

POLICE CIRCULAR ORDER No. 15

The question was recently discussed at the Police Conference how to attain closer contact between Police Officers and the lower ranks. As an outcome of the discussion the following instructions are issued for guidance.

2. Superintendent of Police will put into practice a system of durbars somewhat on the lines of those adopted in the Army. At headquarters the S.P. will call a general durbar of all men in the lines and will extend the invitation to men of the local P.-S., Town, etc., who may be able to attend. This durbar should be run on informal lines the men sitting round while the S.P. and officers sit on chairs. The durbar should start with a short lecture on some subject of general interest. This subject may be one of Police interest or it may be one of wider interest. As a general rule the subjects which are attracting most attention in the press will give a line on matters suitable for discussion. After a preliminary talk by the S.P., officers and men will be encouraged to discuss the whole matters as in a debate. When the subject has been fully dealt with the durbar should then be thrown open to discuss matters which any member of the audience may like to put forward. The only subjects which should be excluded from discussion are matters of purely personal interest to individuals, disciplinary matters and such like.

3. To make this durbar a success it will be necessary for the S.P. to study before hand the subject on which he intends to talk. To go unprepared will mean an uninteresting lecture and apathy on the part of the audience. With regard to the discussion of matters put forward by the men, there must be no hedging on the part of the S.P. to answer legitimate questions however awkward they may be and provided they are put respectfully and do not lie within the prohibited category. It may be that the S.P. will find himself unable to give a prompt answer to awkward questions. In such a case he must accept the question, admit that he is unprepared and take it up at the next durbar.

4. It is very desirable that the durbar should not be treated merely as an instrument for putting forward grievances. The object to be aimed at is co-operation between officers and men, and the rectification of so called grievances is only one of the objects in view.

5. Durbars at headquarters should be held monthly. I trust that it will also be possible for S.P. to hold similar durbars at subdivisional headquarters when on tour.

6. The above instructions relate to co-operation with the lower ranks, particularly Habildars and Constables. In order to keep closer contact with the officer ranks advantage should be taken of the quarterly crime meetings when all Inspectors attend S.P.'s Office. After the finish of the crime meeting selected Sub-Inspectors should be called in and the whole meeting turned into a general discussion centre at which the S.P. will be able to put forward his own ideas and receive the ideas of his officers in respect of service conditions, control of crime, relationship with the general public and other matters of police and general interest.

7. If these durbars are to be a success it is necessary for officers to take this matter up seriously. The high Command of the Army place very considerable importance on their durbars and one or two Police Officers in Bihar who took up the system also received favourable impression from first result. I therefore, request that S.Ps. will give this their full attention. A report should be sent to me after the first durbar and a gain in six months time