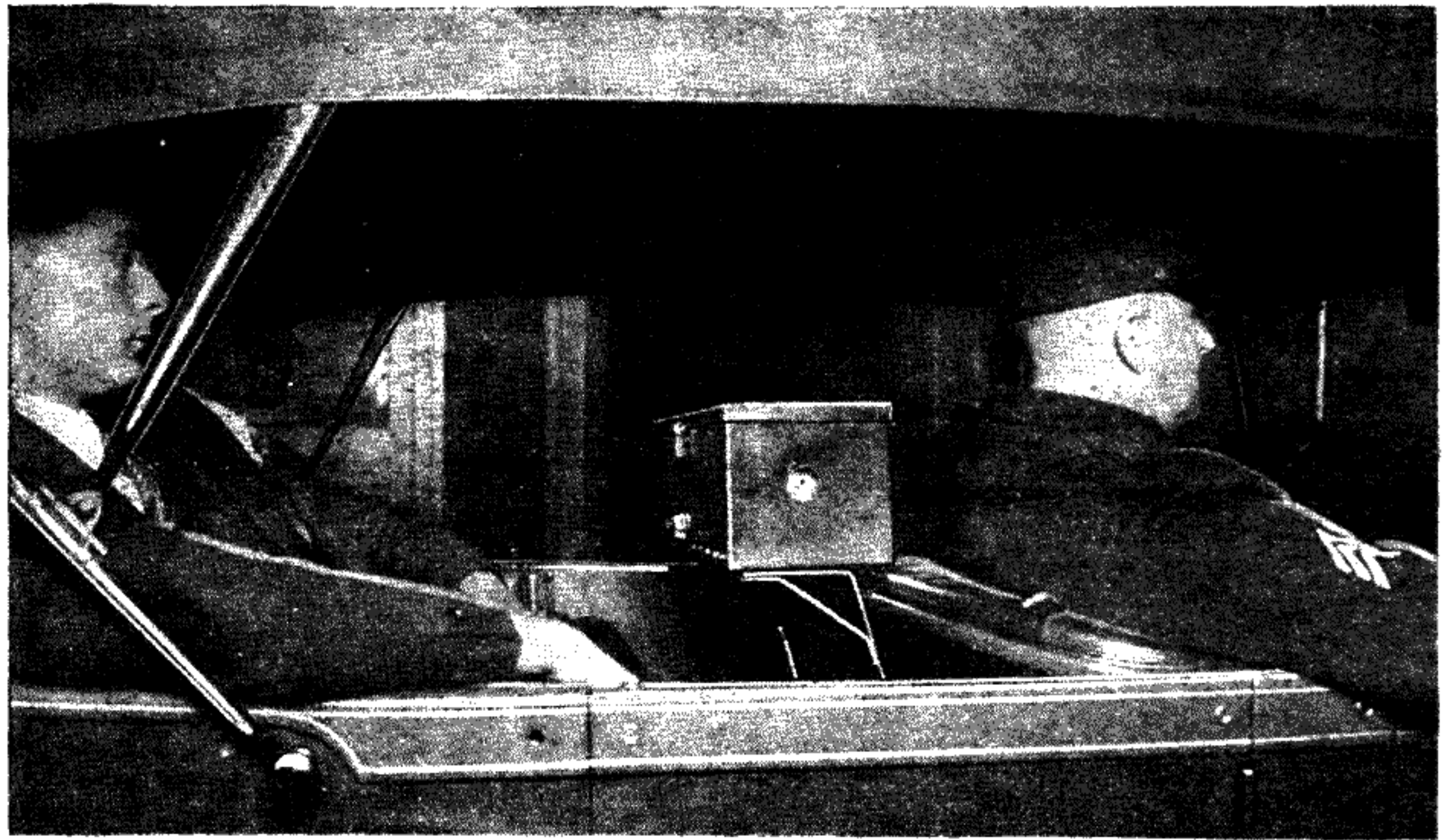
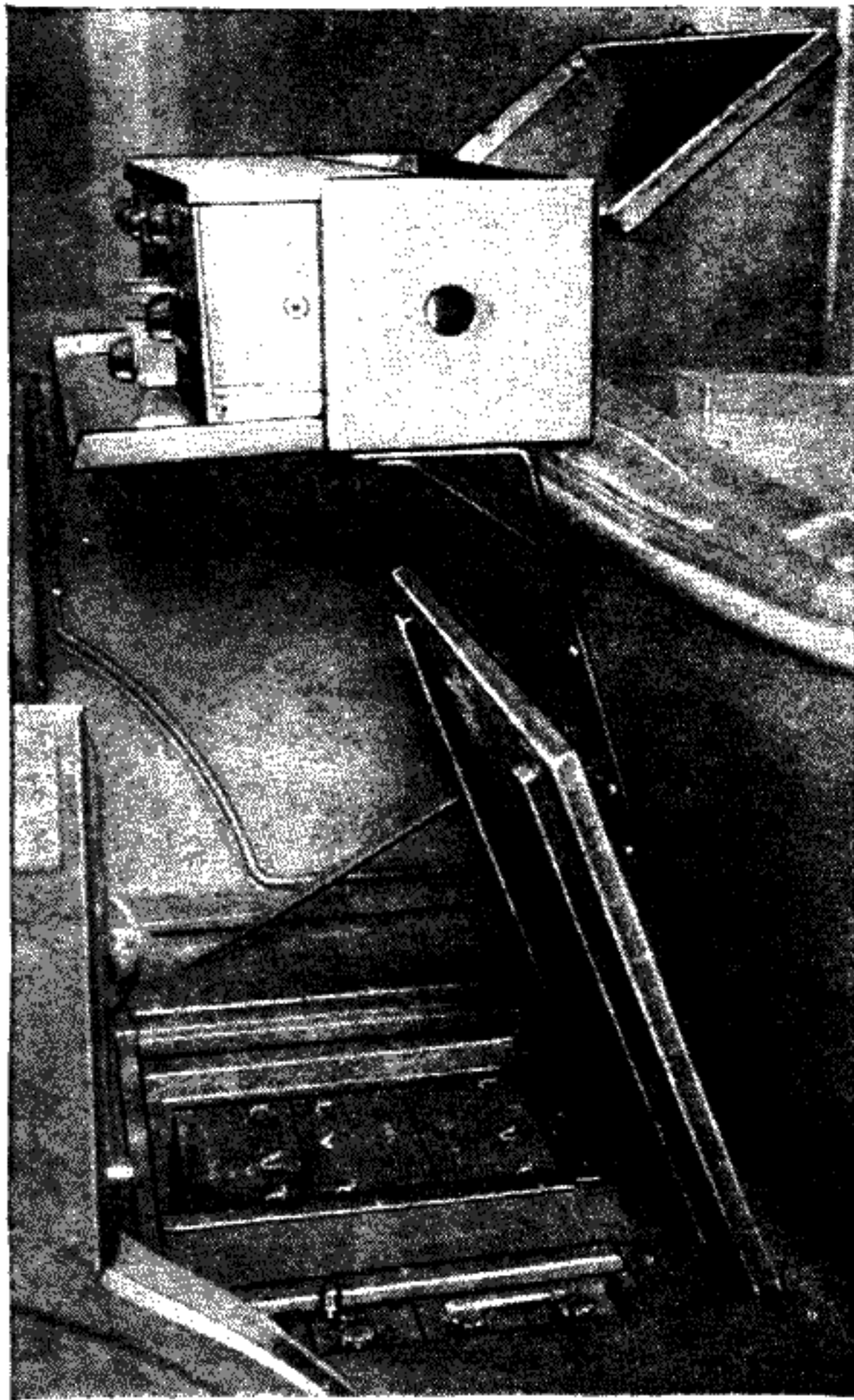


At the right—Ready to step on the gas the instant an alarm is received

The illustration below shows the installation details of "A" and "B" batteries and the receiver partly removed from its case



Police Radio *Routs* RACKETEERS

*A Year's Experience Proves the Value
of Detroit's Radio Police Cars*

By Ralph L. Peters

RADIO'S use as a swift and efficient police weapon in the never-ending battle against crime and the criminal has been demonstrated in an uncanny, almost unbelievable fashion during the last fifteen months by the Detroit Police Department.

Police officials predicted for years that some day radio would prove itself a valuable police ally. That day is here. Snaring criminals in a radio network woven by the police radio station and swift, powerful police automobiles equipped with receiving sets and loud speakers, has become a matter of split seconds.

The perfecting of the radio system has enabled the Detroit police to achieve arrests less than 30 seconds after the report of a crime has been given the police dispatcher.

Eight hundred arrests, at an average time of less than 90 seconds each, have been made by the radio-equipped automobiles of the Detroit police in the past fifteen months. More than 15,000 messages have been given the cars and more than half of these have been direct orders to proceed to the scene of some actual or reported crime. The balance of the messages have been descriptions of wanted and missing persons, license numbers of stolen cars, and other police information.

Burglars have been trapped in homes they were looting. Bandits have been captured or killed as they fled from hold-ups; hit-and-run drivers have been overtaken, arrested and returned to the scene where they had left hapless victims lying in the street.

Bad-check passers; "shovers" of counterfeit money; apartment-house mail-box robbers; annoyers of women; car thieves and racketeers of various sorts have all

A GROUP of men without respect for law, life or property; bent only upon "getting theirs," and getting it without work, and—if possible—without being caught at it. That is "Gangland."

An alarm reaches headquarters, of a hold-up or a burglary or other crime; in many cases, while the trail is still hot; in some cases, even while the perpetrators are still on the scene. Meanwhile, scattered about the city are squads of officers trained to handle just such a situation. By the time headquarters, in the average city, communicates the alarm to one or more of these squads, the trail is cold.

Not so, in Detroit. In that city, an alarm to headquarters is instantly conveyed to every one of the police cars which constantly patrol their routes; enabling the nearest of these cars to speed instantly to the scene.

What radio offers, as a weapon against modern Gangland, Detroit will bear witness; not in a spirit of half-baked enthusiasm, but by pointing to the actual record.

been caught by the crews of police cruisers sent speeding to the scene by orders transmitted broadcast by radio.

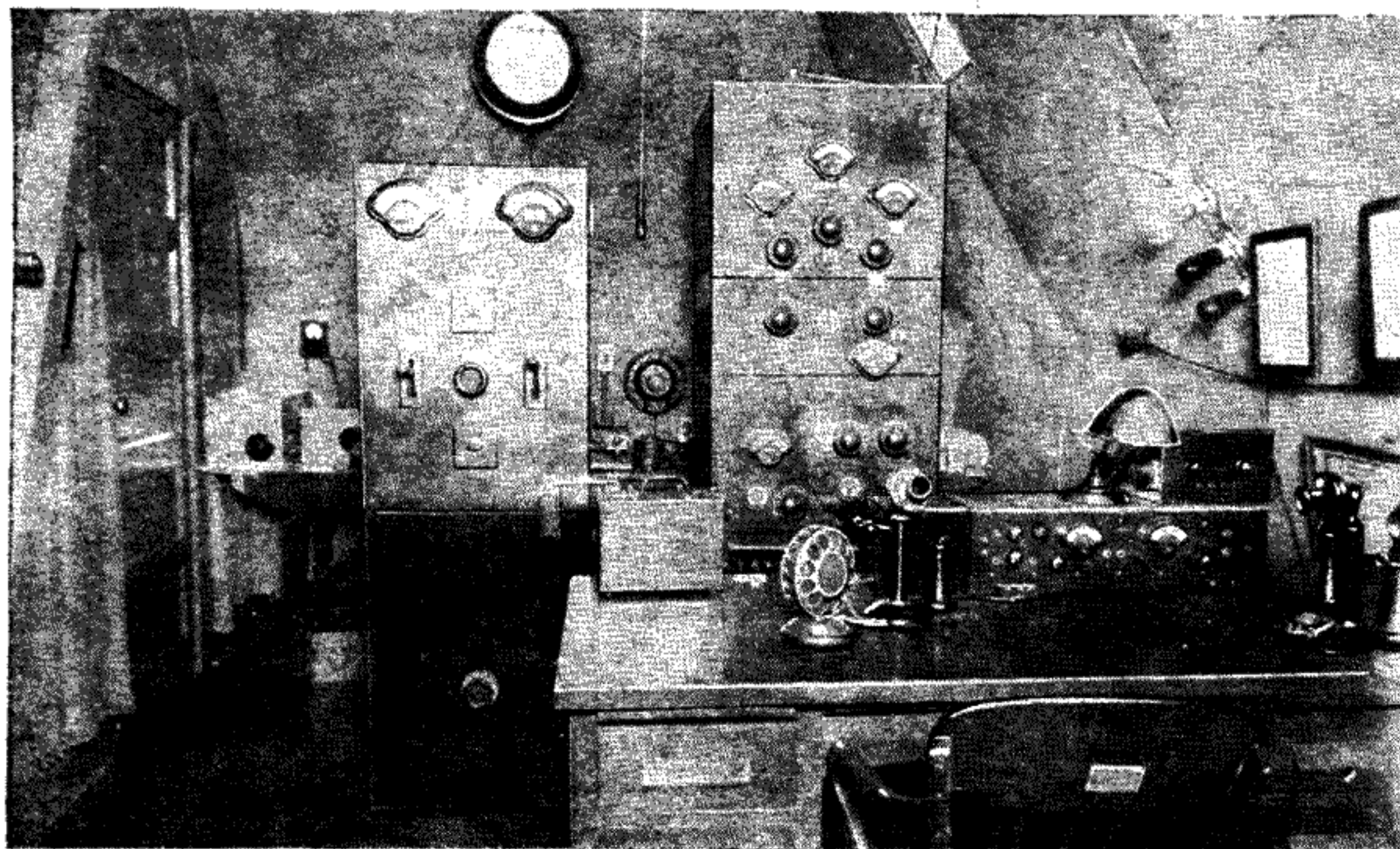
Small wonder that criminals of all sorts have come to view the police use of radio with fear. Seconds count with the criminal, so narrow is the margin of escape or capture. With the radio enabling the police to reach the scene while he is still engaged in a crime, or even before he actually attempts a crime, the chances of escape become poorer every day.

Four to six seconds after a report of a major crime reaches the Detroit police

every radio-equipped police automobile in the city has received the warning simultaneously—a city-wide alarm in a matter of split seconds. One or more of the cars, depending on their location at the time and the seriousness of the crime, speed off to the scene of the trouble.

The police dispatcher, seated before the switchboard at Police Headquarters, plugs in on the radio station as soon as he has received the first flash of a crime. The radio station is located miles across the city on Belle Isle, Detroit's island park in the Detroit River.

When the dispatcher thus plugs in on



of the scene of some crime when warned by radio to proceed there. Possibly they are farther away, but the chances are that one or more of them will be within 60 to 90 seconds' running time of the crime. It wasn't so before the advent of radio. Then, it was possible to communicate with the cruisers and scout cars only when one of the members of the crew called in to report. Now, all of them receive the flash at the same instant.

At least two arrests have been made in "nothing flat." These were achieved by the No. 7 cruiser. A citizen called Police Headquarters early one morning and reported having seen two men ransacking a grocery store. No. 7 cruiser received the report at the very instant when it was turning into the street on which the store was located, just nine doors from the store itself. Before the radio operator had ceased repeating the message, the members of the cruiser crew

the switchboard, he automatically puts the station on the air. He repeats the message twice and it is then reiterated by the radio operator, to doubly insure its receipt. The messages come in clearly and succinctly to the crews of the radio-equipped cars. As they are speeding to the address given, any additional details obtainable as to the nature of the crime, the license number of the escaping car, descriptions, etc., are flashed to them.

Two types of automobiles are used. The cruisers are high-powered seven-passenger touring cars manned by a crew of four officers armed with automatic pistols, revolvers, shotguns and tear-gas bombs. The others are termed scout cars and are light cars manned by a crew of two. In between radio-flashed orders they patrol the streets of their respective districts.

The receiving sets are of the six-tube type, mounted on a steel chassis. They are tuned in on the police radio station, locked in position and then padlocked in a metal cabinet.

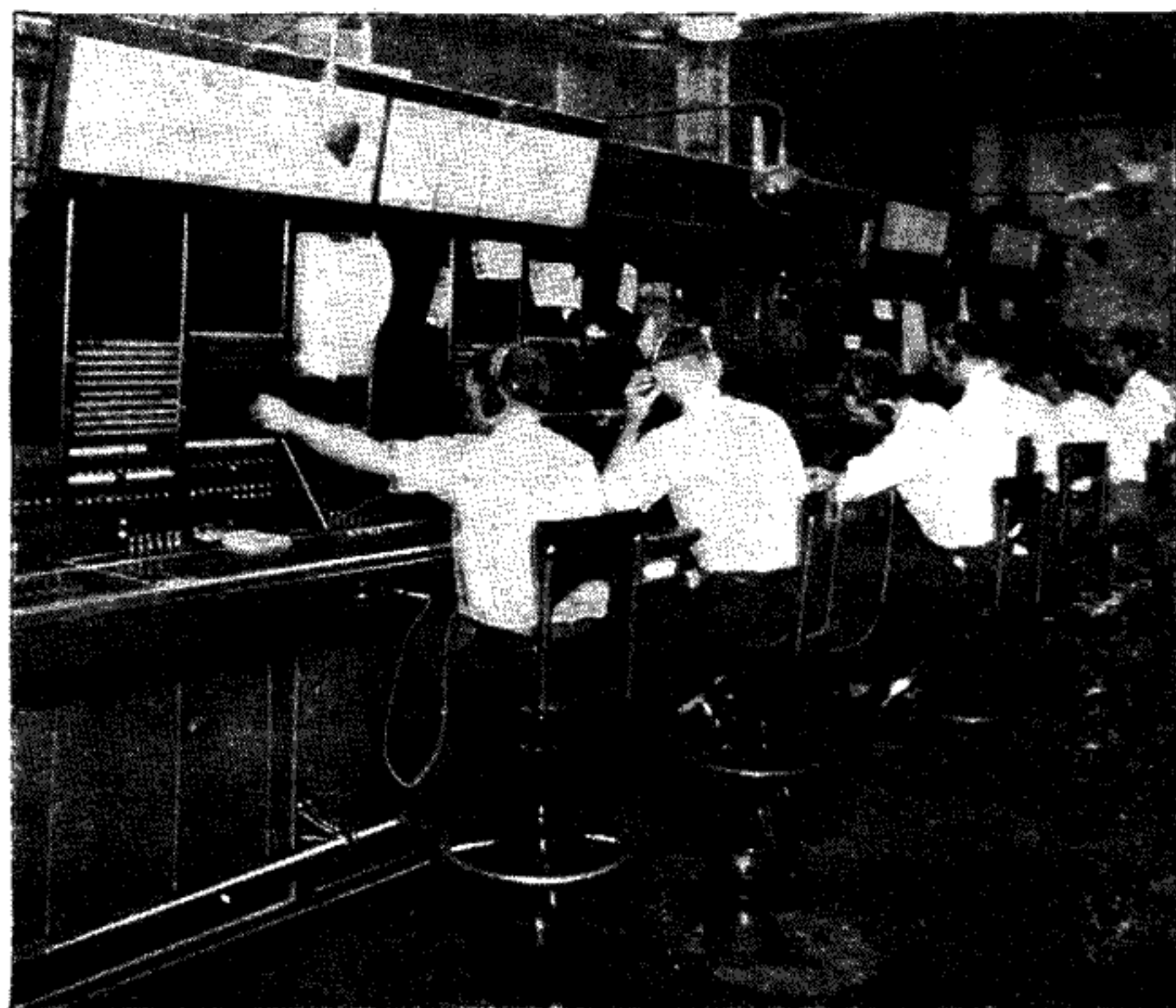
The crews of the patrolling automobiles have access to the volume control but can not tune the set to any other station but the police station. The aerials are mounted in the tops of the cars, being either of wire or copper screen. Both types are in use. All of the sets are built in the workrooms of Station WCK, the police radio station, by members of the radio staff. A "trouble-shooting" car is ready at a minute's notice to service the sets. Extra receiving sets are always ready for installation and the substitution is effected within a few seconds, one set being slid out of the cabinet and another slipped into position. The sets of all cruisers are tested every eight hours, and half-hourly test calls enable the crews to know whether or not their sets are working after the tour of duty has begun.

Since the department has its own station, there is no delay in putting the alarms on the air. Nothing but police work is done by the station: it has no entertainment programs. It is operated on a low wavelength, where there is less chance that any but the police sets will receive the messages.

Sometimes the cars are within a block

Over the microphone, above, go the broadcast alarms which have succeeded in gumming up the "get-aways" of Detroit's gangsters

At the right the switchboard at police headquarters in Detroit. The dispatcher at the left of the illustration is plugging in on the police radio station. The act of plugging in automatically puts this station on the air

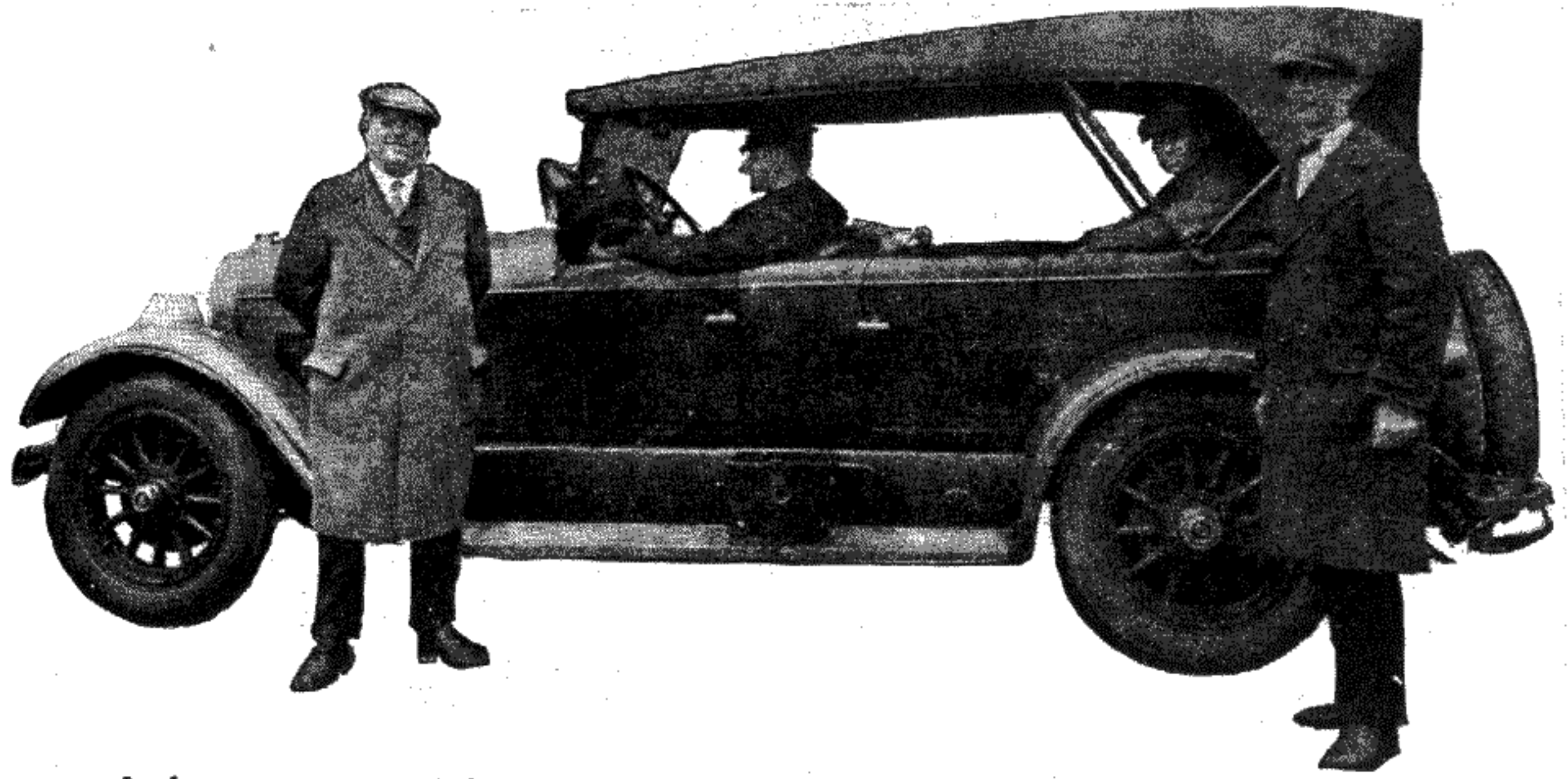
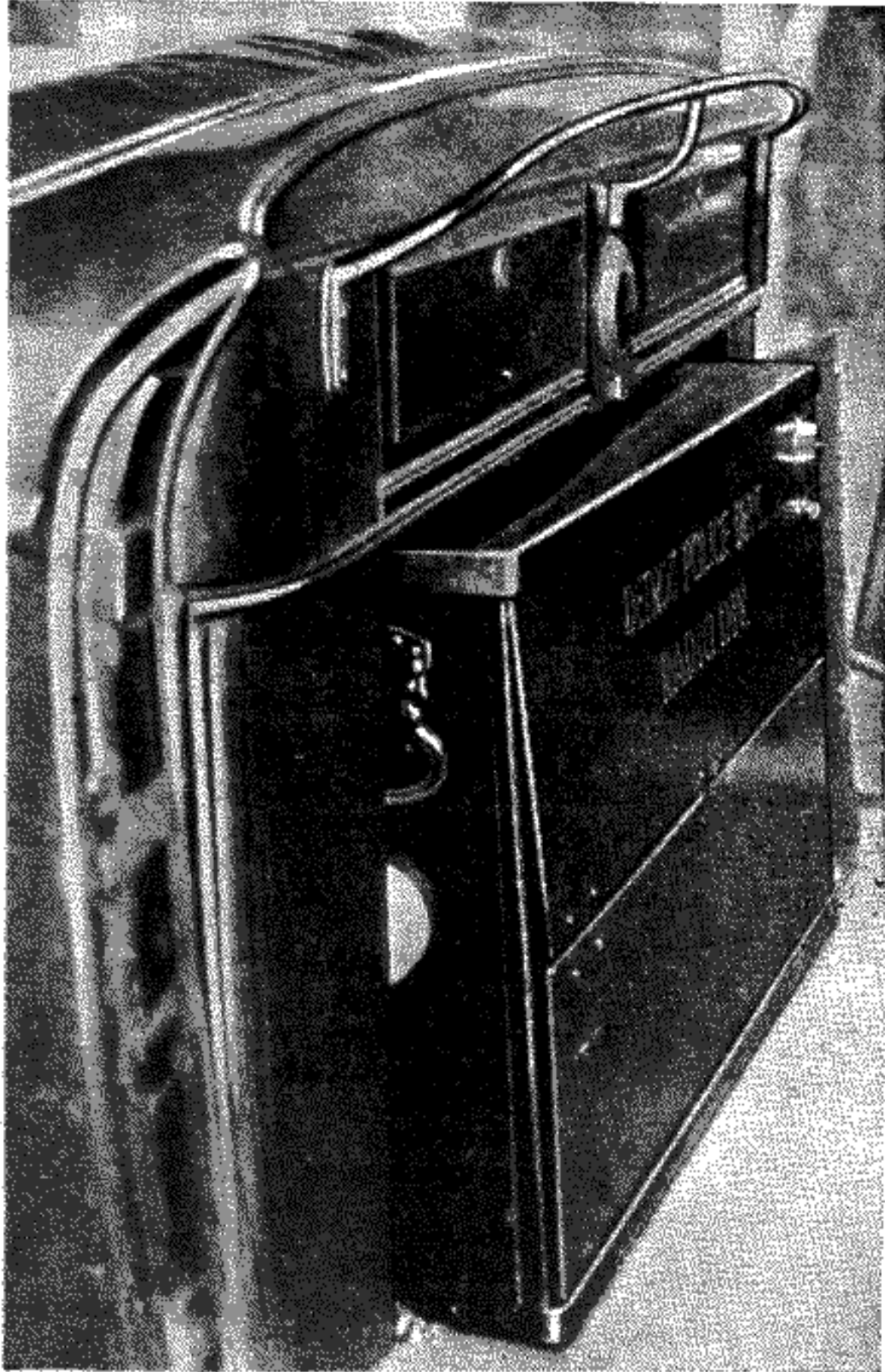


Below—William T. Rutledge, Commissioner of the Detroit Police Department, who says "Radio Communication to Police cars is the greatest development of modern times, in the prevention of crime and the apprehension of criminals"



Patrolman Robert Batts, designer of the receivers, and Sergeant Walter Vogler, in charge of the Police Radio Station at Detroit

Below—This shows how the specially designed radio receiving set is installed in the back of the front seat of the "cruiser" type of police car



rested the man several blocks down the street in another store.

Sometimes the cruisers run a race to the scene of some crime. No. 9 and No. 7 cruisers staged such a race recently.

No. 9 picked up a report a prowler was in a house. The cruiser headed for the address at once. No. 7 cruiser was within a few blocks of the address and also headed for the scene. No. 7 made the run in 90 seconds and trapped the prowler in the house. No. 9, having been at the far end of its territory at the time the alarm was sounded, reached the house

These cars cover regular territories in various parts of the city and are ready for instant dispatching to any point by means of the centralized radio communication

still refused to halt. No. 9 reached the scene in 90 seconds, but there was nothing left to do but take the wounded man to the hospital.

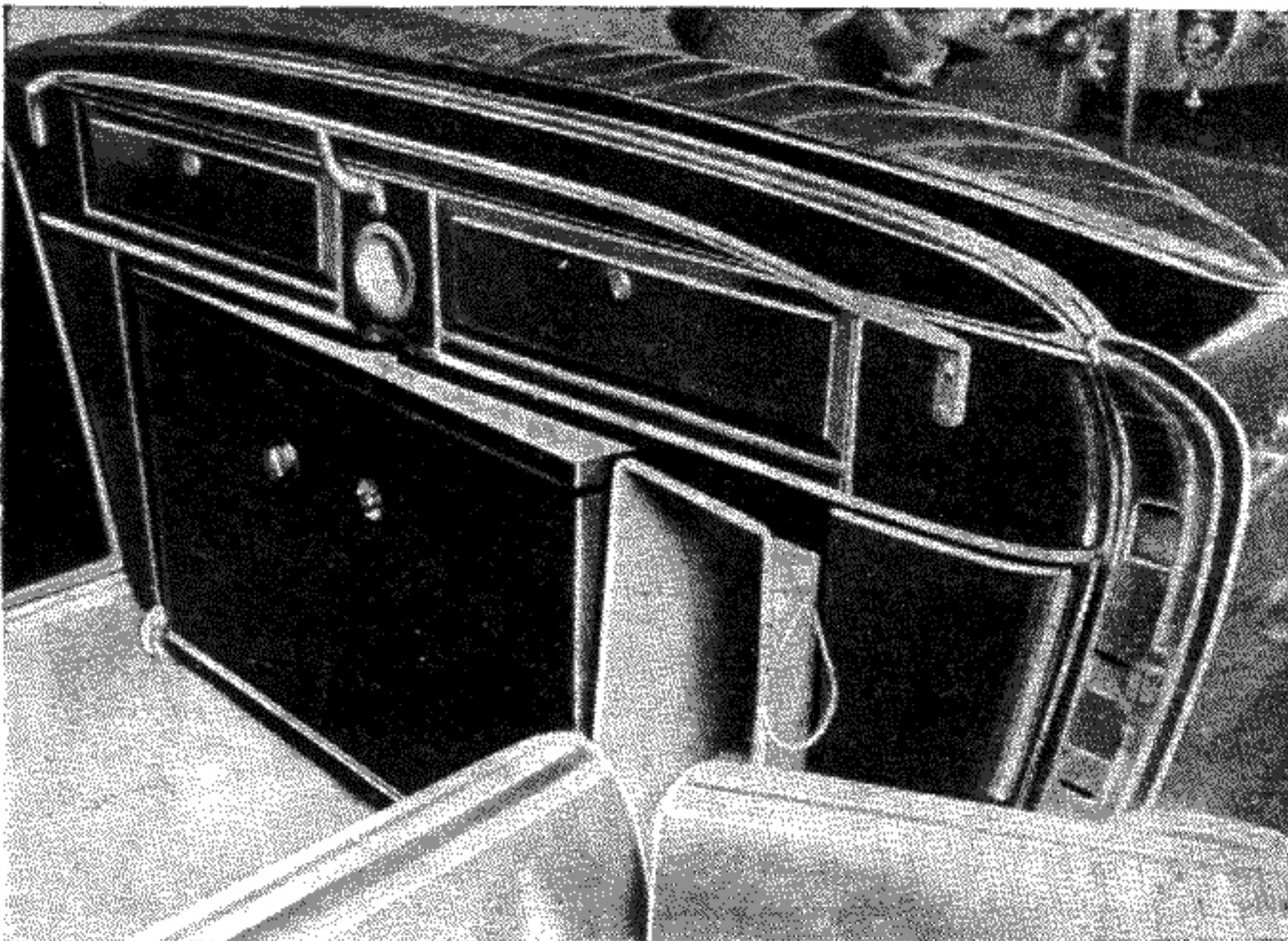
Even more spectacular was the round-up of five store burglars by the crews of the No. 5 and No. 7 cruisers. Four minutes before midnight, an excited citizen called Police Headquarters and reported he had seen three men in a grocery store near a certain street intersection, three blocks from the corner. He did not have the address of the store nor did he designate which corner it was near.

The dispatcher ordered No. 5 to the scene. Arriving there, the crew separated, one man going to each corner. One of the four found the rear door of a store open. Inside the store he saw three dark figures. It was one man against three, but in he went. One of the three was captured. The others leaped through a front window and fled.

The officer reported at once to the radio station, asking that all cruisers be notified to be on the watch for two youths with cut and bleeding hands and faces. He also had obtained a brief description of the pair. The alarm was sounded. A few minutes later a taxicab sped past No. 7 cruiser. Suspicious, the cruiser crew set out in pursuit. The cab was overhauled and forced to the curb. Inside were two youths. Their hands and faces were cut and bleeding. In their pockets was a quantity of small change. They admitted having escaped from the store and named two other youths that had been implicated with the three of them in other store burglaries. These two also were arrested.

Crimes actually are prevented by the speed of the radio-dispatched cruisers. Recently No. 9 was given an alarm a man with a gun had been seen entering a drug-store. The cruiser reached the store in 30 seconds and arrested the suspect. He was armed but had not yet held up the store.

Three men in a large sedan were seen parked in front of a grocery store recently. Their actions aroused the suspicion of an alert shopkeeper, who called



At the left, note how the loud-speaker horn is placed in this "cruiser" installation. In the scout type car shown at the beginning of this article, the loud-speaker is placed overhead

had surrounded the store and captured the prowlers.

Not many weeks ago, No. 5 cruiser was dispatched to a coal office that had been held up. The run was made in 90 seconds but the bandit had fled. The cruiser crew quickly obtained a description of the man and started circling the block. The bandit was sighted running down an alley. Off sped the cruiser in pursuit. The bandit was ordered to halt. He attempted to clamber over a fence as the officers opened fire. He fell lifeless. In his pockets were found a revolver and the money taken in the hold-up.

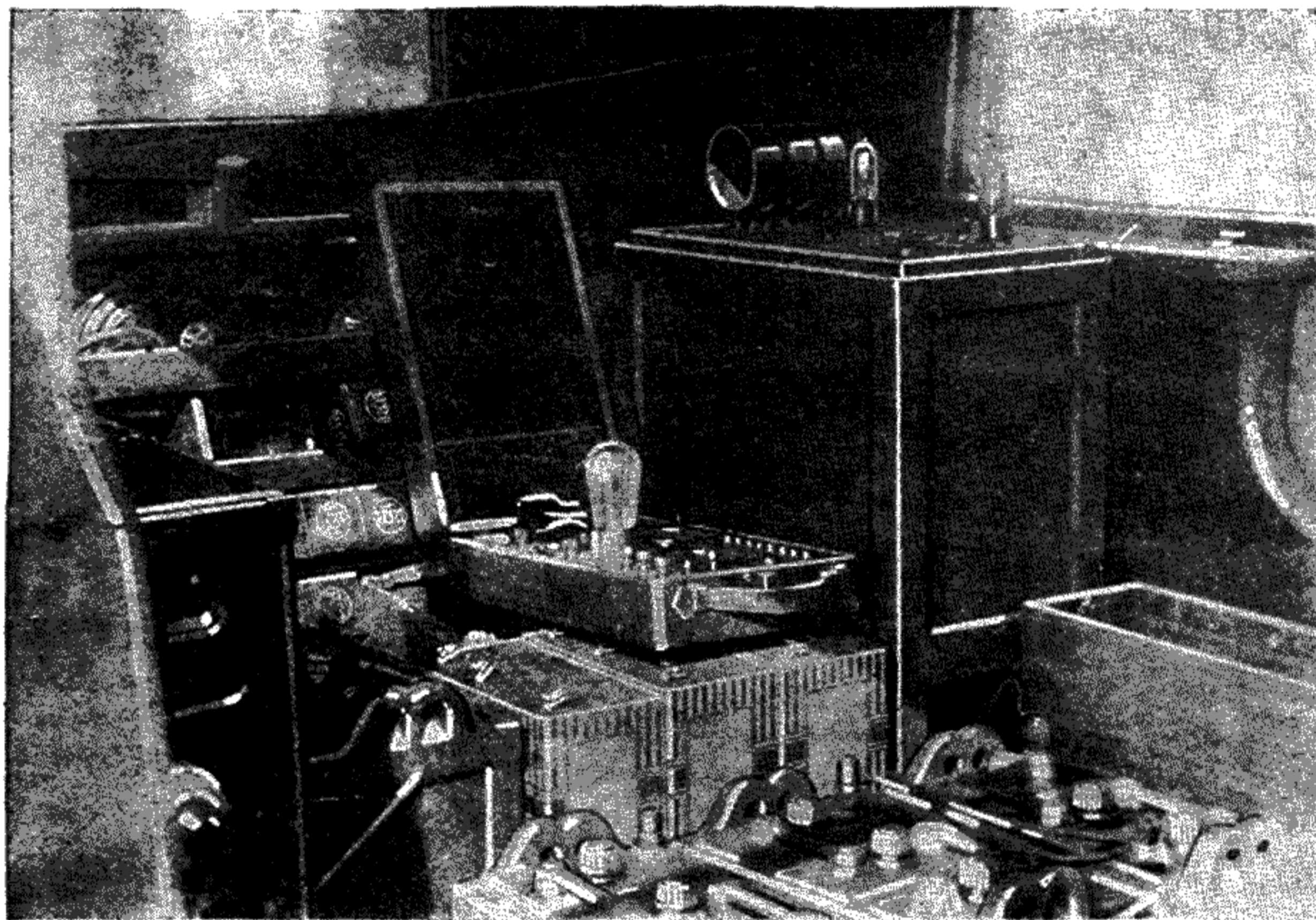
It was No. 5 cruiser, also, that apprehended a bad-check worker within three minutes after the police had been told of his attempts to defraud several storekeepers. The cruiser crew obtained a description of the suspect from the storekeeper who had called the police and ar-

in a little more than two minutes, to find the prowler in custody.

No. 9 and No. 8 cruisers participated in a similar case recently. No. 8 was given a report a man was attempting to enter a house. The run was made in 90 seconds, but the prowler had gone. The crew began a search of the neighborhood. A few minutes later No. 9 cruiser was given a report of a prowler. The new address was only three blocks from the first.

No. 8 cruiser raced off to the new address, arriving there in 30 seconds. A man slipped from between two houses. The cruiser crew ordered him to halt. He broke into a run, stopped and reached for his hip, warning the officers not to follow him.

Two officers opened fire. He renewed his flight. The men in the cruiser sped after him and shot him down when he



Below—A busy corner of the workroom at Station WCK, the Detroit Police Department Radio Station. All of the police sets are built in the workrooms of the station by members of the radio staff

Half hourly test calls enable the crews to know whether or not their receivers are functioning, and the sets are given a test every eight hours; extra receiving sets being always ready for substitution, which is a matter of only a few seconds

the police. No. 15 cruiser went roaring off to the scene. The cruiser crew spotted the three suspects less than two minutes after getting the message. The trio was parked in front of a store, scrutinizing its interior at length. They drove on down the street, parked in front of another store and repeated their actions. One of the three turned and saw the cruiser slipping down upon them. The suspects' car sped off with the cruiser in headlong pursuit.

As the fleeing trio swung around a corner, one of them tossed an automatic pistol from the car. Less than a block farther on a revolver was flung from the car. Still the pursuit continued. The car was forced to the curb. The three leaped from their car and attempted to flee but found themselves facing the weapons of the cruiser crew. They were identified later as gasoline station bandits. The car they had been driving had been stolen several weeks before.

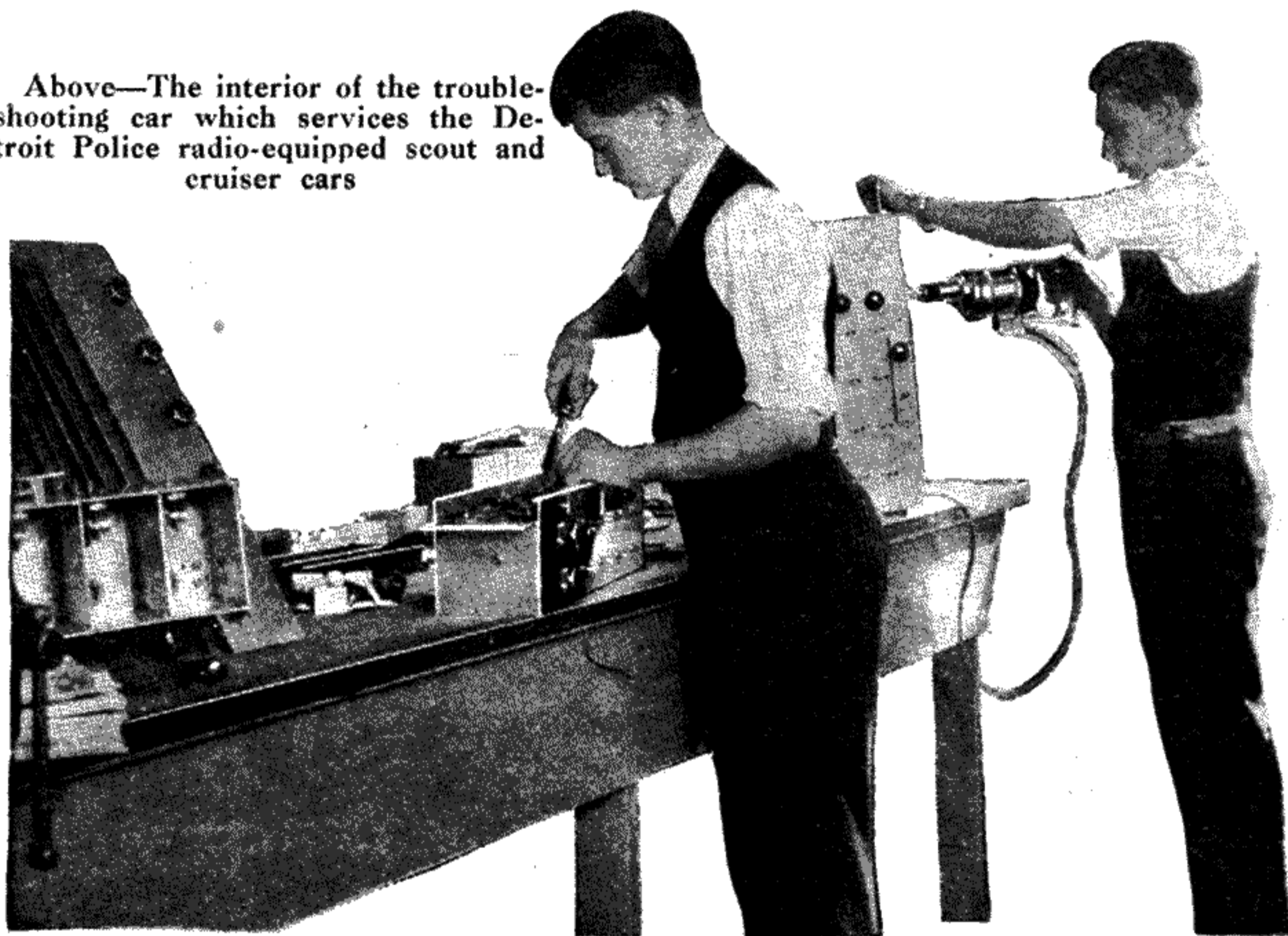
All of these are actual instances taken from the log book of Station WCK. The list might be continued indefinitely, but those cited will explain why Commissioner William P. Rutledge, of the Detroit Police, a pioneer and prophet in the police use of radio, spoke as he did recently before the annual convention of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, meeting at Atlanta, Ga.

"Radio communication to police cars is the greatest development of modern times in the prevention of crime and the apprehension of criminals," he said. "It is the most forward step taken since I entered the profession thirty-five years ago."

The results in Detroit were not obtained overnight. Ten years of experimentation, trial and disappointment lay behind the present record. Ten years ago police officials all over the country were talking about and experimenting with radio. Bit by bit the enthusiasm waned and in most cities died entirely.

The Detroit police had a station and one cruiser in operation in 1921. The station was operated intermittently and with varying success down to the spring of 1927, when Commissioner Rutledge

Above—The interior of the troubleshooting car which services the Detroit Police radio-equipped scout and cruiser cars



ordered it closed because the results had been unsatisfactory. He was disappointed but not ready to give up. When some one suggested the equipment be sold he refused, saying he would find some one who would achieve the results he wanted.

In the fall of 1927 a patrolman by the name of Kenneth Cox, attached to the traffic violations bureau, asked for permission to try his hand at the radio system. He was given the opportunity with the assistance of a capable staff. Patrolman Robert Batts designed a new type receiver for the police cars. Patrolmen Bernard Fitzgerald and Walter Vogler tore down and rebuilt the station's transmitter. The station was reopened in April, 1928. The rest is police history. Cox was made a sergeant and later given leave of absence to go to Chicago to perfect the Chicago Police Department's radio system. He was succeeded in Detroit by Sergt. Vogler.

The success obtained in Detroit has led other cities to renew their interest in

the police use of radio. Even Scotland Yard has sent a letter of inquiry to the Detroit police for details. Additional police radio systems have actually been placed in operation or are contemplated in Chicago, Cleveland, Buffalo, Berkeley, Cal., Highland Park, Mich., and other points.

Commissioner Rutledge and other police officials now vision the day when the police use of radio will be nation-wide. Commissioner Rutledge also predicts it will not be long before every patrolman walking a beat will be equipped with a receiving set. Perhaps that day is not so far distant.

At this moment, having proved the efficiency of radio-equipped and dispatched automobiles, the Detroit Police Department is experimenting with a compact receiving set designed for the use of the individual patrolman. When it is perfected instantaneous communication with every police officer in the city will be possible.