special Branch and of the public order division. Officers at the local level were running the 'Intelligence Cell' at

Southall police station, utilising covert and overt means of recording information. These officers were relying on the majority of their intelligence coming from the officers policing the event, stopping people in the area and recording their details, which would then be fed into the 'fast time' intelligence system which was also operating on the first day. Due to the sensitive nature of this material it will not be used to illustrate specific points, but rather to confirm that local officers see both information sources based centrally in Scotland Yard (Special Branch and the Public Order Intelligence Unit at CO.11, the Public Order Branch) to be a 'black hole'. In other words, local officers often supply information to both Special Branch and the Public Order Intelligence Unit, and receive little or no feed back on their information.

### **25. Detective Sergeant**

*"The problem with both Special Branch and the Public Order Intelligence Unit is that they both are trying to out do each other as regards the information they supply to the senior officers policing these events. The system that was used yesterday and also today seeks to turn information around quickly so that the senior officers can be updated throughout the event."*

Officers in this unit identified with the problems caused to local senior officers by what was perceived to be unwarranted interference by central senior officers in the policing of a largely local event. This was mirrored by their own frustrations in having to supply information updates to officers based in New Scotland Yard, which would then be passed back to senior officers at Southall police station. The time delay in question was perceived to be a problem by these officers, who were able to provide the same information more quickly and in response to the information coming in from the streets being patrolled by the police support units.

### **6.4.3. Implications of Pilot 2 findings**

#### **Methodological issues**

In opting to follow the information and intelligence gathering process a number of issues arose. Firstly, the sensitive nature of the information put a number of areas out of bounds. I was simply denied access to much of the key decision making. This led to a second problem, namely that officers were unable to articulate the reasons for these decisions, due to concerns they had about the sensitivity of some of the information in their possession. Third, and lastly, these decisions were again being made at the police station and were removed from the decision making of the senior officers in control on the ground.

#### **Theoretical issues**

The evidence from the second day of Eid shows that there are big intergroup rivalries between those groups involved in the gathering of information about public order events. Many senior officers are sceptical and even hostile to Special Branch (SB). They see the information they provide as generally unhelpful and often wrong. Junior officers question both the process by which SB assessments are made and the accuracy of the forecast. By contrast, Special Branch perceive this allocation of blame to be a deliberate ploy, to shift the blame from the public order commanders to them. This would seem to suggest that accountability issues are important in framing intergroup relations between Special Branch and other groups within the police.

To be more specific, in order not to be held accountable, for being seen to get things wrong by both senior and junior officers, it would appear that Special Branch accounts of the crowd inevitably play up danger. They have less to lose by suggesting trouble will happen when it doesn't (they can then claim that their briefings allowed officers to act in ways that reduced the problem) than by suggesting that trouble won't happen when it does. Then the unpreparedness of public order officers can be laid fairly and squarely at their door!

### **6.5. Pilot 3: Vaisakhi, Sunday 6th April 1997**

#### **6.5.1. Rationale for Research strategy**

The two previous observations of Eid had highlighted the problems of decision making occurring away from the people observed, and a lack of explanation about decisions made, either because these reasons were never articulated in the first place, or because they were, but I could not access them for security reasons. The research strategy for the third observation attempted to address these problems by selecting the gold commander for this particular event, so that the 'top down' level of decision making could be explicated.

#### **6.5.2. The Events**

It will be recalled that the festival of Vaisakhi marks the birth of the Sikh nation and the formation of the Khalsa (name given to baptised Sikhs). The celebrations organised by the Southall Sikh community, involve processing from the Sikh temple in Havelock Road by a circular route around the town centre before returning to the Temple or Gudwara. Prior to the 1997 celebrations, attacks had been made on these Temples and the police were keen to avoid any possibility of violence reoccurring.

The procession had in the past been well supported by local Sikhs with an estimated 10,000 people expected for this year (1997). Due to the slow nature of the procession, and the fact that the route measures approximately 4.5 miles long, the event can take in the region of 4-6 hours to complete depending on the route selected.

In the past a small number (estimated for this year at 500) of young Sikhs had used the procession to demonstrate 'a show of strength' against the Muslim community. The concern of the police centred on the potential for serious disorder between the Sikh and Muslim youths. In the period 1995 to 1997 police had made over four hundred arrests. (Metropolitan Police, 1997). The celebration for this particular year (1997) was split between two Sundays 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> April 1997. These will be discussed in turn.

Data collected on the first Sunday focused on the role of the gold commander. However, the ability to collect data in situ during this Sunday was seriously impeded as the officer nominated as gold was also gold for the Coca-Cola Cup Final. On the Sunday a perceived terrorist threat to Wembley stadium preoccupied the gold commander. As participant observation is a supremely opportunistic data gathering

technique, I was able to switch from the gold commander and gain an overview of the management of the 'intelligence' by following the 'Intelligence Co-ordinator', in this case a Special Branch officer. Due to the sensitivity of the actual information it will not be possible to explicate this process in great detail, but it did provide an interesting perspective on the intelligence filtering process. Specifically, I gained insights into what intelligence came in, how it was assessed, what was passed on and how longer messages were 'condensed' into shortened versions of the original information received. This filtered version was then made available to assist silver in 'fast time' or immediate decision making on the ground.

### **6.5.3. Implications of Pilot 3 findings**

#### **Methodological issues**

The perceived terrorist threat to the Coca Cola Cup Final illustrates the point that in conducting research of this nature in these environments, it is difficult to maintain control of the research process, or even maintain contact with the person being observed. This is perhaps a cautionary tale for anyone attempting to conduct research in this area in the future, as without that necessary control and access to the person to be observed, the phenomena cannot be studied.

## **6.6. Pilot 4: Vaisakhi, Sunday 13th April 1997**

### **6.6.1. Rationale for Research strategy**

Building on the lessons learnt from the first Vaisakhi Sunday, a decision was made to change the methodological focus for the second event. I elected to follow one person, in this case the mobile reserve bronze, responsible for the tactical deployment of Territorial Support Groups (TSG's). Additionally, information was also recorded from the silver command post, which contained the 'fast' time intelligence cell. The object of this recording was to specifically concentrate upon processes of intelligence assessment and analysis and how this fed into and influenced the selection of tactical deployments by bronze and silver.

### **6.6.2. The Events**

In this final pilot study I was able to observe the unfolding events on the ground in somewhat more detail. Accordingly, it is possible to give more detailed descriptions, which I have divided into a series of significant moments and incidents:

- (a) At about 11am the Sikh march in Slough containing about 3,000 people moved off. Information received from Thames Valley Police identified individuals from Southall and other areas.
- (b) At about 12 noon information was received that the 'Chalvey Boys' had stored up bottles of paint to attack any Sikh vehicles who were unfortunate enough to possibly stray onto the Chalvey estate. Reports were also made of anti Sikh graffiti being prominent on this estate. The march at this point was estimated as being in the region of 3000 strong.
- (c) At about 1.40pm a white van carrying 12 Sikh males was stopped on Southall Broadway by police on the way to the Slough procession.
- (d) Shortly later at 2pm several of the 'Chalvey Boys' were seen observing the march in general and in particular a group of about 150 Sikh youths identified by the police as '*troublemakers from Birmingham.*' Reports were also made of a Sikh car "*cruising the Chalvey estate.*"
- (e) At about 2.20pm the march in Slough concluded with many of the Sikhs making their way back to the Gudwara or Temple from which it had started.

- (f) Around 3pm the police reported a large number of cars carrying Sikhs, in excess of thirty, which were gathering on Southall Broadway, with an open top video car recording the scene.
- (g) At about 3.45pm approximately 20 cars were seen in the vicinity of the Broadway carrying a large number of Sikh youths. The first car in this group of vehicles was playing loud music from a sound system in the car.
- (h) Around 4pm a 'target' known to Southall police was seen in a local Temple and information was received that a number of 'violent' or in police argot '*Heavy Sikhs*' were making their way down to the Broadway.
- (i) At about 4.40pm a crowd of Sikhs estimated in the region of '*200 hundred strong*' were believed to be heading to the Jet service station on the Broadway. This incident will be explored in fuller detail with extracts taken from the field notes made at the time and subsequently transcribed. Immediately prior to this crowd being spotted, a build up of tension was discernible. There were reports of convoys (vehicle and foot) and of 'masked' (wearing handkerchiefs over the lower parts of the face) members of the crowd.

## **26. Extract from field notes**

*The period from 4pm saw a build up of 'tension' when there were reports of 'convoys' (vehicle and foot) drumming (using drums in the street) and the use of masks (in the form of handkerchiefs) by crowd members. A march developed, described at one point by the police as 'organised' and 'political' (pro-Kurdistan). Police identified crowd members with 'loud hailers' as providing leadership to the group of about '200' strong and with 20% 'masked up' (wearing handkerchiefs). This march travelled north up South Road and then turned West along Southall Broadway. This route was not immediately clear to the officer in charge of the Territorial Support Group (TSG) units, nor to the silver command post located in Southall police station.*

This march was felt by the police to be problematic and the silver commander decided that it should be stopped by police before it went further along the Broadway. Due to the heavy nature of the traffic, the police vehicle took about ten minutes to reach the scene, when we did, I noticed a large number of public order trained officers

and their vehicles had arrived at the scene of the march, with many of these police vans displaying blue lights and blocking the road.

**27. Extract from field notes**

*Silver directed that this march be stopped, utilising the Territorial Support Group (TSG) units. Due to the extremely heavy nature of the traffic flow, it took perhaps ten minutes for the bronze commander to arrive. Upon our arrival at the scene, there appeared to be a large number of TSG units partially blocking the Broadway, with many other units arriving using 'blue' lights.*

This march was eventually turned back on itself with police using several units of TSG to do this. I noted that there were several features to this incident. First, the estimate of the numbers of marchers remained remarkably consistent at about 200. Second, despite intelligence from both Special Branch and the 'Intelligence Cell' at Southall police station, the police decided that all 200 posed a threat and were treated in an undifferentiated way. Third, after the incident, junior officers at both the silver command post and the 'Intelligence Cell', commented that Southall was no busier than any other Sunday. Fourth, whilst the incident was being dealt with, there was a period of several minutes when the silver commander could not be contacted by radio. This resulted in a considerable heightening of tension with the bronze commander urging the driver of the police landrover to get to the scene quickly. Lastly, in the heat of the action, officers made decisions without having time either to discuss them beforehand or to articulate their reasons afterwards. All these factors are clearly identifiable from my contemporaneous field notes.

**28. Extract from field notes**

*The march was eventually turned back on itself using several units of TSG. There were several interesting features of this 'incident'*

- *The estimates of numbers, which were asked for on numerous occasions, by the central command complex (GT), the silver and bronze commanders remained remarkably consistent at 'about 200'*

- *The 'crowd' appeared to be defined as 'problematic' or dangerous by the silver commander despite 'intelligence' both from the 'fast' time intelligence gathering operation and the intelligence co-ordinator (a Special Branch officer located at the 'yard'). The result of this homogeneous perceptual categorisation fed into a generic police action taken against all the 200 strong. Tangibly this was seen in the decision by police to halt this group in Southall Broadway before turning them around and escorting the 'crowd' back the way they had come.*

- *Staff in the silver command post and the 'fast' time intelligence at Southall police station commented to me (after it was resolved) that the Broadway was no busier than on any normal Sunday.*

- *There was a brief period of between 3-4 minutes at the height of this incident when silver was being called repeatedly on the command channel and did not respond to either GT or the silver command post. This caused a considerable heightening in 'tension' which was manifested by the bronze commander urging the driver of the police landrover to get to the scene quickly. The staff in the silver command post also commented upon this tension.*

- *Silver command staff, when asked by the bronze TSG commander 'what the problem was with the group of 200?' did contact units with the group for an answer. In conversation later they did say they had speculated that there would be 'big trouble' if this group had got to the Jet Service Station located further West in Southall Broadway.*

- *There was talk by bronze and the silver command post about whether the mounted officers should be deployed as they were close by and could be 'well used'. When silver could not be contacted (it required a 'cadre' Superintendents authority to deploy mounted officers - an officer who has been specially trained to authorise their*

*use) consideration was given as to whether gold should be contacted (he was still at Scotland Yard, sorting out the difficulty in relation to the control of the event).*

*•The use of language was important at several junctures. Specifically, requests by the command team to 'turn them over', and when at one point a TSG unit was directed to go to 'give another TSG unit assistance' alarm bells were ringing all over.*

(j) After this march was turned back, the period from 5.50pm saw an increase in police activity. At about this time the police in Thames Valley cordoned off the Chalvey estate and invoked a Section 60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act order around it. Police information at this time suggested that “*100 plus Chalvey boys were looking for trouble.*” Reports were made of minor incidents of fighting between groups of Sikhs and Muslims, but no large-scale disturbances took place. The observation concluded at about 10pm.

### **6.6.3. Implications of Pilot 4 findings**

#### **Methodological issues**

The research strategy of following the mobile reserve bronze, whilst providing the opportunity to collect systematic data from one source, highlighted the problems of using this technique in the field. At moments of crisis this officer was far too busy to articulate the reasons for the decisions he was taking. The study highlights the difficulties of ethnographic studies in general, and in particular how can you access and collect practically, what police are saying by way of explanation about their decisions.

#### **Theoretical issues**

The data from Vaisakhi provides further confirmation that under conditions where conflict is seen as imminent, police perceive and treat crowds as homogeneous and they ignore information from Special Branch and their own 'Information Cells', that might suggest that not all those present are likely to be involved in conflict. It would appear that the police do not need to experience actual physical threat or actual conflict to act in this way. The assumption of danger seems sufficient to produce homogenising approaches.

## Discussion

The pilot participant observational studies have both theoretical and methodological implications. Theoretically, the various substantive findings may be summarised as follows. First, the police have perceptions of the crowd as dangerous. Second, they appear to have homogenising tendencies towards the crowd, even when their own information sources are at variance with such a position. Third, far from being the homogeneous group that I thought, they were there are clear tensions within the police between different groups. The impact of these tensions may well be, that accountability concerns may make Special Branch officers more pessimistic about their assessment of the likelihood of violence during public order events, to avoid them being held account by other groups within the police for getting things 'wrong'.

From a methodological perspective the following problems can be summarised from the pilot studies. First, the ability to keep with senior public order officers when they are out on the ground dealing with events as they unfold. Second, the ability to see the key decisions made, which was difficult when the officer being observed is distant from the action, and cannot follow what is going on, and then don't articulate the reasons for the decisions taken. Thirdly, chance factors, and the need for the researcher to have a bit of luck i.e. the bomb alert at Wembley and the subsequent exclusion of the researcher from the person being studied.

Incorporating the methodological problems from these pilot participant observational studies together I can draw up an ideal specification for conducting such research during a public order event. Ideally, this would be with a senior officer in one place, to be with officers in a group where they will discuss and articulate decisions and rationales, to be in a place where one can see all the action and hence key decisions can be made and to follow intelligence and senior officers. While these may seem contradictory (if one says in one place, not moving around on the ground, how can one see all the action) there is one place in which they are reconciled: the Metropolitan Police Control Room or GT.

The method of reconciliation involves officers being together in a large communications room made up with communication pods. These pods have various different functions; command and control, Intelligence, and access to a video wall which displays police cameras from static and mobile positions including Heli Teli (the police Helicopter).

During major events in London, GT, is often where the gold commander will sit, in order to provide a overview perspective of all aspects of the event. This is where it was decided that the final participant observation study looking at a 'live' event of significance would be covered from, following the gold commander for the 'Carnival against Capitalism' (June, 1999). This event resulted in some of the worst scenes of violence since the Poll Tax riots of the 1990's.

In choosing the control room I could follow in detail all the sources of communication for this event, both audio and visual, and look in detail at how the gold commander made decisions while seated in front of a large video screen receiving CCTV images through the video wall. This officer was supported by a group of officers assigned to provide monitoring facilities for the various audio and video channels of communication used during the event. This participant observation study had the obvious advantage in that as well as providing an overview to the event decisions could be recorded as they were made and officers could be probed for the reasons for an explanation as to why these decisions had been made. The results of this final participant observation study are reported in chapter 7 overleaf.

## Chapter 7.

### Riot in the City: The Psychology of police decision making in a crowd event.

**“Innocent people were hurt on Friday and millions of pounds worth of damage was done after a day of mayhem...Why were the police not prepared to disperse the rioters once they had assembled – with tear gas and water cannon if necessary” (Sunday Times 20/06/99 p.20).**

#### 7.1. Introduction

It will be remembered from chapter 4, that accountability and phase emerged as key issues in senior officer decision making, and that these issues were supported to some extent in the experimental study in chapter 5. These studies suggested that the impact of phase and accountability on decision making may have been more complex than I originally assumed. In chapter 6, the pilot studies of Eid and Vaisakhi provided evidence of these issues, but crucially, also highlighted tensions within the police. Additionally, these ‘real’ studies threw up practical issues of where, how and who to talk to during events.

The aim of this final study was to conduct a major piece of participant observation research looking at a ‘live’ event of significance, and the police view of different phases within it when there was a likelihood of disorder. I therefore liaised with the Public Order Branch of the Metropolitan Police who identified, six months before the event was due to occur, the ‘Carnival against Capitalism’ (June 18<sup>th</sup> 1999) as having the potential to be the most problematic event of the year for them.

This event was seen to be unique on many fronts. First, it involved two police forces, the Metropolitan and City of London. Second, because of sovereign collective responsibilities and accountabilities, it required that these two forces had separate senior officer command structures at the gold, silver and bronze level. Third, separate control rooms of the two forces supported this separate command structure. Fourth, the separation of both command and control between the two forces, required them to agree on the protocols for deployment of officers within each force area and what tactics would be considered appropriate for each of them.

The 'Carnival against Capitalism' required the police from both the Metropolitan (Met) and City police to draw up plans for the policing arrangements with no known organiser having been identified. The police simply had information that an umbrella organisation known as Reclaim the Streets (**RTS**) expected that between 10 -12,000 supporters from thirty-five different groups would attend the carnival. These were thought to include such disparate groups as the Movement against Monarchy (**MAM**), protesting for a Royal free zone, Critical Mass Cycling (**CMC**) protesting against the use of motor vehicles in London, and a group protesting about the militarisation of space. Despite the fact that these groups represented a wide variety of interests and had different ideologies, the police believed that they would put these differences aside for the day for the sake of the 'Carnival against Capitalism'.

Despite the fact that the police had no contact with any organisers, the event had been widely advertised through a wide variety of media including, posters on the tube and bus systems of London and more widely through the Internet. However, the information supplied by these means was limited to advertising the date of the event and proposing to would be participants that they meet at Liverpool Street Station, an area covered by the City of London police.

Information available to the police included a 'sketchy' timetable of activities which could include all or none of the following:

07.30 Cycle ride near Liverpool Street Station.

10.00 Demonstrations at Reed employment agency locations throughout London.

10.30 Demonstration at Smithfield meat market by animal activists.

11.00 Anti Mc Donald's demonstration at Liverpool Street.

12.00 Human chain around treasury building in Whitehall.

It was believed that at about this time the main 'Carnival against Capitalism' would start, possibly focused outside Liverpool Street Station for a street party in the City of London, with the aim of causing maximum traffic disruption. Tactics in previous 'parties' had included the use of flares to signal the start, blocking the road with cars abandoned at strategic locations, the use of mobile sound systems, damage to traffic lights and

bollards and protesters occupying targeted offices.

13.30 Green Park tube station – demonstration by supporters of anti militarisation of space.

18.00 A march by the Movement against Monarchy (MAM), from Trafalgar Square to protest for a ‘Royal Free Zone’ outside Buckingham Palace.

19.00 Demonstration at Guildhall, where the Duke of Edinburgh was speaking at a dinner for the Rugby World Cup.

The event was seen by Special Branch (SB) to be unique, due to the many organisations with targets/agendas, and with the overall aim to disrupt the City of London by blocking roads, disrupting the tubes and causing minor acts of damage to selected buildings within the City. However, the majority of protesters were expected to be legitimate and good-natured.

### **The Police Strategic and Tactical response**

#### **Strategy: Gold Commander**

The Metropolitan police (Met) strategic aims were set out by the gold commander for the event as being to prevent disorder, stop crime, public safety, protect the Royal Palaces and economic activity. The City police strategic aims were broadly in agreement with the Met, but focusing on the need to protect institutional buildings in their police area such as the Stock Exchange, Bank of England and the Central Criminal Court (Old Bailey). A source of possible tension, between the two forces, was perceived to lie in the requirement for the police command structure to include two separate gold, silver and bronze(s) due to differing sovereign responsibilities and accountabilities. To be more explicit, for the Met, they were accountable to the Public, Institutions and protecting the rights of demonstrators within the area covered by them. In contrast, the City, because in effect they have no Public, were responsible to the City institutions for the policing of the event, to ensure that these were not damaged or disrupted during the protest.

**Tactics: Silver Commander**

For the Met, the strategic aims for the event would be achieved by adopting the tactics of isolating and containing the disorder if and when it occurred. These tactics were based on previous encounters that officers in this force had with Reclaim the Streets (RTS). By contrast, the City force intended to respond to disorder in their area by disrupting and dispersing the protesters from the City limits. Prior to the event this was perceived to pose a route of possible difference between the two forces, as the Met were unwilling to have an uncontrolled dispersal from the City area into the Met area.

**Control of Police Support Units (PSU's or serials): Bronze Commanders**

In light of previous protests and the information concerning the numbers likely to attend, the Met police planning team decided to employ thirty-five level one and two Police Support Unit (PSU's) serials to the event. For the City police their own three PSU's were augmented by six PSU's provided by the Met prior to the start of the day. It will be recalled (from chapter two) that a serial is made up of one Inspector, three Sergeants and twenty-one Constables, and that the differentiation between the level one and two serials can be seen in the amount of training received. To recap, the level one serials known as the Territorial Support Groups (TSG's), and who are the permanent mobile police response to riots in London, attend training in tactics set out in the Public Order Manual, and discussed in chapter 2, on a monthly basis. In contrast the level two Police Support Unit serials, are drawn from stations throughout London and attend training on a six monthly basis (Metropolitan Police, 1999).

The need to provide a co-ordinated approach to the policing meant that the two forces had to agree protocols for the deployment of Metropolitan police officers within the limits of the City of London (and vice versa), prior to the event. It had been decided that Metropolitan officers following groups into the City, would do so if deemed necessary, but would hand over to City senior officers as soon as possible, and then leave the City limits. Conversely, as the Metropolitan police had in effect all the public order resources, if the City senior officers were escorting groups to the limits of the City, they would be met by senior officers from the Metropolitan police to ensure an orderly dispersal from the City area.

## Research Strategy

Drawing on the lessons from previous studies, a longitudinal approach was adopted and in consequence data was collected prior to the event (in the form of semi structured interviews with the gold and silver commanders of the Metropolitan police) during (participant observation of the Metropolitan police gold commander and intelligence gathering facility in the Metropolitan police control room) and post event (semi structured interviews with the gold and silver commanders of the Metropolitan police). These will be discussed in turn.

The pre event interviews focused on the expectations and contingencies for the event with the gold and silver Metropolitan police commanders (the interview schedule is shown in full at **appendix d**). The broad general themes were, how does one identify signs of safety and danger, and what are the key issues for assessing a positive outcome to an event? What were the specific issues concerned with 'Stop the City'? What are the various sources of information available for planning an event, and how do people rate/rely on them? What are the structures of command and accountability used during events? Lastly, what are the considerations in the use of different tactical options?

The second element of the research design involved conducting a participant observation study during the event. Whilst adopting an exploratory approach to the research, it was designed also to act as a confirmatory study to see if the concern for public order and accountability would be replicated in a 'live' situation.

Building on the lessons from the pilot studies of Eid and Vaisakhi (see chapter 6) an ethnographic (participant observation study) was designed to avoid the problems encountered previously.

The criteria for the study were: being able to stay with the relevant senior officer(s), to be in a position to observe these officers making the key decisions about how to police events on the ground, and to be in a context where officers would articulate the reasons for these decisions.

All three criteria were achieved by conducting the study in the control room (GT) of Scotland Yard. Firstly, since officers stayed in the room throughout the event there were no logistic problems in remaining with them. Secondly, since GT is supplied with communication, including live video of events, through both fixed cameras throughout London and also helicopter mounted cameras ('Heli tele'), officers are fully

abreast of events and able to make relevant decisions. Thirdly, GT is arranged in 'pods' - that is clusters of desks with communications technology. Officers sit in groups within these pods and are able to discuss events, discuss their decisions and comment on the events and their own reaction to them. In this context, especially during lulls in the action, there is ample opportunity to record officers articulating the reasons for their decisions. Two researchers covered the event, one in the 'Gold' commander pod, which included all the senior officers, and one in the 'Intelligence' pod.

In contrast to the gold pod, the 'Intelligence Cell' pod was being run by more junior officers, Constables, Sergeants and Inspectors. The rest of the control room was made up of several other communication pods with officers assigned to dealing with specific tasks i.e. the monitoring of the traffic cameras located around London and liaison with other forces.

The data collection ran from 7.30 a.m. until after 9.30 p.m., and the main incidents that occurred during this period are outlined in the account of the days events outlined overleaf.

## **7.2. An account of the event**

### **7.2.1. Early events**

(a) The day began at New Scotland Yard at 7.30 am in the Metropolitan police (Met) control room (GT) following the Met gold commander assisted by his team. A second researcher followed junior officers (Constables and Sergeants) supervised by senior officers (Inspector and Chief Inspector) in the 'Intelligence Cell' set up for the event. The events started with two abseiling protesters leaving the engine room at Tower Bridge at about 8.10 am, and unfurling a banner which read 'Life before Profit'. In this early period of the day a number of bank alarms were activated within the City police force boundary, and attempts were made to gain entry to buildings. One of the protesters managed to get into the Central Criminal Court (Old Bailey).

(b) At around 10.30 am, a sound system started up outside Westminster Abbey. More protesters were successful in chaining themselves to buildings; with eleven people able to attach themselves inside Lloyds Cheapside and with fifteen outside.

(c) At about 11 am, in Bishopgate junction with Liverpool Street, 50 cyclists surrounded a black hackney cab and then sat in the roadway with their bicycles. Shortly after, a demonstration outside the Farringdon Mc Donald's started. Just before midday, 200 'hard-core' protesters were identified by police going towards Liverpool Street Station, including people affiliated to 'London Animal Action'. In police eyes, these were 'hard-liners' capable of causing trouble.

(d) After midday, the numbers of people in and around Liverpool Street Station increased considerably, from several hundred to several thousand. Police identified those who were seen to be in possession of red, green and gold masks as 'hard core' individuals. At about the same time as these masks were donned by these crowd members, the crowd of several thousand outside Liverpool Street Station, split into three large groups. The police assumed that these groups would converge on one of a series of possible targets such as the Liffe (London International Foreign Futures Exchange) building, the Central Criminal Court (Old Bailey), the Bank of England and other major financial institutions housed in various different buildings within the City police area.

(e) At about half past one a sound system began at Warbruck Street junction with Cannon Street. This was followed shortly afterwards in Upper Thames Street with a vehicle being left locked and abandoned in the road.

### 7.2.2. Conflict starts

(f) Just before two-o clock at London Wall, bottles and cans were thrown at police which resulted in a Police Support Unit (PSU) being forced backward. At this stage the police units were surrounded and trapped and demonstrators were seen to climb on the police vehicles and throw paint on the windscreens. Reports were also made of City Traders dropping bottles and photocopied £10 and £50 notes on the crowd in Cannon Street.

(g) A few minutes later, five City police vans were surrounded in London Wall. People began opening the back of the vans and hanging and swinging on the doors. Several people got into the vehicles and began to throw out police kit bags and riot shields. People in the crowd were then seen to be carrying City police riot shields, these are distinguishable from the Metropolitan police clear Perspex riot shields, as they are black in colour.

(h) A few minutes later, as the police vehicles began to leave, a protester was seen to fall and be trapped under one of them. Reports were also made of people entering buildings through air conditioning units and by smashing windows. At this juncture there were two events discernible. First, the conflict at London Wall junction with Moorgate. Second, a relatively quiet crowd, at Mansion house junction with Cannon Street.

(i) As the conflict began to escalate at London Wall, more Police Support Units and police horses were sent to the City senior officers, in addition, a number of police units were sent to the person trapped under the police van.

### 7.2.3. Conflict escalates

(j) Sometime around two o clock, a crowd was seen to be gathering around the London International Foreign Futures Exchange (Liffe) building, Dowgate Hill junction with Cannon Street. This building deals with foreign investment banking services, and was seen to be a possible target, prior to the event. Officers from a Metropolitan police riot serial (wearing riot protection equipment and carrying clear Perspex riot shields) came under attack from a crowd estimated by police at the time as 'a few hundred strong'. Following short shield tactics (riot police running towards the crowd), one of these Met riot officers became isolated and was surrounded by several people, before being pushed backwards and falling to the floor. Several

demonstrators surrounded the fallen officer, who was rescued by a couple of colleagues who pushed their riot shields at these demonstrators. All the officers then retreated a safe distance from the crowd. As the violence intensified, police cordons were put in west of upper Thames Street junction with Dowgate Hill, with police units in riot gear pushing west towards the crowd at up to about twenty yards at a time.

(k) At about the same time reports were made of staff being blocked in the Stock Exchange and the Liffe buildings. Workers from both these buildings were seen to be arguing with crowd members. Entry to the Liffe building was eventually forced by some protesters and extensive damage to the inside fabric of the building and computer systems reported. In an effort to force people from the vicinity of the Liffe building, the police at this location were involved in conflict with sections of the crowd, as they attempted to drive them from the Liffe building.

(l) Just before 5' o'clock reports were received of injuries to crowd members in Upper Thames Street and to two officers in College Street, who had sustained leg injuries. In an adjacent side street wheely bins were launched at police lines. More extensive damage to buildings was reported in Upper Thames Street when a Mercedes dealership was attacked. At about this time further units of police horses were deployed and reported attacks to themselves and their horses.

### **Dispersal from the city**

(m) Just after five o' clock, the police began to organise a contained dispersal from the City police area into the Met police area. This involved the police pushing demonstrators across Southwark and Blackfriars bridges into cordons of police vehicles, which then filtered the crowd onto the Embankment.

(n) At about half past six, a group of demonstrators estimated to be in the region of 1,000 moved away from the vicinity of these bridges towards Ludgate Circus and then on to Fleet Street. Reports were made of damage to shops and to McDonalds in Charing Cross.

### **Standoff - Trafalgar Square**

(o) At about 8pm, the police had contained a crowd estimated as 'a few thousand strong' in Trafalgar Square. There were reports of 'agitators' seeking to goad police into conflict, with minor acts of defiance in the form of blocking traffic driving around the square. The vast majority of these remaining demonstrators had left the area a few hours later.

### **The aftermath of the event**

The media in the immediate aftermath of the riot, focused on the physical cost in terms of injuries to members of the public and to police officers and the damage caused to buildings in the City and the Metropolitan police areas. The extent of damage was measured by one newspaper report as follows: "*almost 40 people were taken to hospital, including six police officers, one of whom was struck on the head with a scaffolding pole. Many were treated for facial cuts and minor injuries. One woman remained in hospital last night with serious leg injuries. The City of London Corporation said the rioters had caused about £2 million pounds worth of damage*" (Sunday Times, 20<sup>th</sup> June 1999, p.5).

Whilst the buildings were being removed of graffiti and the City returned to normal, the media began to speculate on the causes of the violence. Blame was allocated by certain quarters in the newspapers (Sunday Times) to the failure of the City senior officers to support "*the courage of the bobbies*" (Sunday Times, 20<sup>th</sup> June 1999, p.20). The resulting furore as to who was exactly to blame, resulted in an internal police inquiry being conducted into the causes of the perceived police mishandling of the riot.

The report of this inquiry, whilst praising the bravery of junior officers, was less complementary about the role of senior City officers, both in responding to the protection of junior officers, and in failing to protect buildings within the City police force area, including the damage caused to the Liffe building (Evening Standard, 24<sup>th</sup> June 1999). The differences between the Metropolitan and City police, and the failure to co-ordinate their responses, were also highlighted by sections of the media (Evening Standard, Sunday Times).

### **7.3. Analytic issues**

#### **7.3.1. Data collection**

The pre event interview with the Metropolitan police silver commander was conducted in the week running up to the event at a police traffic garage in South London. A short interview with the Met police gold commander was conducted in the police control room (GT) on the day of the event. Both interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format and focused upon officers expectancies about the likely outcomes for the event (the interview schedule is shown in full in **appendix d**).

On the actual day of the event, Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June 1999, the participant observation began in the Metropolitan police control room (GT) at about 7.30am, with one researcher sitting in the gold communication pod, and the second researcher sitting in the intelligence pod. To recap, whilst the purpose of the observation was to look in detail at the 'in vivo' processes concerning the decisions at the strategic or gold level as they took place, the opportunity to gather data from more junior officers in the 'Intelligence Cell' was also taken.

Practically, the observation of the Metropolitan police gold commander involved sitting in the Metropolitan police control room (GT), and facing a video wall which contained CCTV images from cameras around London, including pictures from the police helicopter. The officer performing the role of gold has over thirty years police service and has considerable experience in policing public order events in London.

The other researcher sat in the intelligence cell pod in the control room observing more junior officers (Constables and Sergeants) supervised by senior officers (Inspector and Chief Inspector). These officers were taking information from a variety of covert and overt sources about the event and supplying regular updates to the gold commander and others in the control room.

The protocols for recording the field notes for the day were as follows. Small hands free tape recorders were used to record data where practicable. This material was later transcribed. Where this was not possible, due to officers not wishing to be tape recorded, or for practical reasons such as the batteries having run out, or due to the possible interference with the police control systems, this was augmented by written field notes made in note books. These notes were either taken

contemporaneously or, where that was not possible, as soon as practically possible after the event.

The coding notes, either audio or written, whilst detailing as much as possible where, how, what was said and what actual decisions were made, was generally looking at the following four themes. First, how are crowds perceived in general terms? Second, what are the general concerns of the officers regarding the policing of the event? Third, how did concerns feed into specific decisions in the course of the event? Fourth, and finally, did all officers share the same concerns and, if not, how did differences affect relations between officers (the coding note schedule is shown in full in **appendix d**)?

It was hoped to be able to conduct the post event interviews with the Metropolitan gold and silver commanders at the conclusion of the day's observation. Unfortunately, due to operational and time commitments for both officers it was not possible to do this. Instead the post event interviews had to be conducted several weeks after the event. These interviews were conducted in west and central London on separate days. The interview format was the same for both officers, semi structured, and discussed the day of June 18<sup>th</sup> 1999 as experienced by both officers and their perceptions of the crucial moments within it (the interview schedule is shown in full at **appendix d**).

### 7.3.2. Data analysis: Grounded Theory

It will be remembered from the previous section, that the design of the study incorporated a longitudinal design, and data was collected prior to (in the form of tape-recorded semi structured interviews) during (ethnographic field notes in audio and written format) and post event (semi structured tape-recorded interviews). The tape-recorded interviews, written and audio field notes were then transcribed onto a word processor. The completed transcription yielded forty-five pages of text (43,000 words). The data was analysed using grounded theory, as described in chapter 3 and as used in chapter 4. Hence the analysis again follows the style advocated by both Miles and Huberman (1994) and Strauss and Corbin (1998). To recap, this involves examining the data in a 'fine grained' analysis in open coding, a more abstract coding of themes representing these underlying codings, and a final stage in which the themes are grouped together to provide a theoretical model of the data. The only difference between the present analysis and that in chapter 4 is that, this time, the process was facilitated through the use of specialist software called (NUD\*IST - Non - numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theory building, version 4).

#### **(NUD\*IST - Non - numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theory building software).**

This software has been described as *“a tool kit to assist and support individuals and groups who are engaged in qualitative research processes”* (Gahan & Hannibal, 1998, p.1), as such it is not meant to replace the coding skills of the researcher but allows the process of grounded theory to be conducted with software which is more user friendly than just using a simple word processing package (Gahan & Hannibal, 1998).

In NUD\*IST, following the initial transcription of the data onto the word processor, a decision has to be made as to how fine an analysis is required. In this case a sentence by sentence coding schedule was used, and therefore the data was exported from the word processing package into the software in a format where this was recognised as being the case.

The advantage of selecting sentences as an appropriate unit of analysis is that a 'fine-grained' analysis can be conducted in the open coding process of grounded theory. Practically, this involved allocating each NUD\*IST page of text with consecutive

sentence and page numbers. In this open coding process, each text unit or sentence was examined and systematically coded, and this process continued for the whole document, with each different coding given a separate place in the NUD\*IST indexing system, referred to as 'nodes' (Gahan & Hannibal, 1998).

Put another way, it will be recalled from chapter 4 that the concept cards were generated on 8 by 5 written record cards. The nodes within NUD\*IST can be considered as analogous to these cards, albeit that they are stored electronically. As Gahan and Hannibal (1998) put it: *“each of the nodes has a numerical address, a title and definition. You may organise these nodes in various ways: as a hierarchy, as a flat structure or as unstructured or free nodes ”* (p.8). This intensive period of coding resulted in 34 nodes emerging, which are shown in figure 1 overleaf.

In other words, the software allows text units to be coded together and then labelled as NUD\*IST nodes. Relationships between these nodes can be examined and emerging ideas regarding the analysis can be written electronically as theoretical memos. The labels attached to these nodes, and how they fit together to build the model developed, will be explicated below in a format that will be familiar to the reader from chapter 4. To recap, the 'paper trail' will start with the open coding of the transcribed data, how these concept nodes were grouped and the final grounded theory model before going through elements of the model and providing data in support of it.

**Initial analysis: Open coding****Table 1: Grounded Theory: Nudist nodes**

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Node number</b>	<b>Concept</b>	<b>Node number</b>
Leadership	1	External accountability	18
Followship	2	Home Office	19
Signs of danger	3	City Fathers	20
Banners	4	Financial institutions	21
Balaclavas	5	Public	22
Mobile phones	6	Protesters	23
Sound systems	7	Strategy	24
Crowd irrationality	8	Tactics	25
Crowd fickleness	9	Intergroup Tension: Junior/senior officers	26
Le Bon	10	Intergroup Tension: Met/City Police	27
Allport	11	Met experience	28
Le Bon/Allport/Hybrid	12	City inexperience	29
Levels of violence	13	City tactics	30
Tactics of protesters	14	Communications	31
Information	15	Intragroup Tension: Junior Met officers	32
Spatial location	16	Complexity	33
Symbolic buildings	17	Context	34

**Axial coding or how the nudist nodes are grouped**

It will be recalled from chapters 3 and 4, that after the initial coding of the data in grounded theory, a process of more focused coding seeks to build up the codes into selected core categories. Links between categories were identified in a process involving constant comparison between the categories until they became 'saturated' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The ways in which these NUD\*IST nodes were linked together is shown in figure 3 overleaf.

**Figure 3: Nudist nodes and how they were grouped**

**Theories of the crowd**

Leadership  
Followship  
Signs of danger  
Banners  
Mobile phones  
Sound systems  
Crowd irrationality  
Crowd fickleness  
Crowd theories  
Le Bon  
Allport  
Hybrid

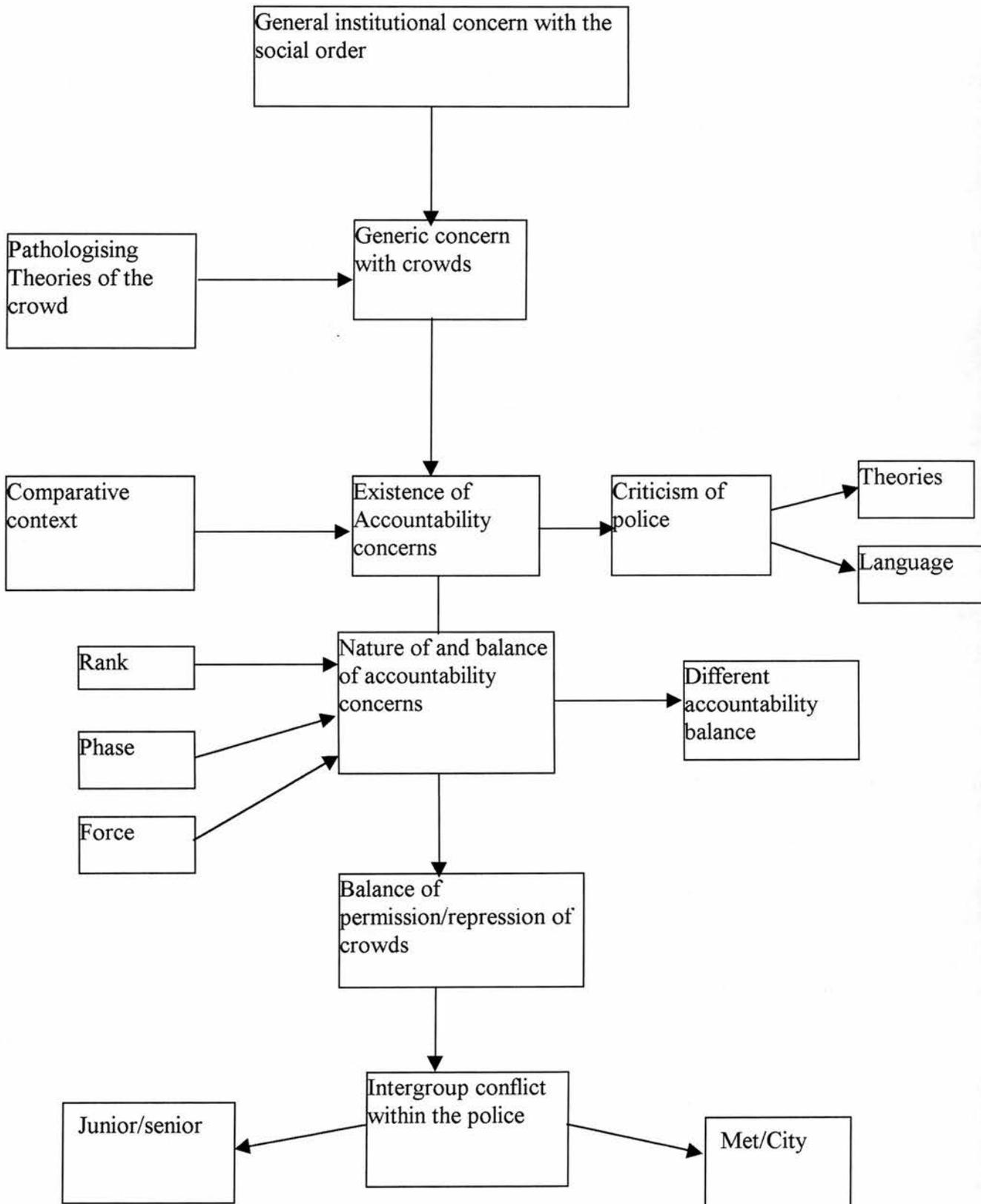
**Contextual structure of accountability**

Levels of violence  
Tactics  
Information  
Spatial location  
Symbolic buildings  
External accountability  
Home Office  
City Fathers  
Financial institutions  
Public  
Protesters  
Strategy

**Intergroup tension**

Junior/senior  
Met/City  
Met experience  
City inexperience  
City tactics  
Communications  
Intragroup tension  
Junior Met  
Context  
Complexity

**Figure 4: Grounded Theory model of Public Order Policing**



## **7.4. Analysis**

### **7.4.1. Explanation of the model**

The grounded theory model in this chapter is much like that in chapter 4, a concern with public order, and hence generated by fear of provoking and permitting violence. This balance is determined by accountability concerns, which in turn affect action. However, this model differs from the one in chapter 4 in three ways. First, whether generic concern with crowds leads to accountability concerns, depends on whether the specific officers feel that they are implicated in what is going on. Second, accountability concerns are more complex than hitherto, it is not simply that internal accountability leads to more repression and external accountability less so. Third, different officers have different accountability concerns, leading to different notions of action and this in turn leads to conflict within the police. The analysis in this chapter will touch on all elements of the model but, to avoid duplication, will concentrate on novel elements.

To be more specific, I will look in detail and focus upon the parts of the analysis where accountability concerns are more complex, and the notion of crowd repression or permission is a consequence of different positions held within the police both in terms of force (Met and City) and rank (Junior and Senior).

The analysis is therefore structured in four parts. First, I will look in detail at how police notions of crowds being a problem for the social order are informed by theories of the crowd, which see the crowd as inherently problematic. It is seen as either 'mad' (Le Bon) or 'bad' (Allport) or a hybrid between the two i.e. the 'mad' leading the 'bad'. I will show that what changes through the phases of the event is the balance between these crowd theories, which is informed by the presence or absence of accountability concerns.

Secondly, I will show that accountability concerns only come into play, if and when officers consider that they will be identified with those policing the event and that this, in turn, is a function of context. Thus, during the event, Met officers saw the policing as conducted by City rather than by themselves and they were deeply critical of them for inflaming the event. Subsequently, when criticism was directed at 'the police' as a whole and where Met officers categorised themselves, along with the City police, and in contrast to external media and political sources, so the nature of

explanation altered. The crowd rather than the City officers were seen by Met officers as responsible for the violence.

Third, I will look in detail at accountability concerns and how they are more complex than first thought. Rather than the notion of a simple distinction between internal and external accountability, we need to consider the nature of different external sources and how these impact on the balance between repression and permission.

Fourth, I will look in detail at the sources of intergroup tension within the police. Tangibly, this can be seen between different forces (Met and City) and between different ranks (Junior and Senior). Those in different positions (Forces and Ranks) have different accountability concerns, which leads to a different notion of the balance of crowd permission and repression and in turn leads to intergroup conflict between forces (the Met and City) and between ranks (Junior and Senior officers).

These four areas will be explicated in detail below, beginning with the police theories of the crowd. To illustrate that this theory is 'grounded' in the data, selective quotations from the police participants will be utilised (as in chapter 4). Coding conventions indicating the source of the data will be utilised as follows: Pre event interview (PEI), Participant observation (PO) and Post event interview (PI).

As already explained, for the purposes of this analysis I will concentrate on those aspects of the data which do not merely duplicate the analysis in chapter 4. I will look briefly at fears of the crowd which are fed by pathologising models (Allport & Le Bon - see chapter 1), before focusing upon those parts of the analysis where accountability concerns are more complex, and the notion of crowd repression or permission is a consequence of different positions held within the police both in terms of force and rank.

### 7.4.2. Fears of the crowd

It will be remembered from chapter 4, that the police view crowds as problematic holding 'agitator' (Allport) and 'mad mob' (Le Bonian) conceptions of them. This analysis confirms and extends that view. To be more explicit, the police have a limited notion of the crowd which sees it as pathologically 'bad' (Allport), 'mad' (Le Bon) or a hybrid notion of the 'bad' leading the 'mad'. This remains constant. What changes is the balance between them, which is informed by the presence of and nature of accountability concerns.

In the initial phase of the event, the police legitimate their actions by utilising theories of the crowd, which reflect the Allportian notion of the crowd as being comprised of at least some 'bad' people. This can be seen in their attempts to identify and differentiate groups such as 'hard-liners' and 'hard-core' from the rest. Put another way, they have a clear sense that the crowd has 'troublemakers' in it's midst, and they are also concerned that these people may take a 'leadership' role. In this phase of the event they actively seek out these 'troublemakers'.

The police do this by seeking to identify people in the crowd who they consider to be acting in the form of 'leaders', so in the early stages of the event, prior to the conflict starting at London Wall, police officers use their information sources to locate those who they believe to be able to influence others in the crowd. Consider the following quotation from a senior police officer tracking the movement of alleged 'hardcore' members of the crowd, in the early phase of the event, and prior to any conflict, as they moved towards Liverpool Street Station.

#### 1. Chief Superintendent (P0)

*"100 hard-core with named targets into Liverpool St."*

At this phase of the event the police see masking up (using balaclavas or handkerchiefs to hide their faces), to indicate leadership in the crowd.

#### 2. Sergeant (P0)

*"Several masked members of the crowd in Cannon Street one wearing a red handkerchief covering the lower half of his face. The leaders have come out to play."*

However, as conflict escalates outside the Liffe building, the stress on 'dangerous elements' gives way to a more Le Bonian sense that all crowd members are by nature unpredictable and at least potentially violent. Consider the following quotation, which explicitly makes this point, made by a senior officer in the gold pod at the height of conflict.

### **3. Chief Inspector (P0)**

*“Throughout the day the crowd was volatile when in close contact with police, which is why Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) were ‘softly softly.’ They were going to be opportunistic was the intelligence with a couple of flash points. The crowd isolated a serial early on, and outside the Liffe building is when the City police started pushing people away. Not sure why they did it. Now not sure why they are blocking crowd at Southwark Bridge, after earlier pushing them along.”*

The above quotation raises another issue, that is, the Met officers explain their strategy in relation to events. The quote comes from a context in which a contrast is being made with the more interventionist strategy of City police officers. Hence, this strategy is blamed for the escalation of conflict. This willingness to blame City, and to use accounts of crowd danger which render them blame worthy, is due to the fact that Met officers differentiate City from the Met, and in blaming the City officers on the ground, feel that they are not criticising themselves. If anything, they are praising themselves by contrast. This takes me to the next part of the analysis.

### 7.4.3. Responsibility and comparative context

From the quotation above, it can be seen that in the 'restricted context' of the event itself, Met officers see City officers as an 'outgroup' and are not responsible for what City officers do. After the event, in an 'extended context' of the police versus external sources, all police form a common group, the Met feel responsible and accountable for what City officers do and this affects their accounts. The difference has to do with 'comparative context'. When it is just Met and City, then City are 'outgroup'. Where external sources - (politicians, media and others) are brought into the equation, so to speak (an 'extended' context), the categories shift into 'them' against the police (Met and City), who are now 'ingroup' members. The shift in categorisation from 'outgroup' to 'ingroup' members will be charted below.

At the height of conflict outside the Liffe building, when the City senior officers were trying to move the crowd away from this and other buildings belonging to institutions within the City, the Met senior officers were keen to distance themselves from the tactics of the City senior officers and were in fact openly critical of the City. Consider the following quotation which shows explicitly, that how in the 'restricted context', senior Met officers talk about the senior City officers as the 'other' and how they feel no responsibility for what the City does.

#### 4. Commander (PO)

*"This has gone badly wrong for the City, if they don't back off now we will have another 'Poll Tax' riot."*

However, when the police are under attack from the politicians and media after the event, City officers are talked of as part of 'us' or the police 'ingroup'. At this juncture Met officers clearly feel responsible for what all officers, City or Met, did in the event and the talk is very different. Consider the following quotation, from the same senior officer, and contrast it's tone with the quotation above, in the context of this officer commenting about the event after it's conclusion, when both forces are accountable for what happened to external sources of criticism (media, politicians and public inquiry).

### 5. Commander (PEI)

*“I think from a policing perspective (Met and City) we dealt with it (the day) pretty well, also from both the Met and City perspectives, the tactics that were implemented to support the overall policing plan dealt with it pretty well. What we could have done better perhaps, was we should have thought more carefully about how we could get people into the City. A certain number of the units took a long time to get there, of course that in turn might have been because traffic was chaotic due to other events. ”*

Put another way, whether the Met or City feel accountable, depends on the context in which they are doing the policing, and this is informed by the presence or absence of accountability concerns for each force. To be more explicit, the notion that we saw in chapter 4, that internal accountability leads to more repression, whilst external accountability leads to more permission of crowds, needs to be amended. The complexity of internal and external accountability concerns, and how this maps onto the permission and repression of crowds takes me to the next part of the analysis.

#### 7.4.4. The complexity of accountability concerns

While my previous studies show the importance of accountability concerns for police decision making, they also show that my original division into internal and external accountability, and the idea that internal accountability increases the level of repression compared to external accountability, may have been too simplistic. The police are externally accountable to a number of sources; politicians, media and others, sometimes that accountability will lead them to be more rather than less repressive. As an example, recall the visit of the Chinese President to the United Kingdom in early 1999. Accountability to politicians led senior police officers to be very repressive to the crowd, often to the dismay of junior officers. Rather than the simple notion of internal and external accountability, we need to look at the contextual structure of accountability and the impact on the balance of repression which in turn leads to intergroup tension between officers of different forces (Met and City) and ranks (Junior and Senior).

One way of illustrating this complexity is by contrasting the structure of accountability for the City and Met forces, and which will be discussed in turn.

To be more explicit, external accountability for the Met and City mean quite different things, for the City it is about the City institutions and less about the Public. This makes the City senior officers concerned about the probity and integrity of the City buildings, as in effect these institutions make up the City police constituency, as the quotation overleaf, from a senior police officer makes explicit.

#### **6. Chief Inspector (Extract from field notes - P0)**

*“The City senior officers are concerned about the probity and integrity of the City buildings because they are very close to the City Fathers as the institutions of the City are their constituency, they have in effect no public.”*

In other words, for the City senior officers, because of their external accountability concerns to the institutions of the City, they cannot allow disruption or damage to these. Thus the City senior officers will do what they can to avoid damage to buildings of significance within the City limits such as the Stock Exchange, Bank of England and the Central Criminal Court (Old Bailey), by repressing the crowd with all available means or in police argot 'dying in the ditch' to defend these buildings. Consider the following quotation from a senior police officer highlighting the 'no - go' areas for the City police, in terms of them utilising all resources in an attempt to repress the crowd, with the goal of avoiding damage to buildings within the City police area, for which they are accountable.

#### **7. Chief Superintendent (PEI)**

*“The City will 'die in the ditch' - repress the crowd with all available means - to try to avoid damage to buildings such as the Stock Exchange, Bank of England and the Central Criminal Court (Old Bailey).”*

Conversely, for the Met, they are not responsible to the City Fathers but to public institutions, and also to the public at large. They are not responsible for the buildings identified by the City police as important, so they can be more permissive in their actions, by not 'repressing the crowd with all available means'. However, for the Met, as they have a particular responsibility to the central institutions of state, such as Buckingham Palace, Downing Street and the Palace of Westminster, attacks on these

buildings would result in the Met 'dying in the ditch' to repress the crowd from gaining access or permitting damage to these buildings of significance. Consider the following quotation overleaf, from the same senior officer as before, which sets out the 'no go' areas for the Met and the willingness to use all available resources to repress the crowd attacking these buildings of significance for the Met.

#### **8. Chief Superintendent (PEI)**

*“The Met are not responsible for the buildings in the City police area, we will however, ‘die in the ditch’ - repress the crowd with all available means - for Buckingham Palace, Downing Street and the Palace of Westminster.”*

Thus it can be seen that how external accountability affects action, depends on the type of external accountability and the precise context. In the City, external accountability as we have seen above, means the financial institutions of the City, and the financial workers, not the general public. Hence, when it comes to those buildings, external accountability means being more repressive, because the buildings are more important than the cost to junior officers in defending them. By contrast, for the Met in this context, external accountability means the public and the institutions less so. Hence, it leads to more permissive tactics. This leads to different notions of crowd permission and repression as one force (the City) says repress the crowd and the other force (Met) says permit the crowd this leads to intergroup conflict, which takes me to the next part of the analysis.

#### 7.4.5. Intergroup conflict Met and City: Different accountability concerns

It will be recalled from the introduction to this chapter, that the Met and City forces disagree on tactics and their use. While the Met adopt the tactics of isolating and containing trouble, the City favour disrupting and dispersing the crowd. However, it is clear that they have different notions of what is non-negotiable.

It will be recalled from the section above on the complexity of accountability concerns that the Met and City have different accountability concerns. For the Met, as they are accountable to the central institutions of state, they cannot tolerate disruption to places like the Royal Palaces, Downing Street and the Palace of Westminster. In those circumstances they would in police argot 'die in the ditch' or use all possible resources to repress the crowd.

By contrast, as the City are essentially accountable to the financial institutions of the city, as they are their main constituency, and they cannot allow disruption to these. They will thus do everything they can to avoid damage to buildings of significance within the city limits such as the stock exchange, Bank of England and the Central Criminal Court (Old Bailey), by repressing the crowd with all available means.

As the City have in effect no public; they are accountable to the City institutions. When the conflict begins in the vicinity of the Liffe building and the City police vans are attacked and the buildings of the City institutions are under threat, the City senior officers on the ground try to repress the crowd with riot trained officers. Consider the following extract from my field notes which records the fact that the City police were donning protective riot equipment outside the Liffe building as they engaged the crowd with a view to dispersing them from the vicinity.

#### 9. Extract from field notes (P0)

1.52 p.m. *City 'kitting' up (donning protective riot gear) and engaging the crowd outside the Liffe building.*

In contrast to the City tactics of using riot equipment to engage the crowd, because the Met were not accountable for the buildings within the City, they were openly critical of the City police senior officers for using these tactics. The extract from my field notes below captures this strength of criticism of the City police tactics

by a Met police tactical advisor, an officer specially trained in the deployment of police tactics in crowd events. This officer was in the gold pod advising the Met gold commander.

#### **10. Sergeant Extract from field notes (P0)**

1.55 p.m. *“City ‘kitting’ (donning protective riot gear) earlier than I would have advised.”*

Later on during the day, when damage was being caused to the Liffe building, it was very clear that the City police wanted to repress the crowd by dispersing them from the City limits. They attempted to do this by calling for more horses and police units to be sent to the City from the Met. Again, consider the following extract from my field notes which captures the contrast between the City desire to disperse the crowd, and the Met response challenging the need for more officers, and the purpose to which they are going to be put.

#### **11. Extract from field notes (P0)**

4.25 p.m. Following short shield runs at the crowd by officers outside the Liffe building, a request for more Met police riot units and horses is sent to the Met police control room from the City control room. The request is challenged by the Met police control room staff who ask the City control room the purpose and numbers to be sent. In reply, the City control room indicates that these additional units would be used for the purposes of *“pushing the crowd away from the Liffe and other buildings on to the embankment for dispersal.”*

In contrast to the desire of the City police to disperse the crowd away from the Liffe and other institutional buildings, because of accountability to the City Fathers, the Met were not accountable for this area and were happy to contain the trouble with damage to these buildings. In fact, they directly call into question the City tactics of repression of the crowd and advocate a more permissive approach to the crowd by withdrawal of the police units to avoid inflaming the situation. This tension is captured in the following extract, which is taken from my field notes, which were made at the time.

**12. Extract from field notes (P0)**

2.00 p.m. London Wall police carriers (vans) being jumped on. Five carriers under attack. Paint on windscreen. Male commander *“we will have another ‘Poll Tax’, the City need to back off to diffuse it.”*

**Met and City: Different balance of permission/repression**

Put another way, the accountability of the Met, to both the institutions and the public, means that they balance the repression and permission of crowds, because, in effect the City have no constituents, apart from the financial institutions, they seek to repress the crowd. Outside the Liffe building when the conflict begins to escalate the police had to decide whether to isolate, contain or disperse the crowd, for the Met, they wanted to contain the levels of damage to the buildings, as they were not accountable. However, for the City because of accountability concerns to the financial institutions, which was non-negotiable, they wanted to move the crowd on. This leads to inter group conflict between the Met and City as one force (City) says repress the crowd while the other (Met) says permit the crowd.

**Evidence of intergroup conflict**

To recap, the different balance of permission and repression of the crowd, due to different accountability concerns of the two forces, led to different notions of which tactics were appropriate and to intergroup conflict between the Met and City. Tangibly this can be seen at the height of conflict, outside the Liffe building, when the building is attacked. In the Metropolitan police control room, senior officers of all ranks were openly criticising the tactics of the City senior officers about the deployments of riot trained officers sent from the Met to the City silver or ground commander. Consider the following quotation, which explicitly captures this conflict between the two forces with Met senior officers openly challenging the deployments of public order trained officers by the City silver or ground commander.

**13. Extract from field notes**

3.50 p.m. Confusion over deployments of Met units by City silver. The City want further units to go to Finsbury Square. *Met Chief Inspector ‘What for?’*  
*“To push crowd onto the embankment for dispersal.”*

At this stage of the event the atmosphere in the control room changed dramatically, as the gold communications pod was surrounded by senior officers from all parts of the control room. The temperature rose sufficiently for mobile air conditioned units to be brought out to cool things down.

Further requests from the City control room for further riot trained Met officers and mounted units, were met with the observation by senior and junior officers of all ranks, in the vicinity of the gold pod, that things had gone badly wrong for the City police. In fact as the extract from my field notes records, the Met gold commander was openly critical of the City tactics, noting that it had 'gone badly wrong' for them.

#### **14. Extract from field notes.**

4.45 p.m. Male commander *"This has gone badly wrong for the city."*

At about this time a message from the Met gold commander to the City gold commander resulted in the Met gold commander receiving a telephone call from this officer. The person on the other end of the telephone appeared to have raised his voice as he spoke to the Met gold commander about sending the remaining riot trained officers to the City. This was in contrast to the Met gold commander who appeared calm in his demeanour, although other Met senior officers in the vicinity of the gold pod were not, as my field notes record, as calm.

#### **15. Extract from field notes**

5 p.m. The City gold rings the Met gold, from where I was, I could hear the voice on the other end of the telephone raised, as a result of this conversation, all the remaining Met units of riot trained officers were sent to the City police to rendezvous at Southwark Bridge. The Met gold remained calm during this conversation when several Met Superintendents were openly criticising the City tactics.

5.15 p.m. Chief Superintendent *"There have been a lot of complaints by the Police Support Unit (PSU) commanders about the lack of experience of the City senior officers."*

5.15 p.m. Superintendent *“This would not have happened in the Met, the City are leaving themselves no room for manoeuvre.”*

Whilst other senior officers were openly criticising the City, the only comment made by the Met commander was to comment upon the demeanor of the City gold. The following quotation makes this point clearly.

5.16 p.m. Met Commander (commentating upon the phone call he had recently received) *“City gold less calm than he was a few hours ago.”*

At this juncture, very experienced Met senior public order officers were openly debating and criticising the plan by the City senior officers to push the crowd away from the Liffe building and disperse it over Blackfriars Bridge and into the Met area as the following quotation makes clear.

#### **16. Superintendent (Extract from field notes)**

*“Plan is to push over Southwark Bridge and contain them. City have no control over this at the moment. Our policy is one of isolation and containment. Play the waiting game like every other time. Have learned dispersal doesn't help.”*

#### **Summary: Balance of permission and repression Met/City**

In summary, the Met and City forces have a different balance of accountability due to different accountability concerns. For the Met, because they are not accountable for the City, they wish to contain the trouble and damage to the City buildings. In contrast because the City are in effect responsible to the City institutions, as they are their main constituents, they seek to disperse the crowd. This leads to intergroup conflict between the two forces, as one force says contain the crowd and damage (Met) whilst the other says stop the damage and disperse the crowd from the City limits (City). The intergroup conflict between the two forces is mirrored by intergroup conflict between officers of different ranks (Junior and Senior), and which brings me on to the next part of the analysis.

#### **7.4.6. Intergroup conflict Senior and Junior officers: Different accountability concerns**

Junior officers are not concerned with public inquiry considerations but with their own safety and the safety of friends on the front line. Senior officers are concerned with safety of junior colleagues as well as balancing the need not to have been seen to have overreacted, and the Home Office phoning the control room to demand 'What's going on?' Therefore, there are different notions of repression in relation to different accountability concerns between officers of different ranks.

When the conflict begins at London Wall, we see in the interchanges between junior and senior officers in the 'Intelligence Cell' an increasing concern with the safety of other junior officers by junior officers. Tangibly, this is seen in expressing concern that fellow junior officers are being beaten up, with direct language utilised to articulate that concern to more senior colleagues in the 'Intelligence Cell'. Consider the following quotations, from two junior officers in the 'Intelligence Cell', which makes this point explicitly.

#### **17. Constable (P0)**

*"Getting a hiding down there."*

#### **18. Constable (P0)**

*"Police getting a right pasting."*

By contrast, because senior officers are accountable, to both junior colleagues and to external sources, we see them unwilling to categorise the violence as a riot. Even when there are reports of officers being injured in the conflict outside the Liffe building, we see in their discourse a willingness to downplay injuries to junior officers and to use the command structure to counter the rumours of junior officers. Consider the following extract from my field notes which records the Met gold commander seeking to find out the extent of the injuries sustained by two junior colleagues injured in College Street, in order to counteract the rumours of more serious injuries that could be disseminated by junior colleagues.

**19. Commander (PO)**

*“Find out injuries to officers to tell bronzes, so we can tell troops’ Not 19,000 injured – two – and they are hobbling around wanting to be out there.”*

Similarly, when the Liffe building is broken into and damaged, we see senior Met officers downplaying the damage caused.

**20. Chief Inspector (PO)**

*“At the end of the day if a few buildings and vehicles get trashed and we have a few injuries, who cares, the day is a success.”*

At this stage of the event, we see in the discourse of senior Met officers, a willingness to accept injuries to officers, damage to property and a perception of the threshold of violence, which is quite different from junior officers. In response to media reports on London Today “rioting breaks out in the City”, a senior officer assessment of the event is captured by the following extract from my field notes.

**21. Chief Superintendent (P0)**

*“I wouldn’t call what we saw today as rioting.”*

Other senior officers who go on to describe the event, echo this theme, again captured by my field notes.

**22. Commander (P0)**

*“Bijou event, no problem.”*

When the police vehicles are surrounded and attacked in London Wall we see in these interchanges between different ranks, junior officers increasingly angry and frustrated by the actions of senior colleagues, especially when the police are attacked outside the Liffe building. Tangibly this frustration is seen with junior officers banging the table in anger at the apparent inaction of senior officers, and in fact being openly critical of senior colleagues as the following extract shows.

**23. Constable (P0)**

*“Frustrating, so frustrating.”*

This overt anger and frustration at the senior officers boils over, with junior officers openly challenging more senior officers, and calling for more repressive measures, such as the use of water cannon to disperse the crowd from the vicinity of the Liffe building.

**24. Constable (PO)**

*“In other countries they would have water cannon to disperse the crowd.”*

**Junior and Senior officers: Different balance or permission/repression of crowds**

In sum, the different accountability concerns of the different ranks, map onto different notions of permission and repression of crowds. This leads to inter group tension as one part of the police, junior officers says repress the crowd, and another part, senior officers, says permit the crowd. This leads on to intergroup conflict.

**Junior and Senior officers: Evidence of intergroup conflict**

Conflict arises, as those in one position believe one course of action should be taken, while those in another position believe in an alternative and incompatible course of action. Junior officers advocate repression. Senior officers advocate a more tolerant approach. One incident sums up the different concerns and the different priorities of junior and senior officers. It relates to a point where protesters were clambering onto a police van and the van began to accelerate in order to escape the crowd. As senior officers and junior officers in the 'Intelligence' pod watched the events together, the junior officers were all for the escape and took pleasure from the possibility that those protesters clinging to the van might fall and be hurt. The senior officers were alarmed at what might happen, precisely because they were concerned at being blamed for any injuries to protesters. Consider the following extract from my field notes, which recorded this interchange between senior and junior officers at the time.

**25. Field note extract (P0)**

*“I’d run him over (constable). Hang on we might” (concerned inspector).  
Man on the windscreen falls, arrested. Cheers from constable.*

**Summary Junior and Senior officer accountability balance**

In summary, junior officers are concerned with being hit on the head, and are not influenced by external accountability considerations (public inquiry), they see the crowd as more violent and dangerous and wish to clamp down or repress the crowd. In contrast, senior officers have to balance the safety of junior colleagues with making decisions, which are a potential threat to them, as they are accountable to the public, so relatively speaking in relation to junior officers they do not repress the crowd. This leads to intergroup conflict between junior and senior officers.

### **7.5 Discussion**

In broad terms the analysis in this chapter confirms crucial elements of previous models. It shows in practice as well as training a concern with the crowd, permission and provoking balance, affected by accountability, which affects action. It extends this in ways explained above. Of crucial importance are accountability concerns, but this is not as simple as internal accountability equalling crowd repression and external accountability equalling permission equation, that we have seen in earlier chapters. Rather we must look at the exact configuration, the nature of external agencies and what they demand.

The nature and balance between internal and external accountability concerns, differs at different times. This leads to a different balance between permission and repression of crowds, which leads to intergroup conflict between Junior and Senior officers, and between the Metropolitan and City of London forces.

To be more specific, it will be remembered that the model suggested that the balance of permission and repression of crowds depend upon the accountability of different groups within the police. This can be seen to operate in the way a variety of conflicts emerge between Junior and Senior officers and Met and City police relations.

The conflicts between Junior and Senior officers occur because of different accountability concerns. To recap, in the context of fellow junior officers being injured in the violence, other junior officers are not concerned with public inquiry considerations. They are unwilling to accept injuries to their fellow junior colleagues and in many cases angrily demand more repressive measures being taken towards the crowd as a whole. Thus we see the junior officers articulating the need for the use of water cannon as a means of dispersal.

By contrast, senior officers have to balance accountability to fellow junior officers being injured, with the knowledge that they are responsible to external agencies for the rights of the crowd and what happens during the event. We see a willingness by senior officers to accept injuries to officers, damage to property and a threshold of violence that allows them to categorise the event at the height of the riot as a "*Bijou event, no problem.*" Thus different accountability concerns for junior and senior officers, lead to different notions of repression and permission of crowds, leading to intergroup conflict.

The intergroup tensions arising between the Met and City forces also arise because of the difference in their respective accountability concerns which lead to different notions of permission and repression of the crowd. It will be recalled from the above analysis that because in effect the City have no public, their constituents are the financial institutions of the City, when the Liffe building was attacked they had to engage the crowd and defend the symbolic buildings associated with the City, because of their accountability concerns to the City Fathers.

In contrast, the Met were not accountable to the City Fathers and sought to contain the damage to the Liffe building, by advocating withdrawal of officers to avoid preventing a target to crowd members.

These different accountability concerns of the Met and City lead to different notions of crowd permission and repression, which in turn lead to intergroup conflict as one force advocated one thing and the other another, leading to tension between the two.

Once again accountability is central to understanding group processes. If anything, my analysis extends our understanding of how important such concerns are. Most notably it is apparent that intergroup conflict between different ranks and forces cannot be understood without reference to issues of accountability. Hence the study of formal groups raises an issue that is all but absent in the copious literature on intergroup processes, there is virtually no mention of accountability in explanations of intergroup conflict. For instance the term is absent from Brown's recent and comprehensive text on group processes (Brown, 2000).

A second issue arises from this study in relation to group processes. This is a nice field illustration of SCT's point that who is ingroup and who is outgroup depends upon the comparative context. As noted above, in the 'restricted' comparative context of the police the City were seen as ingroup members. However, in the 'extended' context of the police as a whole (Met and City together) the City were seen as fellow ingroup members as the police defended the actions that were taken on the day.

This analysis extends this further by linking changes in comparative context, and hence group structure, to the issue of group biases in attribution. Previous research has shown that good outcomes are attributed internally to the ingroup, and bad outcomes externally to the outgroup (Islam & Hewstone, 1993b). Conversely, for

the outgroup members, good outcomes are attributed externally and bad outcomes internally (Islam & Hewstone, 1993b).

In this study we have seen that these previous social psychological findings on the attribution of blame have to take account of how comparative context affects intergroup relations. In the 'restricted' where City were seen as outgroup the Met were very negative and graphic in outlining the incompetence of the City senior officers. Conversely, in the 'extended' context of the police (City and Met) being held to account after the event by politicians and the media, Met officers construed the City as part of the common ingroup, they therefore saw the riot as due to outgroup violence and not the fault of City officers.

However, the study has four major shortcomings. First, the data almost exclusively comes from senior Metropolitan officers, the data from junior officers was gathered opportunistically from the 'Intelligence Cell'. On a related point, whilst I have data from the Met side, and predominately from senior officers, I have none from the City side, neither senior or junior, to contextualise their experiences.

Second, whilst the pilot reported in chapter 6 led to the research strategy adopted for this study, I still encountered problems in observing the Metropolitan police gold commander in the control room. To be more precise, at moments of frenetic activity it was difficult to get explications from senior officers about the decision making process, and in consequence, it was not as explicit as it might have been. On a related point, after the stand off at Trafalgar Square, it would have been preferable to interview both the gold and silver commanders to get their immediate reactions to the day. Due to operational and time constraint limitations on these officers this was not possible, and therefore the post event interviews with both officers did not take place until several weeks after the event.

Third, I must consider the possibility of reactivity, what was said and done during the day arose artificially in response to my presence. However, it could be argued that in the intensity of the events of June 18<sup>th</sup> 1999, that the senior officers ignored my presence. This 'anonymity' in the research setting may well have been helped by my former status as a serving senior officer, and have lead to me being accepted as a police 'ingroup' member.

Fourth, this is only one case study event, which may have been unique in nature due to the people taking part. In order to generalise these findings we need to conduct

further research, which are more genuinely intergroup in nature. Ideally, this would involve a series of other events with the Metropolitan and other forces, and look at both senior and junior officers together in these events.

Having said all that, we have seen in the preceding chapters in training, experimental and 'live' settings enough qualitative and quantitative evidence to give us confidence that accountability concerns are a powerful model on which to understand senior police officer decision making during crowd events.

## **Chapter 8. General Discussion.**

### **8.1. Summary of findings**

The purpose of this thesis was to look at the police perspective in crowd events. This is important both in its own right but also as a necessary element of understanding the overall dynamics of crowd events. In particular, the research was motivated by a concern that police assumptions and perceptions of all crowd members as hostile and dangerous may constitute a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The thesis was therefore an exploratory study, but five major findings have come out of it. First, the police see the crowd as danger. Second, how they respond to the crowd is mediated by accountability concerns, which are complex. Third, accountability concerns in turn are affected by phase of the event, position (different groups within the police) and force (Met and City). Fourth, at moments of danger they are repressive, but what constitutes an appropriate level of repression, differs between those in different positions. Fifthly, the police as an organisation are more complex than first thought, and we need to consider the dynamics within the police in order to understand dynamics between the police and crowd. These will be discussed in turn.

First, we have seen in the preceding chapters that the police see the crowd as danger. More specifically, if we look at the quotation below from a senior officer, we can see the genuine, and generalised fear, that senior public order trained officers have about crowds posing a threat to the social order, to the extent of destabilising and threatening that order.

#### **1. Commander**

*"People will always say that this is very, very important, this brings down governments, you can have a high crime rate but you don't get resignations of the Commissioner or the Home Secretary. Public Order policing does have these consequences and it can cause profound damage and destabilises our way of life, the very fabric of society, and that's why it is so important from a police perspective."*

Second, how the police respond to crowds is mediated by accountability concerns, which as we have seen in this thesis are complex. It will be recalled from the training study (chapter 4) that it was proposed that internal accountability would make officers more repressive and external accountability less so. I also suggested that the effects of accountability were a function of phase. The experimental studies reported in chapter 5 confirmed the importance of accountability and phase, but suggested that the way they operate, and the way that they map onto what the police do, is rather more complex than I first imagined. This complexity was further brought home by the June 18th 1999 events (reported in chapter 7).

In sum, we have seen that this simple equation is far more complex than this simple mapping suggests, and that accountability depends upon the particular context that officers find themselves in.

A couple of recent examples may help to clarify this position. Recall from the recent anti capitalist march on May 1st 2000 where the Cenotaph and other public symbols were daubed with graffiti. Here the dilemma facing the police in balancing internal and external accountability concerns, was captured the following day by the Guardian newspaper. Consider the following quote taken from a feature article by Sarah Hall under the banner headline "*softly, softly approach, falls down as Mc Donald's is wrecked by anarchists.*" (Guardian 2nd May 2000, p.3).

## **2. Sarah Hall Guardian reporter 2nd May 2000**

*"Despite the vastly increased numbers (from earlier protests), the Met was determined to operate a "softly softly approach", minimising the police presence and turning a blind eye to minor offences to avoid provoking violent clashes.....The approach foundered once a breakaway group of anarchists began to smash up and loot a branch of Mc Donald's in Whitehall."* (p.3)

Thus the simple configuration of internal accountability concerns leading officers to be more repressive, suggested in chapter 4, was replaced in this instance by external accountability sources, in the form of politicians and sections of the media, calling on the police to have taken far more repressive action than they did to deal with the protesters. During a parliamentary debate following the violence, the Guardian reported that Ann Widdecombe - the Conservative shadow Home Secretary - was critical of police tactics and contrasted the Met action in dealing with the May day protests, with the robust action taken by police to deal with protests against a visit by the Chinese president earlier this year.

### **3. Michael White Political Editor The Guardian, 2nd May 2000**

*"Politicians of all parties yesterday weighed in behind Jack Straw's condemnation of Monday's May Day demonstration as "criminality and thuggery masquerading as political protest" but proved divided over the tactics deployed by police.....Anne Widdecombe (Conservative) contrasted it with the tough tactics when China's president Jiang Zemin visited London."(p.3)*

Third, the complexity of accountability concerns discussed above, leads on to the next findings that these accountability concerns are affected by phase of the event, position (different groups within the police) and force (Met and City). These will be discussed in turn.

It will be recalled from both the training study (chapter 4) and the 'live' events (chapters 6 and 7), that senior officers have a threshold of violence, which depends upon the phase of the event that they are in. In the early stages of an event, because they must balance being held to account for provoking violence with permitting violence, they are willing to take injuries to junior colleagues to avoid the accusation that they overreacted. Consider the following quotation overleaf from a senior officer, which highlights the dilemma of what level of violence, in the form of missiles being thrown at the police, constitutes a threat to the safety of junior officers who are not wearing protective riot gear, and how these junior officers need to be aware of accountability concerns, to avoid the accusation that the police overreacted.

#### 4. Chief Inspector

*"I think I've stood on cordons (lines of unprotected police officers) on numerous occasions and had lots of what I would deem minor missiles thrown at the police officers I have been in charge of. I am talking here about minor bits and pieces being thrown at us, empty cans, placards and small pieces of rubbish. Junior officers have to realise that you have to stand there and take that sort of missile to avoid being accused by a court or public inquiry of overreacting."*

In what I have referred to as the incipient phase of violence in previous chapters, we are not sure whether the police are concerned with being held to account for permitting violence, but are sure they are concerned with being held to account for provoking violence. In this phase of an event they need to balance the injuries being sustained by their officers, with a need to retain control of their officers by controlling any over aggressive behaviour by junior officers. This is a difficult balance for a senior supervising officer to judge and requires the junior officers to be tightly controlled, in order for them not to be seen to have aggressively overreacted. Consider the following quotation, from the same senior officer as before, and the categorisation of violence towards the police, both in terms of the type and quantity of missiles being thrown at the police. This senior officer acknowledges the difficulty, whilst on the one hand being seen not to have overreacted by outside bodies, on the other, it is important in terms of intergroup control of junior officers by senior officers, that they retain control of the junior officers who in many cases are frightened and attempting to control these feelings by acting aggressively towards crowd members.

### 5. Chief Inspector

*"Well if you leave the junior officers in a situation where they are getting loads and loads of stuff being thrown at them, and what I mean here is bits of 4 by 2 wooden posts, iron railings and bricks and full bottles, then often junior officers will suffer the same sorts of stress and feelings of fright that individuals in the crowd do. Often when young junior officers are deployed on the streets in a Public Order operation they are frightened and often try to overcome these feelings by becoming aggressive themselves. It is at this point that you have to be able to control them to avoid the situation of you losing control of them. "*

Finally, in what I have previously termed the overt sustained conflict stage, the police don't believe that they can be held to account for provoking violence but are concerned with being held to account for permitting violence. At this stage, both to retain support of their junior officers, and to avoid the accusation that they lost control of the situation and permitted violence to occur, they categorise the event as requiring them to retain order by using all possible tactical options. Officers left previously unprotected are removed with all possible speed to avoid injury and thus loss of the officers to the policing operation. Senior officers sanction interventions so as to avoid the possibility of the morale of officers being adversely affected, by seeing other junior colleagues injured and no action to stop it being taken by senior officers. Again, consider the following quotation from the same senior officer as previously, that when violence has reached a stage where junior officers are being injured, the police have to withdraw these officers and replace them with other junior officers in protective riot gear. This withdrawal of unprotected officers whilst acknowledged by senior officers as possibly sending a message to the crowd that they have 'won the first battle', is vital to maintain the morale of junior officers who are witnessing injuries to junior colleagues.

### 5. Chief Inspector

*"When you have reached the stage of petrol bombs then you have to restore order as quickly as possible. At this stage there is absolutely no point in leaving officers who are not in possession of protected riot equipment (helmets, shields and flame retardant overalls) to sustain injuries. Whilst you have to be mindful that by withdrawing non protected officers for their own safety, that you send a message to the demonstrators that they've actually won the first battle....However, you have to set that against the fact that in keeping them there, that officers injured will be lost for the rest of the day. This would impact badly on the morale of other junior officers who seeing a colleague injured and nothing done about it would feel vulnerable. It is vital at this stage to deal with this issue quickly."*

Having removed the unprotected officers, the police go on to restore order by considering all possible tactics that they possess, weighing the response to the circumstances appertaining at the time. Again, consider the following quotation overleaf, from a different senior officer, who would consider the following use of tactical actions against crowd members in an ascending order of police repression. This scale of repression goes through various stages including the use of riot trained officers, the police horses, before moving on to the highest levels of repression available for use against crowds, the use of specialist weapons, such as baton rounds and firearms. In fact, this officer openly questions whether the police have got the use of baton rounds in the right order on this scale of repression, believing they should be used at an earlier stage than other senior officers would authorise, as he believes they can be fired at crowd members with more accuracy than can be achieved by using the police horses.

## 6. Commander

*"Depending on the levels of violence being used and the actual or potential casualties sustained, or likely to be sustained, I would consider in the following order the use of specialist tactics. First, the use of level 1 (riot trained officers) perhaps in combination with the use of police horses. Second, if the violence was such that lives had been or were possibly going to be lost whether the use of CS gas, baton rounds and firearms would be appropriate. I believe that the police have got the use of baton rounds wrong, in the sense that in they are a more discriminate use of force, than perhaps sending the horses into a crowd of people. There are obviously Home Office guidelines for the use of such specialist weapons, and the criteria for use would have to be assessed and met, but I would be considering their use earlier than perhaps other senior officers would in order to restore order."*

The foregoing quotations indicate not only the importance of phase on accountability and action, but also the fact that officers in different positions - senior and junior - may have very different accountability concerns. This was quite clear in the study of the 'Carnival against Capitalism' (chapter 7). Junior officers on seeing other junior officers surrounded by crowd members and attacked, were not concerned with being held to account by a public inquiry, but were simply concerned with avoiding injuries to their colleagues. We saw that, when the conflict began at London Wall, junior officers laid the entire stress on danger to their peers. Two constables in the intelligence cell used graphic language to express their concerns.

## 7. Constable (P0)

*"Getting a hiding down there."*

## 8. Constable (P0)

*"Police getting a right pasting."*

By contrast, because senior officers are accountable to both junior colleagues and to external sources, we saw them unwilling to categorise the violence as a riot. Even when there are reports of officers being injured in the conflict outside the Liffe building, we saw in their discourse a willingness to downplay injuries to junior officers and to use the command structure to counter possible rumours of junior officers.

### **9. Commander (PO)**

*“Find out injuries to officers to tell bronzes, so we can tell troops’ Not 19,000 injured – two – and they are hobbling around wanting to be out there.”*

The difference in accountability concerns between those in different positions within the police is also mirrored by different accountability concerns between those in different forces. To be more specific, it will be remembered that, when the Liffe building was attacked, the City police were far more eager than Met officers to intervene against the crowd, given their greater accountability to City institutions and lesser accountability to the public at large. My field notes from the day capture the ensuing tension.

### **10. Extract from field notes (P0)**

4.25 p.m. Following short shield runs at the crowd by officers outside the Liffe building, a request for more Met police riot units and horses is sent to the Met police control room from the City control room.

The request is challenged by the Met police control room staff who ask the City control room the purpose and numbers to be sent.

In reply the City control room indicates that these additional units would be used for the purposes of *“pushing the crowd away from the Liffe and other buildings on to the Embankment for dispersal.”*

In fact, as another extract from my notes makes clear, the Met directly called into question the City tactics of repression of the crowd, and they advocated a more permissive approach to the crowd by withdrawal of the police units to avoid inflaming the situation as shown overleaf, in an extract taken from my field notes.

**11. Extract from field notes (P0)**

2.00 p.m. London Wall police carriers (vans) being jumped on. Five carriers under attack. Paint on windscreen. Commander *"we will have another 'Poll Tax' riot, they need to back off to diffuse it."*

The fourth implication of my studies, is that due to these different accountability concerns for those in different positions, and due to ensuing differences as to appropriate action - often in the middle of very fraught circumstances - tensions arise between different groupings in the police. Again recall, in the context of chapter 7 and the 'Carnival against Capitalism', that at the height of the conflict at the Liffe building we saw junior officers concerned with the safety of fellow junior officers. In fact, they were advocating that the crowd should be repressed by water cannon as the extract below makes explicit.

**12. Constable (PO)**

*"In other countries they would have water cannon."*

By contrast, senior officers, because of the need to balance the care of their officers with protecting the rights of the crowd, downplayed the levels of violence and damage to such an extent, that they were advocating withdrawal of officers to avoid presenting a target as the extract from my field notes shows.

**13. Commander**

*"Get them to withdraw from the rear of the building to avoid presenting a target."*

Fifthly then, the police as an organisation are more complex than first thought. In the same way that it is wrong to consider the crowd as an homogeneous entity, the police reaction to crowds can only be understood by amplifying the inter and intra group differences within this heterogeneous organisation.

To be more specific, it will be recalled from both chapters 6 and 7 that we need to consider intergroup differences on three levels. First, in terms of rank (Junior and Senior). Second, in terms of force (Metropolitan and City). Third, in terms of different groups within the police (Special Branch and uniform Public Order officers). These will be discussed in turn below.

Recall from chapter 6, and the first Vaisakhi study, that the police strategy was one of stopping Sikhs and Muslims, using the powers defined in section 60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, 1994. This, according to local senior officers, was the main source of information about the people actually in Southall, who were stopped by police officers and whose details were recorded, and was to be used to update the local 'fast time' intelligence gathering operation. It will be remembered that the friction between local senior officers in charge of the operation, and the central communications complex (GT) based at New Scotland Yard, resulted in the local senior officer (who was acting as the gold commander) going to the communications complex to resolve who was in charge of the event. The local argument that 'fast time' intelligence about the operation, could only be processed locally quickly and for the benefit of the officers policing the event, was contrasted with the slow turn around time of this information, from officers at the central command complex.

By contrast, while junior officers broadly supported the stance taken by senior officers from the local station, over who was in control of the event, they still had misgivings about the policy of the blanket use of stopping young Sikhs and Muslims in the area, and passing information through the intelligence system. In fact, junior officers, employed on such duties, were openly sceptical as to the value of this information and criticised its usage as being counterproductive.

As well as differences between officers of the same and different ranks, at both different and the same working locations, it will be remembered that during the 'Carnival against Capitalism' we saw big differences between the City and the Met police, because of different accountability concerns. More specifically, at perceived moments of crisis when the City police were trying to avoid further damage to

buildings and to push the crowd away from the Liffe building, we saw Met senior officers openly critical of the City senior officer tactics.

Another example of the intergroup differences between different groups within the police, was seen in chapter 6, in the second Eid study, which showed that Special Branch (SB) and other sections of the police, have a mutual distrust following the accountability for the information supplied to senior officers policing the 'Poll Tax' disturbances in the 1990's. From a non-Special Branch perspective, this is seen in questioning the probabilistic nature of the assessment of the threat of disorder, and calling for more concrete predictions. Consider the following quotation from a non-Special Branch officer, which openly questions both the format of Special Branch predictions about crowd events and their accuracy.

#### 14. Commander

*"I mean, it's a musical joke, they never tell you anything you didn't know before and it's a bit like a surveyor's report, it covers everything but commits them to nothing. That's not necessarily true, I have seen some, which are really very good - they are spot on. By and large, though, I think perhaps they could be a bit more accurate or precise, if that's the right word. I would prefer it if they were a bit more precise, because I don't think anybody's going to get into the 'game of blame', you know, but if they got it badly wrong but its based on the information they had available, and its all been assessed properly, that's what has come out of the 'ink', nobody can actually blame them, all they are doing is giving you the information they had available. Therefore perhaps, what I need to say is that they need to be bit more sort of precise, and that relies on I suppose years of practice."*

Recall, also from chapter 6, that from a Special Branch perspective, that this criticism and disinformation about the accuracy of their forecasts, was perceived to be unfair both by Special Branch officers and by certain senior public order trained officers.

## **8.2. Limitations of the research**

This was an exploratory study, which in the main concentrated on accountability, which is important, but other factors might be as well.

As an example, one of the main themes occurring in the forty five semi structured interviews conducted with senior public order officers at the gold, silver, bronze and sub bronze level of command, is the concern expressed by 'experienced' officers at the bronze and silver levels of command, about a lack of experience of some officers allocated the role of gold.

To be more explicit, experienced bronze and silver commanders have voiced concern that as experienced gold commanders retire from the police, they are being replaced, on occasions, by officers who have little or no experience of command during large scale public order events. The potential pitfalls of replacing experienced gold commanders with officers with very little experience in the field of public order has real ramifications in terms of the response by police to crowd action.

Consider the quotation, from a 'very experienced' silver commander, which specifically highlights the problem of an 'inexperienced' gold commander, dealing with an event involving groups such as the Movement against Monarchy (MAM), a group whom we met previously in the 'Carnival against Capitalism' (chapter 7). The silver commander, whilst acknowledging that a lot of activity by crowd members was taking place, openly expressed concerns about the possibility of this 'inexperienced' gold commander 'overreacting' and possibly escalating violence between the police and the crowd. This tension between gold and his silver and bronze commanders was brought to a head when, the gold commander was so alarmed by what he saw on the monitors at the control room or GT, that he wanted to mobilise the Metropolitan Police reserve response. This would have required officers to be called from police stations throughout London, to attend the scene to quell the 'trouble', and was considered to be a 'disproportionately' excessive measure, by three experienced silver and bronze commanders, to the actual threat posed by the crowd, as the following extract makes explicit.

### 15. Chief Superintendent

*"The only way of teaching how to deal with Public Order events is through experience. A good example of this was one of the last Movement against Monarchy (MAM) marches. This involved police doing a big dispersal of the crowd and the Forward Intelligence Teams (FIT's) were coming in with loads of information about these groups, which was being fed into GT, and the gold commander, who was not very experienced, with these type of protests. The gold commander sat down with three experienced Public Order officers, and wanted to push the panic button for force mobilisation, because he had heard lots of activity from crowd members, reported by the FIT's. The three experienced Officers said collectively 'no, this is not needed we are dispersing the crowd, we are in control.' It was only with the experience of these experienced, although junior in rank to the gold commander, that prevented gold from overreacting and perhaps escalating a situation with the crowd, which in effect, we were controlling."*

From a methodological point of view, the studies are not perfect. Whilst I was given generous access, this was not total (access to intelligence was severely restricted see chapters 6 and 7). Constraints were also placed on where I could study, most notably perhaps in the experiments (see chapter 5), but also the first Vaisakhi study, and the delay in getting interviews from the Met police gold and silver commanders after June 18th 1999 (see chapter 7). On a related point, it was impossible to get access to video material from the Met police control room (GT), due to the requirement for it to be used for post event investigation into the criminal inquiry which commenced immediately after the riot. This would have been a useful resource with which to conduct the post event interviews, by going back over the video footage with both the Met police gold and silver commanders.

On the subject of resources, there were limitations as to how many conversations could actually be covered. In an ideal world, it would have been nice to record everything that everyone said, but again practically impossible.

Perhaps, one of the most obvious limitations to the studies, are that they only cover senior officer level in the Met police. However, it is clear that there are differences between those in different positions. Again in a perfect world, it would be

nice to be able to cover junior as well as senior officers, and also look at the two together so as to assess the dynamics. Similarly, it would be good to look at different forces through the same event, to gain insights into force perspectives and how they interrelate.

Finally, and perhaps most obviously, I talk of studying the police to understand overall dynamics, and there are interesting pointers as to how police action might affect the crowd, but we need to go on and look at both the police and crowd in the same event. Indeed, ideally, I would look at different groups in the crowd, and different groups in the police in one large study.

### **8.3. Future directions**

Identifying the limitations of the research also provides an opportunity for suggesting how the research could proceed in overcoming them. If resources were not an issue, a piece of research which looked at the overall crowd in terms of different groups within it, whilst at the same time looking at the police and different groups within it, might be the ultimate aim. However, because resources are finite, and this is a logistically massive undertaking, it might be best to work ones way towards this ultimate goal.

Hence, first of all look at junior and senior officers together through the same event. This might be in the form of experimental studies combined with field studies. For the experiments I might look at senior/junior officer differences in perceptions of danger, the ranking of different concerns by different ranks, and tactical action preferences to different scenarios.

Building on the lessons learned in this thesis, and if feasible, I would control the scenarios by using actors (for example at the riot training establishment at Hounslow in London) to keep everything constant (nature of event, of participants, of physical context, even the weather!), everything, that is, apart from the phase of the event.

#### **8.4. What are the wider implications for social psychology?**

As stated in chapter 1, the aim of the thesis was to look at the police in order to better understand crowd dynamics as a whole. I want to first address those implications and then look at the wider implications for social psychology.

As concerns crowd psychology, previous studies suggest that police action shape crowd action, specifically if crowds are treated as homogeneous and dangerous, there is a danger of uniting crowds in opposition to the police and escalating conflict. (Stott & Reicher, 1998).

My research partly replicates that finding. It is true, especially where violence is incipient and even more when it becomes more intense, that police do indeed treat the crowd as homogeneous and dangerous. This research reinforces the idea that police hold theories and perceptions that may contribute to escalating conflict. However, police actions are nuanced and complex. Police views are richer, more variable and more understanding of crowd heterogeneity than Stott and Reicher (1998) suggest. In particular the research shows the importance of accountability in framing perceptions and actions.

To be more explicit, it will be recalled that in chapter 4 we saw the general importance of accountability. Chapter 5 confirmed that. Chapter 7, not only illustrated the significance of accountability in a 'real' life context but also extended its range of applicability to the explanation of intergroup conflict.

All in all, perhaps the most striking finding to come out of this thesis is the centrality of accountability to the group processes I have been studying, by contrast to the almost total silence about accountability in the group literature. As indicated in chapter 4 this may have to do with methods and types of laboratory groups, no history, no formal criteria and membership is up to the individual if he/she wishes to identify. However, the police and many if not most groups in society are different. Thus being in a formal group like the police entails an element of sanction. In order for group members to remain part of the group they need to avoid the sanctions that can be imposed in terms of disciplinary and other measures which would mean removal from the group.

We can therefore draw two general lessons from the work presented in this thesis. A social psychology which wishes to understand real groups must, as in this thesis, study real groups in context. Ethnography, which is underused in social

psychological research, should perhaps be more widely utilised as a technique in conducting such research.

Second, and more specifically, group psychology needs to take accountability more seriously. If we do so we might find that it affects not just the specific processes outlined here but many others central to social psychology.

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## Appendices



UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS  
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY  
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From:

*UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS  
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY ETHICAL COMMITTEE*

Switchboard: (01334) 476161  
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22<sup>nd</sup> April 1997

Mr Patrick Cronin  
School of Psychology  
University of St Andrews

Dear Pat

**Re: Policing Crowds**

This project has been considered and approved by the School of Psychology Ethical Committee.

We would, however, be interested to see any written ethical guidance which you have received from the Occupational Health Directorate.

If, during the course of the proposed research, any important condition were to alter, then the Committee would wish to be informed.

Yours sincerely

PP Dr Hugh Morris  
Convener

Dictated but not read

**Appendix b: Acronyms and abbreviations**

AC.	Assistant Commissioner
ACPO.	Association of Chief Police Officers
APPO.	Area Press and Publicity Officer
CMDR.	Commander
C.INSP.	Chief Inspector
C. SUPT.	Chief Superintendent
DSO.	Designated Senior Officer
FIT.	Forward Intelligence Teams
FBI.	Federal Bureau of Investigation
INSP.	Police Inspector
MACC.	Mutual aid Co-ordinating Centre
NRC.	National Reporting Centre
PC.	Police Constable
PSU.	Police Support Unit
SB.	Special Branch
SGT.	Police Sergeant
SPG.	Special Patrol Group
SUPT.	Superintendent
TSG.	Territorial Support Group
QPM.	Queens Police Medal.

## **Appendix c: Experimental studies, order of presentation.**

### **1. Introduction and manipulation questions.**

#### **2. Scenarios**

##### **a) Scenario 1.**

1. Expectation questions

11. Value questions

111. Contagion questions

1V. Dangerous questions

V. Homogeneity questions

##### **b) Scenario 2.**

1. Expectation questions

11. Value questions

111. Contagion questions

1V. Dangerous questions

V. Homogeneity questions

##### **c) Scenario 3.**

1. Expectation questions

11. Value questions

111. Contagion questions

1V. Dangerous questions

V. Homogeneity questions

**3. Experiment 2, manipulation of internal and external accountability conditions, followed by completion of action measures.**

### **4. Debrief sessions.**

## Experimenter Script

### **Good Morning /Afternoon.**

As many of you are aware, I have been conducting research into the decision-making processes utilised by senior public order commanders. This research has so far, for the most part, been conducted by looking at senior public order training, a series of 'real' events and the interviewing of officers. This has revealed that public order commanders have to deal with a complex array of information, which is often presented in an ambiguous format, this leads to concerns being expressed about specific issues. One of the issues of most concern for public order commanders would appear to be the issue of Risk Assessment/ Public Inquiry/or both.

Now let me explain the nature of the task today. First of all, I will ask you some general questions then show you three video clips. What I am interested in today, is your immediate reactions to these clips, which contain a number of hypothetical crowd situations. These are not new and represent ambiguous situations much like you are faced with during an actual event. You may recognise these events but I would ask that you imagine yourself at the scene of each, and then answer a series of questions in relation to the clips. These questions take a number of forms and should be answered in the order in which they appear, do not turn over the page. There are no right or wrong answers. Make your judgements in relation to the material you see. Do not change any of your answers unless you feel that you have made a genuine mistake.

The information supplied by you, will remain confidential and anonymous, and will be used for the purposes of the psychological research outlined. At the end of each clip I will stop and ask you to fill in the booklet provided. In the booklets you will come across questions, firstly about your expectations and the value you place on different outcomes. In relation to expectancies, you will be asked to rate these in percentage terms. For example, if you expected it to rain at this particular moment you would place a value near to 100%, if you do not expect it to rain the value would be placed nearer to 0. If you were ambiguous about the likelihood of rain you would place a value in percentage terms closer to 50.

After you have answered questions about your expectancies, I will ask you to place a value on a series of outcomes. These questions will require you to fill in a scale. The scale will require you to place a line according to your perception of the value to you, of the outcome in question. For example, if you placed a value on the likelihood of rain as very positive you would mark a position on the line like this

Very Positive ----- Very Negative.

If however you placed a very negative weighting to such an outcome you would mark a position on the line like this.

Very Positive ----- Very Negative

In the last section of the booklet I will ask questions about the perceived nature of the crowd. These questions require you to respond by giving percentage estimates. All these questions will be repeated for each scenario.

Are there any questions?

If not, we will begin with the first scenario

**Scenario 1: Anti Fascist Demonstration.**

**A demonstration has been called following the murder of a local Asian youth. Local opinion has been inflamed following racist comments by the local British National Party (BNP) Prospective Parliamentary Candidate. A wide section of the local community have formed a coalition to oppose his views. They have proposed a demonstration ending with a prayer vigil outside the house of the candidate. A large number, approximately 15,000, are expected to take part in the demonstration and vigil. The candidate has, through the Local and National media, stated his belief that the police should spend their time catching criminals rather than allow the demonstration and vigil to take place. Organisers have been informed that the vigil will not be allowed to take place. The organisers have also indicated that the presence of police is likely to inflame the protesters. It is at this point that you are confronted with the following (video clip).**

**Scenario one**

If you decide **not to** 'kit' up what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

If you do decide to '**kit** up what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

If you do decide to **intervene** what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

If you do decide **not to** intervene what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

Now please evaluate the following outcomes. **Place a straight line through the dotted line to indicate your weighting to the various different outcomes.**

1. You decide not to 'kit' up and the level of violence increases

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

2. You decide not to 'kit' up and the level of violence stays the same

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

3. You decide not to 'kit' up and the level of violence reduces

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

4. You decide to intervene and the level of violence stays the same.

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

5. You decide to intervene and the level of violence reduces.

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

6. You decide to intervene and the level of violence increases.

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

Now I want you to evaluate the following statements. **Place a straight line through the dotted line to indicate your evaluation of the various statements.**

1. In a crowd like this everybody has the potential to get carried away and become involved in violence.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

2. Anyone who remains in a situation like this is out for trouble

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

3. In a situation like this, agitators are liable to whip ordinary people into doing things that they would not normally do.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

4. Even in this context, non-violent people will remain non-violent.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

5. In the midst of confrontations like this, there are likely to be plenty of decent respectable people.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

6. Even if it is foolish, innocent bystanders are liable to hang around in situations like this.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

Now I would like you to ask you some questions about the nature of the crowd you have just seen.

**Please rate as a percentage estimate for each.**

1. What proportion of the people in the crowd are actively involved in throwing missiles? Please give as a percentage estimate.
2. What proportion of people in the crowd are actively involved in conflict with the police? Please give as a percentage estimate.
3. What proportion of the crowd are liable to become involved in conflict with the police? Please give as a percentage estimate.
4. What proportion of people in the crowd are involved in illegal acts? Please give as a percentage estimate.
5. What proportion of people in the crowd are liable to be involved in illegal acts? Please give as a percentage estimate.

Now please estimate the percentage of the crowd who fall into each of the following four categories.

**Anti social (percentage estimate)**

**Violent (percentage estimate)**

**Anti Police (percentage estimate)**

**Threat to Public Order (percentage estimate)**

Now I want you to estimate the impact on the crowd of deploying the following tactical options.

Please rate as percentage estimate.

	<b>Violence will reduce.</b>	<b>Violence will stay the same.</b>	<b>Violence will increase.</b>
<b>'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Do not 'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Withdraw</b>			
<b>Do not Withdraw</b>			
<b>Use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Do not use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Contain</b>			
<b>Do not contain</b>			
<b>Use Level one/two officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Do not use Level one/two trained officers to disperse</b>			

## Scenario 2 'Police Powers' Demonstration

The government are introducing legislation, which increases Police powers of stop and search. The legislation has generated considerable opposition and criticism of the ways current powers are used, and future powers might be used to infringe civil liberties. A coalition against the legislation has been formed including Church groups, Civil Liberties groups, Trades Unions and Black groups. This coalition has called a National demonstration, the route of which goes from Kennington Park, up Whitehall and ends in Trafalgar Square. Parliament is in recess since it is the summertime and most MP's, including the Prime Minister, are on holiday. Some 15,000 people turn up for the demonstration. They are a wide spectrum, from anarchist and environmental groups to contingents of clerics. The march sets off and, despite a fair degree of anti police chants and taunts remains largely good-natured. As the march goes up Whitehall, however, the front of the march stops in Downing Street. There are lines of uniformed officers inside Downing Street and also flanking the demonstration in Whitehall. The following video clip shows what happens next, as demonstrators move towards the gates of Downing Street.

**Scenario Two**

If you decide **not to** 'kit' up what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

If you do decide to '**kit**' up what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

If you do decide to **intervene** what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

If you do decide **not to** intervene what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

Now please evaluate the following outcomes. **Place a straight line through the dotted line to indicate your weighting to the various different outcomes.**

1. You decide not to 'kit' up and the level of violence increases

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

2. You decide not to 'kit' up and the level of violence stays the same

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

3. You decide not to 'kit' up and the level of violence reduces

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

4. You decide to intervene and the level of violence stays the same.

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

5. You decide to intervene and the level of violence reduces.

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

6. You decide to intervene and the level of violence increases.

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

Now I want you to evaluate the following statements. **Place a straight line through the dotted line to indicate your evaluation of the various statements.**

1. In a crowd like this everybody has the potential to get carried away and become involved in violence.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

2. Anyone who remains in a situation like this is out for trouble

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

3. In a situation like this agitators, are liable to whip ordinary people into doing things that they would not normally do.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

4. Even in this context, non-violent people will remain non-violent.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

5. In the midst of confrontations like this, there are likely to be plenty of decent respectable people.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

6. Even if it is foolish, innocent bystanders are liable to hang around in situations like this.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

Now I would like you to ask you some questions about the nature of the crowd you have just seen.

**Please rate as a percentage estimate for each.**

1. What proportion of the people in the crowd are actively involved in throwing missiles? Please give as a percentage estimate.
2. What proportion of people in the crowd are actively involved in conflict with the police? Please give as a percentage estimate.
3. What proportion of the crowd are liable to become involved in conflict with the police? Please give as a percentage estimate.
4. What proportion of people in the crowd are involved in illegal acts? Please give as a percentage estimate.
5. What proportion of people in the crowd are liable to be involved in illegal acts? Please give as a percentage estimate.

Now please estimate the percentage of the crowd who fall into each of the following four categories.

**Anti social (percentage estimate)**

**Violent (percentage estimate)**

**Anti Police (percentage estimate)**

**Threat to Public Order (percentage estimate)**

Now I want you to estimate the impact on the crowd of deploying the following tactical options.  
Please rate as percentage estimate.

	<b>Violence will reduce.</b>	<b>Violence will stay the same.</b>	<b>Violence will increase.</b>
<b>'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Do not 'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Withdraw</b>			
<b>Do not Withdraw</b>			
<b>Use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Do not use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Contain</b>			
<b>Do not contain</b>			
<b>Use Level one/two officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Do not use Level one/two trained officers to disperse</b>			

### **Scenario 3 Student Demonstration.**

**Scenario three, is a demonstration which has been organised by the National Union of Students (NUS) to protest against proposed government legislation to increase the fees to be paid by all those studying in higher education. The numbers estimated by the organisers, is in the region of 10,000 demonstrators from various Left wing groups. Several paper sellers are in evidence. The protest has received a large amount of media comment and has been widely advertised. The Prime Minister is due to deliver a 'key' note speech at a meeting with a group of interested parties. The demonstrators have heckled and jostled the police, deployed outside the venue for the speech, when it was discovered that the Prime Minister had been smuggled through the back door. The organisers plan, was to disrupt the meeting by getting all the students who were in the venue to leave as the Minister delivered the speech. It is at this point that you are confronted by the following scene (video clip).**

**Scenario Three.**

If you decide **not to** 'kit' up what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

If you do decide to '**kit** up what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

If you do decide to **intervene** what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

If you do decide **not to** intervene what is the probability (**in percentage terms**)

- a) the level of violence will reduce
- b) the level of violence will stay the same
- c) the level of violence will increase

Now please evaluate the following outcomes. **Place a straight line through the dotted line to indicate your weighting to the various different outcomes.**

1. You decide not to 'kit' up and the level of violence increases

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

2. You decide not to 'kit' up and the level of violence stays the same

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

3. You decide not to 'kit' up and the level of violence reduces

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

4. You decide to intervene and the level of violence stays the same.

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

5. You decide to intervene and the level of violence reduces.

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

6. You decide to intervene and the level of violence increases.

**Very Positive** ----- **Very Negative.**

Now I want you to evaluate the following statements. **Place a straight line through the dotted line to indicate your evaluation of the various statements.**

1. In a crowd like this everybody has the potential to get carried away and become involved in violence.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

2. Anyone who remains in a situation like this is out for trouble

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

3. In a situation like this agitators, are liable to whip ordinary people into doing things that they would not normally do.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

4. Even in this context, non-violent people will remain non-violent.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

5. In the midst of confrontations like this, there are likely to be plenty of decent respectable people.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

6. Even if it is foolish, innocent bystanders are liable to hang around in situations like this.

**Strongly agree** ----- **Strongly disagree**

Now I would like you to ask you some questions about the nature of the crowd you have just seen.

**Please rate as a percentage estimate for each.**

1. What proportion of the people in the crowd are actively involved in throwing missiles? Please give as a percentage estimate.
2. What proportion of people in the crowd are actively involved in conflict with the police? Please give as a percentage estimate.
3. What proportion of the crowd are liable to become involved in conflict with the police? Please give as a percentage estimate.
4. What proportion of people in the crowd are involved in illegal acts? Please give as a percentage estimate.
5. What proportion of people in the crowd are liable to be involved in illegal acts? Please give as a percentage estimate.

Now please estimate the percentage of the crowd who fall into each of the following four categories.

**Anti social (percentage estimate)**

**Violent (percentage estimate)**

**Anti Police (percentage estimate)**

**Threat to Public Order (percentage estimate)**

Now I want you to estimate the impact on the crowd of deploying the following tactical options.

**Please rate as percentage estimate.**

	<b>Violence will reduce.</b>	<b>Violence will stay the same.</b>	<b>Violence will increase.</b>
<b>'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Do not 'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Withdraw</b>			
<b>Do not Withdraw</b>			
<b>Use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Do not use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Contain</b>			
<b>Do not contain</b>			
<b>Use Level one/two officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Do not use Level one/two trained officers to disperse</b>			

## Experiment 2

In this final section I want you to consider the pressure from concerns relating to the Health and Safety issues relating to officers involved in public order events, and how this would make it more likely, less likely or there would be no difference in your decisions with regard to the tactical deployments you would have made in the three scenarios you have seen. Please rate as a percentage estimate for each.

<b>Scenario 1</b>	<b>More likely</b>	<b>No difference</b>	<b>Less likely</b>
<b>'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Withdraw</b>			
<b>Use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Contain</b>			
<b>Use Level one/two officers to disperse</b>			

	<b>More likely</b>	<b>No difference</b>	<b>Less likely</b>
<b>Scenario 2</b>			
<b>'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Withdraw</b>			
<b>Use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Contain</b>			
<b>Use Level one/two officers to disperse</b>			

<b>Scenario 3</b>	<b>More likely</b>	<b>No difference</b>	<b>Less likely</b>
<b>'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Withdraw</b>			
<b>Use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Contain</b>			
<b>Use Level one/two officers to disperse</b>			

Similarly, I want you to consider the pressure from concerns relating to the issue of the likelihood of a Public Inquiry for officers involved in public order events, and how this would make it more likely, less likely or there would be no difference in your decisions with regard to the tactical deployments you would have made in the three scenarios you have seen. Please rate as a percentage estimate for each.

<b>Scenario 1</b>	<b>More likely</b>	<b>No difference</b>	<b>Less likely</b>
<b>'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Withdraw</b>			
<b>Use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Contain</b>			
<b>Use Level one/two officers to disperse</b>			

<b>Scenario 2</b>	<b>More likely</b>	<b>No difference</b>	<b>Less likely</b>
<b>'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Withdraw</b>			
<b>Use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Contain</b>			
<b>Use Level one/two officers to disperse</b>			

<b>Scenario 3</b>	<b>More likely</b>	<b>No difference</b>	<b>Less likely</b>
<b>'Kit' up</b>			
<b>Withdraw</b>			
<b>Use mounted officers to disperse</b>			
<b>Contain</b>			
<b>Use Level one/two officers to disperse</b>			

**Demographic Details.**

**1. What level of Public Order training have you received? Please circle.**

**Standard**

**Advanced**

**2. What Sex are you? Please circle.**

**Female..... Male**

**3. How old are you?**

**4. What rank do you hold?**

**5. Have you previously been involved in a Public Order event? If yes, please state at what level.**

- **Gold**
- **Silver**
- **Bronze**
- **Subsector bronze.**

**6. What level of Public Order training do you have at senior level? Please tick**

- **Recently trained**
- **Trained for some time (Please give approximate time in years).**

**7. What level of Public Order experience do you have at senior level**

- **Previously employed on less than ten events.**
- **Previously employed on more than ten but less than twenty events.**
- **Previously employed on more than twenty events.**

**Appendix d: Pre event, coding notes and post event interview schedule for 'Carnival against Capitalism'**

**Semi structured interview of the gold and silver commander: Pre event.**

**Theme one: General issues prior to the event (Gold commander).**

**Sub questions:**

- a) What are the major issues involved in policing a public order event?
- b) How do you assess the risks involved in policing an event?
- c) How do you identify signs of danger?
- d) How do you identify signs of safety?
- e) What do you regard as a successful outcome to a public order event?
- f) How would you plan to achieve this?
- g) What key things would you use in assessing a positive outcome?
- h) What do you regard as a negative outcome to a public order event?
- i) How would you plan to avoid this?
- j) What key things would you use in assessing a negative outcome?

**Specific issues prior to this particular event (Gold commander).**

**Sub questions:**

- a) What are the immediate issues for you in policing this particular event?
- b) How have you assessed the risks involved in policing this particular event?
- c) How will you identify signs of danger?

- d) How will you identify signs of safety?
- e) What do you regard as a successful outcome to this particular event?
- f) How are you going to achieve this?
- g) What do you regard as a negative outcome to a public order event?
- h) How are you going to avoid this?
- i) How will you identify leadership in the crowd for this particular event?

**Theme Two: General Information (Gold commander).**

**Sub questions:**

- a) How do you see Special Branch (SB)?
- b) What role do you see SB fulfilling in policing public order?
- c) How do you see Public Order Intelligence System (POIS)?
- d) What role do you see (POIS) fulfilling in policing public order?
- e) Have you used any other sources of information. Please specify?
- f) What role do you see this other information source playing?

**Specific Information (Gold commander).**

**Sub questions:**

- a) How many people are expected on this march?
- b) What information broadly was supplied by Special Branch in relation to their estimate of numbers, mood and the likelihood of disorder?

- c) Broadly speaking, how many people are identified as being in the following categories 'organisers' (category C), the 'fighters' (category B) and the 'ordinary' demonstrators (categories A and O)?
- d) Is the information supplied by SB, POIS and any other sources in any way contradictory. If so, please specify the source of the information and in what way the contradiction was dealt with?

**Theme Three : General accountability of (Gold commander).**

**Sub questions:**

- a) How do you separate and interpret the roles of gold, silver, and bronze?
- b) How are officers selected to perform the roles of silver and bronze?
- c) Is there a common structure for setting the strategy for all events. If so what is it?
- d) What themes are relevant for you in setting the strategy for an event and preparing the strategy statement. In what circumstances - if any - would you consider changing the strategy for an event?
- e) In making decisions concerning strategy how much are you influenced by external accountability considerations. Please specify by whom and how you are influenced?
- f) In making decisions concerning strategy how much are you influenced by internal accountability considerations. Please specify by whom and how you are influenced?

**Specific accountability of (Gold commander).****Sub questions:**

- h) In what circumstances (if any) would you intervene and direct the silver commander to make a specific intervention?
- i) In what specific circumstances relating to this event would you consider the authorisation of the following tactical options.
- i.e. 'kitting'
  - use of horses into a crowd
  - clearing the streets.
  - the authorisation to bring forward the 'kestrel' and 'Trojan' units (firearms and baton round teams).
- j) In what specific circumstances relating to this event would you consider the deployment of the following tactical options.
- Level one officers.
  - use of horses into a crowd
  - clearing the streets.
  - the deployment of the 'kestrel' and 'Trojan' units (firearm and baton round teams)
  - the use of CS agent
  - the use of baton rounds
  - the use of firearms.
- k) How would you ensure that in using these tactical options only those crowd members involved in conflict or committing offences were differentiated?

**Semi structured interview of the silver commander: Pre event.****Theme one: General issues prior to the event (Silver commander).****Sub questions:**

- a) What are the major issues involved in policing a public order event?
- b) How do you assess the risks involved in policing an event?
- c) How do you identify signs of danger?
- d) How do you identify signs of safety?
- e) What do you regard as a successful outcome to a public order event?
- f) How are you going to achieve this?
- g) What key things would you use in assessing a positive outcome?
- h) What do you regard as a negative outcome to a public order event?
- i) How are you going to avoid this?
- j) What key things would you use in assessing a negative outcome?

**Specific issues prior to this particular event (Silver commander).****Sub questions:**

- k) What are the immediate issues for you in policing this particular event?
- l) How have you assessed the risks involved in policing this particular event?
- m) How will you identify signs of danger?
- n) How will you identify signs of safety?

- o) What do you regard as a positive outcome for this event?
- p) How are you going to achieve this?
- q) What do you regard as a negative outcome to a public order event?
- r) How are you going to avoid this?

**Theme Two :The use of Information. (Silver commander).**

**Sub questions:**

- a) How do you see Special Branch (SB)?
- b) What role do you see SB fulfilling in policing public order?
- c) How do you see Public Order Intelligence System (POIS)?
- d) What role do you see (POIS) fulfilling in policing public order?
- e) Have you used any other sources of information. Please specify?
- f) What role do you see this other information source playing?

**Specific Information (Silver commander)**

**Sub questions:**

- g) How many people are expected on this march?
- h) What information broadly was supplied by Special Branch in relation to their estimate of numbers, mood and the likelihood of disorder?
- i) Broadly speaking, how many people are identified as being in the following categories 'organisers' (category C), the 'fighters' (category B) and the 'ordinary' demonstrators (categories A and O)?

k) Is the information supplied by SB, POIS and any other sources in any way contradictory. If so, please specify the source of the information and in what way the contradiction was dealt with?

**Theme Three :General accountability of (Silver commander).**

**Sub questions:**

- a) How do you separate and interpret the roles of gold, silver, and bronze?
  
- b) How are officers selected to perform the roles of bronze?
  
- c) How do you set the tactics for the event in support of the strategy? What themes are relevant for you in making your tactical plan. In what circumstances would you consider changing the tactical plan for the event?
  
- d) Is there a common structure for setting the tactical plan for all events?
  
- e) In making decisions concerning tactics how much are you influenced by external accountability considerations? Please specify by whom and how you are influenced.
  
- f) In making decisions concerning tactics how much are you influenced by internal accountability considerations? Please specify by whom and how you are influenced
  
- g) In what circumstances (if any) would you intervene and direct a bronze commander to make a specific intervention?
  
- h) In what circumstances would you consider that the strategy should be altered?

i) In what circumstances would you consider the authorisation of the following tactical options?

- i.e. 'kitting'
- use of horses into a crowd
- clearing the streets.
- the authorisation to bring forward the 'kestrel' and 'Trojan' units (the firearm and baton round teams).

i) In what circumstances would you consider the deployment of the following tactical options?

- i.e. 'kitting'
- use of horses into a crowd
- clearing the streets
- the deployment of the 'kestrel' and 'Trojan' units (the use of firearm and baton round teams)
- the use of CS agent
- the use of baton rounds
- the use of firearms.

j) How would you ensure that in using these tactical options only those crowd members involved in conflict or committing offences were differentiated?

## **Participant observation study of the gold and silver commanders during the event:**

### **General themes**

#### **a) What are the concerns of both gold and silver on the day of the event.**

##### **Specific coding of gold and silver by use of participant observation looking for the following:**

- Accountability concerns and the source i.e. internal/external. What influences are brought to bear on the gold/silver commander?
- How do the police categorise a public order event in the pre, incipient and conflict phases. How are these translations made and crucially what cues are used to make the translations?
- What are the concepts of legitimacy at the gold and silver level? Do they accept injuries and damage to property to avoid being held to account for overreacting? Do these concepts change in response to the police perception of the phase(s) of the event.
- What are the theories of the crowd? Does this change in response to the change in categorisation of the event

##### **General theme.**

#### **b) What are the general perceptions of danger, safety and models of leadership within the crowd by gold and silver?**

##### **Specific coding of gold and silver by use of participant observation looking for the following:**

- What information is used by gold and silver to indicate signs of danger?
- What information is used by them to indicate signs of safety?
- What information is used by them to indicate signs of leadership within the crowd?
- What information is used by them to suggest organisation within the crowd?
- What information do the police prioritise at different phases of the event (pre, incipient and conflict) with respect to the above?

##### **General theme:**

#### **c) Do the police perceive that crowds pose a problem for the social order?**

##### **Specific coding of gold and silver by use of participant observation looking for the following:**

- How do the police control spatial and temporal decisions made by crowd members? Does this change in response to phase and accountability concerns?
- What are the criteria for intervention/action? What tactical options are considered appropriate at the different phases of the event?

**Post event interview schedule of the gold and silver commander:****General explanation**

- a) What was your general impression of the event?
  
- b) Was the event good?
  
- c) Why?
  
- d) Was the event bad?
  
- e) Why?
  
- f) How did this differ from your expectations?
  
- g) Why did it differ?

**Specific explanation**

- h) Let's go through the specific incident of?
  
- i) Can you tell me what happened?
  
- j) Why did the crowd act as it did?
  
- k) What was the effect/outcome?

## Appendix e: Semi structured interview schedule for interviews with public order commanders at gold, silver, bronze and sub bronze level of command

1. What are the **background factors** prior to the event that influence your decisions?

- Intelligence regarding particular groups, i.e. Special Branch threat assessments
- Probability of counter-demonstrations
- Route of the march
- Location of demonstration
- **Strategic considerations :**

Political

Organisational

Financial

Societal

- **Other? (please specify).**

2. What are the **immediate factors** on the day of the event that influence your decisions?

- Intelligence i.e. regarding the mood and behaviour of particular groups, supplied by FIT teams
- Vulnerability of symbolic locations
- Severity of injuries to officers and support staff
- Severity of injuries to members of the public, including demonstrators
- Crowd safety, i.e. concerns re crushing in confined spaces
- Advice from tactical advisers
- External organisational pressures, e.g. political, community, media
- Other factors? (please specify).

3 Is there a **critical point** when you would decide to employ particular tactical options?

- Batons - 'show of strength'
- 'Kitting up'
- Withdrawal of non-protected officers
- Vehicle tactics
- Use of mounted officers
- Specialist weapons and tactics?

Baton rounds

CS agent

Firearms