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POLICE LEGITIMACY

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Keywords

Legitimacy of the police, police provocation, corruption, illegal order, professionalism, Russia The subject of the article is assessment of public confidence in the police and the legality of its activities by the opinion of the Russian population.

The purpose of the research is to identify the reasons that affect the assessment of the police legitimacy, its perception by the population. The authors also dare to identify the role of "problem areas" of police activity (related to different violations of the law) in people assessment.

The methodology of the research includes: sociological survey among Russians, comparative criminological, statistical, hermeneutic methods, expert assessments.

The main result, scope of applications. The central link of the police legitimacy is public trust, recognition, leading to the cooperation between the people and the authorities. Legitimacy assessments are formed based on the study of public opinion - the official monitoring procedure. The website of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs provides information on the results of monitoring public opinion about the activities of the police, but an analysis of its content allows us to note its superficiality and unconvincing optimism. This is obviously affected by the shortcomings of the departmental legal regulation of the process of monitoring public opinion about the activities of the police, which, judging by the questionnaire questions (there are only three of them), is rather imitative in nature. We believe that the official monitoring of public opinion on the activities of the police, at a minimum, should be supplemented by the results of independent sociological studies aimed at establishing "problem areas" of police activity related to violations of the law, violence, ill-treatment, provocations, inducing someone, directly or indirectly, to commit illegal actions, other official abuses. Otherwise, the regulatory requirements for the activities of the police, which establish the foundations of its legitimacy, cannot be fully implemented. The survey of 362 citizens conducted by the authors allows to state that, with a fairly high assessment of the activities of the Russian police, respondents pay attention to the existence of such problems as: the lack of transparency of police activities and the presence of formal and informal means of evading the legality of police activity, the tolerance of justice authorities to police lawlessness, intoxication with power by police officers, the impact of police brutality on social and legal despair, violation of the law in the name of achieving its falsely understood goals. The extreme case of perverted official zeal is the execution of illegal orders. There are quite widespread ideas in public opinion that entrepreneurs often become victims of extortion by the police, that the police take bribes from medium and small businesses, that you can buy off police officers. At the same time, the results of the study indicate that a significant part of the population is determined to cooperate with the police. Conclusions. The public demand for the police is relevant, the honor and main meaning of which is to protect the interests of all people and serve justice. People need such policemen who will demonstrate not strength and power, but simple human complicity. This is the main secret of the legitimacy of the police. Another secret lies in the orientation of personnel policy towards professionals in the police: their selection, training and support in difficult situations.

1. Introduction.

The extremely high capacity of the content of the concept of legitimacy and the ambiguity of its interpretation [1] makes it necessary to clarify its understanding in relation to such a federal executive body in the field of internal affairs as the police. If we turn to the text of the current Federal Law "On the Police", it becomes obvious that the legitimacy of the police means, firstly, its legal foundation and, secondly, the principles of its activities, which include (1) respect and respect for human and civil rights and freedoms, (2) legality, (3) impartiality, (4) openness and publicity, (5) public trust and support of citizens, (6) interaction and cooperation, (7) the use of science and technology, modern technologies and information systems. However, in this list it is necessary to highlight the main thing, to identify indisputable axiological priorities in the generally recognized value scale of participants in legal relations. According to R. Warden and S. McLean, the legitimacy of the police is public trust in the police and a conscious obligation to obey it [2, 42]. In other words, the central link of the legitimacy of the police is public trust, recognition, leading to cooperation between the people and authorities [3]. Indeed, such an idea permeates the practical content of all these principles, the content of which states, in particular, that:

a police officer is prohibited from resorting to torture, violence, or other cruel or degrading treatment. A police officer is obliged to stop actions that intentionally cause pain, physical or moral suffering to a citizen (1);

it is prohibited for a police officer to incite, incite, incite, directly or indirectly, anyone to commit illegal actions (2);

citizens, public associations and organizations have the right, in accordance with the procedure established by the legislation of the Russian Federation, to receive reliable information about the activities of the police, as well as to receive information from the police directly affecting their rights, with the exception of information access to which is restricted by federal law (3);

The federal executive authority in the field of internal affairs conducts continuous monitoring of public opinion on the activities of the police, as well as monitoring the interaction of the police with civil society institutions. The results of this monitoring are regularly brought to the attention of state and municipal authorities, citizens through the mass media, the Internet information and telecommunications network (4).

2. Methodology.

The website of the Ministry of Internal Affairs provides information on the results of monitoring public opinion about the activities of the police, but an analysis of its content allows us to note its superficiality and unconvincing optimism ("the results of sociological surveys in the period 2016-2020 indicate a steady annual positive growth (from 3% to 6%) of the values of the indicators of assessment by citizens of the Russian Federation of police activity"). Here, obviously, the shortcomings of the departmental legal regulation of the process of monitoring public opinion about the activities of the police are affected, which, judging by the questionnaire questions (there are only three of them), is rather imitative in nature. In addition, the so-called monitoring is practically aimed at establishing positive changes rather than identifying negativisms [4].

Thus, four intermediate conclusions can be formulated:

- A. The central link of the legitimacy of the police is public trust.
- B. Legitimacy assessments are formed based on the study of public opinion. C. Such a study must necessarily establish "problem areas" of police activity related to violations of the rule of law, violence, ill-treatment, provocations, inducing someone, directly or indirectly, to commit illegal actions, other official abuses.

From this, in turn, it follows that the official monitoring of public opinion on the activities of the police, at least, should be supplemented by the results of independent sociological research. Otherwise, the regulatory requirements for the activities of the police, which establish the

foundations of its legitimacy, cannot be fully implemented.

3. General assessments of the work of the police. Such a study was carried out by us in January-April 2021 to the question

"How, in your opinion, does the police work today, how does it cope with its responsibilities?" the following responses were received (in %):

- a) excellent- 3.7;
- b) good-23.7;
- c) satisfactory-58.5;
- d) bad 12.4;
- e) very bad 1,7.

As we can see, the ratings are generally positive, and the fact that the number of respondents who rated the work of the police highly is twice the number of their opponents, inspires confidence in the objectivity of the information received. Such a reservation is necessary in order to avoid accusations of bias when considering other responses that point to problems related to the legitimacy of the police.

In this regard, it is important to pay attention to the associations that the words "police" and "policeman" evoke in us. According to the results of the survey, two associative series are distinguished: positive and negative (Table 1).

Table 1
Association of respondents to the words "Police", "Policeman"

Positive	%	Negative	%
law and order	26,9	lawlessness	10,4
justice, impartiality	11,7	abuse of power	16,2
security	19,1	corruption	15,7
Total	57,7	Total	42,3

4. Negative evaluations.

It is clear that our attention is attracted, first of all, by the indicators of the second associative series, since they indicate that public trust in the police is impossible in the presence of high values of negative characteristics. There is no doubt that lawlessness lies first of all under the eradication. Many foreign publications have been devoted to the analysis of this problem, in which the opacity of police activity and the presence of formal and non-formal means of

evading the paradigm of the legality of official activity are recorded [5], the limits of tolerance of justice and civil society to police lawlessness [6], the difference between legality and justice [7], the phenomenon of intoxication with power by police officers [8], the influence of facts of police brutality on social and legal alienation [9], the cynicism of the legal behavior of police officers, brought to justice for acts of lawlessness [10], violation of the law in the name of achieving its goals [11].

Many of these negative phenomena are visible in the materials of the criminal case against the criminal investigation officers of one of the police departments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Novosibirsk Bespalov S.V. and Petrosyan I.A., who detained citizen N. without sufficient evidence. They applied special means of restricting mobility to the latter - wrist bracelets, fastened them on his wrists behind his back, placed him in an official car and began to demand that he voluntarily confess to committing a crime that he did not commit. Since the victim refused to specify himself, Bespalov S.V. and Petrosyan I.A. began to beat him. The beatings continued in the police department, where the detainee was taken, and they were of the nature of torture. Police officers plugged the victim's respiratory organs, lifted his hands up behind his back, imitating a rack, beat him with their feet shod in heavy winter shoes. During the preliminary investigation, they were not arrested, they gave deliberately false testimony, stating that the victim had a weapon from which he allegedly fired a shot during detention. They did not admit their guilt. Despite this and the group nature of the act provided for in Article 286 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation) "Abuse of official powers", the court made an exceptionally humane decision, assigning each of the defendants a sentence of imprisonment for a period of 3 (three) years, 6 (six) months conditionally, with deprivation of the right to hold positions in the internal affairs bodies related to the exercise of the functions of a representative of the authorities for a period of 2 (two) years.

In the verdict of the court, almost all of the

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listed problems related to the legitimacy of the police were reflected like a drop of water: the intoxication of power bordering on sadism, the cynicism of the legal behavior of police officers at the preliminary investigation and at the court session, the amazing tolerance of the judicial authorities to police lawlessness, violation of the law allegedly in the name of achieving its goals.

5. Falsely understood interests of the service. The cited court verdict specifies the motives for the commission of the crime "... based on a false understanding of the true interests of the police service, in order to ostensibly solve the crime, a joint criminal intent arose aimed at exceeding official powers, i.e. committing actions that clearly go beyond their powers." It is characteristic that such falsely understood interests of the service are associated with the commission of other criminal offenses: bringing an obviously innocent person to criminal responsibility or illegally initiating a criminal case (art. 299), coercion to testify (Article 302), falsification of evidence and the results of operational investigative activities (Article 303). It is also characteristic that criminal prosecution for two of them is almost completely absent (Table 2). As for the application of Article 303 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation "Falsification of evidence results of operational investigative activities", it is also distinguished by exceptional humanism: 38 people or 3.9% of all those convicted of this crime for the specified period have been sentenced to real imprisonment for 10 years.

Table 2
Number of convicts for crimes in the field of justice,
motivated falsely understood by the interests of the
service for 2011-2020 years.

Art.	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
299	1	1	0	1	0	5	0	0	1	1
302	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
303	50	76	85	94	73	100	124	115	129	129

The falsely understood interests of the service acquire a truly perverse character when

the race for indicators ("sticks") begins, which should show the results of the work of police officers in terms of active activity and high detection of crimes. This is done simply: an obvious offense is registered, a simple inquiry is carried out, the case materials are transferred to the court and a guilty verdict is passed. In this case, we are talking about the application of Article 319 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation "Insulting a representative of the authorities". As a rule, such an insult is expressed in obscene abuse of a criminal who is intoxicated relation to police officers during the performance of their official duties to protect public order, which naturally raises the question of how great the public danger of the act is. At the same time, the police themselves often behave rudely and purposelessly, as indicated by 65.6% of the citizens we interviewed. In other words, they often provoke retaliatory rudeness in the form of insults by their behavior. At the same time, we must not forget that in Russia there is an administrative liability for insulting - Article 5.61 of the Code of Administrative Offenses, which provides for penalties. The implementation of administrative measures is quite sufficient to achieve the goals of protecting the authority of a government representative. Instead, judicial practice follows the path of multiplying the number of previously convicted persons: in 2011, 8608 people were convicted for insulting a representative of the authorities, in 2012 - 7821, in 2013 - 7672, in 2014 - 8851, in 2015 - 7816, in 2016 - 10051, in 2017 - 10342, in 2018 - 10154, in 2019. - 9189, in 2020 - 8379 people. Thus, every year from 8 to 10 thousand people receive a criminal record, which stains not only their biography, but also the biography of people close to them. Such a criminal-legal response cannot be called otherwise than punitive, and this naturally undermines the legitimacy not only of the police, but also of justice. Against the background of full or partial decriminalization of insults (Article 130 of the Criminal Code), beatings (Article 116 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation), criminal liability for insulting a representative of the authorities looks anachronistic. Many judges understand this: therefore, cases under art. 319

of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation are often terminated (about 10%), and a fine prevails in the number of punishments imposed. It can also be noted that for some police officers, Article 319 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation "Insulting a representative of the authorities" is a kind of temptation, provoking them to create conflict situations during the protection of public order. It is no coincidence that such crimes account for more than half (58.4%) in the structure of acts encroaching on the identity of police officers [12, p.12]. It is also noteworthy that some regions of Russia are characterized by a noticeably higher intensity of law enforcement in terms of the implementation of this criminal law norm compared to the average statistical indicators, which is indirect evidence of the established practice of solving typical conflict situations between citizens and the police by punitive means. As our calculations show, such regions (where the risk of being criminally liable for insulting a policeman is highest) include Moscow, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Arkhangelsk, Bryansk, Voronezh, Kaluga, Ivanovo, Tula, Vologda, Kaliningrad, Astrakhan, Rostov, Volgograd, Samara, Saratov, Nizhny Novgorod, Tyumen, Kemerovo region, Stavropol, Krasnodar, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Dagestan, Bashkortostan, Tatarstan.

6. Suppression of punitive practices. In this regard, it is imperative to decriminalize criminal liability for insulting a representative of the authorities [13, p. 229; 14, p. 52]. On the one hand, police officers who a) declare their insults and b) conduct an inquiry in criminal cases under Article 319 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation will have time to do more important work. On the other hand, thousands of citizens of the Russian Federation who are not familiar with the underside of criminal justice, their relatives and acquaintances will have no reason to doubt the legitimacy of the police.

7. The problem of executing illegal orders.

The extreme case of perverted official zeal is the execution of illegal orders. There is a fairly representative conviction in public opinion

about the reality of such a phenomenon. Thus, the respondents rated the judgment "Police officers often carry out illegal orders and are ready to do it" as follows (in %):

- a) strongly disagree -8.8
- b) I rather disagree than agree 10.8
-) I find it difficult to answer- 31.8
- d) I rather agree than disagree-33.9
- e) I totally agree-14.7

As we can see, the number of those who agree with the above judgment is more than twice the number of those who disagree with it.

It should be taken into account, firstly, that illegal orders may be legal in form, but illegal in substance. We are talking here about the actions of police officers involved in the implementation of court decisions made without sufficient grounds. Such decisions, as a rule, express the involvement of judges in raider seizures and violate the constitutional principle of judicial independence [15; 16; 17; 18]. A blatant example of such "legitimate lawlessness" is the raider seizure of the Sredneuralsky Court [19], which can be considered as a basis for applying to the appropriate authorities for violation of Article 14 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, which establishes: "1. The Russian Federation is a secular state. No religion can be established as a State or compulsory one. 2. Religious associations are separated from the State and are equal before the law." From a theoretical point of view, such situations are included in the scope of the analysis of the phenomenon of "criminal law" [19], and in the moral aspect they are a heavy burden on the conscience of law enforcement officers, since innocent victims appear, literally crying out for justice. And we are all witnessing events that bring us back to the eternal questions of being about the meaning of life and the high price of a "child's tear" [20; 21].

Situations of a different kind are connected with the execution of obviously illegal orders by police officers. Here is what one of the respondents (who has experience working in operational units of the internal affairs bodies) wrote on the pages of the questionnaire: "Illegal

orders in the activities of the police are very common. Police officers often simply have to perform such tasks, because otherwise they risk falling out of favor with the higher management, which in the future may lead to dismissal and even bringing (by way of "substitutes") to criminal responsibility. There are also cases when the police consciously and with pleasure execute illegal orders. For the most part, this happens when there is a possibility of joint (with the head who gave the order) illegal earnings." At the same time, it should be remembered that over the head of a police officer, like a sword of Damocles, hangs the threat of criminal liability for non-execution of an order (Article 286.1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation). It is clear that the legislator in the disposition of this norm, in essence, defines restrictive conditions for its implementation related to the signs of the order, the subjective side of the crime and its consequences [22; 23], however, this does not remove the issues of execution of illegal orders given orally or based on the legal ignorance of subordinates.

8. Police provocations.

The results of our survey recorded the conviction of the prevalence of other negativisms in police practice. So, regarding the judgment "the practice of provoking crimes in the form of throwing drugs to citizens is widespread in the activities of the police", respondents expressed the following (in %);

- a) I strongly disagree- 4.5
- b) I rather disagree -15.5
- c) I find it difficult to answer- 31.5
- d) I rather agree-33.8
- e) I completely agree-14.7.

The results obtained (50% of respondents who agreed against 20% of those who disagreed) speak for themselves. At the same time, they are quite consistent with the data of other sociological studies. Thus, a survey by the LEVADA Center conducted in connection with the "Ivan Golunov case" showed that 66% of Russians consider the throwing of drugs by the police to be a common practice. This is done

both for "improving performance indicators" and for the purpose of organized extortion [24]. In such circumstances, it is necessary to agree with the proposals to establish criminal liability for provocation of a crime [25; 26].

9. Police corruption.

There are quite widespread ideas in public opinion that entrepreneurs often become victims of extortion by the police (41.2% of responses), that the police protect medium and small businesses (41.8%), that police officers can be bought off (58.6%). Contrary opinions are expressed twice as rarely, which indicates a tendency to form a generally negative image of the police. This alarming trend expresses the process of delimitation of the police, which is based on both an objective factor - corruption, and a subjective one - an increasing conviction that police officers protect the interests of the authorities, not the people. A third of respondents (28.2%) agreed with the statement that the police served the people, and the police protect the interests of the ruling class.

Police corruption makes a significant contribution to social disorganization [27; 28]. According to the materials of scientific research, trust thrives most in societies with an effective, impartial and fair bureaucracy of the street level (street-level bureaucracies) [29], where police officers are assigned one of the leading roles. That is why, along with anti-corruption measures, it is important to provide an adequate response to the growing public expectations of a dialogue between the authorities and the population [30].

As the results of our research show, a significant part of the population is inclined to cooperate with the police. To the question "Are you ready to take part in the protection of public order?" a third of respondents (31.6%) answered positively, and every third of them is ready to do it free of charge. Thus, the police still have a solid credit of trust that needs to be used.

10. Conclusion. In foreign studies, attention is drawn to the deterioration of relations between the police and citizens during the human rights movement and mass demonstrations against

police brutality, as well as against the ongoing discriminatory practices of police officers against representatives of ethnic minorities [31], to the relevance of the public request for the police, whose honor and main purpose is to protect the interests of all people and serve justice [32].

A similar public request was recorded by the results of a survey of the population conducted by us. To the question: "What factors are determining, in your opinion, in the formation of a positive image of the police and its employees?" the following answers were received (in %):

- a) glorification of activities in the media, publication of only positive information 8.2;
- b) refutation of negative information, control over social networks-10.8;
- c) legal consulting of TV series "about bandits and cops" 5,4;
- d) interaction with independent public bodies, civil society structures 16.9;
- e) protecting the interests of citizens, helping them in any critical situations 69.1;
 - e) other 3,0.

As we see, people need such policemen who will demonstrate not strength and power, but simple human complicity. This is the main secret of the legitimacy of the police.

Another secret lies in the orientation of personnel policy towards professionals in the police: their selection, training and support in difficult situations. It is characteristic that during periods of turmoil, upheavals and reforms, professionals get rid of, they are replaced by obedient amateurs. Although there is much talk about the need to train professionals with "the wisdom of Solomon, the courage of David, the patience of Jacob and the kindness of a Samaritan" [33, p. 245]. Foreign researchers pay attention to the importance of determining priorities in conflict police strategies (prevention vs repression, public consent vs approval of the established order), which depends on the choice of the position of the participation of police forces on any side ("right" or "left" in the political struggle, the importance of the role of police unions in determining such a position). At the same time, they see differences between the value orientations of various models of police legal awareness: repressive and preventive. Representatives of the first model are more characterized by readiness to arrest offenders, ensuring respect for the law, interaction with other law enforcement agencies and magistrates, emphasis on the application of sanctions in the justice system. Representatives of the preventive model of professional legal awareness are distinguished by their orientation to protection of democratic institutions, the fight poverty and unemployment, partnership with civil society. However, both equally assess the importance of combating extremism, banditry, prostitution, and drug addiction [34, pp. 347-348, 357-358]. To ensure the "minimum standard" of the legitimacy of the Russian police, it is simply necessary to educate an honest policeman and create conditions for his professional activity, which means that there is a respectful attitude towards him from the leadership and the absence of intrigues in the professional environment. Let the authors express their conviction, based on their own experience and the experience of many colleagues, that there were no such problems in the Soviet police. Capitalism creates a "universal policeman", whose image is a "man-mask", and the mask, as you know, accompanies the carnival, which always ends.

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