



Privatising Policing and Expanding Private Provision

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Vote

- How many would support the privatisation of the police?
- How many would support increased private sector involvement in policing?



Overview

- Tough financial times ahead: the need for more for less
- Police inefficient and bureaucratic: example of patrol
- Many services provided are performed in some form already in private sector to equal if better quality at lower cost
- Many 'privatisation' initiatives so far, but not far enough



The State of Public Policing

- Public police tarnished with scandals: Tomlinson, De Menezes, Macpherson
- Public police don't provide equitable policing
- Public policing is costly and inefficient
 - Costs of employment/training/equipping of a police constable £100k+

Officer Deployment of Typical force

- 2500 Officers
- 1550 Operational Patrol Officers (HQ, Specialist, CID)
- 1350 Patrol Constables (Management and Operational Specialist)
- 335 Patrol Officers (4 Shifts)
- 250 On patrol duty (leave, sickness, training, court)
- 125 On Street (interviewing, paperwork, breaks)



The Privatisation of the Police

- Johnston (1991) and Button (2002)
- Load Shedding: Direct and Indirect
 - Patrol
 - Policing public order events
 - Investigating fraud
 - Response to intruder alarms

Ctd

■ Contracting Out

- Service functions: catering, cleaning, maintenance, security etc
- Prisoner escort
- Custody
- Civilianisation – ‘next step contracting out?’



Ctd

- Embracing private sector practices
 - FMI/Sheehy/PMCA/NPM
 - Hiring officers (section 25 Police Act 1996)
 - Charging fees for services
 - Sponsorship

Further Examples

- Custody
- Public order
- Exercising powers and use of lethal force
- Inteligarde Toronto: (Rigakos, 2002)
- Iraq and Afghanistan! Armed private armies to intelligence gathering



Prisoner Transport
Reliance transports approx. 420,000
detainees per annum



The Case of Prisons

- Derek Lewis
- Prison Industries (USA)
- Private Prisons
 - Innovation
 - Accountable
 - Lower costs
- Impact on wider sector



Ctd

Bottomley et al (1996: 55) write,

‘...it is certainly a widely held view in the Prison Service (at both establishment and headquarters levels) that the threat of market testing has made a major contribution to the growing pressure towards innovation and the more efficient management of resources that has occurred during this period...’



The Case of Probation

- Previous Govt proposals leaked to press include:
- Abolition of probation boards and creation of internal-market
- Open market where contracts for offender management, supervision etc are put out to tender
- Range of providers will bid including existing probation service, private companies and not-for profit sector
- Theoretically whole regions could be privatised



Extreme Profitshire: The Practicalities

- 2010 Police Privatisation Act
- Creation of Police Contracts Authority
- Invitations for expressions of interest to provide the policing services in Warwickshire
- Consortium of companies led by Rentokill
- New senior management team of civilians and 'innovative' officers replaces existing team.

Ctd

- New chief constable appointed former chief executive of the RAC
- Concentration on *Inner Core* functions, *all Outer Core* and *Ancillary* civilianised or contracted out
- Charges introduced for a range of services
- Sponsorship deal with 'Orange' means all vehicles painted that colour



Less Radical Proposals

- Keep existing police forces but
 - Bring in private sector expertise at the top level
 - Encourage greater contracting out: patrol, custody, certain investigations etc
 - Charge for more services
 - Actively pursue more sponsorship
 - Encourage communities (business and residents) to take greater responsibility



Advantages of Privatisation

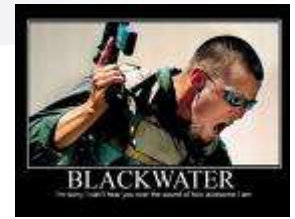
- Greater innovation in service provision
- Lead to more innovation in public sector
- Lower costs to taxpayer
- Greater accountability

Not like

- <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=k6CkltzGAxY>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k6CkltzGAxY>

Public, not private, policing

Professor Steve Savage



Public, not private, policing

- Introduction and Background
- The case **against** private policing
- The problem with 'private sector practices' in public policing
- The case **for** public policing
- Conclusion – more variations on *public* policing rather than the private alternative

Introduction – going full circle



- 19th Century ‘Modern Police’ created to *replace* the chaos of myriad of private policing arrangements
- Increasing expectations and demands on public police + constraints on public spending challenged ‘public police monopoly’
- Private policing the ‘solution’!
 - ‘*The Rebirth of Private Policing*’ (Les Johnston, 1991)

Background: expansion of private provision of public services

- Since 1980s governments committed to expansion of private provision public sector
 - Privatisation of publicly owned industries
 - Encouragement of private sector in *public services*
 - sale of council houses
 - private prisons
 - private care homes
 - outsourcing of catering in hospitals, schools etc
 - Enforcement of *business models* for managing public services (New Public Management)
 - Performance measurement
 - Market ethos (competition between providers)
 - Targets (like profit targets)

Background: 'public bad, private good'

- Assumption that 'public bad'
 - Inefficient, wasteful
 - Vested interests – run for people that *work* in public services them rather than *consumer*
 - Badly managed and over bureaucratic
- Assumption that 'private good'
 - Lean, fit and well managed
 - Responsive to consumers
 - Cheaper because of market competition
 - But 'better quality'

The case against private policing – the purpose of policing



- Replacing (in part) principle of policing for the *public good* with policing for **profit**
- Dangers of allowing considerations of profit into the work of policing
 - look at history of police corruption – when gain clouds policing decisions and actions
- Threat to notion of policing by consent – public not there to *serve* but as source of *profit*
- Private police ultimately accountable to *shareholders* and not the community policed

The case against private policing – inequities in policing



- Private policing only ‘serves’ those who can *afford* to pay – Gunwharf not Summerstown
- Private policing *disperses* problems from heavily secured sites to less well secured sites
- Private policing *excludes* those who appear to be ‘suspect populations’ (based largely on appearance)
 - “these suspect populations are liable to find themselves excluded from quasi-public space....such as shopping malls, leisure complexes and gated housing estates” (Zedner, 2003)
- Inequities in private policing: both *under-police* and *over-police* the poor

The case against private policing – a ‘market’ for policing?

- Private policing ‘sold’ on notion of responsiveness to markets and benefits of ‘competition’
- But major private policing operations delivered by small number of *multi-nationals* – little real competition or ‘market’ [ocs](#)
- Will only chase business where *real money lies* – leaves huge gaps in actual *need* which only *public* will provide for



The case against private policing – social harm



- Role and activities of private police serve to increase *anxieties* and *crime*
 - Constant reminders of *danger* (need for protective rings; exclusion of threats)
 - Focus on threat of crime as ever present – a **vested interest in ‘bigging up’ crime**
- Symbolic of lack of *trust* in people
 - Door checks; searches; suspicion about age, etc
- Socially divisive
 - Creation and reinforcement of ‘gated communities’ as separate from rest
 - Like *private schools* – divide school population into haves and have nots

Private sector practices in public policing



- Private sector ‘ethos’ visited on public police
 - ‘New Public Management’ as business models for public
- Increased efficiency and effectiveness?
 - Introduced performance measures which do not tell full picture of policing – measures only what can be *counted* (eg number of stops and searches) rather than what *counts* (eg feelings of security and safety; ‘peace and quiet’)
 - Police pursue *targets* (numbers of arrests) at expense of other valuable activities (informal contacts with community)
 - Time wasted on *recording and monitoring* performance – **more** bureaucracy not less

The case for public policing *fairness*



- Police actions closely *monitored* for proportionality eg stop and searches (record on stop, reasons and ethnicity of person) – need to show not discriminating
 - Organisational and professional concern for *public confidence* in the police and good police-public relations – need to show fairness and equity of treatment
 - Fairness linked to Code of *Professional Standards*:
- **Principle 6- Equality** “Police officers act with fairness and impartiality. They do not discriminate unlawfully on the grounds of sex, race, colour, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, disability, age, sexual orientation, property, birth or other status”

The case for public policing - *accountability*

- Who are private police primarily 'accountable to'?
 - **Shareholders/company profits**
 - **Customers (shops, leisure companies, property holders etc**
- Who are the public police accountable to?



The case for public policing - *quality*



■ *Selection*

- through National Selection Process
- highly competitive
- 50% graduates

■ *Training* - to become a constable:

- 4/5 months in training school
- 6 -12 months tutoring at division
- 2 years before fully trained for independent patrol
- and the private security sector? [Guards](#)

■ *Police standards*

- Overseen by National Policing Improvement Agency
- HMIC force-by-force comparisons on performance (including diversity)

The case for public policing

public service ethos



- Not policing-for-profit but policing as a public service
 - quality of service provided rather than the quantity of profit made
- Servants of the *community* not the organisation paying for security (or shareholders)
- Oriented not just to *crime* but to *peace-keeping*

Conclusion



- As demands for policing grows expand the *public* not the *private* policing sector
 - More regular officer and/or
 - PCSOs and/or
 - Special Constables
- Keep policing a matter of public good rather than private profit! [JJ](#)