

The Metropolitan Police, however, are Washington's front-line troops in the grinding, deadly war against crime and disorder. Numbering 3,150 police and civilian employees (with 22 percent Negro patrolmen), rarely up to authorized strength because of recruiting difficulties and discouraging pay scales, it is the Metropolitan Police who catch and arrest the felons, take the casualties, and backstop the other police whenever real trouble comes.

The MPDC's resources, divided among fifteen precincts and four specialized divisions (Traffic, Detective, Morals, and Youth Aid), include 181 cruisers and scout cars, 14 patrol wagons, 92 motorcycles, and six police boats. The department's communications reach every vehicle, 90 of some 150 foot patrol beats, and 937 call boxes. By means of the area police teletype net and common-aid radio circuit which joins the important police agencies of the District and adjoining Maryland and Virginia, police headquarters keep in close touch with all the area's emergencies and misdoings. And the MPDC will, when it is installed, operate the recently announced million-dollar-a-year police computer system which, serving all forces in metropolitan Washington, is a long step toward a truly unified regional police effort.

To employ these resources in coping with Washington's more than 25,000 serious crimes per year (according to the FBI, our 1965 score was 25,462), Chief John B. Layton has a budget of about \$38 million. It is little enough. Sixty-six men of the MPDC have given their lives in the line of duty in this century alone—five (and one police dog loyal unto death) during the past two fiscal years. Last year 20 policemen won medals for feats of valor or merit ranging from gunpoint confrontation with armed madmen to rescuing fifteen persons from a blazing building. For \$6,010 a year—base pay of an MPDC private—the taxpayer takes such heroism for granted.

Top among our professional, hard-working police officers, and recent successor to the capable, deeply respected Chief Robert V. Murray, the present chief, Layton, has much to live up to. The extent to which he will succeed remains to be seen. If Chief Layton proves unable to stem Washington's rising crime rate he will certainly hear from one prominent Washingtonian, President Johnson, who in March said, "We must bring the latest and most effective methods of law enforcement to the District of Columbia."

One controversial local police problem, which was watched closely by at least one former President, stems from the very existence of the District's second largest police force, the 290-man U.S. Park Police. An anomalous body, in theory part ranger, mainly in fact a snugly funded mix of highway patrol and city traffic police, the Park Police—or "Sparrow Cops," as they were once known—have primary jurisdiction over the twenty per cent of Washington which falls under National Park Service jurisdiction, including Constitution and Independence avenues, the 776 circles, triangles, squares, the Civil War forts, and other greenswards of Washington. They also have secondary jurisdiction everywhere else in the District, just as the Metropolitan Police, when they get a respite from crime in the streets, can work the parks. Park Police patrol one-fifth of the District; for this Washington taxpayers contribute one-third of the Park Police budget.

Outside Washington, the Park Police have a constellation of responsibilities—mainly 74.6 miles of Federal highway patrol—ranging from near Baltimore to Seneca (federally owned Park Police territory.) The empire of the Park Police today is so extensive that patrolmen carry summons books for three different U.S. District Court jurisdictions—Richmond, Alexandria, and Baltimore—into which their clients may be haled.

Larger by itself than a police force for a city of 75,000, the Park Police, with their 40 scout cars, 32 motorcycles, two horse vans, and 23 horses (Washington's only mounted police), and their new \$700,000 Potomac Park headquarters, their separate Police Academy, laboratory and photo lab, are per capita Washington's most costly police. Even the Park Police uniforms—gaudy or distinctive, according to your taste—are, at \$500 per set, the most expensive in town. Acknowledging the cost-differential between Park and Metropolitan police, the Interior Department's T. Sutton Jett, who for 27 years has ably presided over our parks, says the return is worthwhile: With 15 million yearly visitors, Washington needs, he says, a kind of "visitors police" to aid tourists, range the parks, and police the Cherry Blossom Festival and other special events. On the other hand, crime statisticians will note that the Park Police, with about ten per cent of the Metropolitan Police uniformed manpower, in 1964 (according to the FBI) logged only