Knowledge-Based Public Order Policing: Principles and Practice

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Abstract Much public order policing is still based on the assumption that crowds are inherently irrational and dangerous. We argue that this approach is both misinformed and counter-productive because it can lead to policing interventions that increase the influence of those advocating violence in the crowd. We challenge traditional assumptions about crowd psychology and demonstrate how widespread conflict derives from the interactions between police and crowds. From this, we develop general guidelines as to how policing can reduce crowd violence and lead crowd members themselves to self-police violent groupings in their midst. We then use examples from anti-globalisation protests and the Euro 2004 football championships to show how these guidelines can be applied in practice and how effective they can be. We conclude by arguing that such knowledge-based crowd policing can turn crowd events into opportunities to overcome seemingly intractable conflicts between the police and groups within our society.

Introduction

Most policing is in some way related to the maintenance of public order. So how come public order policing refers specifically to crowd events? Part of the answer lies in the assumption that crowds pose an inherent threat to order. We use the term 'public order policing' precisely because we associate crowds with public *dis*order.

This assumption has profound implications for the ways in which crowds are policed. Most crucially, because it locates the cause of violence as lying entirely with the crowd as opposed to arising out of the interaction between crowds and the police, it neglects the

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possibility that police actions may contribute to the production of conflict and hence provides no basis for developing strategies, tactics and technologies that might minimise such a possibility. Rather, the focus lies on how to contain crowds and prevent them from expressing their natural belligerence. In short, the crowd is seen as a problem and treated as such.

There are two major problems with this approach. The first is that it runs the risk of creating a self-fulfilling prophecy: if you define people as hostile and if you then act towards them in ways that make it obvious, you think of them as being hostile, then they are very likely to become hostile in response. The first time the chairman of Manchester United described his fans as 'animals', the fans responded by chanting 'we hate humans' at the next game (Robins, 1984).

The second problem is that this approach misses out on a major opportunity. If the police can interact with crowd members in ways that lead to a deteriorating relationship and increase conflict, they can equally interact in other ways that lead to improving relationships and reduce conflict. Moreover, to the extent that police-crowd relationships are emblematic of relationships with the wider groups from which crowd members are drawn (for instance, events like Brixton and Toxteth were seen to crystallise negative relations between the police and black people in Britain), then crowd policing can have a profoundly positive effect upon policing more generally.

Our aim, in this paper, is to show how an informed understanding of crowd psychology can be used in order to develop forms of policing that promote reconciliation rather than conflict. The paper is divided into two main sections. In the first, we explain the principles that underlie our proposals for knowledge-based public order policing. That is, we provide a critical review of classic crowd psychology, outline a more contemporary approach to the subject, and then draw out the general implications for effective policing. In the second section, we provide an example of how these principles can be applied in practice and of how they are effective in transforming negative relations between police and crowd into positive relations.

The principles of knowledge-based public order policing

The classic psychologies of crowd behaviour

The July 2006 distance learning handbook for the Initial Public Order Commanders Course of the National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE—now incorporated into the National Policing Improvement Agency) contained the following claims:

> Everett D Martin; a psychologist of the 1920's, wrote in his book 'The Behaviour of Crowds': "A crowd is a device for indulging ourselves in a kind of temporary insanity by all going crazy together".

> All psychologists seem to agree, that membership of a crowd results in the lessening of an individual's ability to think rationally, whilst at the same time his/her more primitive impulses are elicited in a harmonious fashion with the emerging primitive impulses of all the other crowd members (Martin, 1960).

It is certainly true that Martin's words express what we have termed the 'classic view' of crowd psychology (Reicher *et al.*, 2004)—not surprisingly, since his book 'The Behaviour of Crowds' (1920) starts by acknowledging that the theoretical approach is taken from Gustave Le Bon, the founding figure of the field (see Le Bon, 1895/1947). Like Le Bon, Martin characterises crowd psychology in terms of irrationality, primitivity and aggressivity. If this last element is implicit in the quote included in the NCPE document, it is quite explicit elsewhere in Martin's text. Thus he states that 'every crowd is potentially if not actually homicidal in its tendencies' (1920, p. 105). That is, even where the crowd seems peaceable enough, violence can always erupt at any time. In practice, this means that crowd members must always be treated with suspicion. They certainly cannot be recruited as partners in the maintenance of public order.

By the 1920s, when Martin was writing, the Le Bonian approach was already highly controversial. Allport (1924) in particular dismissed the notion of reversion to a primitive group mind. His work initiated a tradition that explains crowd action in terms of the character of those individuals drawn to the crowd. According to this perspective, if crowds are violent it is not because peaceable individuals are transformed in the mass but rather because violent individuals are drawn to crowd events where they can express their true nature. If the classic view, in popular parlance, might be called the 'mad mob' approach, then this latter view is the 'hooligan' approach. But despite the differences, the two approaches share the view that crowds are inherently mindless. Second, both approaches see crowd action as inherently meaningless; third they see crowds as inherently aggressive and fourth they therefore locate the responsibility for collective conflict as lying exclusively within the crowd. So for all the theoretical argument about the explanation of crowd behaviour, there is no argument about the primitive and pathological nature of that behaviour. Were we still in the 1920s, the claim that all psychologists agree with Martin's description of crowds would be eminently reasonable. But psychology has moved on over the last 80 years.

The new psychology of crowd behaviour

The core conceptual premise which underlies both Le Bonian crowd psychology and its Allportian critics, is that the standards which control our behaviour are associated with individual identity. If either individual identity is stripped away in the crowd (Le Bon) or else individual crowd members have flawed identities (Allport), then the crowd action will be uncontrolled and the normal restraints against aggression will be removed.

Over the last 30 years, social identity research (Tajfel and Turner, 1979)—by now the dominant approach ingroup psychology—has systematically dismantled the particular notion of identity which underlies the classic crowd psychologies. Indeed, as its name suggests, the social identity tradition rejects the idea that people only have a single personal identity. Rather, it argues, identity should be seen as a system in which different parts govern our behaviour (i.e. are psychologically salient) in different contexts. Certainly there are times when we do think of ourselves in terms of our personal identities: what makes us unique as individuals and different from other individuals. But at other times, we think of ourselves in terms of our group memberships (I am British; I am a police officer; I am a Catholic, or whatever) and of what makes our group

unique compared to other groups. That is, we think of ourselves in terms of our social identities. Psychologically, the shift from personal identity to social identity is what makes group behaviour possible (Turner, 1982).

To illustrate the argument, consider the following situation. You are on a crowded train full of commuters, each of whom is trying to ignore the presence of the others, seeking to avoid eye contact and to minimise any physical contact. Then the train stops. After some time, there is an announcement which gives some excuse for the delay. People start to think of each other as fellow passengers (in opposition to the train company) rather than as separate individuals. They begin to turn towards each other, to talk, and to smile.

Three points can be drawn from this illustration. First, we need to distinguish between a *physical* group of people (which we will call an aggregate) and a *psychological* group. The former simply refers to a set of people who are co-present, while the latter refers to a set of people who, subjectively, think of themselves as belonging to a common social category. The same aggregate may contain no psychological groups (as in our example of the train before the delay), one psychological group (as in the train after the delay) or indeed multiple different psychological groups (say in the case of rival football fans crowded into the same carriages). What is more, the psychological groupings contained in the self-same aggregate can shift as a function of unfolding events.

Second, when people shift from seeing others as individuals to seeing others as group members, their relationships with them undergo a fundamental transformation. Common ingroup members are treated with warmth and respect; they are trusted, supported and they receive cooperation (see also Tyler and Blader, 2000; Levine *et al.*, 2005). This does not usually extend to outgroup members. The reason for this fundamental transformation is that, once people define themselves in terms of a group membership the fate of the group as a whole (and hence of others in the group), the well-being of the group, the prestige and reputation of the group becomes their fate, their well-being, their prestige and their reputation.

Third, while people may do things in groups that they may not probably do in other circumstances, this need not necessarily be anti-social (in the example that we have given, people are more sociable and generous than on their day-to-day commutes) and it certainly does not indicate that they have lost control over their actions. Indeed people in groups conform to the beliefs and standards that are associated with the relevant identity. In contrast to the classic view that people *lose* identity and hence *lose* control in collective settings, what is suggested here is that people *shift* identity and hence *shift* the bases of behavioural control in groups. What they will then do depends upon the particular group under consideration (Reicher, 1987, 2001).

Thus far, we have referred to groups and crowds as if the two were interchangeable and, at one level, all we have argued about groups in general does indeed apply to the crowds in particular. Notably, there is by now an extensive historical literature which shows that crowd action is not random and uncontrolled but rather is a faithful reflection of the social beliefs of the groups involved (see, for instance, Thompson, 1971; Reddy, 1977; Davis, 1978). Even where crowds are violent, the nature of that violence—both the targets

that are chosen and the manner of the attacks upon them—reflects belief systems that are current in the relevant community.

However, there is one critical difference between crowds and other types of group. Most groups have formal means of discussing and agreeing on group norms—and how to apply these norms to novel situations. They have meetings and conferences to discuss what they believe in and formal hierarchies to enact decisions on a day-to-day basis. Crowds, characteristically have neither. It is difficult to sit down in the midst of a riot and discuss what to do. Equally, there is rarely a formal authority structure in the crowd. Yet crowd events typically throw up unprecedented situations such that it is all but impossible simply to apply preformed responses. This combination means that the process of defining appropriate group action becomes more volatile and more fraught than elsewhere (Reicher, 1982, 1984). There are liable to be multiple voices within the group arguing for more or less confrontational action. What, then, determines which voice will be heard?

In answering this key question, it is necessary to highlight another difference between the crowd and other groups. Whereas the psychological salience of group identity is always associated with the (implicit) presence of another group, that other group is not necessarily a physical presence. By contrast, crowd events generally involve face to face contact between the different parties—either one crowd versus another (say left wing and right wing political groups) or else—very often and of immediate interest here—between crowd members and the police. We suggest that the relationship and the balance between groupings within the crowd is critically dependent upon the interaction between the crowd and outsiders.

The interactive dynamics of crowd conflict

There are three elements to our argument. First, the relationship between outgroup action, common fate and group formation is much more immediate in crowd settings due to the fact that the fate of crowd members is directly determined by what outsiders (notably the police) allow them to do. That is, where the police have both the inclination and the power to treat all members in a crowd event as if they were the same, then this will create a common experience amongst crowd members which is then likely to make them cohere as a unified group (Drury and Reicher, 1999, 2000, 2005; Drury *et al.*, 2003). Thus, in one of our studies (Reicher, 1996) the decision of the police to throw a cordon across Westminster Bridge—thus preventing all those attending a student anti-loans protest from accessing the House of Commons—transformed a multitude of small grouplets into a unified crowd who felt attached to all fellow demonstrators, even complete strangers, in opposition to the police.

Second, where the common fate imposed by the outgroup violates ingroup conceptions of legitimacy—either imposing experiences which are considered illegitimate or impeding acts which are seen as legitimate—then the crowd will unify around hostility and anger towards that outgroup. To continue with the Westminster Bridge example, students had come to London so as to lobby parliament and they felt that this was a fundamental democratic right. When, from their perspective, this right was denied, even the most peaceable of participants supported attempts to breach the police line. (Reicher, 1996, for other examples

of this process, see Adang, 1998; Stott and Reicher, 1998; Stott and Drury, 2000).

Our point is that one cannot specify in general terms a set of actions which will arouse crowd hostility or produce collective violence (as is suggested by the common metaphor that once there is tinder any spark will lead to a riot). Rather, the events which precipitate such violence will be different from group to group as a function of their different conceptions of legitimacy and their different histories with outgroups (see Reicher, 1984; Adang and Standaar, 1993).

Third, we are not arguing that the shared perception of outgroup illegitimacy will lead all crowd members into direct conflict with outgroup members. Rather than assuming that there is a simple dichotomy between violence and non-violence, we need to consider a spectrum of behaviour which goes from active participation in violent acts to active suppression of violence (see Adang, 1991). Outgroup actions can impact at all points along this spectrum and what may be critical is the way they disrupt the willingness of crowd members to contain the violence of those in their midst—what we term self-policing. A powerful illustration of this can be found in our study of the behaviour of England and Scotland fans during the 1998 world cup in France (Stott *et al.*, 2001).

Domestically, there is as much (if not more) violence in Scottish as in English football. So why, at an international level, are the English involved in more conflict than the Scottish? The answer lies in their differential reputations and hence in the ways in which they have been treated historically. The English were seen as dangerous, so England fans *in general* were heavily policed and subject to hostility—even violence—from local people

and rival fans. Under these conditions fans who initially condemned conflict began to sympathise with those who expressed hostility. Far from impeding such people, the mass of fans increasingly condoned them as both expressing and protecting the group interest. The Scots, by contrast, were seen as colourful, boisterous and entertaining. They were generally welcomed, liked and trusted by outsiders. As a result, any Scottish fan who was violent was perceived to be threatening the ingroup reputation. So, while there were plenty of incidents where individuals began to be violent, others would characteristically intervene to stop them. Overall, generalised outgroup hostility increased the influence of violent fans and the support given to them. Conversely, generalised outgroup friendliness decreased the influence of violent fans and the active intervention against them.

Putting all three elements together, our argument explains why policing practices based on the classic crowd psychologies may not only be misinformed but actively counterproductive. If one believes that all crowd members are potentially if not actively dangerous, then one will (1) treat all crowd members alike and hence create unity amongst them, (2) react to the violence of some crowd members by imposing restraint on all, thus increasing the likelihood of violating ingroup conceptions of legitimacy and uniting the crowd in hostility and opposition to the police, and (3) increase the influence of those advocating conflict in the crowd and undermine self-policing amongst crowd members.

This is what we mean by our earlier reference to a self-fulfilling prophecy. By responding to the acts of the few by clamping down on the many, a limited problem may be transformed into a general conflagration. What we are

proposing is that, instead of focusing exclusively on the (potential) violence of crowd members, we focus on the processes through which violence escalates and de-escalates. By understanding these processes, and their contribution to them, the police will be better able to deal with the crowds. We do not promise that such an understanding will always allow conflict to be avoided. However, we do suggest that this understanding can guide the police to act in ways that minimise conflict and maximise the opportunities to engage crowd members themselves in achieving this end.

The practice of knowledge-based public order policing

General guidelines for policing crowds

The implications of contemporary crowd psychology for public order policing can be summarised in terms of four general guidelines. These build on guidelines that we have described previously (Adang, 1998; Reicher *et al.*, 2004) and which were incorporated in the ACPO Manual on Public Order Policing (2003).

The first guideline relates to issues of information and intelligence. Currently, the emphasis is on criminal intelligence relating to the presence of individuals with a known history of violence (Cronin, 2001). While this work has proved very effective, taken in isolation, it ignores the process whereby the violence of the few does (or does not) become collective. If the police are to understand this, they need to understand the social identities of crowd members. We have shown how the behaviour of crowd members, their notions of right and wrong, and the ways in which they will react to police interventions are all a function of the beliefs and

values associated with these social identities. Knowledge-based public order policing therefore starts with information about these social identities.

Understanding of social identities is a necessary condition for following the second of our guidelines. That is, the primary focus of police strategies during crowd events should be to maximise the facilitation of crowd aims. While some groups within the crowd may intend to act in ways that the police cannot permit, and members of these groups may be prepared to confront the police in order to achieve their aims, the majority of participants generally will identify with groups that have entirely legal aims and intentions. By facilitating these, the police will not only avoid violence from these participants, they will also gain their cooperation in dealing with the minority of others. But this only becomes possible where there is information which allows the police to understand the priorities of these groups and to devise practices which will allow legal aims to be met.

There will be times when such an approach will not be possible for practical reasons; that is, one cannot facilitate the legal aims of some groups without thereby facilitating the illegitimate aims of others. For instance, to use an example that we will elaborate on later, it may be that the majority of demonstrators in an anti-globalisation event have the aim of voicing opposition to the actions of financial institutions. However, to allow them to march past their headquarters could make it easier for those factions that want to disrupt, damage or even destroy the building. In such cases, however, the police can still work with the organisers and participants in order (1) to clarify that the police are seeking to facilitate legitimate crowd action; (2) that the reasons

for policing constraints lie in the illegitimate aims of certain participants; (3) to explore ways in which the police can facilitate alternative ways in which legitimate aims can be fulfilled.

Overall, the aim of these various procedures is to reach a position where the majority of crowd members do not react to police presence as something which impedes them but rather as something which enables them. More technically, the aim is to shape interactions between police and crowd in such a way as to lead peaceful crowd members categorise themselves along with the police and in opposition to violent factions rather than categorising themselves along with violent factions against the police.

The third of our guidelines concerns the centrality of communication with crowd members. Take the case of the Notting Hill Carnival, where the police routinely cordon off certain roads as overspill areas in cases of emergency. Yet participants had no knowledge of this reasoning and, for them, the cordons reflected police control on a day when the streets belonged to 'the people'. Hence the cordons became potential flashpoints. The general lesson to be taken from this is that actions taken by the police for the interests of the crowd will be ineffective, or even counterproductive unless they are perceived as such by the participants themselves. This can only be achieved through a comprehensive communication strategy.

Prior to events, it is important to plan strategies along with the event organisers which clarify collective aims and address how they can best be facilitated. Before, or at the start of events, these agreements need to be communicated to all participants through use of the net, through leaflets or else through visual and aural communications systems. Here, the police can play a part by providing facilities to organisers that allow them to communicate better with their own constituency. During the events, it is particularly critical to develop a means of addressing crowd members so that, if unexpected events arise, organisers and the police can explain what they are doing and how it is tied to the agreed aims of the event. Uncertainty always provides a space in which those drawing on historical distrust of the police can gain influence.

Our fourth and final guideline overarches all that we have said so far. That is, in every aspect of public order policing, it is critical to maintain a differentiated approach with the crowd. As we have stressed repeatedly, crowds do not typically start off as homogenous entities and they are only likely to act as such if one treats them that way. The key to policing is to treat the participants with respect and, where some of them initiate conflict, to ensure that the response does not drag the others in. Amongst other things, this has implications for the development of new tactics since many existing techniques treat all crowd members equally. It has implications for technology, since certain types of equipment are too inaccurate to separate the perpetrator from the bystander. It even has implications for clothing since, seen through a scuffed Perspex visor, the faces of the crowd merge into one and make targeted reactions impossible. In short, the guidelines we have outlined here—and differentiation in particular—are not mere 'add-ons' which can be tacked onto existing practices. Rather, they represent an alternative perspective which needs to be taken into account in each and every decision that is made about policing crowds.

Let us give some concrete examples of how our approach is beginning to be applied in practice and how, we believe, the benefits (in terms of limiting disorder, reducing officer deployment and improving police-community relations) are sufficiently great to exceed any costs.

Applying the guidelines—examples of knowledge-based policing in practice

We provide two examples. One relates to a very specific issue on tactics. The other is much more extended and shows the approach being employed to cover all aspects of a series of high profile crowd events.

Example 1:

Developing differentiated tactics of containment. In recent years, one of the fastest growing forms of public protest in the United Kingdom and elsewhere has been associated with the anti-globalisation movement. Specifically, since the late-1990s there have been major annual demonstrations in London. These protests pose a number of novel challenges to the police. Unlike traditional marches which tended to have clear leadership and organisation and a specified aim, the anti-globalisation protests bring together a loose coalition of multiple groups with multiple aims, no clear leadership and multiple targets. In the middle of London, virtually any building, could be seen as a target to at least some in the crowd. One aspect of the police response was the use of corralling tactics, whereby protestors would be surrounded by the police and would not be allowed to leave. However the tactic became highly controversial, especially after the May Day anti-globalisation protests of 2001, both for

legal reasons and because of the anger that it provoked.

Anger stemmed precisely from the undifferentiated nature of corralling. People would be corralled simply for being part of the crowd irrespective of who they were or what they had done. This led to considerable concern at the palpably innocent being treated as guilty. This, in turn, gave rise not only to a shared experience amongst crowd members but also a shared sense of police illegitimacy—precisely the factors that we have identified above as leading to conflict escalation. It may have been that, in the event itself, participants may have felt sufficiently disempowered as to refrain from expressing their anger. However, the likelihood that they would conflict with the police in future events would be increased. Accordingly, we were asked by the Metropolitan Police to consider how to develop the corralling tactic (Cronin, 2002; Cronin and Reicher, 2002).

We stressed, first, the need for officers to understand the meaning of their tactic from the perspective of the participants. In particular, the anger of participants should not be dismissed simply as reflecting a prior hostility to the police. Rather, officers need to consider how they might be producing hostility in those who started off being sympathetic towards them. Next, we stressed that, if crowd members had to be contained out of fear that some amongst them might be violent, it was critical to communicate to the people as to why they were being contained and how this was necessitated by minority actions. Part of this may involve the development of new communications technologies such as high-powered mobile loudspeaker systems and giant LCD screens. Third, procedures of selective filtering should be developed for enabling those

with specific needs to exit the containment area—and this should also be communicated to the crowd. Moreover, it should also be stressed that conflict within the containment area would disrupt the selective filtering process and hence act against the interests of crowd members. Fourth, once those in need had been allowed to leave, it should be stressed to the remaining crowd that the police also wish to let them proceed as well, but that this could only occur under conditions that will prevent some amongst them from causing violence. These conditions might include the removal of clothing that obscures individual identity, abandoning placards, bottles and other objects that could be used as weapons. This advice has been taken on board by the Metropolitan police and we are told through personal communication that it has been applied on a number of occasions to considerable effect.

Example 2:

Graded policing at the Euro 2004.
By far the most systematic application of our approach occurred at the 2004 European Football Championships in Portugal (Euro 2004). This work was based on a long-standing programme of research on police-crowd interactions by two of the authors, Adang and Stott, which had already had an impact on policing practices (Adang, 1991, 1998; Adang and Cuvelier, 2001; Stott and Adang, 2003). These researchers worked with the Portuguese Public Security Police (Polícia de Segurança Pública (PSP)) to produce a model of good practice in policing football matches. The model was implemented in all the areas under the PSP control (which covers all the major cities in Portugal and seven of the ten tournament venues—the other three, in the South, were under the control of the Guarda Nacional Republicana (GNR). It was evaluated by a team of sixteen observers who made over eighteen hundred structured observations during the major gatherings of fans in the cities where the matches were held. In addition, English fans were surveyed for their perceptions, feelings and behaviours (for a full report of the research, see Stott *et al*., 2006; see also Stott *et al*., 2007a,b; Stott and Pearson, in press).

The core feature of the model lay in the notion of *graded policing*. That is, four levels of policing intervention were developed with the aim of creating a positive and close relationship with crowd members, but also of monitoring incipient signs of disorder. This would then allow early, appropriate and targeted interventions before conflict could escalate to a level where only draconian measures would suffice.

Level 1 was characterised by officers in normal uniform, working in pairs spread evenly throughout the crowd within the relevant geographical location—not merely remaining at the edges. Their primary function was to establish an *enabling* police presence. Officers were specifically trained to be friendly, open and approachable. They would interact with the crowd members and generally support the aim of Euro 2004 as a 'carnival of football'. At the same time, the presence (and acceptance) of these officers in the crowd allowed them to spot signs of tension and incipient conflict (such as verbal abuse against rival fans). They could therefore respond quickly to minor incidents of emergent disorder and ensure that they targeted only those individuals who were actually being disorderly without having impact on others in the crowd. This tactic therefore gave the police the option to intervene in a low-key manner during the early

stages of the emergent disorder often without others in the crowd even noticing that an arrest had been made.

Where disorder endured or escalated, policing shifted to level 2. This involved larger groups of officers moving in, still wearing standard uniforms. Their remit was to communicate with fans in a non-confrontational manner, to reassert shared norms concerning the limits of acceptable behaviour, and to highlight breaches of those norms and the consequences that would flow from them. Should this fail, the intervention would shift up to level 3. Officers would don protective equipment and draw batons, but always seeking to target their actions as precisely as possible. If this was still insufficient, then the PSP's riot squads, the Corpo de Intervenção, in full protective equipment and with water cannon were always ready at the fourth tactical level.

The approach proved to be highly successful. Overall, the police maintained low visibility and although there were large numbers of riot police around but out of sight, interventions by these units were very rare. This reflected a very low level of conflict. In only 0.2% of our observations was there any sign of violent behaviour, and even where there was violence it involved very few people. By contrast there were a number of notable instances of 'self-policing' amongst fans at critical moments. For example, just prior to one of England's matches, as one group of England fans attempted to assault the police, other England fans confronted the group and actively prevented the attack from taking place.

This positive picture is corroborated by the official figures. There were no recorded instances of major collective disorder during Euro 2004 in the areas under PSP jurisdiction and there was only one arrest of an England fan for a violence-related offence. This figure is in contrast to the 965 arrests of England fans during the earlier European championships held in 2000. However, perhaps the most telling comparison would have been with those areas under the control of the other Portuguese police force, the GNR, during Euro 2004. The GNR employed a more traditional 'high profile' approach to crowd policing. They either avoided close contact with the crowd or else intervened in force with full riot gear. This resulted in two major 'riots' during which 52 England fans were arrested.

Taken together these findings suggest, first, that a positive attitude and facilitative relationship to the crowd is effective in reducing levels of disorder; second, that this relationship is effective in promoting self-policing amongst fans; third, that the capacity to mount early, low impact and targeted interventions allows the police to manage the low-level dynamics of emergent disorder; fourth, that this capability in turn decreases the likelihood of having to use more forceful and inherently indiscriminate tactical options (e.g. riot squads/PSUs in protective equipment).

These benefits are substantial, but there is more. We have argued that police-crowd interactions do not only affect the immediate outcomes of collective events. They also determine the more enduring relationships between the police and the groups in the crowd. These claims are supported from the survey data with England fans. Respondents described PSP policing in highly positive terms. They saw the PSP as behaving legitimately towards them and, in this context, they did not perceive their own group ('England fans') as being in opposition to either the fans of other countries or the police. Rather, they saw themselves

in opposition to those 'hooligan' fans who supported violence against such targets.

Critically, however, these perceptions were not something that pre-dated the tournament and which explain the peaceful nature of the crowds in PSP areas. Rather they emerged during the tournament as a function, we suggest, of the PSP approach. Thus, before Euro 2004, being an England fan meant distancing yourself from the police (in statistical terms, there was a strong and significant *negative* correlation between ingroup identification and perceived similarity to the PSP). However, after the tournament this relationship was reversed and being an England fan meant associating with the police (that is, there was a strong and significant *positive* correlation between ingroup identification and perceived similarity to the PSP).

Conclusion

At the start of this paper, we argued that crowds should not be seen as an inherent threat and that crowd events should not be seen just as a problem but also as an opportunity. We have shown how violence derives from inter-actions—notably between crowd and police. Using this knowledge, we have outlined, both in principle and in practice, an approach to crowd policing that can produce harmony both within and beyond crowd events. That is, as illustrated in Euro 2004, we have developed a knowledge- based public order policing that can profitably exploit the opportunities inherent in crowd events. Against a background where, for decades, English fan violence has been seen as an intractable problem, we have shown not only that fans can be peaceful but that they can be recruited as allies in subduing violence.

The obvious question is that, even if our claims over Euro 2004 are accepted, how far can the Portuguese example be extended to other settings? At one level, we would readily join those who counsel against simplistic overgeneralisation. It would be a serious misunderstanding of our argument to suggest that the tactics used in Portugal can be applied mechanically to other crowds. Our whole position, as encapsulated in the first of our guidelines above regarding information and intelligence, is that the way one treats crowds must be based on knowledge of the specific social identities of the groups involved and hence of *their* aims, *their* understandings and *their* notions of legitimacy. Such questions as 'should we facilitate crowd goals and if so how?' or, 'what forms of action will be seen as violating crowd rights and hence increase conflict?' can only be answered in relation to such knowledge.

In sum there is no such thing as 'one size fits all' public order policing. The specifics must always be tailored to the given event. What our approach provides is a means of asking the questions from which these specifics can be developed. That was what was done in Euro 2004 and if the same process is followed, there is no reason why crowd policing could not be just as effective in turning around seemingly intractable tensions with other alienated groups in our society.

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