Robert Schuman Centre

The Policing of Mass Demonstration
in Contemporary Democracies

The Policing of Protest in France:
Towards a Model of Protest Policing

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EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE

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In *Demonstration Democracy* (1970) Amitai Etzioni stated that the recourse to direct expression of opinion through protest was becoming an increasingly common practice in democratic countries. According to Etzioni, this was noticeable both in the rise in the number of demonstrations and in the spread of this practice to all levels of society. This established analysis is in line with the French situation of the eighties and the nineties. In fact, the legitimacy of protest is now well recognized by French public opinion. Its use is widespread among all socio-professional categories (Fillieule, 1994) and the legal framework has developed to extent that the right to protest is now considered a constitutional right.[1] Furthermore, demonstrations rarely give way to the use of violence on the part of demonstrators or the forces of law and order. Studies conducted by Favre and Fillieule have in fact shown that only 5 per cent of demonstrations become violent in the form of destruction of public/private property or attacks on other persons (Favre, 1990; Favre and Fillieule, 1994).[2]

These observations strongly suggests that demonstrating has becoming a usual and peaceful process in France, which therefore places it among the broad range of conventional political practices. Thus, the common image of the police battling with demonstrators has become rather misleading. Disorder is largest rare, even in the biggest and most problematic protest events. By and large, demonstrators cooperate with the police, assemble at a previously agreed upon location, proceed along an agreed route and disperse peacefully, regardless of the perceived results of their action.

Thus, the issue to address is how the police have extended such a high degree of control over protest action by cooperation with demonstrators rather than by

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[1] Cf. Constitutional Court, n°94-352 DC 01/18/1995 and Favre (1993).

[2] The French national police have developed a very broad definition of a protest event. A protest event, for them, includes any type of gathering of people, either in public or private. Hence, included in the term are events as diverse as soccer matches, rock concerts, Labour Day parades, religious processions and, from time to time, picket lines. For both practical and theoretical reasons which we cannott go into within the space of this paper, we will not go into here, we define a protest event much more narrowly, as follows: *an event in which a non-governmental actor occupies a public space (public buildings, streets) in order to make a political demand, to experience in-process benefits, or to celebrate something, which includes the manifest or latent expression of political opinion.* For a further explanation on the reasoning behind this definition, see Fillieule (1995 a).

repression. How is the policing of protests organized in France? On what principles and professional knowledge is it based? These are some of the questions which this paper will deal with.

The theoretical significance of these issues is not simply confined to sociological studies of the police. In its broader framework, studies of the maintenance of law and order should become one of the central elements of the analysis of social movements. Indeed, the development of social movements depends largely on the State's structures and its responses. However, in the majority of existing works, the extreme diversity of actors and agencies constituting the State is oversimplified by their placement into general categories such as strong State/weak State. This would suggest a concerted action on the part of the State. In such analysis, police forces and their actions are considered as pure instruments and are categorized under "police repression". The sole actor which the protesters confront is the government in power representing the State. This body, through the police, thus decides whether to increase repression or give way to the demonstrators' demands. From a judicial point of view emanating from Weber, the police appears as an armed instrument of political power.

In this paper, we propose a model for ways in which protests are handled which presents street demonstrations as part of a triangular game in which the rules are prone to change during the course of the event. In effect, it can be argued that an understanding of the methods of protest management should include three major actors: the forces of law and order, the government, and the protesters themselves. The analysis constantly returns to the freedom of manoeuvre at the disposal of these actors in order to establish the rules of the game and then to actually act within them. This room for manoeuvre necessitates an examination of events as a result of a complex, interactive and tactical process incorporating the social movement, police officers (senior officers and rank and file) on the ground and political authorities. From this angle, our model differs slightly from that of Della Porta which emphasizes police knowledge and tactics. It is also different from the model proposed by Mc Carthy, Mc Phail and Crist (1995) which, in addition to police tactics, analyses the relationship between public order policy and the legal, political environment. In our view, the model is incomplete without giving equal importance to the role of the demonstrators themselves.

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Taking this as a starting point, we explore three central questions: 1) What are the established rules of the game (legal norms, structure of police organization and professional conduct, hierarchical relations between police authorities and political authorities)?; 2) How, in practice, do the different actors play the game (by a strict or relaxed application, depending on the individual circumstances and vested interests at the time?); 3) What impact does the development of the game on any modifications of the rules. In other words, what determines modifications of the rules?[3]

Our work relies on three kinds of material: firstly, a series of formal interviews, conducted in Paris as well as throughout the country with the senior officers most frequently involved in the negotiating, planning and command of order operations; secondly, observation of numerous protest events and participation to the planning process of demonstrations in Marseille and Nantes; finally, a database of almost 5,000 protest events which occurred between 1979 and 1989 in the cities of Marseille, Nantes, and Paris[4]. We have constructed this data from the national police archives (Fillieule, 1994). This database allows us to make a quantified corroboration of the police officers assertions. By this multiplication of sources and methods, we hope our conceptualization of protest policing will not be as impressionistic as ethnographic studies sometimes appear to be.

We begin by briefly pointing out what we consider to be the main organizational characteristics of the handling of protests in France: a highly centralised and unified framework, even if, in the purest French tradition, the case of Paris is quite unique (I). We then present the philosophy on which this maintenance of order is based. We will show the extent to which these effective rules of the game are based less on legal prescriptions than on actual informal

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[3] Since the development of an answer to this last question would lead us too far from the framework of this paper, we will not deal with it here. Suffice it to say that, historically, the constitution of police knowledge, police practices and legal tools to deal with demonstrations were mostly initiated as a reaction to the changing tactics of demonstrators (see 1893-98, 1934, 1968, 1990-93 as major examples). The fact that the demonstrators themselves led the way reinforces our argument that the analysis of protest handling must undertaken on three levels (see also Fillieule, 1995 b).

[4] All protest events which occurred between 1979 and 1989 in Marseille (the second largest city in France) and Nantes have been fully coded and entered into the database. Only a part of Paris events from this period (approximately 10,000) have been coded and entered.

practices (II). Thirdly, we will see how these rules of the game are applied in different ways on the ground, depending on the orders given by the government and the police perception of the groups involved (III).

Forces of law and order in France: A diverse but highly centralized model

For historical reasons which cannot be elaborated on here, the forces responsible for the maintenance of public order in France are both varied and numerous.[5] There are military forces (*gendarmes mobiles*) and the national police force (specialized divisions of these and more general sections[6]). However, behind this diversity is hidden a highly centralized and uniform organization in terms of leadership, policy implementation and methods. This will be briefly illustrated in this section with reference to the organization of the specialized forces and the urban police in Paris as well as in the provinces.

The specialized forces

The specialized forces are firstly composed of the *gendarmes mobiles,* which come under the Ministry of Defense but are at the disposal of the Ministry of the Interior when used in operations for the maintenance of order. Secondly, the *CRS (Compagnies républicaines de sécurité)*, drawn from the mainstream police forces, form part of these specialized forces.
The first characteristic feature of these forces is that they are composed of mobile units with a national jurisdiction. *CRS* and *gendarmes mobiles* squads rarely act in the area where they are actually based. Therefore, full mobility is a prerequisite for these squads.
Secondly, these specialized forces undertake specific training. *Gendarmes* and *CRS* follow regular training sessions in the form of simulated operations. One striking fact is that, despite the observable differences in the practical execution of the exercises and the superiority of technical norms at the disposal

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[5] Several works deal with this question. The most clear and updated analysis is Bruneteaux, 1993.

[6] In addition to these forces of intervention are those of the intelligence service (the *Renseignements généraux*) whose task it is to provide the ground forces with all necessary information to conduct their work. We will return to this later).

of the *gendarmerie mobile*, the professional code of practice on which the training of the two types of forces is based, judging by the manual used in these sessions, is virtually identical.

The essential training in the maintenance of order is concentrated on a small set of simple rules. Whatever situation they are applied to (movements of units, charges, throwing tear gas, etc.), these rules are based on the necessity of a strong collective discipline and absolute respect for orders given by the senior officers. In effect, the *CRS* and the *gendarmes mobiles* must always act as complete units under the authority of their own senior officers. It follows that the training of the rank and file is relatively neglected, with the emphasis remaining on that of the senior officers.

Hence, the practical value of specialized forces is strongly linked to this unity of action. Examination of hundreds of written accounts of demonstrations in the *CRS* archives points to the fact that any division of units inariably results in a loosening of control exercised by the seniors. Consequently, situations arise where ordinary officers may resort to more unofficial strikes legitimized as statements of self-defence. Collective action of squads serves the purpose of restraining men to avoid their taking any initiative to personally deal with events which occur in demonstrations (hurling of missiles, insults, etc.). This collective action principle helps to develop a sense of solidarity amongst the forces.

Deployment of these forces follows orders from the Prefet who directly represents the Minister of the Interior in the provinces (*départements*). There is no legal limit to the use of these specialized forces. However, in practice the Prefets only resort to such measure when the information before them indicates that there is a strong possibility of violent/disruptive actions may break out in the course of an event. In all other cases, which cover the majority of events in the provinces, the local urban forces, under the authority of the local chief of police are responsible for maintaining order.

The civil authorities, that is the Prefet or Deputy Prefet (*sous-préfet*), the mayor or one of his associates and the police commissioner (*commissaire*[7]), are responsible for the use of coercive measures when considered appropriate. However, on the ground, the execution of policy legally depends on the

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[7] The term commissaire refers here to a person responsible for law and order, a civil representative of the Prefet, not a post in the police hierarchy.

hierarchy of squads made available. Once the decision to use coercion is taken, with the orders given by the civil authorities, the heads of each squad can give orders and supervise the action of their men in the field.

This rational partition of labour, conceals however, a lack of clarity regarding the exact nature of the relationships between the orders given by the civil authorities from the command room or on the ground and the actual implementation of these orders by the chiefs of each squad. This lack of clarity can sometimes be magnified in important cases of maintaining order, given the wide range of forces which could intervene and the frequent interventions of political power in the technical decisions to be taken.

Even in Paris, there have been cases in which a commander of a *CRS* or *gendarme* squad has refused to execute an order from the civil authority which has not also been confirmed by his own superiors.[8] In the light of these observations, it seems necessary not to reduce the interactions in demonstrations to a simple conflict between demonstrators and the police. Just as demonstrators can oppose each other, the forces of order do not necessarily act in a unified

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[8] Monjardet (1990, p. 219) says the same. Cf. equally the interview with Yves Lejeune, commandant of a *CRS* squad, before the commission of inquiry of the National assembly in 1986 regarding his relations with the hierarchy:
"- A. Billardon: I am struck by the problem of command in this operation. Under whose orders were you ?
- Y. Lejeune: Under the orders of the *commissaire* and possibly the operations room. (...) In theory, these are the same since the commissaire has instructions from the operations room on his own channel. And my boss, who is in the command room, gives me orders on his own line.
Gilbert Bonnemaison: If it happens that for a reason or other you have orders given by your boss which may not exactly be the same as that from the operations room, who should you follow?
Y.L: You are asking me a delicate question. That has never happenned to me.
G.B:You might find yourself before such a possibility.
Y.L: There are not many differences in points of view. I think at that moment I would make my own decision. It has previously been the case for police vehicles. Once the forces were in place, the *commissaire* of the XVI° *arrondissement* had asked, contrary to my opinion, that we reinforce the barricade with our vehicles. When I noticed that the demonstrators were trying to set fire to our vehicles, on my own initiative, I had them placed in the middle of the bridge. My vehicles pulled back. The other vehicles of the urban police which didn't pulled back were burnt" (Masson, 1987, p.784).

way. There are no clearly defined structures governing the relationships on the ground - a state of affairs that could potentially result in disorder.

Urban police in the provinces and in Paris

As has been stated, specialized forces are only called in when the anticipated event is potentially violent or dangerous. Hence, for the majority of routine demonstrations, the urban police is the only force involved. In the provinces, the latter is characterized by two features: first, there is no specific training on the maintenance of order, either in the initial course or in susequent ones. Professional knowledge is only acquired by experience. Second, maintainance of order is just one aspect amongst others of their general duties. In certain large towns, there is however a special brigade called the *Brigade Départementale d'Information de Voie Publique (BDIVP),* whose police officers concentrate primarily on issues of public order.

Urban police officers undergo a nine-months initial training course in a police academy before being officially commissioned. This programm is quite limited and does not specifically deal with the maintenance of order. Reasoning underlying this situation is that the training of recruits explicitly aims to produce guardians of the peace in a general sense. The maintenance of order is a specialized police function which is taught to those whose careers subsequently develop in the *CRS* or in the Paris *compagnies d'intervention* (see below). The absence of technical training for urban police is strongly emphasized by those who regularly organize demonstrations and they actually consider this to be dangerous:

> "The urban police are the problem, in Paris and in the provinces. It is with them that we have all the problems, because they are not trained in how to maintain order. That's what happened at Amiens when that guy was killed[9].. It is always... It is those lads, when they charge they don't know how to charge properly. They lay into people. That doesn't happen with the *CRS* or the *gendarmes*".[10]

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[9]   This incident involved a CGT militant who died in Amiens following a blow received from a baton charge.

[10]   Interview with Maurice. L., chief steward at the CGT since 1978, quoted in Bruneteaux (1993, p.457).

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In Paris, however, the young recruits are integrated into intervention squads (*Compagnies d'intervention*) which receive training in maintenance of order but are not a constituent part of the specialized forces (*CRS* and *gendarmes*). They equally assume numerous tasks related to anti-crime initiatives.

Created in June 1959 and extended to eleven units in 1969, the *Compagnies d'intervention* benefited in the 1960s from a regular and very similar type of training programme to that of the *CRS* and the *gendarmes*. Then, from 1978, their role was extended to include an anti-criminality component. As a result, specific training for demonstrations diminished and finally disappeared. At the end of the 1970s, the number of squads was reduced to six and at the same time they were less and less frequently used as individual units. This development was reinforced in 1983 with the dispersal of these squads among the different police stations in Paris. There was thus a loss of technical expertise to the point of incompetence, with dangerous implications

For the training of the *Compagnies d'intervention*, the model followed is that of the *gendarmerie* and the *CRS*. Training sessions are regularly held at an army location near Paris. In a few months, an advanced training centre should be completed and used in collaboration with the *CRS*[11].

This brief description of the different forces dealing with protest policing shows well how important the unification of the national context is in France. Apart from distinguishing Paris from the rest of the country - which is really only due to a question of political requirements - we can say without doubt that protest policing is exerted in a unified manner all over the country. Every aspects converges toward this unification : from the procedures for recruiting within the different forces, to the nature and quality of the training offered to the specialized units, the lack of such training for protest policing within the urban police, and the doctrine on which the training and the organization of the commandment are based. We could as well add to these points that all commissioners (*commissaires*) in charge of protest policing goes through the school of Saint-Cyr au Mont d'Or, where they receive an identical preparation for the maintenance of public order, and that information in Paris and out of Paris is collected by the same intelligence service (*Renseignements généraux*). The result is that a specific "philosophy of protest handling" has been built nationally in France, elements of this philosophy whcih may be found within

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[11] Direct cooperation between the Police Prefecture, *Gendarmerie* and *CRS* is not new in police training. For instance, all students at the school for the *commissaires* stay for a training session in Cigaville with the *gendarmes*. On the other side, *CRS* instructed the Parisian policemen on the use of a new baton, the ton-fa.

each police force and all over the country. We will now examine the essential characteristics of this "philosophy".

Fundamental Doctrine and Practice in Protest Policing in France

As P. Waddington (1994, p. 40) points out in his critique of the authoritarian State thesis, it would be completely misleading to base a complete explanation of the handling of protests solely on an analysis of the legal and material means at the disposal of political authorities. In France, the practice of protest policing is characterized precisely by the two following aspects: first, the continual search, through negotiation and compromise, for agreement even if such agreement is not necessarily based on the range of legal means; second, the underuse of available coercive means. On this point, the seniors officers we interviewed all agreed. This unanimity is confirmed in large part by our own observation of demonstrations. When we asked the chief of *Etat-Major* in the Paris Police Prefecture what he would consider successful protest management, he replied:

> "An operation in protest management can be said to have succeeded when there have been no incidents, no injuries, or when it has been possible to engage a dialogue with the protesters right from the beginning and ensure a satisfactory conclusion to the demonstration. Demonstrators generally get much more tired than the policemen. We can always pull out one shift and send in fresh men. It is therefore best to take one's time in bringing a demonstration to an end, and not, as I have seen happen on occasions, by kicking ass. We have to wait patiently for it to disperse. It is not always easy (....). A good demonstration is one in which neither the police nor the demonstrators find themselves in a position of inferiority."

The "philosophy" of protest policing can be summed up with the following three principles:
1/ The first objective of policing is to prevent trouble so that the police will not have to use force. Police Intelligence is therefore essential in formulating preventive measures;
2/ When police intervention is necessary to reinforce order, such intervention must not exacerbate the situation;
3/ Protest policing has as its primary objective the control of the situation at all times, regardless of costs. Predicting the events, constant negotiation with the other side, and control of the situation which is implemented by a wait and see approach where a strong coercive response is at one end of a range of possible

reactions are the three basic rules of the actual doctrine. We will examine therefore the meaning of these three principles and the way in which they are implemented.

The use of Intelligence and planning in the maintenance of order during demonstrations

Before the event, Intelligence and planning is an essential part of protest handling. According to most senior officers interviewed, failed policing above all occurs "when we are surprised. The worst thing that can happen is when we are surprised".

The Law of 1935 circumscribes the right of protest with an obligation on protesters to give the police three days notice of a march. This prior notification must be sent to the Town Hall or to the police headquarters in Paris. Even if the legal procedure is not strictly followed by the organizers of demonstrations (we will give more information on this point below), the police try to get in touch with the organizers to find out their intentions and to discuss the details of the march. At the same time, the intelligence service (*Renseignements généraux*) produces a detailed report in which they provide their own information about the expected number of demonstrators, the aims of the march and the spirit of the protesters themselves. Based upon these elements, the local police chief (or the sub-director of public order in Paris) formulates a plan of action within the framework of the Prefet's orders. The organization of the operation depends on two factors: the previous and/or declared goals of the demonstrators, and the will of the political authorities.

At this point, police headquarters determines the number of police officers required during the event. The Prefet approves the requisitioning of these men, from the local urban police (*Compagnies d'intervention* in Paris) and, in the case of large or risky marches, *gendarmes* and/or *CRS*. After the national police headquarters have assigned all available forces, local police direction forms a plan of action consisting in the disposition of forces, the designation of senior officers (*commissaires*) who will lead these forces, and the requisitioning of specific materials (water tanks, anti-barricade trucks, etc.). This plan is established during one or more preparative sessions. On the day of the event, units gather one hour before the event is due to begin. In most cases, when *CRS* or *gendarmes* are required, they are briefed by a senior officer in command as

to the general plan and the objectives set by the Prefet at each point in the operation.

Of note is noteworthy the extent to which the police build their plans on past experience. We have, for instance, noticed that in Marseille, Nantes and Paris, in addition to the report given by the local intelligence service, those in charge of a specific protest policing conduct research from their own archives to look for past events of a similar nature. The purpose is to build on precedents to prevent the reoccurrence of unfortunate behaviour among demonstrators. This resort to past experience is a major element of the subculture of public order forces and can explain why all police forces specializing in crowd control try to produce as detailed written reports as possible about situations they have to deal with. These case studies form the main syllabus taught to trainee officers, and senior officers, at the school of Saint-Cyr au Mont d'Or for *commissaires*, in the training centres of the *CRS* or at the centre at Cigaville for *gendarmes*. In the same way, photographic or film records are often used.

Negotiation and compromise

The planning done before a demonstration is based in main part on contact with protest groups. Contrary to the commonly held assumptionthat the police have no contact with the organizers of a demonstration until the beginning of the march, most of the time the event takes place in a spirit of mutual recognition and respect. What we would like to show here is that in public order operations, the main way cooperation is secured through negotiation with the protest organizers, before as well as during the march. Moreover, we submit that this negotiation process relies more on informal means than on legal norms.

By far, the most illustrative example of this informal way of managing protests is that of the notification requirement contained in the Law of 1935. As noted above, this law requires notification to the police no less than three days before the intended date of procession. A march for which notification is not properly made and which refuse to disperse when asked by the police should be treated as an unlawful assembly. In such cases, the police are legally authorized to use force, and can arrest and prosecute the organizers as well as participants.

However, there is a gap between this legal framework and practice. It is extremely rare for organizers to comply with the law or even know its prescriptions, except in Paris where the principle of preliminary notification is generally respected. In other places, prior notification is the exception rather than

the rule, as illustrated by Figure 1 for Marseille. Only 8.5 per cent of the events recorded between 1987 and 1991 were notified to the police or the Town Hall. If the police were to bring the law into operation, French demonstrations would be for the most part considered as "unlawful assemblies" and would be strictly forbidden... As one can see, this is not at all the case.

{FIG 1 ABOUT HERE}

In the same way, it would be misleading to try to understand the way French political authorities deal with demonstrations simply by observing the changing legislative regime. The recent change in French law gives us a very clear example of this. Under pressure from the law and order lobby, the legal framework has recently been tightened during the course of the overall reform of the penal code initiated in 1994.

This might logically lead one to conclude that there has been a move towards greater repression in France. But that is not the case at all: the political reasons which prompted the passing of this set of laws are far removed from the reality of protest handling. This is confirmed by the interviews we conducted in July 1995 with the officers in charge of Parisian police. First, and this is quite surprising, these police chiefs only had limited knowledge of the new laws. Secondly, they all insisted on the theoretical aspect of these laws which could only be applied in the case of a very serious crisis:

> "The new provisions are not well-suited to the task. The penalties were not applied before, so when one looks at the new ones they seem to be useless. Under these new regulations, we can lock up two- or even three-fifths of all demonstrations. And then we would have a real riot on our hands."

Protest policing cannot be adequately analysed in terms of the legal norms. As a rule, police do not use the whole set of legal means it has at hard to maintain order and the basis of its actions is essentially informal negotiation.[12] The use of the declaration in Paris demonstrates the point.

In Paris, where prior notification of demonstrations is much more frequent than in the provinces, we can see that directors of public order, rather than for

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[12] We should keep in mind, however, that the eventuality of a crisis situation can lead to a strict interpretation of the law, which would allow a very high level of repression.

sticking to the strict provisions, look for establishing negotiations with the protesters. These negotiations must lead to a compromise so that unexpected risks are minimized. The Etat-Major considers this step as a central element in the means at its disposal and the Chief of the Etat-Major itself meets in his office with the people involved in the organisation of the demonstration. These organizers may have asked for the meeting or the police may have called them.

According to the chief of the Etat-Major, negotiation with demonstrators must fullfil the following requirements:

A) Requirements of (1) public order (for instance, police may prefer a specific route and refuse another) and (2) political considerations (that is, the orders of the Prefet) must never be presented to the demonstrators as flat requirements based on law: on the contrary, the goal of the negotiation is to make the demonstrators think that the restrictions are in their own interests, that it is simply friendly advice:

> "If there is some small problem, perhaps with the route, I try to make them aware of it before they arrive at the Prefecture. So they can think about changing their route. If, for example, they want to go down the Champs-Elysées, this is not possible[13]. But rather than say to them that it is not possible, I would explain to them that they have to park 1,500 coaches, which is an enormous number. A coach is 20 metres long. You need dozens of streets in which to park them. They haven't thought of that. So, I suggest to them Saint-Augustin, since they can park their coaches in the Boulevard Malesherbes, and so they agree and go away satisfied."

B) Organizers must always go away from the meeting with the feeling that negotiating helped them in organizing the march. That is why the chief of the Etat-Major presents his requirements in the form of helpful advice. For instance, in the case of inexperienced demonstrators, it is frequent for senior officers to give the organizers some instructions as now to organize stewards and how to direct them. In fact, police have an important advantage: they usually hold a monopoly of expertise, which they use to a greater or lesser degree to advise and assist organizers who are unfamiliar with practices and procedures. In doing so, they guide organizers along a path acceptable to the political authorities.

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[13] This is a tradition in Paris, for symbolic and practical reasons, that there are no demonstrations on the Champs-Elysées.

C) Police always act so that the organizers feel they hold the main responsibility for the demonstration. They ask about their stewarding and plans, pointing out to them all the potential dangers found at this kind of event (and even exaggerating). The goal here is to encourage the organizers to be as cooperative as possible and to ensure that they recognize the importance of the liaison officer who will be the link between the organizers and the police on the day of the event. But also, if the organizers fear from dangerous or violent acts from their own participants or some violent external groups (for instance, hooligans in student demonstrations), this encourages a shared interest between the police and the organizers and a shared perspective in relation to those who might be considered troublemakers.

D) Finally, the purpose of negotiation is to establish a climate of mutual confidence with the organizers being persuaded that the police will respect their undertakings. To fulfil this aim, the chief of the Etat-Major may reveal some part of the means at his disposal, in a spirit of openness, but also to exclude the possibility of ambiguous situations or surprises arising on the day the event takes place:

> "My objective, when I meet with the demonstrators, is to ensure that they leave satisfied, even if they have not got what they wanted. I never get angry with a protester. It is vital that they have total confidence in everything that happens. If I tell them to do something, I need it to be acted upon. I don't want to say to them: 'Yes, you can do that', and then, in the field, something else here happens. The fact that they have made a commitment by coming here, one is bound. They have their motives, but so what? They have the right to be received here like anyone else. If you start to have problems with them here, you will certainly have problems with them on the day".

Clearly, these four informal principles on which negotiations are based are applied to a greater or lesser extent according to the nature of the groups in question. The degree of cooperation can vary greatly. For instance, for the huge demonstration on 16 January 1995 in Paris in defence of state schooling (at which more than 800,000 people gathered), negotiations lasted more than a month. Police representatives directly assisted organizers during their internal meetings for the formulation of the stewarding plan, the organization of the march, and so on. In contrast, when demonstrators show no readiness to cooperate, and even refuse to meet with police face to face, the chief of the Etat-Major may content himself with a simple telephone negotiation, the route and conditions being sent by fax.

After the preliminary negotiations, it is worth stressing how much the search for compromise influences the forces of law and order as events are actually taking place. To further this spirit of compromise a liaison officer is appointed for every protest, with the task of maintaining a constant contact with the organizers. During very large protests, he is always a senior officer of the Etat-Major.[14] On the other hand, civilian police representatives are specifically charged with establishing contact between the organizers and the political authorities targeted by the demonstration is. These representatives lead the negotiation for example for the reception of a delegation at a public administration building and are in charge, if such delegation is permitted, of the group whilst inside the building and on the way out. These agents usually work in the different *arrondissements* (administrative districts of Paris), so they are perfectly familiar with the various heads (in each administration) who can receive a delegation. Negotiation with demonstrators is thus facilitated.

This process of constant negotiation in the field very often produces a close cooperation between police forces and demonstrators's stewards, since they share common interests.

> "If there is a procession of more than 800 metres, we must be able to isolate troublemakers from the crowd, and protect those that have a right to be there. This works very well with the CGT and other professional organizations. They have stewards in place who know that we will isolate those that shouldn't be there. They will put up barriers and if necessary will stop the demo, speed it up or cut it short. Sometimes, they will come to us and tell us that they are going to lead the troublemakers up a certain street. And we can be waiting at the other end of the street to greet them! But for student demos, the stewards do not like to do that, because it is seen as collusion with the police. Some stewards at student protests even play a doublegame."

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[14] This practice certainly originates from the end of the 1970s, when the Police Prefecture in Paris generally opened large processions with police buses placed several hundred metres in front of the demonstration. It was during a demonstration of the steel workers on 23 March 1979 that for the first time a police officer was in charge of the link. Otherwise, it is since the student demonstrations of december 1986 in Paris that this method has been systematically employed. It can sometimes be highly visible: during the annual demonstration of the National Front in honor of Joan of Arc, 1 May 1988, a car with a sign liaison police/organizers opened the procession.

"Once, I conducted a baton charge at the head of the CGT stewards. It was one of the 1987 demonstrations in memory of Malik Oussekine,[15] with many young people. The CGT was responsible for the stewarding. I was in charge of the coordination of the forces on the field. When we arrived in Place de la Bastille, the organizers came to me and said: "OK, our deal is over, we called for dispersion, good-bye." I said good-bye to them and at that very moment, an unmarked police car was turned upside down and anarchists started in wrecking everything around them; a few dozen, not many more. So, I went back to the guy from the CGT and he told me: "Yes, but we called for dispersion." I said to him: "Listen, we have to do something." You know, even if there were some police units, the rest of the procession was still arriving. There were lots of young people. The guy from the CGT understood perfectly well that we could not do anything. It was a very delicate task, it was worse than bad. The CGT guy consulted his men. He asked the one he had to ask, and then he came back to me and said: "OK, let's go." Then, with 20 big guys, we all together charged the hooligans. And I must tell you: they use means we gave up a long time ago. Everything was then back in order".

Here may bee seen one of the considerations which is most important for senior police officers: professionalism of the adversary. The more the organizers are used to the practice of a demonstration, the more senior police officers find it a "pleasure to work with them" (to use an expression often repeated in our interviews).[16]

In this analysis, we have shown that one of the major weapons of the police does not lie in a repressive or legalistic approach, but rather in the art of negotiation with the organizers, bringing them onto their home ground where they can keep the initiative and use their expertise to the full. However, this weapon would suffice if demonstrations only opposed senior officers and organizers. In other words, when the event is underway, the central problem becomes one of controlling troops - on the side of the demonstrators as well as on the side of the police.

Distance as a means of control

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[15] A student who died as a result of the police beating during a demonstration on the 4 December 1986.

[16] Sommier (1990) presents the same point of view, based on interviews with chief stewards of the CGT and the CFDT: they usually recognize the police having a good "technical faculty" (p. 19).

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"Two different obstacles stand against us in the field of protest policing. On the one hand, we find those who have organized and signed the preliminary notification. But the organizers have great difficulties when explaining this to their own constituency and it is exactly the same thing when we try to make it clear for police officers. An average demonstrator does not know that people come here and sign an official paper, that routes are negociated with us, that some manoeuvres are decided before the event begin: "When you get here, we'll move this squad. Behind you, there will be this other unit. In front of you, a *CRS* squad will move ahead." The organizers know this. I tell them everything again when I get in touch with them. I tell them: "So, now, we want this, we let another squad stand behind you." But the rest of the march only see cops wearing helmets, who are ready to go. And our officers only sees people moving and shouting. We always have some difficulty explaining to them that demonstrations are a kind of a role game. It is a part of the urban ethology, and our two grassroots do not understand this very well".

This observation from the Director of training at the Paris Police Prefecture clearly demonstrates our point: the central issue faced by those responsible for the maintenance of law and order at protest events is that of control amongst the rank and file as well as the demonstrators. This distrust towards their own troops demonstrates how the doctrine of protest policing is largely based on the wish to avoid any confrontation between police officers and demonstrators. Protest policing in France is locked in a weighty contradiction expressed on the one hand by increasing pressure from the governement and public opinion to control the demonstrations and, on the other hand, by what is still a main characteristic of police action, that is, whatever happens, "one is always hostage to the last legionnaire of the last century." In other words, protest policing is at the mercy of the weakest link[17].

In the case of urban police, the question of control is even more important since the profession of "guardian of the peace" attracts a population of under-motivated young people into its ranks, whose only wish is to move out of the rank of the unemployed. Furthermore, senior officers claim that new recruits do not stand up well to the various daily constraints of the job because their missions are completely incompatible with the romantic idea they had about the job before they joined the police force:

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[17] The Assistant of the Director of Public Security in Paris expresses it nicely in the following terms: "In the contemporary policing of protests, the Chief of Police, under pressure from Cabinet ministers and French press agency (*AFP*), tends toward a push-button response to police actions in the same vein as electronic games. But Nintendo has yet not provided the solution."

"The main part of our men cannot even memorize the name of the Prefet, but they know all the names of the football players in the national team. Before, officers became officers from father to son or down through other relatives. They were mainly part sons of peasants or workers, and for them, to become a civil servant was perceived as a real social promotion. They were already socialized when they arrived in the Prefecture and they knew very well what the job was about: the kinds of missions, career plans, etc. Now, young recruits are from another world. They are not really motivated by the job but they cannot do anything else. The largest part of them join because of the pressure of joblessness. They come from the provinces and their one aim is to go back there. But what is of utmost importance is that they have no idea of the job they will have to do and what they imagine it will be is completely false. This image is in fact the one promoted by trash TV series like *Starsky and Hutch*. The young officer sees himself patrolling the streets all day long with no defined goal in a big car with a girophare, in regular clothes, and dealing with a big business every day... When they find themselves controlling traffic at intersections, they very quickly sing a different tune".

These comments help us to better understand why, in Paris in particular but also among the specialized forces those in command are wary of their rank and file. A veritable schism exists in effect between the goals of the police seniors and the way the rank and file think with regard to what constitutes good policing of protests. Non-intervention and an impassionate approach are two criteria for excellence in the senior officers' view, but their men do not consider the operation a success without some kind of physical confrontation or without having evened the score with the demonstrators.

"You know, most of the time, when we are engaged in the policing of a protest, we do not confront demonstrators. If there is no violence, I think the officers resent it in a way that is - I will say it frankly - it's desapointing. Because they wish to go for a battle. Some of them, however, more philosophically, think it is not worse like that. Policing of protests does not always mean baton charges, tear gas, beatings. That is what we try to explain to our young recruits. A lot of them think they are strong because they are numerous, and within a large force. Then, they would like... They would like... to be more violent. But we, on the other side, we watch over it. We just say: "stop!"

"The men always want to give a personal touch to the debate. One can often hear within the ranks before a baton charge: "I'm gonna kick that one, because he threw ten molotov cocktails." If one says: "We'll arrest him", it is OK, but if he says: "This one, we'll slash him on the corner of the bridge and then we won't take him back", that's another story. It is the duty of the commanders to listen to what is told and to draw aside those who started this kind of argument, which can lead to serious injured people, even among themselves, among those who had their sprint alone to solve their

litte problem. Finally, they made their film on their own. And the opposite is true, as well. The demonstrator who fix an officer in his memory because the officer is a little bit bigger. He fixes the poor little copper and he'll receive his jab because he was on his own".

The concern to restrict the autonomy of policemen at the front line has increased in importance in recent years, notably after the student demonstrations of November and December 1986, during which one specialized motorcycle unit (*Peloton Voltigeur Motocycliste -PVM*) behaved in a particularily violent manner, one squad even going so far as to beat a demonstrator to death. This especially dramatic episode, in which the freedom of movement accorded to the field resulted in the death of a man, re-emerges time and time again in discussions among senior officers as a particularily tragic example of how a demonstration can go wrong when police officers are not well enough handled by their commanders:

> "If only that team had kept on practicing every week in training sessions... It was a wonderful tool which, according to its initial objective, was supposed to be more dissuasive than repressive. It was created to be impressive, to go on the micro-phenomenas. It had an extraordinary mobility. So long as the guys were trained, so long as it was serious. Officers came from two distinct units: *Compagnies d'intervention* on one side and instructors on the other side. As long as the two were trained together and if the hierarchy followed everything, everything was OK. From the moment when the instructors began to think training was a useless constraint, that it just was not worthhile at all, because nobody told them what they had to do or nobody trained them seriously, they did their war on their own, in their own little territory."

To control the rank and file, a whole set of techniques, based on the idea of a necessary distance between demonstrators and officers, has been progressively developed. These various techniques are in a certain sense the action repertory for different interventions.

The main elements of this repertory are based on the use of specific types of action depending on the situation. Ideally, these responses aim to avoid physical harm to the demonstrators on each occasion and, at the same time, to allow the police officers to be protected and feel reassured.[18] To achieve these

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[18] As all those interviewed recall, once fear takes hold within the ranks of the police, confronted by often large numbers of demonstrators, the risk of uncontrolled reactions increases, rendering any kind of control totally impossible.

two objectives, the method employed concentrates on maintaining a *necessary distance* and on utilizing the *ritualization of aggression.*

Ritualization of aggression and necessary distance are based on various means. In Europe, different methods, such as smoke screens, have been tried to this end. In France, the standard response is based essentially on the use of tear gas, and in a less systematic way, water tanks. As Bruneteaux notes, tear gas was employed for the first time in 1947 and became common place at the end of the 1960s. Following on from lacrimatory methods, gradation was introduced in the scaling of repression from 1955 with the invention of the offensive grenade, a missile designed to cause traumatic shock.

The use of water undoubtedly represents one of the oldest tools, in the form of deployment of firemen. Nevertheless, it was not until May 1968 that the first water tank model was employed to create a brief moment of crisis among protesters and force a no man's land between them and the police forces so that all contact could be avoided.[19]

Ritualization of aggression is implemented by means of specific ways that present themselves to the demonstrators, move in the urban space, and make certain gestures policemen questioned referred to as rituals.

"The way we intervene, the way we take up our position, the way we, let's say, play our own theatre, is very important. Because a perfect technical thing, but which is very badly shown off, which doesn't make a sudden impression and which doesn't show by certain signs our determination to lead the manoeuvre the way we want, can very quickly make the situation change. We have to visually display both our purpose and our determination. Sometimes, it is better to come down a little bit, to get a better position, even if it means things are going badly around us. It is better if there is some trouble for 3 or 4 minutes and if, very firmly, from the very moment we show the will to clean the place, we position ourselves so that we show we are about to go into action. Very often, it allows us to avoid aggression. When we take up positions in a strong way, visually, we can see that the most part of the people who began to be violent, leave and we don't see them anymore."

"The purpose of the training is to be able to carry out very compact and uniform manoeuvres in order to give the impression of a large force. *Gendarmes* have

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[19] Following a nurses' demonstration during which water tanks were used without any significant harm, a campaign of complaint led to a restriction on the use of this method, despite its effectiveness.

understood this very well for a long time: they slash their shields, a ritual, a gesture quite like the ones animals use. I often compare it to Konrad Lorenz's books. It is the same with the demonstrators. Shouting, colours. It is just like Sioux war paintings. And on our side, we answer with another kind of gestual. Wearing helmets, putting our vizors down, beating the shields, letting the men progress in a line or in a column. We all know this. But it is rather difficult for our men to understand it".

When all other means of intimidation fail and it is no longer possible to maintain a line, senior officers have recourse to the baton charge. In the thinking of the police commanders, this is the ultimate means at disposal, in the sense that it is used only when confrontation with the demonstrators is absolutely necessary.[20] But it should also be noted that in many cases, the baton charge is considered as a means of intimidation whose function is to leave the demonstrators untouched but, in the two senses of the word, to force a no man's land which prevent man-to-man contact. The charge with baton drawn and the use of coercive means against demonstrators, according to the doctrine, is considered as the last resort.

Differentiation in the management of protesting groups.

Over and beyond a general doctrine of policing protests that would be theoretically applicable to all situations, both field observation and analysis of police archives clearly show that protest handling styles are very evidently determined by three interconnecting factors: differential police perceptions of protest groups, political considerations, and the strategy of protest groups themselves. In this third and final section we will argue that to understand actual policing styles, each event must also be analyzed in terms of a three-way interaction involving government officials, security forces and demonstrators themselves.

While protest handling is a technique (oriented by a doctrine) materialized by a set of practices (the determinants of which are to be sought in police perceptions of the groups in conflict), it is also a *policy* in the sense that it involves choices made within the framework of a government strategy (Monjardet, 1990). For this reason, we will now examine how, in addition to the organizational and technical elements analysed above, protest handling poses a number of problems that can be interpreted on a cultural and political level.

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[20] On the psychological effects of the baton charge on the officers, see Waddington (1991, pp. 171-178).

A differential perception of conflict groups

The doctrine of protest handling as it is taught does not confine its scope to delineating tactical and strategic methods inherent in police work. It inevitably develops an ideology as well. To the extent that policing protests implies resorting to force in other words, striking citizens while going to great lengths to assert they are not enemies - it is hard to avoid developing a normative philosophy to rationalize the practices adopted.

This normative philosophy, employed to justify the use of force, is basically built upon a declaration of *impartiality,* well expressed by the excerpt below from a memorandum in which the national training bureau of the *CRS* defines the missions of this specilized force:

"The *CRS* should not only be an intervention force but an interpositing force (a median and a mediator) playing the role of a buffer, thus participating in controlling social life. This deontology, by preventing a conflict from degenerating or avoiding extensive property damage or even the loss of human lives, allows the various actors in the economic and social sphere as well as political leaders when it comes to State intervention, the time to arbitrate, to find a solution to the many tensions engendered by the complexity of modern society".[21]

While claiming that police intervention takes place within the law of the republic and admitting the legitimacy of protest action, demonstrations are analysed through the very peculiar prism of crowd psychology handed down through the works of Tarde and Le Bon. The resulting conception of the demonstrator consequently appears, in our opinion, first to justify the patience police are asked to exercise in the event of an assault or property damage, then to legitimize the use of strong-arm tactics when the civil authorities have decided to call for intervention or in situations of self-defence.

This is why anticipation, throwing projectiles and hurling insults are at first tolerated by men who have been conditioned to believe they are dealing with children or at least "people who have taken leave of their senses." But at the same time, and this is not contradictory, this vision of things contains the principle justification for intervention, both because the irresponsible crowd has

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[21] In *Notice pratique sur les conditions d'emploi des Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité*, Bureau formation du service central des CRS, 10/990, p. 2.

become dangerous and because in its midst are leaders that have to be neutralized. Commissioner Berlioz (1987) aptly expresses this conception when he writes that an angry crowd "is obviously dangerous, because the individual feels liberated. The slightest slogan, even the most unreasonable one, is instantly taken as a primal truth and acted upon without reservation. The intransigence and intolerance of this mass preclude all discussion and negotiation; thus the only solution open to someone in charge of public order is to check the eruption of this crowd before it is too late" (p. 13). The predominance among police cadres as well as men in the ranks of a type of reasoning inspired by crowd psychology might lead one to conclude that their vision of protesting crowds is an undifferentiated one. This is not so in reality.

Notwithstanding the official line of the law, which holds that every demonstrator has the right to equal treatment, it has become clear through both studying demonstration reports and conducting interviews that police officers always pass an implicit judgement on the demonstrators' legitimacy, according to the perceived characteristics of the protest organization:

"In some cases people are desperate. I've seen some who had come from little provincial towns like that. That's desperation, when the factory is closing down. It happens when the whole town depends on practically one single business. Or worse, when two spouses work in the same company. For people like that it's a disaster because they won't find another job. They haven't got much else to lose and you can understand why they resort to violence. You've got to understand."

These differential perceptions obviously play a role in the type of strategy implemented by the police force. Again Monjardet's analyses (1988) on the professional ideology of the *CRS* are enlightening. In his view, the attitude of the *CRS* "depends on the demonstrators' behaviour and very directly on the tension they themselves display. It also depends, in a different way for each *CRS* member, on the nature of the demonstrators: their social characteristics, the types of demands." This allegedly leads to "a certain sympathy for workers' demands and a certain aversion regarding young-privileged-student-senseless-looters" (pp. 101-126).

Protest handling under high political surveillance

Differential police perceptions of demonstrators are not enough to explain differences in styles of protest handling. Political involvement has yet to be taken into account. As we have already noted, calling in any sort of security

force is always the result of a decision on the part of the administrative authorities (the Prefet). This state of legal subordination suggests that we should examine both the instructions given by the civil authorities and how they are implemented in the field. We will first see that the intransigence displayed at times by the political authorities makes the outbreak of violence highly probable.[22] Conversely, government representatives sometimes handle conflicts in a patrimonialistic manner. The methods and justifications of this policing style remain to be explored.

The case in which security forces, on orders from the civil authorities, most clearly take a repressive attitude toward demonstrators is during illegal demonstrations not tolerated by the government. For example on 30 November 1988, opponents to the Turkish government planned a demonstration to protest Turgut Ozal's visit to Paris. Although it was banned by the Prefet, a meeting was planned at Place de la Concorde in front of the Hotel Crillon to boo Turgut Ozal, official guest of France. Security forces had strict orders from the government to prevent any gathering at the Concorde and to make arrests. As early as 10 a.m., small groups of demonstrators were coming out of the metro. Soon some 30 people were gathered near the obelisk. The *CRS* commandant then received orders to proceed with arrests, which he refused to do for want of means (lack of buses). A half-hour later the protester numbered about 200: the security force moved to scatter them and the first clashes begin (the demonstrators were cerrying batons). About 50 arrests were made. At 10.25 a.m. the remainder of demonstrators, who were crouched down to avoid being carried off, were ordered to disperse. The security force intervened by blocking the demonstrators against the fence surrounding the obelisk which allowed the officers to make arrests in greater numbers. During this operation tear gas was used (even as far as in the buses) to neutralize the most virulent demonstrators. A withdrawal manoeuvre initiated by the *CRS* then allowed the crowd to disperse along the Quai des Tuileries. At 10.45 a.m. it was all over. The *CRS* counted 14 wounded among their ranks; one demonstrator, "suffering from the effects of tear gas, fainted and was taken by civilian prefecture staff over to the obelisk fence and handcuffed to it until the first aid team arrived", states the *CRS* report. Numerous arrests must have taken place as several prefecture vehicles were sent out.

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[22] This has been already suggested by Skolnick (1969, p. 47). See also Waddington (1992, pp. 50-51) based on many case studies of suffragettes, anti-fascists and student demonstrations in Great-Britain.

This example provides a perfect illustration of the difference in treatment that demonstrators receive depending on the instructions given by government authorities: given the orders to disperse immediately, police intervention preceded any demonstration of violence ; in contrast with most protest policing operations, the aim of the manoeuvre was less to disperse the demonstrators than to make arrests. Therefore, the blocking of opponents against the fence around the obelisk, a behaviour about which the *CRS* itself expressed reservations given the violence it sparked; the warnings were issued only after an initial effort to drive the crowd back and some 50 arrests were made; finally plain-clothes officers from the prefecture were there to filter the press so as to avoid too much publicity.

Another typical method of direct political involvement in the policing of demonstrations, although unfortunately little research has been devoted to it, is antagonism. The alleged existence of *agents provocateurs* has been the focus of many debates in France, either put forth as an argument for propaganda purposes or denounced as a cause of violence when trying to establish the facts, depending on the case. However, as G. T. Marx points out (1974), the sociology of mobilizations and police specialists have scarcely taken an interest in the phenomenon, despite its blatant existence: indeed, historical examples abound and in his article Marx studies some 20 cases in the United States. In France, the matter of antagonism resurfaces periodically, the most striking cases in recent years being the steel-workers' demonstration on 23 March 1979[23] and the lycée student protest on 12 November 1990.

Deliberate antagonism on the part of political authorities is most often at the expense of the police themselves, who iterate their hostility to the orders given. Rather than speak of police antagonism as is usually the case, it would thus be more accurate to speak of political antagonism. For the 12 November 1990 demonstration, for instance, the Prefet authorized the young protester to cross the Seine river and disperse along the Champs-Elysées. It also set up a large concentration of troops on the right bank, leaving the left bank relatively unattended. The general staff unanimously expressed its disapproval based on technical reasons. But no charge to the plans were allowed. The result concurred with police predictions: the first incident of pillaging finally prompted the prefect to prohibit the march from crossing the Seine, provoking a fury among the mass of demonstrators. Furthermore, the operation was set up in such a way

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[23] For a complete analysis of this spectacular case, see Fillieule (1994).

that the police had immense trouble holding down the bridges. The demonstration ended in several hours of violent clashes, considerable property damage and some hundred wounded.

Though certain social groups or demands probably receive more severe treatment than is usually the case, in certain circumstances political authorities show greater tolerance toward illegal protest activity. Most cases involve farmers' demonstrations, and to a lesser degree, students'.

On the most transparent level, political authorities issue orders not to make arrests, even when individuals who have perpetrated violence can be identified. This is particularly to avoid refulling protest dynamics. Rather unconvinced of the efficacy of this method, security forces often complain of government leniency, the effect of which, in their opinion, is more to assure the protest group of the utility or even the necessity of violent action.

Variations in the degree of tolerance shown by the civil authorities are manifest in other instances as well. It is not uncommon, as we have seen, for "zones of tolerance" during pre-demonstration negotiations between organizers and the authorities, to be defined, the purpose of which is to circumscribe beforehand the type and degree of violence that will not give rise to police intervention. These are the negotiation procedures with political authorities that we have shown to have crucial repercussions on police operations. Delimiting degrees of acceptable illegality fulfils a dual function. It first allows the civil authorities to define acceptable targets for violence and to reject others deemed more sensitive or costly, for instance, public buildings, private property, ans so on. At the same time it does not cut off the organizers from its popular base, sometimes determined to see some action no matter what, and thus allow us the leadership to maintain control.

In other cases, an agreement is found in the field without prior negotiation having taken place. For instance, when on 19 May 1983 poultry farmers scattered 17,000 laying hens in the streets of Morlaix before charging City Hall where they broke down doors and occupied the premises, the authorities offered to put a train carriage of the Brest-Paris express at the disposition of a delegation (and their chickens) to go to Paris and request a meeting with a Cabinet member. The farmers' acceptance of this compromise enabled a clash with security forces to be avoided.

Conclusion

To conclude, we wish to underscore the importance of the communication process in protest interaction. This communication can be analysed as an insurance game, that is, an exchange in which the action depends on anticipating the adversary's next move: demonstrators adjust their acts in accordance with what they believe the police will tolerate, while civil authorities implicitly or explicitly set tolerance thresholds depending on the nature of the protagonists. The figure below outlines this mechanism by identifying four ideal-types of protest styles.

Figure 1: Ideal-types of protest styles in France

police style (possibly under political pressure)

peaceful/ cooperation   *violent*

		peaceful /	peaceful	non tolerated
		cooperation	demonstrations A	demonstrations B
action of the				
demonstrators	*violent*	patrimonialistic	crisis
		handling C	demonstrations D

Type B covers situations in which the police, on orders from the political authorities or their own chief, have a distinctly repressive and/or antagonistic attitude toward non-violent demonstrators. Most banned and non-tolerated demonstrations fall into this classification.[24] Type C considers situations in which the authorities handle illegal protests in a soft manner. The police take a wait-and-see stance with regard to public and private property damage. Type D characterizes demonstrations in which protester and security force commanders alike adopt a position of open conflict. Finally, Type A refers to routine demonstrations that follow the procedures outlined above and which take place in a climate of mutual cooperation. Our paper demonstrates that, apart from a few exemplary cases, differences in policing conflicts do not fall neatly into

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[24] We know that the interdiction of a demonstration is no longer a sufficient reason to provoke a systematic dispersion. There must be a political decision taken by the authorities. It just reinforces differences in the treatment of authorized and non-authorized demonstrations.

these four categories. We have in fact shown that attitudes during a demonstration are in constant flux and, for instance, a demonstration being handled according to the soft method as long as protest violence remains within certain bounds can turn into an open clash and the dispersion of the protester as soon as security forces implement repressive methods. The above grid serves only to stress the fact that the way the authorities — be they in the political arena or the police in the field — perceive protest groups, and thus the treatment the latter receive, is obviously not uniform.

The main reason for this is that government authority as it is manifested in protest handling is brought into action through a multitude of actors, the interests, the subcultures and the attitudes of which vary greatly. Police handling of protests can therefore not be interpreted solely according to a logic of pure instrumentality of the security forces in the service of political choices, given the leeway agents at all levels are granted. We thus logically conclude that there is a need to analyse the police machinery as a fully fledged actor in the structure of political opportunities. Yet it would be misleading to concentrate attention on police work alone and no longer take into account the role of political authorities or the nature of protest groups. Only a combination of these three angles can enable us to identify a series of factors that can be said to play a role in the type of protest handling style implemented.

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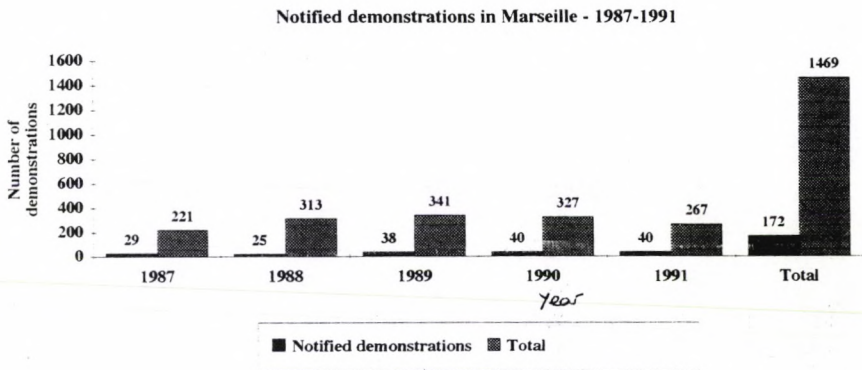
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