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The evolution of policing in America

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The evolution of policing in America

Question 1

Organized law enforcement was established in America in the 1630s. This early system comprised volunteers who were either paid privately by the community or by the local authorities. Those under the local authorities were known as the watch and consist of a constable and six men (Bowling, 2019). The primary role of this group was night patrols. However, members of the society would join these patrols to help maintain law and order. Like what is witnessed with modern police, the watch responded to distress calls, arrested culprits, and handed them to the constable, who took them to court.

Question 2

By 1700, America's economy had grown significantly. There were a lot of economic activities, both at the local level and overseas trading. American towns experienced a surge in populations due to rural to urban migration, increasing crime rates and other social problems. The watch was dealing with unprecedented lawlessness as their responsibilities increased. In addition to that, the volunteers felt misused and decided to quit, prompting the government to establish a robust policing system. By 1800, regional administrations started upgrading their law enforcement units to be more robust and efficient. This system was first adopted in England, then America copied the same in 1829. The new police unit comprised full-time government employees with a salary and other benefits.

Modern policing in America has improved, mainly due to technological advancements. The advancements in methods of communication and transport have enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of the police. Presently, the American police are trained in law enforcement and life rescue services, firefighting, and ambulances. Police officers can offer emergency medical

assistance and have some of the best equipment to carry out their mandate as expected (Meese and Malcolm, 2017). Besides, the American police are members of a trade union, where their grievances and welfare are guaranteed. The present system has seen officers adopt technologies like the body camera that records every incident and makes it easier to understand whether the police or civilians cross the line. In addition to that, technological advancements in record keeping and applying statistical theories and models in information technology can map out crime patterns. In America, this is called predictive policing. In addition to that, fighting crime involving fingerprint technology, cameras, and automatic number plate systems have been adopted.

Even though the American policing system has witnessed a tremendous transformation over the years, this evolution is attributed to economic progress, politics, and society. For instance, agitation and social activism in the community change how police officers are recruited, trained and deployed. Human rights activists are driving the social changes in policing, using lethal force being frowned upon (Huq, 2017). Social activism is forcing the American police to adopt alternative strategies when dealing with volatile situations. Most important is the implication that policing is no longer about general-purpose policing of law enforcement. Society is forcing the policing system in America to adopt a more radical approach that requires social and intellectual skills. In the end, policing in America is about understanding strategy, tactics, and the masses' psychology. The future of policing does not involve the use of technology alone or the community's psychological understanding. However, it involves an all-inclusive approach, where the police and the society come together to deal with societal issues.

Question 3

Presently, it is becoming difficult to be a police officer in America. Society is increasingly becoming hostile towards police officers. Simultaneously, artificial intelligence is taking center stage, especially with surveillance and facial recognition technologies championed by those in government. As a result, future criminals will not be caught by an officer on the streets but by someone behind a desk. Many future police officers will be computer experts who will use predictive technologies to single out criminals. However, the focus should be on the community and finding ways to engage community members to report criminals instead of using technology to monitor what people are doing actively.

References

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