

Topics

On Police, a Palace and Position

Two's Company—and Crowd

Police work is often so dull and sometimes so dangerous that it's understandable for the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association fiercely to oppose the city's plan to start using some one-man patrol cars this spring. But while understandable, the opposition is not sensible, especially not in a time of financial stress.

The plan—symbolic of efforts to enhance police productivity—is to use up to 100 solo cars on certain shifts and in quieter residential areas. Most patrol cars would continue to have two men. Either service would increase or costs would decrease. The P.B.A.'s opposition is based primarily on the belief that two officers are necessary, in all cars, against danger in unpredictable circumstances.

There is no denying the real hazards faced by police officers, sometimes even on the most routine-sounding call. But safety does not ring true as a valid objection. One-man cars are hardly a revolutionary notion. Nearly half the nation's police departments use them exclusively. Even such large cities as Philadelphia and Los Angeles have for years successfully deployed a number of one-man cars. (And, conversely, police officials note that a high proportion of police murder victims here in recent years were killed

in pairs. "Being two didn't help them," one observes.)

That leaves the monotony of ordinary patrol and the natural desire for company—which is hardly a persuasive reason in the face of the continuing need to reduce the size of the force.

'I Am a Bulldozer'

One of the arresting qualities of Idi Amin, Uganda's president, used to be invective. Never mind that he has presided over the eviction of Asians, imprisonment and harassment of Europeans, firing squads against his own people. And never mind his willingness to provide safe haven for terrorists.

The tirades seemed to stop after the raid on Entebbe. But now, the self-styled Field Marshal has emerged from his humiliation with a new idiom: construction. "I am a bulldozer," he once said, and his Government recently announced it will erect new headquarters for its United Nations delegation adjacent to the United States mission. If height counts as an index to anything, even megalomania, Mr. Amin wins; his otherwise undistinguished building will rise three stories higher than ours.

At least what Uganda lacks in style, it will make up in comfort. Those fifteen floors will serve a staff of less than twelve. It will take a while be-

fore the relentless flow of U.N. paper crowds them out.

Representative in the House

We are pleased to note that the Banking and Currency Committee of the House of Representatives has given birth to an Urban Affairs subcommittee, even one with only advisory and no legislative authority. And we think we rise above parochialism in urging support for making a New York City representative, Herman Badillo, a member. "Hamlet" without the Prince of Denmark would be scarcely less complete than an Urban Affairs body on which the nation's biggest single urban problem is unrepresented.

Even stronger, therefore, is the case for a New York City representative on the parent full committee, with its full legislative authority. Mr. Badillo's nomination to Banking and Currency comes up for confirmation by the House Democratic caucus Tuesday. It was recommended, please note further, by unanimous vote of the New York State Congressional delegation.

Mr. Badillo is amply, even uniquely qualified for Banking and Currency, which also oversees the Housing subcommittee. He dropped senior standing elsewhere to accept the designation. To the manner born, we'd say.