

Who should the police be in an age of polycentric governance?

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Introduction

Several years ago, in 1996, David Bayley and I argued that, over the last quarter of the Twentieth Century, the nature of policing had been profoundly altered. We spoke of a “watershed” in policing and wrote that:

future generations [would] look back on our era as a time when one system of policing ended and another took its place (Bayley & Shearing, 1996: 85).

A decade earlier, in 1980, Philip Stenning and I (Stenning & Shearing, 1980) had written about a “quiet revolution” that we argued was transforming policing.

It seems to me, as we stand near the end of the first decade of the 21st Century, that we were most certainly right in our assessments. Consider the following example, and it is one among many. The private security company Group 4 Securicor, one of several global security companies, is a London Stock Exchange-listed company with net assets of US\$935 million. It has some 400,000 employees, annual revenues of US\$ 3.8 billion and operates in over 100 countries. No small policing establishment (Abrahamsen and Williams, 2007: 240).

As this example implies, my particular focus in talking first of a “quiet revolution” and then of a “watershed in policing” was on the enormous growth of non-state policing. Of course, at the time we were writing much was also changing within police organizations, in particular changes were taking place under the sign of “community policing”.

At the time we were writing, the changes that were taking place within police organizations and the growth of non-state policing, especially the growth of private security, were fundamentally at odds with each other.

What the police were trying to do through community policing, and what they still are seeking to do in this and other ways, was to advance their claim to a monopoly over policing. This claim, and the dream that lies behind it, has a long lineage that goes back to at least Thomas

Hobbes' Leviathan, published in 1651, and to the Treaty of Westphalia that was signed at almost exactly the same time in 1648.

Police, through community policing, were seeking to strengthen their claim to a monopoly of policing by developing better ways of drawing upon community resources that would enable them to police better.

What the growth of private security was doing was fundamentally challenging this claim to a policing monopoly.

In my presentation today I want to explore this contradiction between a police dream of realizing a monopoly over policing (and governance more generally) and the erosion of this monopoly by the emergence of other governmental nodes engaged in policing.

I am going to argue that the dream of a monopoly of policing by police is no longer a viable or credible dream and that police, rather than remaining faithful to this dream, as they have done for so long, should begin to look for another dream to inspire them as they enter the 21st Century. The question I will ask is what this dream might be. I am going to phrase this question as follows: "Who should the police be in an age of polycentric, or what I have been calling nodal, security governance?"

This is not a question that I have invented – rather it is one that has begun to occupy police over the past decade. In providing a suggestion as to what a new dream for police might be, I will draw in particular on work I, and others, have been doing with the Victoria Police in Australia.

In what I have to say I will inevitably be talking from a very parochial point of view -- that is, a view curtailed by the very narrow limits of my experiences. I leave it to you to decide whether what I have to say resonates with your experiences.

I will start with who the police have been; that is, with the vision that has inspired them.

The Dream of Police

So what has been the vision that inspired police?

Since the inception of the police in the early 19th Century England, Anglo-police have been inspired by a very clear, and widely accepted, vision of policing and of governance more generally. This vision constituted the rationale that lay behind Sir Robert Peel's 1829 conception of a "new police". What Peel's conception did was to give concrete expression to

a dream of how the governance of security should be delivered that had been emerging for a long time. Peel's accomplishment, when he established the London Metropolitan Police, was to take a significant step towards realizing this dream of a state monopoly over policing. His new police, thus, formed part of a long history of developments towards the realization of a state monopoly over security governance.

The British historian F.W. Maitland, writing in 1885, described this progressive process of centralization as one in which public authority had been gaining increasing control over the governance of security (Maitland, 1885). He put this very nicely when he noted that for some time "private peaces", that is orders defined by private auspices or authorities, had been progressively "swallowed up" by a single, **public** peace, that was guaranteed by a central public authority.

The situation that this "swallowing up" was, was a response to what in Maitland's view, and here I am using contemporary terminology rather than his, plural or polycentric policing. What Maitland described as progressively having taken place was a "de-pluralization" of policing. Central to this was a de-fragmentation of sovereignty. Multiple auspices of policing were, Maitland argued, being replaced by a single auspice, namely, the nation state. This emergence of state policing was an important feature of a wider state-building process that sought to de-pluralize and de-fragmentalize public service delivery.

Maitland's empirical analysis of the progressive centralization of policing echoed an even older normative conception of states as the appropriate sites of central governance and in particular policing. Perhaps the most influential statement of this conception, as I have already suggested, was that articulated by Thomas Hobbes. The Hobbesian aspiration or dream was that of a single undivided sovereignty that could and did monopolize the governance of security.

This aspiration for a single unified public sphere, governed by a single sovereignty, is a deeply embedded Western political aspiration. State police organizations have come to epitomize this dream, and for this reason have emerged as one of its most important figurative symbols. Police have become an iconic emblem of this aspiration.

The realization of this aspiration was not only a founding inspiration for police, as I have already suggested, but police have dedicated themselves to its realization. Police have made realizing this dream of governance their most fundamental mission. This dream has inspired police. It has defined who the police have been and still are. The Peelian idea that an organized police was the answer to the problem of plural policing has proved to be remarkably resilient. Thus, within the English speaking world, Peel did not simply establish the Irish and then the London Police -- he established a set of design principles for

monopolizing governance that have proved to be enormously important to the development of policing.

In summary, police are central to the political aspiration of a single public peace promoted by a single sovereign. To challenge the police is not simply to challenge an institution of governance but to challenge a centuries old political aspiration that is central to the very idea of states and state-building.

A central feature of the design principles for police, established by Peel, was that police would enable the establishment of this dream of state sovereignty by extending the eyes of the state into the very fibre of collective life. Sir Leon Radzinowicz captured this aspiration nicely when he wrote that the central idea behind the design that Peel set out for police was that police would constitute a mechanism that would establish “an unremitting watch” across state territory (Radzinowicz, 1968). The idea, as was evident from the design of the London Metropolitan Police, was to spread police-eyes over the whole of London so as to create a network or web of surveillance.

This web of surveillance would prevent crime. As a consequence the police would have little need to detect crime because it would not occur. As Peel made clear, the police would be assessed not in terms of their detection rates but in terms of the absence of crime. Today this is interpreted to mean that police effectiveness should be assessed through crime rates. The lower the crime rates the better the police and vice versa – an idea that we now find incorporated into many CompStat processes.

While this idea of a fundamentally preventative police has always been problematic, and has never been realized, police have been extraordinarily successful in progressively realizing the possibility of a “public peace” that “swallowed up” competing private peaces. Put differently, police have done extraordinarily well in establishing a state monopoly of security governance. This is perhaps seen most clearly in the simple fact that policing became equated with police, in the eyes of citizens and politicians. Policing has become what police do. To borrow a turn of phrase from Nils Christie (2003), police came to “own” policing.

While this police monopoly over policing was never perfect, police have nonetheless been (as I have just argued) remarkably successful in advancing the aspiration of a state monopoly over the governance of security. The ownership of policing by police reached its highest point during the second quarter of the 20th Century. By then the verb “to police” and the gerund “policing” were firmly tied to the police in political and popular consciousness. To police meant to deploy police.

Given the extent of the plural reality that confronted Peel, this was indeed an enormous accomplishment. For much of the 20th Century there was, in most people's minds, no police other than state police and no policing outside of what state police did. To use Fukuyama's language (1992), it would have been sensible, at mid-century, to speak of an "end of history" as far as police and policing were concerned. And indeed many people, citizens, politicians and scholars alike, did in fact speak in precisely these terms.

For evidence of this one only needs to look at the mainstream histories of the British and American police published at this time which took exactly this view (Critchely, T.A ; Reith, C.; Miller, W.R.). State police were conceived of as an end point in a progressive, teleological history. The idea of a police that monopolized policing was presented as an unstoppable, indeed an inevitable, development. Police, these histories argued, had realized their political mission – a police monopoly over policing was how things were, and that was how they would remain.

The Re-Emergence of Plural Policing

How very, very different things look today! It is not possible today, in most parts of the world, to seriously contend that states, through their police, monopolize policing. Furthermore, today, the very idea that the police can, or should monopolize policing, does not have the same sense of self-evidence and certainly, not the same sense of inevitability that it once had.

Quite suddenly, as the mid point of the 20th Century passed, things began to change, and change very rapidly. It was this sense of suddenness that Philip Stenning and I had in mind when we spoke of a "quiet revolution". What we were referring to was the way in which the presence of non-state security had crept up on us, had seemingly emerged suddenly, apparently from nowhere. The first really visible sign of this change was the growth of commercial private security, although there was much more to what had been happening than this.

We -- politicians, scholars and practitioners -- were not prepared mentally for these changes. We either simply did not notice them, because our ways of seeing did not allow us to see what was happening, or, even when we could not avoid recognizing that things were different, we simply did not know what to make of the changes that had been taking place. One overwhelming response to this uncertainty was avoidance, or more strongly, denial.

With the emergence of private security, with numbers that at the time seemed staggering but are now taken for granted, the seemingly unstoppable tide of a police monopoly over policing

was suddenly, and forcibly, stopped in its tracks. The tide had turned and things were suddenly very different.

It has taken us a long time for us to move from avoidance and confusion to recognition and comprehension. Further, getting to where we are today in terms of our understanding, which is not very far along at all, has been both slow going and hard work.

Enquiries into the nature of these changes in policing have identified two parallel, but very different, sets of developments in the governance of security.

The set of developments that people have been most aware of is, interestingly, the set that, I will argue, has been least important in reshaping policing. This set of developments, which has taken place under signs such as “neo-liberalism” and “privatization”, arises from the policy idea that the states should devolve or contract out some of their functions to non-state sectors. This idea, and it has been a very powerful idea indeed, was nicely expressed by Osborne and Gaebler in their influential book *Reinventing Government* (1993), where they spoke of states as being good at the “steering” of governance, but bad at “rowing”. They argued that while states should continue to steer governance they should give up much of the rowing of governance to others. Underlying this idea is a decoupling of “governance” and “government”.

While neo-liberalism has had some impact on state policing this arena of state governance has been remarkably immune to neo-liberalism as a mentality of governance, to this, in Foucault’s terms, governmentality (Burchell, Gordon and Miller eds. 1991).

While governments have indeed contracted out some of the rowing of security governance to others this, with a few exceptions, has been very limited. The rowing of state policing has remained very much a police preserve. Police have remained the primary rowers of state security governance.

While developments such as “community policing” are sometimes cited as evidence for of the impact of a neo-liberal governmentality within police, in my reading of this as I have already suggested, it is quite the opposite. Community policing has not had the effect of devolving the rowing of policing to others. It has been designed to, and in fact has had the effect of, strengthening the rowing of police. Community policing seeks to engage communities in policing so as to enhance not reduce the rowing of security governance by police.

If, in fact, neo-liberal ideas had indeed taken hold within policing, in the way they have in other sectors one would expect to find, for example, that the private sector would today be much more involved in providing policing on behalf of state governments than is in fact the

case. While there is some evidence that this has happened, these have been very minor developments – for example, the use of private security as receptionists in police buildings.

This analysis raises the question of how to explain the huge size of private security, and non-state policing more generally, if what has taken place is not a consequence of a neo-liberal mentality. If the explanation is not neo-liberalism, what is it?

This brings me to the second, older, and less recognized, set of developments that has been taking place. These developments have been obscured precisely because they do not fall within a neo-liberal explanation. What has been taking place, in addition to neo-liberal devolutionary developments, has been the emergence of what Stuart Macaulay, (1986) in the mid 1980s, termed “private governments”.

Before taking my argument further let me take a moment to define some terms so as to avoid misunderstanding. “Government”, in the phrase “private government”, refers to a source of authority and direction for governance. This is very much the sense in which Foucault used the term “government”. Government in this usage may or may not be a state government. “Private” in the phrase “private governments’ refers to a non-state source of authority and direction.

David Bayley and I have used the phrase “auspice of governance” to refer to a source of authority and direction in governance. We contrasted this with “providers” of governance – that is, entities who act under the direction of an auspice to enact the business of governing. The term “governance”, within this set of terms, refers to an activity intended to shape the course of events. To speak of “security governance”, as I have been doing, is thus to speak of intentional activities designed to shape the course of events so as to promote security. “Police”, within this conception, are state-based providers of security governance.

That was all a bit of a mouthful, and I apologise for that. But I hope you will agree that it was a necessary mouthful to take.

Let me get back now to the emergence of private governments in the sense in which I have just defined them. Perhaps the first point to note is that within a Hobbesian framework, “private government” is an oxymoron – it is a contradiction in terms.

Private government is something that within a Hobbesian framework is a conceptual impossibility, as government means by definition a public entity that monopolizes governance. As a conceptual impossibility the idea of private governments is also normatively highly problematic for Hobbesians, and we are almost all Hobbesians.

To recognize private governments, as Macaulay does, is not to suggest that these governments are independent or unrelated to state governments. On the contrary, state laws have provided the context for, and have facilitated, the emergence of non-state nodes of governance – two sets of laws have proved to be particularly significant in facilitating the presence of private governments, namely, property law and contract law.

In outlining the emergence of private governments I want to return to private security as an illustrative example. Private security provides a very good place both to view and to examine the emergence and nature of private governments. Commercial private security are providers of policing services that are hired by a host of non-state auspices of governance. As service providers for these non-state nodes of governance they act to create orders defined as good and desirable by these nodes.

The existence of private security companies and officers constitutes an important indicator of private nodes of governance, for without these nodes private security would not have a client base and would not exist. The fact that private security exists across the world, and that security officers typically outnumber police officers by sometimes as much as five or six to one, is clear evidence that private governments are alive and well and exist across the globe.

The emergence of private governments has been profoundly important for the governance of security, as it has reshaped it from a domain that states have dominated to a polycentric terrain. In pointing to this, David Bayley and I have described what has been happening as a “multilateralization” of policing. While this is certainly an ungainly word, it is useful.

As a result of this set of developments, which shows no sign of receding, we now very clearly live in a nodal world of security governance in which there are many policing auspices, both state and non-state, as well as many security providers – again both state and non-state.

Historically, of course, there is nothing new about this. Indeed, nodal forms of security governance are historically the norm. What makes our contemporary situation seem “new” is that for a relatively short period, indeed for no more than a hiccup in history, the polycentric nature of security governance, and governance more generally, seemed to be, and indeed probably was, receding. This recession was, as I have already argued, accompanied by considerable hope that this growth in the dominance of state policing was going to continue to develop and expand. Indeed, this seemed to be an inevitable development that would “end history”.

Today, as I have already argued, all the evidence suggests that nothing could in fact be further from the truth.

Context is of course important, and the precise ways in which the multilateralisation of policing has taken place varies considerably across the world. But whatever the variation, and there is certainly a lot of it, the overall story is the same. Namely, that it has become harder and harder to seriously maintain that the state monopolizes security governance. An “end of history” stance is now quite simply untenable.

If this is accepted, as I would argue it must be, then the normative question becomes: What now?

Who Should the Police Be?

One of the things this, What now? question requires is a rethinking of who the police can, and should, be in our age of polycentric governance. Hence the question with which I began.

It has taken me a while to get back to it, but here I am again. So, Who should the police be and how should we go about establishing an answer to this question?

This question is now being asked more and more often in policing circles. One person who has raised this question again and again has been Sir Ian Blair, the Commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police. He first raised this question publicly in a very influential 1998 paper (Blair, 1998) and has re-raised it on several occasions since then. He raised it again recently, very publicly indeed, in his BBC Dibley lecture (Blair, 2005), where he sought to initiate a public discussion around the question of who the police should be.

The answer that Blair has settle upon is one that argues that the police should not just sit back and let others encroach on police terrain but should fight back. To fight back Blair has argued that the police should take back the patrol function. To do this, he has argued for the development of a second tier of policing within police departments. In the Met he has done this through the establishment of Community Service Officers who are being used to take back patrol.

Although the creation of Community Service Officers is a “fight back” response, Blair is fully aware of the polycentric nature of contemporary policing and the size and scope private security and does not expect these other policing nodes to go away. Rather what Blair is suggesting is that while policing can no longer be thought of as just what police do, there are some activities that police should hold on to, and not be pushed out of.

In the UK a somewhat different response was put forward to the question of who the police should be, by the Patten Commission that looked at the policing of Northern Ireland. The key recommendation of the Commission’s 1999 report was that the British Government should

establish a “security” rather than “police” budgets and that it should establish Policing, rather than Police Boards, to manage these security budgets.

What I would like to do today is to share with you the vision, of who the police should be in an age of polycentric governance, emerging within a research programme in Australia under the auspices of the Victorian Police and the Australian National University.

The question of who the police should be in an age of polycentric governance is not an easy question for police to have to consider, given the dream of monopoly that has inspired them for so long, and it takes courage and courageous leadership like the leadership of Ian Blair and Christine Nixon, the Commissioner of the Victorian Police, to consider it. These are by no means the only police leaders who are addressing this question. In saying this I am thinking particularly of what has been happening in Canada for some time (Law Commission of Canada, 2006), of what is taking place in the Netherlands with the publication of “Police in Evolution: Vision on Policing” (Project Group Vision on Policing, 2006) by the Dutch Board of Police Commissioners, the steps being undertaken in New Zealand to redraft their police act and the steps the Ministry of Safety and Security in South Africa are exploring as they explore more nodal forms of policing. (Ritchie,2007; Shearing, forthcoming; Shearing & Foster forthcoming).

What these organizations and their leaders have been seeking to discover and articulate is a 21st Century vision for police. While this might indeed be a difficult task it is precisely what has to be done if police are to position appropriately themselves within security governance.

These police leaders are seeking a vision for police that will ensure that police, as they locate themselves within a nodal field of governance will continue to play a central role in policing. That is, they are seeking to ensure that the police are empirically not simply one node among many within the nodal governance of security. This aspiration is sensible, not only from the point of view of the police themselves, but from a wider perspective, as an enormous amount has been invested in creating police organizations around the world and this investment is worth protecting and developing. We have police and we should continue to use them be wisely.

The Victorian Project

The Victorian work of creating a vision for policing is a project that is being led by Jennifer Wood, who was at the Australian National University and is now based at Temple University in the US. Jennifer has worked closely with Monique Marks, now at the University of Kwa Zulu-Natal in South Africa, in developing the project. The principal investigators on the project are Commissioner Nixon, Peter Grabosky, from the Australian National University, and myself. The team assembled to conduct the project, like its investigators, comprises both

academics and police practitioners. This idea of mixing police and academics in research teams has now become a standard mode of operation for the Victorian Police in conducting research (Wood and Marks, 2006). They now have over eleven projects structured in this way.

The Victorian research team has decided to take a grounded empirical approach to articulating a role for the police in a polycentric age. In order to do this they have asked the question, of who the police should be, in several specific empirical contexts. For example, youth safety, the policing of sexual offences, policing organized crime, safety on public transit and so on. In each of these contexts the research team have asked, who the police should be within that specific context. To approach this question the team has developed a methodology that will enable the police to find out more about the nodal context within each of these domains. A key tool here is what they have called “nodal mapping” (Wood, 2006). The idea of nodal mapping is to map out the knowledges and capacities relevant to security governance that are available within a domain. The idea is to understand what knowledges and capacities are being mobilized by whom and to what ends. The mapping also seeks to identify what might be thought of as “nodal black holes” – that is, knowledges and capacities that are not playing a role in governing security but could, and perhaps should, become engaged. The central idea is to map both auspices and providers of governance so as to get a sense of the field of security governance within which the police are operating within a particular context.

Once this has been done, the question raised is, how can the police best position themselves within this nodal context of auspices and providers of security governance? That is, what is the best way for the police, given their resources and expertise, to add value in this particular context?

As you would expect, answers vary depending on the nature of the nodal field and the particular sets of issues that the field presents. What is consistent, however, in the answers that are arising is that the impulse to seek to establish a policing monopoly that pushes others who are contributing, or who can contribute, to security governance within the particular context, has been resisted. The question, as I have suggested, is to find who and where police can best add value to a nodal field.

In considering this issue of how best to add value, a key issue that is emerging is discovering how to be of assistance to other nodes in enabling them to add value. That is, the Victoria Police are asking how they can assist in creating conditions that will allow other nodes to form, and play a part, in security governance. Here the question is not simply what the police can do themselves, although this is part of it, but rather how the police can facilitate the building of an effective and accountable system of nodal security governance.

What is emerging in Victoria as these issues are being explored is both considerable diversity coupled with what might be thought of as a unified set of “design principles” for nodal security governance that uses police resources in sensible and central ways.

While the project has not taken direction from the work of the Patten Commission report, there are many resonances between the Patten approach, with its emphasis on security budgets that can be used to support and fund a variety of sets of nodal resources, and the design principles emerging within Victoria.

Plural policing, within this view, is not seen as a problem to be overcome but as an opportunity to be embraced. Compared to the “police should monopolise policing” conception, the design principles emerging in Victoria express a radically different understanding of policing and the police role.

A key conception that is emerging within the Victoria project is one pioneered by Cohen and Felson in their work in the US (1979), namely, the notion of “guardianship capacity”. This concept is being used to develop the idea that the role of the police should be to ensure that any social arena has in place guardians capable of governing security effectively. In the terms, I have been using here, the idea is that the police would become nodal coordinators and facilitators. They would not monopolize policing but they should assume a role as guarantors of guardianship that ensure public safety and security.

While the notion of “guardianship capacity” is not new, when it is articulated in the way I have just outlined it has radical implications for defining who the police should be. These implications enable the police potentially to articulate a new vision for police that can and will inspire them and others.

The role for the police, that I have just articulated (while certainly not a monopoly role) is a role that accords the police a key place as the central node within security governance no matter what the context and no matter what specific contribution they make to the governance of security within that context.

It is a role that positions the police as guardians of public order and of the public interest in policing. This may not be the monopoly role that Peel envisaged, but it is certainly a role that is consistent with the Hobbesian ideal of a state stewardship of public order.

As I have suggested, one of the features of this conception that is significant for me is not how new it is, but how old it is. This conception resonates very closely with arguments put forward by Patrick Colquhoun, one of the most influential thinkers on policing reform in Britain at the end of the nineteenth century. Colquhoun, in arguing for the establishment of what he

called the Criminal Police, that we now think of as "the police", insisted that they should be conceived of as forming part of a much wider "police system" (Neocleous, 2000; McMullan, 1996 and 1998). Within this police system the police were to play an organising and coordinating role.

Plural policing, in Colquhoun's conception, was to be managed, not eliminated. The police were, in his view, to play a critical role in this management. Private peaces were not seen as antithetical to a wider public peace. On the contrary, what might be thought of as good private peaces were desirable and were to be encouraged.

Somewhere along the line, as these ideas were translated and developed as a Peelian conception, this wider vision of police as critical players within a policing system got lost. It is precisely this Colquhoun-ian vision that the Victorian Project has sought to retrieve in articulating a "whole of society" approach to security governance that positions the police both as a policing node, with important knowledge and capacity, as well as a coordinating node within a policing system.

This view of the role of the police as nodal coordinators has been nicely expressed by Lucia Zedner in a paper published last year. In this paper she not only endorses the approach that is emerging within the Victorian Project but offers a very similar interpretation to the one I have just offered, of eighteenth-century policing reform proposals. In articulating her view she writes that:

With policing increasingly shared amongst individuals, communal and private providers, the state can no longer claim a monopoly over policing. It can, nonetheless, insist upon its right to delineate and uphold the normative structures essential both to protect the public interest in policing and maintain the ligatures of civil society (Zedner, 2006: 92-93).

This approach is also consistent with the approach that Neil Walker and Ian Loader have recently advocated in their book *Civilizing Security* (2007), where they argue for a role for the state as a guarantor of the public interest within a plural policing system where non-auspices of policing are by definition pursuing what might be thought about as common interests rather than a single "public" interest.

One of the significant features of the design principles that are emerging within the Victorian project is that as coordinators and facilitators of guardianship capacity, the police play a central role in policing even when the activities of police are not foregrounded. A good example of this is to be found in the youth sub-project where schools, and particularly schoolchildren, have emerged as major players within a policing system for youth safety.

Conclusion

Let me draw my remarks together by sharing with you the way the Victoria Project team has begun to conceptualise the design principles for police and policing within a polycentric world.

They have used the term `nexus' to capture the way in which they are re-imagining the police role. *Nexus* for the Victorian team has three related meanings. First, it means a connection, a tie or a link. Second, it means a connected series or group. Finally, it refers to a core or a centre. For the project team, `nexus policing' means a connected set of resources within which the police situate themselves as a vital centre that promotes effective guardianship. Nexus policing means an effective policing system.

Nexus policing is partnership policing, but here the police are doing more than simply attempting to recruit partners who can enhance their capacity to police effectively. For the Victorian Project, Nexus is the next generation of partnership policing. It is a partnership within a nodal policing system.

This view of police as "nexus coordinators" and facilitators presents the idea of a police monopoly differently to the way it has traditionally been understood. Police are not seen as monopolising policing activities but as being central, and indeed the central, guardians of the public peace. They are the institution that people should be able to turn to when they seek assurances of safety.

The role of the police is to ensure that safety is effectively governed. Whether this involves them as a direct source of guardianship capacity themselves will vary across time and space. A useful term that captures this understanding of the police role is Loader's and Walker's term, "anchored pluralism".

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