



AT THE LEFT IS SHOWN THE INTERIOR OF ONE OF CHICAGO'S POLICE SQUAD CARS, WITH A RECEIVING SET LOCKED IN ON WGN'S WAVELENGTH; SHOWING MYRON EARL AND RICHARD FREDERICKS OF THE DETECTIVE BUREAU TRAVELING AUTO SQUADS

BELOW IS PAT BARNES, ANNOUNCER AT WGN, WHO HAS INTERRUPTED MANY A PROGRAM IN ORDER TO APPRISE DETECTIVES BY HIS "SQUADS-ATTENTION!" THAT A CRIME REPORT IS COMING THROUGH



Squads- Attention!

Radio Enlists in Chicago's War on Crime

BY ARTHUR STRINGER

POLICE radio has passed its experimental state and has become an integral part of modern police equipment." (William Russell, Commissioner of Police, Chicago.)

With their feuds, murders, robberies, liquor trafficking and bombings, the gangsters and racketeers of Chicago have been waging a guerilla warfare, these many months, until their fact and exaggeration have colored the conversation of a nation.

When a Chicagoan goes to another city, in the ordinary course of commercial relationship, the ice of a first call is frequently broken by some such pleasantry as, "Well, where's the latest bullet holes in your hat?"

Conditions in the second city of the continent continued from bad to worse until the entire metropolitan area became aroused and definitely organized to down crime within the district. At radio station WGN the management was of the opinion that more criminals would be apprehended if police and detectives could

arrive at the scene of a crime while the evil-doers were still in the immediate vicinity.

Radio, they concluded, could accomplish this feat and was the only means of communication that would make things so hot for the crooks that they would either be captured or driven out of town. Having reached such a decision, WGN next offered its facilities to the police of Chicago to demonstrate that radio would prove a crime nemesis. The Commissioner of Police agreed to a trial and the fleet of speedy, high-powered squad-cars was equipped with receiving sets, locked on WGN, day and night.

And then began the now famous call to the motorized and radioized police force of Chicago, "Squads Attention!" which marks the beginning of an order to proceed at a mile-a-minute clip, or faster, to the scene of a crime. It does not matter in the least what sort of a program is in progress over the *Tribune's* radio station, nor the hour. When a call comes from police headquarters the program is cut, and out goes the order, "Squads Attention!" Sometimes

there are a dozen or more calls during an evening's tuning, in addition to those that are broadcast during the day.

The public service that WGN has pioneered is not only helping the police force of Chicago in its battle against crime, but it is serving to acquaint a goodly number of citizens with audible evidence of crime in their own city.

After several weeks of trial, the Police announced that radio had made good, and would be continued as an aid to the detection of crime. Simultaneously Commissioner of Police Russell announced that the police department had obtained the use of the naval reserve station, NDS, in Lincoln Park, on Chicago's near north side in order to supplant and extend the radio service inaugurated by WGN. "So successful has radio service as a crime detector been that its use is to be extended to the whole Chicago area," he announced.

William O. Freeman, Chief of Police of Evanston, Ill., the home of Northwestern University, 15 miles north of Chicago, protects 65,000 inhabitants and many millions of dollars worth of personal property in the luxurious homes of industrial leaders who spend their days in Chicago and their nights in Evanston, far from the turmoil of the Loop. Such wealth has always been an attraction to the yeggman, and Chief Freeman has need of all the assistance modern methods of crime prevention and detection offer.

When at its own expense WGN installed receivers in Chicago squad cars, Chief Freeman installed a receiver in his headquarters and another in a single squad car, with such excellent results that early in May he asked the city council for funds with which to radio-equip eight more cars.

Chiefs of police in other population centers in Cook county, in which Chicago is located, are making plans to adopt radio as has Chicago. Through the North County Police Chiefs' Association, of which Chief Freeman is a member, plans are now under way to bring every police car in the territory within constant communication of NDS.

Throughout the entire Chicago metropolitan area, with more than 4,500,000 inhabitants, police will soon respond to a call for assistance

within a few seconds, whereas hours were required in the past. On a broadcasting band of 71 meters, messages will soon be receivable only by the police and the few radio fans with low wave receivers. This will make for a measure of secrecy which broadcasting on the regular band does not provide; for sometimes, the police are aware, the radio order which sends police squads hurrying to a certain location is also a warning to the criminal.

It is told that when the police invaded an apartment, recently, they found the hall door open and their quarry gone. The loud speaker was doing its best as the police entered, and in the horn was this note: "Sorry I could not wait. Thanks for the tip."

On another occasion radio brought squad-cars to an address in Oak Park (Ill.), the nation's largest village, eight or ten miles west of Chicago. After the detectives surrounded the building they burst in the door, only to be welcomed by the "burglar" himself. He was a paperhanger, waiting the return of the family before starting his work. And to make the affair all the more complicated the message which brought the detectives to the scene of the supposed robbery likewise brought a crowd of several thousand people to see how police actually capture a real, live burglar.

Radio as an aid to the police goes back a number of years, in spite of the fact that it is only a matter of months that it has been adopted to any considerable extent.

The most sensational criminal case in 1910 was the wife murder committed by Dr. Crippen in London. Crippen was an American physician of dubious repute who had resided in England for many years. The crime was the outcome of a sordid domestic triangle. After killing his wife and safely disposing of the body, Crippen succeeded in convincing his neighbors that she had merely returned to the United States. Nevertheless he was in terror of detection, and, but for his sudden flight, the crime might never have been discovered. And had not a marvelous new force just come into being, he would probably not have been captured. The police learned that Crippen had disguised his mistress as a boy and had disappeared, but they could not locate them. The pair had, in fact, gone to

Holland, whence, under an assumed name, they had sailed for Quebec on the *S. S. Montrose*. The captain, observing the caresses this passenger bestowed on his supposed son, discovered the deception. The *Montrose* was equipped with the newly discovered wireless, and he communicated with Scotland Yard. While the lovers dreamed of a secure future, detectives were racing across the Atlantic to meet them at their destination.

The prisoners were returned to England, where Crippen was tried, convicted, and hanged with the speed characteristic of British justice. Radio in its first man hunt had been triumphant!