focus of Chapters IV and V. With them, homan security forces take on the appearance of modern secret police. However, much of the material covered here is based largely on both tne available epigraphic evidence and scattered references found in the literary record. Little, then, outside of their compostion and organization is known; stories of their activities are tantalizingly brief.

This work closes with a summation of their development and a re-emphasis of these forces' role in the greater transition of home's government. A short restatement of the lack of additional information is offered to contrast what is known with what has been lost.

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PREFACE

The tern homan secret police is a misnomer. it is under this collective, albeit inadequate heading that scholars have placed those agencies which the homan government used throughout its history. As it became more authoritarian, the state grew to rely more heavily on such units to gather information to control the civilian population. their pervasiveness is reflected in the variety of names by which they were known. During the Republic, civil magistrates acted in the capacity of a police force, both arresting and summarily judging and executing tne convict. It was not until Rome gained control of the Mediterranean that a distinction between civilian and state security networks was made.

The full-scale exploitation of these men began after the accession of Augustus, who placed them under limited governmental control; it was this lack of state intervention that was the major cause of the republican force's ineffectiveness. Members now were often recruited from the military and, at first, the emperor's bodyguard, or cohortes praetoriae, operated in this manner. Later, as provincial generals occupied the imperial throne, men were drawn directly from the legions and drafted into service, as in tne case of the frumentarii. These groups, however, worked independently many times, giving rise to numerous abuses which led to their removal. Under Diocletian, complete bureacratic control of these agents was achieved; they were then termed agentes in rebus, or general agents.

This development was not always direct, but it did represent the transition to a totalitarian state. Whether they were secret police or not, their indispensibility to the Roman state is without doubt. Thus, the subject of this thesis is not that they were such, but how they became so. Much of this centers on the epigraphical evidence: monumental inscriptions and legal rescripts. Still, there are existing gaps which leave no answer and must be filled with

scholarly inference. fortunately, men such as Otto Hirschfeld and William L. Sinnigen have blazed a trail.

The idea for this study came while doing some preliminary research into the military reforms of the emperor Septimius Severus. In reviewing a work on the Legio II Yarthica, I encountered the term frumentarius. Further study revealed much: there was, however, no single collective work covering the entire scope of the subject, much of this was due to the general lack of material, as discussed in Chapter VI. Nevertheless, by utilizing available material, some attempt has been made to present as clear a picture as possible of the origins and growth of a Roman secret police network.

CHAPTER I

REPUBLICAN FORCES

Little information concerning any security forces exists for the period of tne early kings. Not even until well into the Republic are they mentioned with much regularity. Certain groups, however, did count such functions among their many duties. Known as apparitores, or public servants, they assisted the civil magistrates who saw to the safety of the city. Along with the limited number of state slaves, termed collectively as familia publica or individually as servi publici, these lesser bureaucrats oversaw the civic transactions in Rome.

The apparitores were divided into five classes, among which were the lictores and viatores. The lictores, being generally freedmen, bore tne fasces, the symbols of authority, before the homan officials; their number varied according to the office-holder.[1] At kome they were formed into a corps of three decuriae, or divisions, and were under the command of ten presidents. On public occasions these men marched before the consul, clearing his way; only matrons and Vestals were excluded from their admonition to stand and pay due honor. The lictores were empowered as well to execute sentences of punishment which allowed them to act in a limited capacity as a policing agency. The same was true for the viatores.

The viatores carried dispatches and made arrests. Like the lictores, they too were divided into three decuriae for service under both the consuls and tne praetors. This responsibility of delivering messages and summons appears somewhat similar to tne later organization of tne

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[1] Yolyb. III.87; Theodor mommsen, homisches Staatsrecht, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Verlag Duncker & Humblot, 1901; reprint ed., Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlaganstalt, 1955), I:374ff.

speculatores, or mounted messengers, who, assigned to the administration of tne cursus publicus, or public post road, used their control of the highway to apprehend those who made use of it illegally. Expanding their role as letter carriers, the viatores were able to do the same, Within a short time, they became connected with a variety of otner offices, both secular and religious,[2]

The lictores and the viatores were agents of the consuls. After the expulsion of the last king from home in 509 B.C., the Comitia Centuriata, or tribal council, voted for the creation of a new office, that of consul, to replace the monarch as head of state. Numbering two and serving annually, the consuls ruled in various legislative and judicial areas. Thus, they were also commanders-in-chief througn the right of imperium which allowed them to lead an army into the field, This power extended as well to the punishment and execution of civil criminals, particularly those involved in capital offences. They acted in a largely supervisory capacity though, leaving the actual mechanics of arrest and penalization to their subordinates.[3]

While Rome remained small, the system whereby the consuls maintained security both in the city and in the state proved to be somewhat effective. but as Homan power increased and the duties of the greater magistrates turned more to the affairs of state, there grew a need for a specialized agency to ensure the protection of the city, The creation of the aediles, tne plebeii in 494 B.C. and the curules in 366 B.C., proved an immediate solution to the problem.[4] Initially associated with tne plebeian trib-

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[2]Cic. De Sen. 16; Liv. VI.15; Gell. XIII.12.

[3]Otto Hirschfeld, Kleine Schriften (Berlin: Weidmannscne Buchhandlung, 1913; reprint ed., New York: Arno Press, 1975), p. 578; Mommsen, homisches Staatsrecht, II: 138ff.

[4]During the plebeians' efforts to gain political

unate, assisting the tribunes with arrests, judgements and punishments, the duties of both the plebeii and the curules gradually extended to other areas, particularly in relation to the market-place and the city's public buildings.[5] A similar system existed among the Greek poleis of Magna Graecia. There, the agoranomoi, or market-masters, and the astunomoi, the city-masters, saw to the condition of market wares, the probity of weights and measures and the maintenence of public roads and buildings, This transfer of such powers to the aediles paralleled the creation of the Twelve Tables, or written code of homan law. Seeking a model upon which to base their own legal precepts, the decemviri, or board of ten men selected for that purpose, travelled throughout the Greek areas, and there would have encountered those agencies, The increasing need for some sort of organized security force seemed only natural in the aedileship, since they had dealt with these matters from their inception.

Many of the civil safety functions that had come under the jurisdiction of the consuls previously, now nad been given over to the aediles. Besides securing the city against violations of the law, they continued to exact penalties upon those brought before their attention.

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recognition from the patricians, they gained, in 494 B.C., the concession to elect their own officials, the tribuni plebis, who protected them against the arbitrary conduct of the higher magistrates. At the same time, these tribunes appointed assistants, the aediles plebeii, whose main duty was to carry out their orders. Later, the patricians were allowed to serve in various plebeian offices, including the aedileship. In 366 B.C. the aediles curules were created, open only to the patricians at first, but later to the plebeians as well.

[5] Dion. Hal. VI.90, X.34; Plaut. Amph. prolog.69ff; Capt. 79ff; Cist. epilog. 3ff; Rud. 372-373; Stich. 352ff; Trin. 990; Cic. Ep.Fam. VIII.6.4,5; Liv. XXIII.41.7, XXX. 26.6, XXXI.4.6; W.E. Heitland, The Roman Republic, 3 vols. (Cambridge: University Yreas, 1923) I:122-123, §§157-158.

They had already acted in this capacity under the supervision of the tribunes, and now functioned as managers of the Roman penal system. Fines were levied against those convicted of misdemeanors; these monies went into the treasury for building and road repair. More serious infractions warranted either scourging or banishment to one of the many latumiae, the quarries. Those found guilty of capital offences could be exiled or executed.[6] The application of a civil police force and corrections unit provided the necessary deterence, alleviating the consuls of such rudimentary occupations and securing the needed safety of Rome. While the importance of the aediles mignt later decline, the foundation for the development of specialized security organizations had been established.

The expansion of Home into the Italian Peninsula introduced a new branch of the ever-growing body of security forces. In 290 B.C. the tresviri capitales were regularly appointed to relieve the burdens of the consuls and, to a lesser extent, the aediles, by securing the safe custody of the convict, as well as the standard duties of arrest and execution.[7] btationed near the Columna Maenia in the Forum, they coordinated the activities of

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[6] Ibid. Throughout the hepublic, home had only one prison, known either by its general title, carcer, or the more familiar Tullianum, and situated on the eastern side of the Capitolium. Attributed to Ancus Marcius, the fourth king of Home, it was possibly an early cistern that was converted into a place of detention for state criminals. Both the upper section, the robur, and the stairs leading to it, the scalae Gemoniae, were used for execution. Those convicted of capital crimes could also be hurled from the Tarpeian Rock, named for tne woman Tarpeia who, giving the Capitol over to the Sabines, was killed and buried close by, On the carcer, Liv. XXIX.22; XXXIV.44; XXXVIII.59; Plut. Mar. 12; Plin. His.Nat. VIII.145; ball. Cat. 56; Sue. Tib. 61; Vit. 17. On the Tarpeian Hock, Liv. I.11. On the latumiae; Cic. Verr. V.27(cf. Varr. L.L. V.151).

[7] Liv. Epit. 11; Cic. Pro Cluen. 13.39.

their subordinates, the custodes, or contingents which made up the vigilia, or city watch. Since they often acted as a night patrol, they were also known as tresviri nocturni.[8] As such tney regulated the movement of slaves witnin the city walls, apprehending those suspected of being fugitives, returning them, in turn, to their rightful owners.[9] While the tresviri capitales assumed many security duties for the magistrates, they remained dependent upon their superiors and, unlike the aediles, had no criminal jurisdiction; all conviction went through the regular court. They were essentially the custodial element of tue Roman judicial process.[10] Still., their existence demonstrated the attempt to seperate actual police work from the judicatory areas that both the consuls and the aediles would continue to investigate. Such an idea was novel and its effectiveness was soon tested.

Moving across the Italian Peninsula, Rome came in contact with many new cults, most notably those found in the Greek poleis of southern Italy. One of these was the rite of tne Great Dionysia, known to the Latins as the bacchanalia. Brought into the city by a Greek priest from Etruria, it began as a simple ceremony, but soon took on an air of excess, providing the opportunity for criminal activity.[11] While the occurrences were widely known, the Senate took no action until 186 B.C. when a young man, Yublius Aebutius, brougnt accusations to the consuls.[12] When full infoxmation concerning the debauchery and subversion associated with the Bacchanalia was revealed, the magistrates, armed with a senatus consultum, began an im-

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[8] Plaut. Amph. ad init.

[9] Ibid., 155; Asc. 370; Hor. Ep. 4.11; Cic. Verr. 11.12; Val. Max. VIII.4.2.

[10] Pompon. ap. Dig. 1.2.2.30; Cic. De Leg. III.3.6.

[11] Liv. XXXIX.8-19.

[12] Ibid.

mediate investigation of the matter.[13]

The manner in which the consuls handled the affair is important since it reveals the division of labor among the various security forces, The aediles curules were ordered to seek out the priests of the cult, holding them in open arrest for questioning; the aediles plebeii prevented any secret celebrations. The tresviri capitales secured the safety of the city, stationing the custodes in strategic locations to see that no nocturnal meetings of any kind were convened; they were aided by the quinqueviri uls cis Tiberim who stood guard over specific buildings in their own districts.[14] This is the first mention of the quinqueviri uls cis Tiberim, the board of five men established at the time to assist the tresviri capitales.[15] Little about the quinqueviri was innovative, since tney were similar to many already-existing agencies. still, that should not detract from their importance, for it shows clearly that as the city expanded, home experienced many major urban problems. It therefore required more men to perform the same tasks formerly handled by a few, It is the picture of a developing magistracy.[16]

After the proclamation of penalties for aiding the criminal celebrants and publication of rewards for informers, the custodes which the tresviri had posted captured many of the Bacchantes. While the Senate might utilize a supplementary force of citizen-volunteers in emergencies, the Roman state applied these custodes as the basis of the civilian security agencies. Made up of state slaves, they secured Rome's protection for the following century. Their use was not new, Even as late as

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[13]The decree was known as the senatus consultum de Bacchanalibus.

[14]Liv. XXXIX.8-19.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Hirschfeld, p. 578; Mommsen, Römisches Staatsrecht, II:611.

22 B.C. tne familia publica were manning the city fire brigade. 17

During the last century of the Hepublic, termed as tne homan nevolution, the state underwent numerous violent upheavals. This unrest has been blamed on the factional fighting among the supporters of various military strongmen. Certainly this contributed to the collapse of civil order, But tne ineffective role of the security forces must also be considered, for their organization made tnem so, Through the patron-client relationsnip wealthy patricians could summon their retainers into a form of private army. the consul Opimius, in the affair with Gaius Gracchus, instructed the senators to take up arms and notified each eques, or knight, to report for duty with two armed slaves.[18] Even Cicero often boasted that he used nis own men to defend the hepublic.[19] This system produced a more efficacious and centralized force. Nevertheless, it also aided in weakening the government's own agencies.

The revolt of Saturninus in 100 B.C. brought the legions within the walls of home, Previously, the proscription that no armed contingent enter the city ensured that a tyranny through force could be avoided. buch a strong restriction also hobbled the legitimate authorities, forcing them to use other means in tne maintenance of order. In 88 B.C. Sulla captured Rome. The following year, both Marius and Cinna retook the city, using their Illyrian soldiers in the arrests whicn followed, Similar moves laid the foundation for the continued deployment of the military in difficult situations and the collapse of the existing police. Now, the legions were charged with keeping order,

The Republic was near chaos; the conspiracy of Catiline in 63 B.C. was the beginning of the end. In his first

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[17]Vell. II.91.3; Dio. LIII.24.4-5.

[18]Plut. G.Gracch. 14(cf. App. B.C. I.25; II.3).

[19]Cic. III Cat. II.5.

oration on the matter, Cicero declared that nothing could restrain the violence that only increased in the city.[20] The general trouble only worsened. By the time that Caesar returned from Gaul, Rome was overrun with legionaires. In fact, warfare had become so great that he stationed troops around his house as well as at the city gates in order to stem any looting.[21] The custodes were now assigned to the fora, while the soldiers, or milites, and, to a lesser extent, the lictores carried out arrests.[22]

After Caesar's assassination in44 B.C., his soldiers, stationed on the Tiberine Island and used to maintain civil order, were immediately transferred to Antony for deployment in time of crisis, as in the arrest and execution of Amatius Pseudomarius, a pretender who had incited the plebeians to revolt.[23] Two years later, when the second triumvirate of Antony, Octavian and Lepidus held Home under military occupation, these same units carried out the proscriptions; routine police duty was left to the custodes. The civil magistrates remained powerless, unable to assert any control over the soldiers' often brutal behavior.[24] The army was now in charge of all civil safety.

The security forces of the Republic were comparable to the citizen-militia of Colonial America, being called out in times of emergency. While Rome remained small, this system proved to be an effective method of protection. But as homan control spread throughout the Mediterranean, the need for a central agency under a single authority became

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[20] Cic. I Cat. I.1.

[21] App. B.C. II.92; Edward Echols, "The Roman City Police: Origin and Development," Classical Journal LIII (1958) : 378.

[22] Sue. Iul. 43.2.

[23] App. B.C. III.3.

[24] Ibid., IV.35.

apparent. The constant division of authority among the different magistrates and the ever-increasing power of the military dictators and their minions demonstrated the necessity of reorganization.[25] Without it, total anarchy would have eventually resulted.

healizing that peace in the empire was, in part, gained tnrough security at home, Octavian attempted to redesign the existing forces into a functioning element of nis new order. The things they lacked, centrality and direction, he replaced with structure and leadership. All was based on a military model, since the army had proven its ability to keep the peace and the new nead of state was himself a general. The Republic was finished.

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[25]App. B.C. I.100-104; Caes. Bell.Civ. I.75.2; CIL. I.585; VI.1298; X.6007. [CIL. =Corpus Inscriptionem Latinarum.]

CHAPTER II

THE AUGUSTAN RESOLUTION

With the defeat of Antony at Actium in 31 B.C., Octavian became the master of the Roman world. dis victory finally brought an end to the civil war tnat had lasted for over a century. While there was great benefit in his long-needed peace to tne empire, his triumph introduced some far-reaching and fundamental changes to Roman government. To maintain stability, Augustus, as he was known after 27 B.C., gradually weakened the power of existing political institutions untii much of the authority rested in him. The Senate now was reduced to tne status of a rubber stamp. The veil of quasi-republicanism between the executive and legislative branches of government served a two-fold purpose: it allowed an unimpeded strengthening of the imperial position and provided the senatorial class with the false security of a continued role in decision-making. More important, however, was the close association with the Roman military. As a military dictator, the pinceps, or emperor, relied heavily on the legions for support. Such a symbiotic relationship resulted in the success of the new regime, as evidenced in the evolution of its policing agencies.

The violence of the late Republic demonstrated the need for adequate civil protection. Augustus had hoped to alleviate this by instituting a more efficient system, but ne was hampered from doing so because of his frequent absences from the capital. Thus, he retained the dual nature of the present force, tnat of tne custodes supplemented by special legionary units.[26] He then stationed these detachments under the command of his representative in tne city,

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[26]Sue. Aug. 43.1; 49.1. These legionary units were Augustus' personal cohortes praetoriae.

initially Gaius Maecenas and later, Marcus Agrippa, who acted as tne emperor's proxy in public emergencies. At first Augustus' deputies succeeded in forstailing any trouble.[27] After he established himself at home, nowever, the princeps took the soldiers with nim when he left to consolidate his power in tne provinces. Confident in those ne left in charge, he felt that they could deal with any difficulty that might arise. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of tne Roman security organization was dependent upon the inclusion of the military. By removing them, Augustus had hampered tne custodes' ability to police. The serious riots tnat followed the consular elections of 21 B.C and 19 B.C. required that he return quickly with his troops to quell the disturbances.[28] When he was forced to depart for Gaul in 16 B.C., he became concerned, for any protracted stay away from home on his part, without a strong force to maintain order, could result in a reiapse into the precarious instability of the previous years. To prevent this possibility, he created the cohortes urbanae, or city cohorts, who would provide sufficient protection while the emperor was out of tne city. 29

The cohortes urbanae were designed to replace tne existing arrangement of tne public forces. There was always a great need for some armed organization to maintain civil civil order. The Senate, nowever, citing the prohibition

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[27]Vell. II.89.1-3; App. B.C. IV.50. In 30 B.C., uaecenas quickly detected and crushed the plot of Marcus Lepidus, son of the triumvir, to assassinate Octavian upon nis return from the East, where he was securing nis new hgyptian territories.

[28]Dio. LIV.4.6; LV.10.1-2.

[29]Marcel Durry, Les cohortes pretoriennes, Bibliotheque des Ecoles Françaises d'Athene et de Kome, no. 146 (Paris: h. de aoccard, 1968), p. 12; Michael Grant, The Army of tne Caesars (Wew York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974), p. 95. Both assert that the creation of the cohortes urbanae dates between 30 B.C. and 27 B.C. Cf. Bdward Echols, "The Roman Cit, Police: Origin and Development," Classical Journal LIII (1958): 380.

of stationing an army within tne walls, blocked any such attempt; only Augustus' personal assurance tney would be used in defense of tne city calmed their fears, He then detacned tmree cohorts of nis personal guard and assigned them to tne duties of a regular police force, tnus establisning badly-needed security while quieting senatorial opposition, 30

In tne early stages of tneir existence, tne cohortes urbanae maintained a close association with tne praetorians from which tney nad been drawn. Numbered sequentially with the conortes praetoriae, they were to be an important component of a singular entity similar to tne counterpart of legionary soldiers instituted under Marius nearly a century earlier.[31] in the creation of tnis unit, the princeps nad hopea to form a strong and capable agency which would replace the older transitional arrangement of the custodes and tneir military supplement. Long after tne cohortes urbanae had become an independent body, tnis former alliance was still apparent. When the camp of tne Praetorian Guard, the Castra Praetoria, was constructed in A.D. 23, they were billeted there, 32

According to various later Roman historians, botn the number of cohorts as well as tne men enrolled in them increased in the succeeding years. Tacitus, tne early sec-

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[30] Dio. LV.10.10; hchols, 380. In 16 B.C., tne connortes praetoriae, predecessors of the later, more powerful Praetorian Guard, was a widely scattered, quasi-independent organization commanded by two tribunes. Tneir fluidity of structure, combined with tneir role as the emperor's personal unit, allowed Augustus to draw the conortes urbanae from their ranks,

[31] Echols, 379.

[32] Grant, Army ~~of~~ ~~the~~ Caesars, pp. 132-133; LE. 1927:120. [LE. =L'Annee Epigraphique.] aotn also shared a common and restricted area of recruitment---Etruria, Umbria, Latium and tne older Latin colonies. Transfer from the urban to the praetorian conorts was standard procedure at all times.

ond century historian, noted that in A.D. 23 the number of armed forces in Rome figured at nine praetorian and three urban cohorts, essentially the same strength they were almost a half-century previously.[33] Others, however, most notably Cassius Dio, claimed that both figures were significantly greater: In surveying the year A.D. 5, he stated that there were 10,000 somatophulakes, or bodyguards, and 6,000 ~~hoi tes~~ poleos phrouroi, the city guards, each organized into ten and four divisions respectively.[34] Clearly, the terminology here is collective, for later in the passage he uses the standard Greek titles of doruphorikoi for the Guard and astikoi for the conortes urbanae.[35] In the nineteenth century, Theodor Mommsen believed that this particular passage was a serious anachronism, and that Dio was merely describing the situation as it existed in the early third century; a theory which seems untenable.[36] Alfredo Passerini resolved the discrepancy between Tacitus and Dio, concluding that the Conors X of the city forces was so closely associated with the praetorium, the headquarters of the Guard, as to be considered a part of the imperial bodyguard.[37] This latter hypothesis would seem

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[33] Tac. Ann. IV.5.

[34] Dio. LV.24.6.

[35] Alfredo Passerini, Le coorti pretorie (Rome: Signorelli, 1939), p. 48. Cf. p. 3 above.

[36] Passerini, p. 62; S.A. Cook, et al. eds., The Cambridge Ancient History, vol. XII: Imperial Crisis and Recovery, A.D. 193-324 (Cambridge: University Press, 1939), p. 5; Theodor Mommsen, Gesammelte Schriften (Berlin: Weidemann, 1904-1916), 6:6 n. 3. Septimius Severus raised the number of Praetorians to 15,000, supposedly forming an extra five cohorts. It appears, however, that the amount of men in a cohort was raised from the traditional 1,000 to 1,500.

[37] Nichols, 381-382; Passerini, p. 48 (cf. Juv. 3. 235ff, 320-329; Sen. Epist. 56). Passerini rejects the consideration of the Germani corporis custodes, or German bodyguard, citing that they could not have numbered 1,000

more credible, not only adding weight to the theory of a close relationship between the cohortes praetoriae et urbanae, but also indicating that, in the event of a major emergency, reinforcements could be drawn from the imperial bodyguard, thus reducing the possibility of a return to the chaos which occurred under the Republic.

Their constant visibility and armed nature allowed the cohortes urbanae to overawe the larger slave population at home, from whom the government still feared an uprising. Their powers of detention extended to the general populace as well, restricting public demonstrations which still frequently took place.[38] Moreover, these units secured the city during the successive imperial crises, often taking part themselves in the coups. In fact, their functions are comparable to the modern Italian carabinieri, or state police, acting as a powerfully visible reminder of the strength of the new order.[39]

To calm senatorial fears concerning the formation of an urban para-military force, Augustus placed the cohortes urbanae under the command of the praefectus urbi, or city prefect. Conferred on former senators, this plan checked the Senate's opposition while providing them the opportunity to maintain an antique position of authority. Largely an honorary office, it was also designed to be purely temporary. The failure of the proxy-princeps concept once again raised the question of a feasible solution for the protection of Rome during Augustus' numerous absences. To counteract this deficiency he employed ex-con-

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men. The most likely candidate would seem to be the remaining contingent of custodes which Augustus retained in service.

[38]Grant, Army of the Caesars, p. 96; pp. 17-12 above. The idea of a para-military organization inside of home had hampered their creation. Senatorial misgivings harkened back to the armed gangs of the late Republic.

[39]Echols, 382.

suls who would assume tne general supervisory duties previously associated with botn Maecenas and Agrippa. Early attempts, nowever, proved unsuccessful. 40

In 16 B.C., the same year that the conortes urbanae were organized, Augustus once again appointed a praefectus urbi. Titus Statilius Taurus, a general who possessed no nepublican affiliations, was chosen to command tne city forces.[41] Still, this remained a temporary arrangement. it was not until A.D. 13, almost forty years later, tnat this office became a permanent institution wnen, at tne insistence of Tiberius, the emperor selected Lucius Calpurnius Piso, both a close associate and a prestigious member of tne old aristocracy. Intermittently, he remained in tne post until A.D. 32.[42] The continual re-appointment of Piso

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[40] Tac. *Ann.* VI.11.4(cf. Jerome in Euseb. Chron. VIII); Grant, Army ~~of the~~ Caesars, pp. 96-97. In 26 B.C., wnile he was away in Spain and Gaul, Augustus appointed the former consul, Marcus Valerius Messalla Corvinus, to oversee the safety of home. Uessalla, however, resigned tnis first post of praefectus urbi a few days later, citing tnat nis duties were unclear and that the office itself was incivilis, or unconstitutional. With this abortive first attempt, Augustus, by using the distinguished ana versatile Messalla, had hoped to establish a permanence that would free him and nis closer associates from personal intervention in a crisis. That nis candidate's nepublican sentiments kept him from complying and tne princeps' immediate withdrawal of the idea until a later date, reveals that Augustus was more than willing to bide his time until a more favorable opportunity presented itself.

[41] Dio. LIV.19.6 states tnat Taurus was placed in charge of the whole of Italy. it appears, however, that, conservative that he was, Augustus was still unwilling to reject totally tne concept of a sub-princeps, vacillating instead between that and the senatorial office of praefectus urbi. Wnile ne was secure enough in nis imperial role to disregard tne grumblings of the Senate, he still consiaered his position tenuous enough to take their objections seriously.

[42] PIR^2. C289, p.64ff. PIR^2. [=Prosopographia Imperii Romani.]; barbara Levick, Yiberius the Politician (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1982), p. 53.

not only served to establish the praefectus urbi as a permanent institution, but also contributed to a viable transition from the government of Augustus to that of his successor.

The praefectus urbi simply presented an impressive facade. In reality, he possessed less political power than his pretorian colleague who, as commander of the cohortes praetoriae, or imperial bodyguard, developed a close connection with the emperor and his household.[43] By securing the safety of the princeps, the praefectus praetorio eventually came to participate in many of the innermost imperial councils, often acting as one of his most intimate confidants. This arrangement extended as well to the prefect's command which was allowed to screen incoming correspondence from provincial governors. Combined with the military composition of the Guard, the praefectus praetorio became a dominant force in the government.

Made up of equestrians, the position of praefectus praetorio was created rather late. Before then, the cohortes praetoriae were placed under the command of each cohort's tribunes. Even after the office was instituted in 2 B.C., the post of commander of the Guard was considered relatively minor.[44] Duties were divided between the joint candidates. This was largely a precautionary measure: if one of them became ill or the loyalty of either become suspect, the other could assume control.[45]

Toward the end of Augustus' reign, this method underwent revision. Owing to the confusion associated with the duality of the prefecture, and believing the faith of the Guard to be secure, the emperor appointed only one man to the command: first Valerius Ligur and later, Lucius Se-

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[43] Grant, Army of the Caesars, pp. 94, 97 (cf. Tac. Ann. XIV.41).

[44] Dio. LV.10.10.

[45] Ibid., LII.24.2.

ius Strabo.[46] During his tenure, the nigh confidence that Augustus nad in his subordinates as well as strabo's own personal ability allowed him to transcend the normal political machine, amassing the powers generally associated witn the later Yretorian Prefect.

The Guard itself, known as the cohortes praetoriae, traced its roots to the Republic when early leaders were accustomed to surround themselves with a contingent of tneir friends.[47] While it appears that one of the Scipios may nave been the first to alter that procedure, it was Marius who regularly made use of a epecifically military unit composed of specially selected legionaries.[48] By the end of the first century B.C., various commanders employed these cohorts to maintain order and crush mutinees, along with their initial task of protecting his person.[49] So important did they become that it was not uncommon for these generals to strike commemmorative coins in their nonor.[50]

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[46] ILS. 8996. [ILS. =Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae]. Like other praefecti praetorio, Lucius Seius Strabo was an equestrian, albeit an extremely well-connected one. His mother, Terentia, was apparently the sister-in-law of Maecenas, and his wife belonged to the family of the Cornelii Lentuli.

This singular appointment, however, was short-lived. boon after, his son Lucius Aelius Sejanus, was enrolled as his colleague. That the office was a stepping-stone for higner equestrian posts is evidenced by Strabo's selection for the prestigious graefectus Aegypti in A.D. 14.

[47] App. B.Iber. 84.

[48] Sall. B.J. 98.1.

[49] Cic. ad Attic. XIII.52. Despite the disbanding of his Spanish guard, Caesar took two thousand of his soldiers with him when he went to dine with Cicero at his house in Cumae.

[50] H.A. Gruebner, coins of the Roman Republic in the British ~ u s e 3 vols., photolithographic reprint. (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1970), II:183-184. A short time before the battle at Actium, Antony issued a set

Sometime after Actium, Augustus reformed his personal guard into nine cohorts, each containing 500 infantrymen, as well as three squadrons of 90 equites praetoriani or pretorian cavalry sections.[51] Three of these cohorts were distributed at Rome among the city wards, while the remaining six were stationed in various Italian towns close by.[52] This action compensated for the presence of the urban forces. Too many armed men in the streets would constitute a conspicuous snow of raw force, an action that Augustus was willing to forgo. This arrangement for the billeting of his troops, then, alleviated the oppostion that might arise, providing him with not only a private army, but also a reserve from which he could draw, should the need arise.

Like their urban counterparts, the cohortes praetoriae were recruited from the three central Italian regions of Latium, Etruria and Umbria: this was later extended to include other areas of the peninsula.[53] Thus, the Guard was a largely Italian force, The consequences were far-reaching, for no longer was there merely a Roman domination of the rest of Italy, but now a unique concept, that of "Italia", was created: a novel idea that was slowly gaining ascendancy within the empire.[54] The inclusion

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of legionary aurei and denarii, designed to honor his men. This series included both gold and silver coins with the reverse legend chortium praetoriarum, a reference to his personal guard.

[51] Fuller treatment of the Pretorians is included in Durry and Passerini, The equites praetoriani were known collectively as the equites singulares Augusti. On the cavalry units, see M. Speidel, Die equites singulares Augusti: Begleitruppe der römischen Kaiser des zweiten und dritten Jahrhunderts (Bonn: Habelt, 1965).

[52] Sue. Aug. 49.1.

[53] Tac. Ann. IV.5.5.

[54] A result of the Social War, 90-88 B.C.

of many non-Romans strengthened tuis Italian alliance, remaining in existence for nearly two centuries. It was, nowever, detrimental by fostering a sense of being true Romans and warriors of Italy and, as such, suitable judges of how both should be governed.[55] Perhaps, this possibility of future disorder on their part was a consideration in Augustus' dispersement of tnem tnroughout the countryside.

Tne duties of the cohortes praetoriae centered on tne protection of tne emperor, aoting as his escort to a variety of civil and religious functions. It can be assumed that tney were stationed among the crowds during the ceremonies to ensure tne masses snow proper respect and enthusiasm. One conort stood guard at tne palace every day and night, changing during the afternoon. While on duty in Rome, in deference to Republican sentiment, they replaced their military uniforms with togas under which tney concealed their weapons.[56] Even later, when the Pretorians' responsibilities were enlarged beyond the personal security of the **princeps**, tney still maintained a close connection with the imperial nouse.[57]

Although the cohortes graetoriae were an effective organization at home, they were, nevertheless, unwieldy. At most, they amounted to 1500 men per cohort. Consequently, an elite was developed among its ranks, composed of a corps of mounted soldiers, or **speculatores**, whose purpose was to

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[55] Tac. *Ann.* IV.5.5; His. I.84; Verg. Aen. VIII.678; Grant, Army of the Caesars, p. 90(cf. p. 12 n. 32 above), Ostensibly, seeing the Pretorians' mixture in politics to be the cause of Rome's misfortunes of the preceeding two centuries, tae emperor Septimius Severus replaced them with nis own Illyrian troops. In fact, tnis was only an outward symbol of the rise of non-Italians in key governmental positions which occurred throughout the second and tnird centuries.

[56] Tac. His. I.38(cf. Ann. XVI.27.1). At tne Porta della Cancelleria in the Vatican Museums are two reliefs snowing the Pretorians in both uniforms.

[57] Grant, Army of the Caesars, pp. 89, 164-165. During Nero's reign, the Guard was actively participating in scenes both on the stage and in the arena.

to carry dispatches for the praefectus praetorio. The term was nothing new: the legions had long used them as scouts and military intellegence.[58] As a group, they continued well into the empire, often acting as military police. When detached to Rome, the speculatores were quartered in the Castra Peregrinorum, or foreign camp situated on the Caelian Hill.[59]

During the becond Triumvirate, there was a new type of speculator who was occupied as an itinerant executioner under the proscriptions. Widely used by the triumvirs in this capacity, they were commemorated in Antony's legionary coinage.[60] lifter Augustus gained the throne, they bore proudly the title speculatores Caesaris, and it was at this time that they became attached to tne cohortes praetoriae.[61] Like the Pretorians, they were charged with the safety of the emperor as well as relaying messages.[62] lilong with their role as executioners, successive principes found them useful for espionage, arrests and the detention of suspects. It is with these men that the later frumentarii, or secret police, could find their closest antecedents.

Daily security matters were nandled by tne vigiles, or city fire watch. Of the three groups whicn Augustus es-- tabiishea, they were the last and most important becuase

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[59] On the Castra Peregrinorum, see P.K. Baillie neynolds, "The Castra Peregrinorum," Journal of Roman Studies 13 (1 923): 152-167.

[60] Gruebner, II:185-186. Chortium speculatorum.

[61] ILS. 1993, 2014.

[62] Sue. Aug. 74; Gal. 18; Tac. His. II.11. The close association between the emperor and nis speculatores is documented by the incident of Augustus dining at the villa of one of them who then entertained him back to home. Men for this corps were cnosen for their impressive physical size. it also appears tnat they were extremely aggressive in protecting their charge, once accidentally wounding the princeps in their zeal.

of their close relationship with the general populace. Throughout the Republic, the familia publica, or state slaves, served as fire brigades under the direction of the tresviri nocturmi whose duty was to oversee the nightly safety of the city.[63] These units were distributed among the wards to exstinguish quickly any local conflagration.[64] It appears, however, that this was inadequate, for the tresviri were often forced to call on other magistrates to supplement their own forces. Many times they even sub-contracted to private individuals with large bands of personal slaves at their disposal.[65]

After a fire in 7 B.C., Augustus increased the number of city ward from seven to fourteen. This move served a two-fold purpose: to alleviate the burden on the magistrates while making the governing of home more efficient. There was one serious drawback, for it placed a greater load on Rome's security, particularly its fire services. This improvised organization which the princeps implemented was tenuous and, as the result of another blaze thirteen years later, demonstrated it to be ineffective.

The vigiles were created in A.D. 6. Made up of freedmen and numbering seven cohorts, they were, like their Republican predecessors, stationed in different parts of the city with two wards coming under each cohort's jurisdiction.[66] Sources indicate that the position was less than

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[63] Liv. IX.46.3; Paul. Dig. I.15.

[64] Paul. Dig. I.15.

[65] CIL. VI.32316-32317; Dio. LIIII.24; Plut. Cras. 2; Vell.Pat. II.91.3. Marcus Licinius Crassus, the triumvir, collected much of his property at Rome by using his slaves as firemen, buying out the distraught property-owner at a ridiculously low price before fighting the fire. Aediles wishing to advance their political careers also raised and maintained private fire brigades of slaves.

[66] On the vigiles, P.K. Baillie Reynolds, The Vigiles of Imperial Rome (London: Oxford University Press, 1926).

desireable, and tne vigiles were often tne subject of ridicule.[67] Service was long and difficult, the pay so minimal that by tne time of Tiberius, inducements were offered to boost recruitment. As a wnole, they were commanded by an equestrian, tne praefectus vigilum, a post tnat held little respect, and was also initially only temporary.[68]

Details of tne vigiles' duties are largely unavailable, but tney were primarily responsible for extinguishing any fires that occurred in their regiones, or wards. This remedial function soon became a preventative one, for they patrolled at nignt, carrying buckets and axes with them. Thus, tney assumed the role of a quasi-police force. This mignt include such duties as retrieving runaway slaves or overseeing tne public baths.[69] Not all the men in each cohort were out on watch. A larger detachment remained in its respective excubitorium, or station house, where a form of police-court was held for the trial of suspected arsonists.

The last century of the Republic had proven that the civil structure of Rome's security forces was insufficient in dealing with the crises at hand. Understanding this, Augustus realized that to increase tneir effectiveness, major adjustments must be made. The recent memory of Caesar's failure still haunted him and any future plans would have to be designed around this difficulty. Thus, the cohortespraetoriae et urbanae and tne vigiles demonstrate tnis endeavor to balance the new imperial administration with existing republican institutions.

Tne process was slow, showing that for all his pol-

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[67] Juv. [illegible] XIV.305; Sen. Epis. 4.1; heynolds, Vigiles, p. 66.

[68] A similarity to the praefectus urbi.

[69] Paul. Dig. I.5; SHA. Vit. Alex. 24. [SHA. =Scriptores Historiae Augustae]. Special detachments of vigiles were involved in tne operation of the tepidaria and caldaria of the baths, since furnaces were required to heat tne water.

itical acumen, Augustus had developed no land-range course of action. The new princeps, certainly unsure of tne direction of the Senate, was willing to wait while searcning for a viable solution to tne problem. His numerous attempts to maintain the old duality of established magistracies sent him looking among nis intimates and friendly elements in the government for suitable assistants. The question of who was to rule in the emperor's absence addressed the fundamental shortcoming of tne system and provided no all-inclusive solution.

One thing was certain: like other military dictators, Augustus found his authority invested in nis army. The symbiotic bond between the emperor and his troops was systematically transferred into the civilian mechanism. As a group, they remained semi-autonomous, owing their allegiance not wholly to the state, but to their legions as well in an intense kammeradschaft, or commeraderie whicn they developed in the field. This was also true of borne's security forces. Their loyalty was contingent on the success of eacn imperial candidate. As a result, the heirs of Augustus discovered themselves at the mercy of their men.

CHAPTER III

PARTNER OF MY LABORS

The successors of Augustus found it difficult to maintain the institutional balance which had successfully provided their predecessor with almost a half-century of peace. As the years progressed, however, these new emperors came up against emergencies which required expedient solutions. Slowly, the republican facade that had been created at the Principate's inception was being chipped away. The offices which had been subordinated to the imperial will now became powerful rivals. Many of the candidates for the throne were now required to purchase the loyalty of these men to ensure the security of their rule. Among these officers, the praefectus praetorio was the most prominent, delivering the crown to whomever had achieved the Guard's favor.

The creator of this situation was Lucius Aelius Sejanus, an equestrian who had been appointed as his father's colleague to the prefecture sometime during the latter part of Augustus' reign. Of Etruscan lineage, he had moved among imperial circles for many years, particularly the clique that centered around Tiberius.[70] In A.D. 23, upon the advice of the princeps, Sejanus oversaw the construction of the Guard's permanent camp, the Castra Praetoria, which was situated in the city's northwest section.[71] For the next decade his authority and influence

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[70] Michael Grant, The Twelve Caesars (New York: Charles Scribner's sons, 1975), p. 98; Army of the Caesars, pp. 130-131; Tac. Ann. IV.1. (cf. ILS. 8996). Shortly after his appointment as joint-praefectus praetorio, Sejanus accompanied Drusus Junior, Tiberius' son, with part of the Guard to Pannonia.

[71] Grant, The Twelve Caesars, p. 98 (cf. Tac. Ann. IV.1.1-3). Tacitus asserts that this was an excellent example of Sejanus' evil intentions.

increased: he even sought a connection with the imperial house by marrying Tiberius' niece and widowed daughter-in-law, Julia Livilla.[72]

No sooner had Sejanus acquired a seemingly unassailable position of prestige, than he was removed from office and executed.[73] Later, Tiberius publicly explained that he had ordered the man's removal because he was fearful of his prefect's machinations against the sons of his nephew Germanicus, which more than likely applied to Gaius Caligula.[74] It is better to surmise that Sejanus' bold accumulation of power led to his downfall: he was not trying to upset the succession, but rather he was placing himself above his station, In doing so he had alienated certain factions within the imperial family, including those who were still loyal to Agrippina, the wife of Germanicus and the grand-daughter of Augustus. His exploitation of Tiberius' suspicious nature brought about the removal of Agrippina and her elder sons from the scene, Now Caligula was was in danger. It was his fears that prompted the emperor to action.[75] This provided Tiberius with both a pretext and an alibi for any subsequent action, Not even a close and trusted adviser, especially one of less than patrician heritage, could jeopardize the authority invested in the princeps,

While Tiberius might have settled the problem of someone other than himself possessing far-reaching powers, he still had to contend with the necessity for a capable-

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[72] It is generaliy assumed that Livilla poisoned her husband, Drusus Junior, on the command of Sejanus.

[73] Juv. Sat. X.58ff.(cf. Jos. Ant. XVIII.182 and Dio. LXV.14.1). Sejanus was condemned through a letter sent from Antonia, Caligula's grandmother.

[74] Barbara Levick, Tiberius the Politician (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 174.

[75] Sue. Cal. 10.2. Caligula left Antonia's care sometime before the age of eighteen when he then went to stay with Tiberius on Capri, there celebrating his coming of age.

commander of his Pretorians. Thus, the intimate relationship between Caesar and his praefectus praetorio which had been initiated under Sejanus continued with his successors, Quintus Naevius Sutorius Macro was next appointed to the prefecture. Although he had been the praefectus vigilum, he received Tiberius' attention by skillfully maintaining order among the cohorts' ranks during the critical period following Sejanus' arrest.[76] Like his predecessor, Macro too was able to accumulate similar, extraordinary powers: the whole distressing affair forced the emperor into permanent retirement on Capri. When Caligula succeeded Tiberius to the throne in mid-March, A.D. 37, his administration clearly depended upon the support that Macro and his troops were willing to offer.

At first, Caligula's reign showed great promise and a release from the excesses that had plagued the previous princeps' rule. It soon degenerated, however, into one of perversion and tyranny. During this time, the cohortes praetoriae extended their duties as political assassins, detaining and executing those who had been proscribed as enemies of the state. All this centered on the new emperor's immense fears: it had been what prompted the letter to Capri many years earlier, To combat the possibility of attack, he raised the number of Pretorian cohorts to twelve.

Caligula's abuses, however, alienated various elements within the Guard, particularly among the pretorian tribunes. One of these, Cassius Chaerea, threw his supgort benind a group of senators in a conspiracy to assassinate the emperor.[77] On January 24, A.D. 41, in a covered passage beneath the Palace, Chaerea, along with two fellow officers knifed down the young princeps; at the same time Caligula's wife Caesonia and her baby daughter were killed.

While some members of the Guard were involved in

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[76] Grant, Army of the Caesars, p. 137.

[77] Sue. a__ 56.

the murder, a contingent of others entered one of the imperial bedrooms and there found Claudius, Caligula's uncle, cowering behind some curtains. Upon his discovery, he was declared the new emperor.[78] The events of Claudius' acclamation and subsequent withdrawal to the Castra Praetoria are important, for they demonstrate the vital role that the Pretorians now played in matters of state. The new Caesar was heavily indebted to them for their support: the coinage which provided their donative alluded to recent events.[79] Certain factions, however, still objected to another ruler, but the execution of Caligula's assassin quieted their protests. Claudius proved himself a capable commander, quickly receiving general military favor.[80]

While Claudius attempted to remedy the governmental excesses of his predecessors, he was compelled, nevertheless, to rely on his personal forces. Among them, the band of mounted speculatores were required to provide escort to various dinner parties in the city, often replacing the host's own servants.[81] The conortes praetoriae themselves were again deployed in a number of duties which differed from their original functions.[82] In the crisis following the attempted coup of Messalina, the emperor's wife, and Gaius Silius, the consul-elect for the next year, they were placed under the special direction of Narcissus, a Greek freedman and imperial praegositus ab epistulis, or

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[78] Ibid., Claud. 10. Suetonius' account makes a good story, but its purpose was to achieve a dramatic effect. More than likely, Claudius had already been selected as successor since he was both a member of the ruling family and the brother of Germanicus who remained popular among the armies long after his death.

[79] Harold Mattingly and E.A. Sydenham, eds., The Roman Imperial Coinage, vol. 1: Augustus to Vitellius (London: H.A. Seaby, 1926; reprint ed. Seaby's Numismatic Publications Ltd., 1979), I:12.

[80] Jos. Ant. XIX.274.

[81] Grant, Army of the Caesars, p. 154.

[82] Ibid., pp. 156-157.

secretary of correspondence, arresting tnose associated with tne plot and carrying out the execution of its leaders.[83]

When Claudius died in A.D. 54, Nero, his adopted son by marriage to Agrippinilla, the daughter of his orotner Germanicus, was hailed as the new princeps.[84] Immediately, Agrippinilla began to court the loyalty of the Guard. bonuses were distributed and tne Pretorian prefect, Sextus Afranius Burrus, was selected to be a part of the new regency. A provincial from Gallia Narbonensis, Burrus naa a long association of service to many in the imperial house, including tne empress, which greatly enhanced his candidacy.[85] Acting in a judiciai capacity, he relieved the burdens wnich proved too great for the young ruler to bear.[86]

When he reached his majority, Nero replaced nis dependence on his mother witn tnat of his advisers. by ascribing his conortes praetoriae with some extraordinary activities, he hoped to forge an inseparable bond that would endear himself to his troops as a military man and tne guardian of tneir welfare.[87] His trusted Burrus soon

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[83] Tac. Ann. XI.

[84] Ibid., XII.1-10. in A.D. 49, Claudius took his niece Agrippinilla as nis fourth wife. Through her earlier marriage to Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus, she nad a son, tne future emperor Nero, whom the emperor adopted the following year. Claudius' natural son, Britannicus, was kept from attaining any significant position, since ne was four years younger than his step-brother and the product of Claudius' previous union. After Nero's accession, when she found her control over her son lessening, Agrippinilla attempted to supplant him with aritannicus. In tne end, nowever, Nero prevaiied and botn were summarily removed.

[85] ILS. 1321.

[86] Sen. De Clem. II.1.2.

[87] Grant, Army of the Caesars, p. lob. The affair surrounding tne murder of Agrippinilla did little to endear tne Guard to Nero, for ne had first sougnt them out to

died, leaving tne young man in tne hands of less scrupulous individuals. Like Tiberius before him, Nero left to them tne task of governing while he pursued his own passions, oblivious to their consequences. One such man, Burrus' successor Gaius Ofonius Tigellinus, offered little save advancing his personal fortunes. Thus, Nero had his Sejanus.

A Sicilian of dubious origins, Tigellinus became acquainted with the emperor wno then appointed nim as a joint-praefectus praetorio in A.D. 62.[88] Capitalizing on the timid cnaracter of tne princeps, he removed nis colleague, Faenius hufus, from office. While Nero preoccupied nimself with dramatic contests, Tigellinus conducted numerous treason investigations against opposition in the Senate.[89] After the Pisonian conspiracy in A.D. 65, Tigellinus received a new partner, a tall, grim man named Nymphidius Sabinus.[90] Yor the next three years, they were left in charge of home while the emperor made an extended tour of Greece. This state of disarray Left many in doubt,

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perform tne deed, Tney balked, however, citing the oath of loyalty to the imperial family by wnicn they were bound. This Lack of true commraderie between the emperor and his troops stemmed, from Nero's non-military pursuits of tne stage over the field.

[88]A native of Agrigentum, Gaius Ofonius Tigellinus was banished to Scyllaceum in Brutii by Caligula for sexual excesses with tne emperor's sisters where he became employed as a fisn monger. After Agrippinilla became empress, ne was returned to Italy, and the favor of tne hornan--court,

[89]Tac. Ann. XV.7 . . As a result of the conspiracy that arose in A.D. 65 under Gaius Calpurnius Piso, which pitted one faction of tne Guard against the otner, Tigellinus received two dedicatory statues to be erected in his honor: one in the Palace, the otner in tne Forum.

[90]Tne background of Nymphidius oabinus was highly questionable, and many colorful explanations were offered, including the rumor that he was Caligula's illegitimate son.

particularly among tne legions wno felt unsure of tneir role in tne government and uneasy about their alliance witn a commander who showed little interest in military matters, They grew disenchanted and began to searcn for available candidates.

As tensions increased, both of tne praefecti praetorio dissolved their allegiance to Nero. Hoping to salvage some part of his position, Nympnidius Sabinus removed Tigellinus, now ill, from office. ne then actively sougnt out senators wno had been alienated by the emperor's continued executions and attempted to strike some deal with tnem. Without tne backing of tne Guard, Nero was forced to flee.[91] Outside of Rome ne committed suicide.

The year foliowing Nero's death was one of confusion, for a total of four imperial candidates had been acclaimed within the first six months. The deal that Nymphidius sabinus had been arranging with the Senate came to include the emperor-elect, Servius Sulpicius Oalba. However, when Galba declined any close association with him, the former prefect declared himself, as Caligula's son, to be tne rightful heir to the tnrone. aut the rebellion was soon squelched: the troops on which he relied felt tnat tne bonuses ne promised were not enough and that perhaps Galba would offer more.

Galba soon alienated the Guard by refusing to pay tne donatives tnat Nymphidius Sabinus had promised earlier and return Tigellinus to tneir custody for punisnment. Without their backing, his administration soon faltered and, almost two weeks after his arrival in the capital, a conspiracy arose to nand over the government to Marcus Salvius Otho. The former nusband of Nero's mistress and wife, Poppaea Sabina and governor of Lusitania, he had been one of the first to throw his forces behind tne new ruler, expecting, naturally, as one of his closest advisers, to

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[91] Nymphidius Sabinus earlier bribed the conorts with promises of money if tney would abandon Wero.

be named as his successor; an honor which fell instead to Lucius Calpurnius Piso Licinianus, a descendant of both Pompey and Crassus. This disappointment drove Otho to throw in his lot with the Pretorians, embittered by the loss of their huge donative. Led by the corps of speculatores, they formed a scheme for the overthrow of Galba.

According to a pre-arranged plan, Otho, was hailed as emperor while walking near the Temple of Saturn by some of those speculatores who had begun the conspiracy. From his headquarters at the Castra Praetoria, to where he had been taken after his acclamation, he devised a plot to gain the acceptance of his cause among the Guard who had still not come to his side and an initiative for the removal of any legitimate heirs. A rumor of Otho's death, which almost ended the matter before it had begun, was found to be false: immediately speeches were made to calm the men who then set out to vent their fury on Galba and Piso.[92] Threats were then made against the senate for showing less than adequate enthusiasm concerning the cohorts' choice and included the discussion of lynching its members on the spot, Again, through the use of gifts, Otho halted both; the execution of the riot's ringleaders proved that, for the time, he was in control.

At the same time that Otho was chosen, the legions in Germany proclaimed Aulus Vitellius as emperor. When the reports of Vitellius' rapid advance reached the capital, Otho assigned many former legionary commanders to high positions in a vain attempt to foster closer relations between himself and the military. The most notable of these assignments was Titus Flavius Sabinus, whom he returned to the post of praefectus urbi. Otho did this not so much for the man's ability, even though he was quite capable, but because he hoped for a union with Sabinus' elder brother, Titus Flavius Vespasianus, who was in the East making sig-

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[92]Sue. Otho. 6.3.

nificant gains in Rome's war against the Jews. By bringing him to his side, Otho hoped to stem any further Vitellian encroachment. Unfortunately, Vespasian declined and Otho was forced to take the field where he was defeated.

Like his predecessors, Vitellius, after punishing those who had participated in Galba's murder, awarded honorable discharges and fresh donatives to those elements of the Guard that provided for his success.[93] In a bold move, he increased their complement, largely with recruits from his own legions. Meanwhile, the news of Otho's suicide had reached Vespasian in Judea, whereupon his troops then acclaimed him emperor. Throughout that summer, and with the assistance of the governors of both Syria and Egypt, he marched through the northern provinces back to Rome. He hoped to gain the backing of the legions stationed along the Danube; this would give him a wider base from which to operate.

Back in the capital, Flavius Sabinus urged Vitellius to abdicate, nearly accomplishing the task.[94] However, there were some soldiers who feared the loss of their monies and, finding some of the civilian population eager to riot, brought a halt to the negotiations. Tensions only increased when a contingent of German auxiliaries set upon Sabinus and his nephew Domitian, forcing them to take refuge in the Capitol. Fighting ensued, and the former *praefectus urbi* was killed. Domitian, in disguise, narrowly escaped. The entire episode removed any hope that Vitellius might formerly have had concerning a link with Vespasian; now he could only sue for peace. It was fruitless, because he was dragged from the Palace and murdered as Vespasian entered the city in triumph. The house of Augustus now relinquished its control of the Roman state

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[93] Ibid., *Vitell.* 10.1.

[94] 'Vitellius' concerned the pleasures of the table rather than the affairs of state.

Por my grandfather,

LEROY WADDING VAN HORN

wnose love of history inspired this work.

and in its place arose an imperial succession based not on familial connection, but military ability.

The organizations which Augustus established relieved the difficulties that tneir republican counterparts had faced in policing the city of Rome. This new arrangement had one serious fiaw, however, by investing in tne emperor tne centralization of the security forces. If the central authority was able to control its subordinate agencies, a harmonious balance was reached and imperial stability was achieved. Unfortunately, as tne duties of the princeps increased, the reliance on these men allowed them to act in a semi-autonomous fasnion, for the check of imperial consent was removed. When the emperor withdrew completely from public affairs, his abscence provided less scrupulous men with an incentive to strike out on their own. The motives of Sejanus are debateable, but it does raise tne very point of contention concerning the limits of power inherent in both offices. Combined with the supranationalistic nature of the Guard, these prefects now possessed the ability to dictate policy to tne men they were sworn to protect.

some groups remained alienated, particularly tne army who demanded a greater snare of the decision-making process. Their securing of the empire's frontiers seemed a just qualification for selecting a ruler. The emperor was, foremost, a military man, not a debauchee. The state required a leader witn proven field experience. Still, complications arose when each legion deemed its general wortny of the honor. Vespasian's attempt to seek the backing of tne units along the Danube reveals that ne understood his power base: his throne rested on their universal favor. To keep tneir indulgence, alterations to tne existing structure would nave to be implemented. home, then, was to be an armed camp.

CHAPTER IV

THE FRUMENTARII

As a part of Augustus' reforms and in deference to his legions, a military supply system, the annona militaris, was created within the imperial fiscus, or privy purse, which allowed for a management of the emperor's budget. Rather than drawing funds directly from home, provincial governors were now responsible for the administration of supplies to the armies in their respective regions, a duty which was passed on to the officia, or governor's staff.[95] The men in these officia served as the administrative center in the province and were known either as officiaies, bureaucrats, or beneficiarii, a colloquialism which denotes the favor that they had received in their promotion. Among this group fell the frumentarii.[96]

Initially, the frumentarii were a part of the annona militaris, acting as the purchasing agent for the legions' grain supply. This close connection with the provincials allowed them to gather information that was deemed indispensable to the government and, while they still retained their military status, these men soon began to work for the government.[97] While their use as informants is traceable to the first half of the second century, the origins and early duties of these frumentarii are shrouded in conjecture.. Much of the controversy centers around their relation to the army and their place in the structure of

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[95] William G. Sinnigen, "The Origins of the Frumentarii," Memoirs of the American Academy ~~in Rome~~ XXVII (1962):295.

[96] George H. Watson, The Roman Soldier (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 85.

[97] P.K. Baillie Reynolds, "The troops Quartered in the Castra Peregrinorum," Journal of Roman Studies 33 (1923):170-171.

tne Castra Peregrina, their place of operations in home. The name frumentarius implies an association with the grain supply, and arguments have attempted to link them with the provisioning of the Imperial household.[98] Instead, they were assigned to the grain administration among the provincial legions and from there were employed as spies and executioners. Thus, they were a sort of military police, a post which they held until the time of Diocletian. Then, they were incorporated into the greater bureaucratic machine as the agentes in rebus, or general agents.[99]

The term beneficiarii was a catch-all, used to describe all officiales, regardless of their specific duties; this same name was used well into the second century.[100] This lack of distinction poses serious problems, for, although there were certainly frumentarii already present, the lack of their mention leads to doubt. While governor in Bithynia-Pontus, Pliny the Younger reported to Trajan that he had assigned ten extra beneficiarii to the officium of the procurator in charge of grain purchases.[101] Some of these men would later have been called frumentarii.

While it has been readily accepted that the frumentarii were formed from the legions, which units were involved remains the question. Excavations around Rome have brought to light a number of inscriptions which provide a number of clues. The East made contributions, but the majority of men came from forces stationed in Britain, Spain and the Rhine-Danube frontier.[102] It is important to note

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[98] Jon. Lyd. De Mens., I.26.

[99] Theodor Mommsen, Römisches Strafrecht (Leipzig: Verlag Duncker & Humblot, 1899; reprint ed., Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1955), p. 319; Sinnigen, Origins, 213; Watson, Roman Soldier, p. 147.

[100] Reynolds, "Troops," 170.

[101] Plin. Epis. X.27.

[102] C.I.L. VI. 3324-3300.

here that those men from the eastern legions could feel a special heritage: the area of their origin had a long history of secret police activity.[103] These men were then assigned in Rome at the Castra Peregrina under the collective title, numerus frumentariorum.[104]

There were at the time two camps within the city precincts: the Castra Praetoria in which the imperial guard was billeted, and the Castra Peregrina, the way-station for the frumentarii detached for service in the city. The date of the camp's construction is as much a mystery as the troops it housed. Theodor Mommsen, the great German classical scholar of the late nineteenth century attributed the creation of that and the frumentarii to the reign of Augustus.[105] In the light of recent discoveries, however, the terminus post quem has been advanced to Trajan, a theory corroborated by an inscription from Tunis.[106] This, then, substantiates the assertion by the fourth century author, Sextus Aurelius Victor, that Trajan instituted the frumentarii.[107] Evidence from the Castra Peregrina has proven inconclusive, for earlier excavations were done in a haphazard fashion and cannot be considered.[108]

The existence of additional epigraphical information has raised doubts as to the meaning of numerus frumentariorum.[109] The term either refers to a special legionary unit or the band stationed at home: the archaeological record indicates that the latter hypothesis is correct.[110]

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[103] Ibid., III.1980, 2063, 6108.

[104] Reynolds, "Troops," 170.

[105] Mommsen, Gesammelte Schriften, VI:543.

[106] Sinnigen, "Origins," 222.

[107] Sex. Aur. Vic. De Caes. 13.5-6.

[108] Reynolds, "Castra," 152-107.

[109] CIL. VI.3340.

[110] Ibid., 3324-3366; Reynolds, "Troops," 170.

In fact, they were similar to the cohortes praetoriae in that they retained a commission within their respective legions while possessing a semi-autonomous status during their service in home.

How many were detsched to the numerus at the capital is not known and, again, epigraphic remains are a valuable asset in the lack of literary sources.[111] Some inscriptions assert that three men from each legion were sent, while others state only two: as a whole, they formed the largest contingent in the Castra Peregrina.[112] They bear no resemblance to the auxiliary numeri created by Hadrian to act as a border guard: this is another indication of the Roman government's lack of innovation in nomenclature, The frumentarii would have been a fluid organization, fluctuating in size due to the importance of their duties, But the name was appropriate for the moment.

It appears that no separate command existed for the frumentarii in the army: at home they were under the authority of the princeps peregrinorum, the permanent leader in the camp where they were quartered.[113] The centurio frumentarius, a junior leader, was only a staff appointment from among the ranks and did not involve any special command in the field, although most remained on the rolls of their units while at the garrison in home.[114] Some, though, were discharged and assigned to the General Staff as aides. The tenure of centuriones frumentarii did not restrict the men from ordinary promotions through the ranks of the centurionate and, since he retained the status of a regular legionary centurion, the new post appeared advantageous to those already in the higher ranks,[115] inscriptions record

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[111] Veg. Epitom. II.8.

[112] CIL. VI.3333(2),3349,3351,3357,3361,3362(3).

[113] Reynolds, "Troops," 172-173.

[114] Ibid., 176.

[115] Ibid., 177.

tnat some who were already frumentarii were advanced directly to the grade of centurio frumentarius, whiie an optio primi pili, a man deputed to take cnarge or' tne century upon tne abscence of tne chief centurion, was likewise promote~!.[116] Centurions themselves could be accorded tnis position, and some centuriones frumentarii became exercitatores equitum singularium, trainers of tne mounted bodyguard, or subprinceps peregrinorum, the second-in-command of tne Castra Peregrina.[117]

The transition of tne frumentarii from tne military to tne government was a natural one, for tne administration of the emperor reliea on spies and informants. Tacitus mentions the delatores and tribuni cohortium praetoriarum wno specialized in political assassination.[118] Luring his short tenure in office, tne emperor Otho utilized soldiers in plain-clothes to provide surveillance of subversives, a yractice with which Romans were aireaay familiar.[119] There might be no names given to these groups, but tne same soldier-spies set tne stage for similar operatives in the succeeding centuries.

When dadrian came to the throne in A.D. 117, ne pulled tne frumentarii from the army and pressed them into imperial service. A man of military background, ne nad recognized their unique abilities. Their role as information gatherers proved effective: they could be employed in the Palace in a similar capacity. While tne emperor was in aritain on his tour of the provinces, news reacned nim of nis wife's indiscretions with the praefectus praetorio and the praepositus ab epistulis; this report had come by

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[116] Ibid., "Castra," 164 n.7.

[117] Ibid., "Troops," 177.

[118] Tac. Ann. I.61.3; II.37.4; XV.60.3.

[119] Epict. Diss. IV.13.5; Dio. LXXVIII.32.2ff.; nerod. V.4.7-8.11.

tne machinations of the frumentarii which were being used on hadrian's family and friends.[120] Soon their functions were extended to include tax collection and courier duties, reminiscent of tne earlier speculatores. hike them, the frumentarii carried dispatches to tne provinces, using the cursus publicus, or imperial postroad whicn naa been implemented for tnat purpose. This road, along with its numerous military stations, was vital if communication between tne capital and tne frontier was to be maintained. Consequently, both tne supplies and monies destined for tne legions were tnus transportea under armed escort. Again the frumentarii were called uyon, since tney were knowledgeable about provisioning and could keep tne emperor informed.

During tne latter part of tne second century A.D. when Commodus, the son of Marcus Aurelius, was in power, tne frumentarii expanded their influence, so tnat even whole provinces came under their control. One centurio frumentarius counted tne entire region of Asia as nis own.[121] Another such man, Durius Lucullus, at the request of the inhabitants in the saltus Burunitanus reported certain grievances to tne emperor.[122] Pernaps this man was a provincial and a frumentarius.[123] If so, it shows the intimate connection between Caesar and his subordinates: Lucullus received a personal reply in response to nis petition.[124]

kt tne same time, the frumentarii also acted as supervisors of public mines and quarries, prisons, public works and stage performances. In a more sinister role, and akin to their original intentions, they acted in concert

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[120] SHA. vit. Had. 11.3-4.

[121] ILS. 9474.

[122] The saltus Burunitanus was located on tne Numidian frontier, about 60 km west of Carthage.

[123] Mikhail I. Rostovtzeff, The Social and Economic distory of tne Roman Empire (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), pp. 349 and 426.

[124] Ibid.

witn tne cohortes urbanae and the vicomagistri, searching the city for Christians and other malcontents.[125] Their work in this area earned the frumentarii the epithet curiosi, or snoops, sometime in the early third century,[126] It was not uncommon for them also to be engaged in political assassination, taking precedent from the cohortes praetoriae.[127] thus, they performed many of tne duties associated witn a modern secret police.

The reign of Septimius Severus marked a high point for imperial secret agents. To check opposition against state policies, he made extensive use of the frumentarii as well as numerous other groups. The Pretorians were now replaced with loyal followers of the emperor, initially veterans of his Illyrian legions, and later with the Legio II Yarthica, popularly known as the Albani, since they were stationed outside of home near the old town of Alba Longa. By the time of Severus' death in A.D. 211, military organizations nad been substituted for the earlier institutions of the Yrincipate. As a part of this, the frumentarii were able to extend tneir hold on the Roman state.

The emperorship was tnen divided between Severus' sons, Caracalla and Geta. Soon afterwards, tnougn, Caracalla felt his position threatened and had both his brother and many of his brother's supporters elimanated. Again, the agents provocateurs were employed, spreading confusion among tne populace wnile securing Geta s adherents for execution as public enemies.[128] It would appear that subsequent

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[125] SHA. vit. Iul. 5.8; vit. Alb. 8.1ff.; vit. Div. Claud. 17.1; CIL. X.6657; Euseb. HE. 6.40; Cyp. Epis. 81.

[126] Sinnigen, "Origins," 68.

[127] SHA. vit. Iul. 5.8; vit. Comm. 4.5; vit. Alb. 8.1ff.

[128] Dio. LXXVIII.17.1-2; S.A. Cook et al. eds., The Cambridge Ancient History, vol. 12: imperial Crisis and Recovery, A.D. 193-324 (Cambridge: University Press, 1939), p. 43.

events allowed the frumentarii to extend their influence over the ever-disintegrating state. When Caracalla was assassinated six years after assuming the throne, his successors hoped to remedy the chaotic situation.

Such men as Macrinus, who was acclaimed ruler after the death of Caracalla, realized that the root of the problem lay in the unrestrained activities of the army: by curbing their abuses, a stronger and more vigorous government would emerge. The pretext to breaking this hold was an investigation concerning the rape of an imperial maid-servant by some soldiers.[129] Such increased surveillance of legionary units coupled with the emperor's policy of cutting back on the huge donatives paid to them soon forced a revolt. Unseated, Macrinus, in the dress of a frumentarius, was forced to flee to Bythinia where he was captured and killed.[130]

Much of what Macrinus had started was continued by Severus Alexander. Like his predecessor, he was conscientious and well-intentioned, but lacked the courage and self-reliance to dispel the influence of his advisors. Still, some agents were returned to their earlier role among the annona militaris as supply administrators.[131] Others acted as messengers as well as wardens of those condemned to the quarries.[132] One of their most important duties during the remainder of the third century was to seek out and bring to court people who owed money to the state. Because of the oppressive tax system and the ravages of civil war and barbarian invasion, many Romans fled to areas not touched by the government's jurisdiction, allowing them to resist paying the huge amounts of money they were required to give.

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[129] SHA. vit. Macr. 12.4.

[130] Dio. LXXVIII.39.3.

[131] Rostovtzeff, p. 363.

[132] SHA. vit. Max. et Balb. 10.3; vit. Div. Claud. 17.1.

The frumentarii travelled throughout tne empire, penetrating cities and villages, even searching private residences for delinquents. Like many otners they were accessible to bribes. The continuing decrease of revenue indicates that they were not completely successful as might be supposed. Nevertneless, the thoroughness they exhibited in tne pursuit of their task prompted innumerable complaints to tne authorities, including some to tne emperor himself.[133]

The names by wnicn these organizations were Known navebrought forward tne tneory that many different agencies were in the field performing similar duties. The internal structure reveals that this is, in fact, the case. besides the frumentarii there were also stationarii, or border patrols and colletiones, tax collectors: the speculatores of Augustus were still in existence. in the eastern provinces tnere were eirenarchoi, or peace-keepers, and diogmitai, or pursuers. Like the frumentarii, tnese otner groups drew taeir titles from tneir actions. Unfortunately, the term colletiones might not imply an independent unit, but merely a colloquialism for the frumentarii in their role as taxmen.

The excavations of ancient Egyptian refuse mounds have brought to light thousands of papyri and ostraca records from the Ptolemaic and Roman periods. Among them are receipts sf communications sent between the province and Rome. Some of these address tne abuses with wnich tne local populace was faced in relation to tne secret police.[134] Though it might be nothing extraordinary, what is important is the usage of terminology, for frumentarii, stationarii and colletiones are specifically mentioned. It would be no less logical to assume then, since tnese rescripts

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[133] Rostovtzeff, p. 603.

[134] William W. Tarn, Hellenistic Civilization, 3rd ed. (Cleveland, Ohio: The World Publishing Co., 1966), pp. 194 and 199. The nigh-handed activities of the police and tax collection had been known in Egypt since the Ptolemies.

were sent to Egypt, that sone distinction would be made. In legal transactions, all colloquialisms are avoided. That does not mean, however, tnat no nicknames were used, for other papyri mention Caesariani, Caesar's men, doroupnoroi, or wallet-carriers, and diogmitai. Still, tne proponderence of names shows that, as a group, tney were pervasive.

As always, this extensive use of spies and informants led to correspondence witn the imperial administration. When Philip tne Arab came to the tnrone in 244 A.D., he instituted a policy of moderation to curb once again the excesses of tne government's agents. More hopefully than convincingly, this spirit prompted one writer to praise him for relieving tne burdens tnat existed under his predecessors.[135] Whether Philip's concern was genuine or not matterea little. The continuing crisis of Loth internal and external decay combined with constant pressure on Rome's borders forced later emperors to increase the number of frumentarii in the field.[136] Such soldier-kings as Aurelian and Probus were able to alleviate the barbarian advance for a time, thus bringing some relief from the internal tension that had become a breeding ground for tne secret police.

In spite of such attempts, the reputation of the frumentarii still worsened. their search for brigands and tax evaders allowed them wide-ranging powers which tney utilized to the fullest. This was complicated by the semi-independent status that was due to tneir military nature. No imperial candidate remained in power long enough to effect a viable solution and, even in the most chaotic of times, the information-gathering abilities of tnese groups proved too vital to dispense with entirely. First, tnough, stabiiity of the throne had to be achieved before any changes could be implemented.[137]

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[135] Eis Bas. 21(62).

[136] Rostovtzeff, pp. 399-401.

[137] Sex. Aur. Vic. De Caes. 39.44ff.

CHAPTER V

THE AGENTES IN REBUS

On November 20, A.D. 284, Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus was proclaimed emperor by his troops in the city of Nicomedia. The son of Dalmatian parents, he rose through the ranks under the emperors Aurelian and Probus; under Carus he was made governor of Moesia and given command of the palace guards.[138] When Carus went to war with the Persians, Diocletian was present among the staff of Numerian, son and successor of the former. When Numerian was discovered to be dead in his litter as the army was retreating across Asia Minor, Diocletian was chosen as the new ruler.

The elevation of Diocletian to the purple was an important turning-point in the Roman imperial system, for it marks the inception of a highly-structured totalitarian state. To deal with the problems that had become too great for one man to handle, he created a partnership: in A.D. 286, a fellow-countryman, Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus was accorded the rank of co-Augustus. As was further necessitated, the empire was again subdivided to include two Caesars. Thus, a tetrarchy was developed that would alleviate the causes of the previous half-century of unrest and bring a much-needed peace and order to Rome.

The last half of the third century was a time of anarchy during which no less than thirty-five candidates sought or held power. Many were chosen by the will of the army which had become increasingly influential in governmental affairs. The general population was overburdened with heavy taxation and inadequate harvests, while living in continual fear of the excessive numbers of police and spies that the administration used to assure its control. By the time of Diocletian's accession, the Roman Empire

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[138] Sex. Aur. Vic. De Caes. 39.1-3.

was in a state of collapse.

dnderstanding tnat sometning had to be done, Diocletian began a reorganization of the homan civil and military systems. One of the major hurdles that the new government faced was tne abuses of tne frumentarii who had operated without restraint during tne period of uncertainty. The government was forced to respond to the numerous complaints that were levelled but, while the frumentarii were abusive, they were, nevertneless, indispensible to state functioning. Tne service they provided assured its continuance and disbanding them entirely would be detrimental. Diocletian, therefore, removed them from the control of the military and brought tnem into tne recently reformed civilian bureaucracy where tne frumentarii could be more closely checked. The name frumentarius was so hated that they were now given the new title of agentes in rebus, or general agents.[139]

While the name had been changed, the agentes in rebus performed many of the same functions as their predecessors. still, differences existed. Tne frumentarii had been associated with the Pretorian prefecture which allowed the para-military organization to operate semi-independently of civilian control. Now the Roman secret police became a a part of the greater bureaucracy, coming under the jurisdiction of the magister officiorum, or master of offices.[140]

Known colloquially as the magistriani, "the master's men," the agentes were closely attached to tne magister officiorum, acting as imperial couriers. This made tnem close descendants of both the frumentarii and speculatores wno were known to count the carrying of dispatches among their varied duties. Likewise, tne agentes were mounted, a fact giving them easy mobility. As useful bureaucrats, their

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[139] Sex. Aur. Vic. De Caes. 39.44; William L. Sinnigen, "The Roman Secret Service," Classical Journal LVII (1961), 66.

[140] A.E.R. Boak, The Master of Offices in the Later Roman and Byzantine Empires (New York:

ranks were often-swollen to capacity. While the emperor Julian, in his attempts at reforming the bloated government, reduced their number to seventeen: by A.D. 380 they claimed to have ten thousand within their corps.[141] Contemporary sources reveal, however, that they never numbered more than twelve hundred.[142]

The reforms of Diocletian had created a large state within a state known as the cornitatus, those ministries attached to the emperor.[143] Such a body, through its various departments, ran the administration of the imperial machinery, following the dominus, or lord, to different cities in which he might reside while on campaign, many offices made up this organization: the household establishment, or sacrum cubiculum, the imperial body, or consistorium, the magister officiorum and the comites of the treasury, rei privatae and domestic affairs.144

The original functions of the magister officiorum are obscure, but the office was created sometime during the reign of Constantine and possessed a number of curious duties,[145] His position, however, was of an administrative and disciplinary nature; he was never known to have commanded the groups under him in military action. Rather, he acted as coordinator of his subordinates: any added authority came after the period of Constantine who invested the post with tribunal rank. It would have been difficult for such a tribune to have any power over other tribunes of the several scholae, or organizational groups under their leadership. The magister, however, acquired considerable influence

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[141] A.H.M. Jones, The Later Roman Empire, 284-602, 2 vols. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), I:578.

[142] Cod. Theod. VI.27.23; Cod. Just. XII.20.3.

[143] Jones, p. 365.

[144] Ibid., p. 367.

[145] Ibid., p. 368.

as head of tne agentes in reous. Since tne time of Julian, he signed many of the imperial warrants in the emperor's name, seeing to tneir arrival to other officers of tne state. This initial responsibility increased the power of tne magister officiorum, so that by the mid fifth century, he was one of tne homan government's most important ministers.

As already stated, tne primary function of the agentes ~~in~~ rebus was the carrying of dispatches. Often, tney are associated with the epitnets curagendarii or curiosi, inspectors of the post, and were sent to the provinces. Such men were used to see tnat the privileges of tne cursus publicus were not being abused, and tnose using its facilities were not doing so in excess of wnat they were entitled to receive. in tnis capacity, tney were required to report on the provinces under their jurisdiction. The emperor Constantius II employed the agentes in this way, Throughout the early half of the fourth century, two of these curiosi were sent to each area annually. in A.D. 395 this number was reduced to one, but by A.D. 412 the limit was removed. Luring the fifth century, when the empire was again in turmoil, tne government required all the information it was able to get; tne agentes were already out in the field and could provide their services to home or Constantinople.

The agentes ~~in~~ rebus, while they acted as police agents, were first civilian bureaucrats. The magister officiorum drew many of his assistants from the scnola.[146] In the Eastern Empire in the later fifth and early sixth centuries, records indicate that these men could hold simultaneous appointments in tne sacra scrinia.[147] After tneir retirement, tney were then assigned as principes officii, or chief administrators for the offices of urban and Pretorian prefects, proconsuls of Achaea and Africa, the comes

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[146] Boak, Master ~~of~~ tne Offices, pp. 100ff.

[147] Cod. Just. XX.5.1-6.1.

Orientis, the Augustal prefect and all vicarii, or senior non-commissioned officers in eacn of the legionary units, In the East they held certain miiitary posts as well as tnat or' comes Aegypti and duces on the Egyptian frontier. Their service as principes for one or two years concluded tneir careers.[148] Later in the fifth century, retired principes received high honors upon retirement: in A.D. 410, tne princeps praefectiorum, wno was also known as the princeps agentium in rebus attained the rank of proconsul, and, in A.D. 444 added a comitiva primi ordinis, a position close to the emperor, to nis awaras. Those men in the East wno achieved the principatus ducenae, also a high administrative post, soon received additional honors as well. in A.D. 386, they were able to retire with tne rank of consularis and in A.D. 426, that of vicarius.[149]

As principes, the agentes in rebus acquired many benefits. Imperial patronage provided an increase in promotions for its members. Many who held the nigher echelons had nign salaries and received extras for performing their duties of countersigning, for a fee, every order issued through tneir department.[150] The prestige of the corps was enhanced by the laws of Constantine and Constantius II, granting immunity from curial status for agentes who had served for twenty years; many of these men were drawn from the curial order, Other benefits included the right of all greater dignitaries in the group to make one nomination to the corps a year.

Competition to enter the agentes in rebus was keen, and by the fifth century tnere were many who were listed among their rolls. some were not on active service, but remained on permanent leave in the provinces wnile earning tneir pay as agents or lessees of senatorial estates. Many

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[148] Jones, p. 579.

[149] Cod. Theod. VI.27.20-22, 28.7.

[150] Ibid., VI.28.379, 386-387, 395, 398.

times men joined only to take advantage or' tne jurisdictional privileges, although from time to time tnere was an imperial attempt to remove sucn unworthy members from the corps.[151]

The agentes coordinated their activities and careers with the notarii, or secretaries serving the imperial privy council; tne notarii nelped to form an important second branch of the organization of internal security.[152] While the original purposes of tne agentes in rebus and the notarii differed initially, their activities brougnt tnem into close contact with each other.

The notarii served as tne secretariat of tne consistorium, or Imperial Council. While many who entered tne ranks of the notarii were of humble origin, all were required to nave a working knowleage of shorthand.[153] Such a skill was necessary for the confidential nature of tneir work and their close proximity to the emperor. because of this, they rose rapialy in prestige, making them, like the agentes in rebus, perfect governmentai informants.

The notarii were drawn from the military organizations of the Principate and institutionalized into the civilian government by the time of Constantine. Originally, the group was enlisted from botn the protectores, the elite palace guard, and tne tribunes in attendence at the praetorium, or imperial hesaquarters. It was sometime during the reign of Constantine that the importance of tne notarii in tne central government was expanded by removing them from tne military authority of the pretorian prefecture and then collecting tnem into their own schola.[154] The schola notariorum

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[151] POxy. 904. [POxy. =Oxyrhynchus Papyri].

[152] William ti Sinnigen, "Two Branches of the Late Roman becret Service," American Journal of Philology LXXX (1959), 238-254.

[153] Lib. Orat. 42.25

[154] Sinnigen, "Two brancnes," 243.

then became directly responsible to the emperor himself and was under the supervision of a primicerius, or senior secretary.[155]

It has been maintained that the notarii, like the agentes in rebus, had a military background: they were detached from their service as protectores domestici for duty in the schola notariorum as a part of their military career.[156] They were, however, actually civilians with fictitious military ranks.[157] Roman bureaucratic terminology had two difficulties: much of it was rooted in the legionary past and the Romans themselves were notorious for not creating new titles. Many of the names appear in nature to be associatedwith the army, but it would not be surprising that the notarii had no prior field training.[158] There is little information about them prior to the entrance into the schola; it seems that they were recruited from several elements of the population.

The corps of the notarii, like that of the agentes, contained a wide variety of men; unlike the agentes, many actively sought the imperial throne. While the majority of both corps were the sons of fullers and bath attendants, there were those, sometimes joining as aere children, who were descended from the important senatorial families.[159] Non-Romans could also achieve positions of high rank. Those were notarii who had received previous training in the schola agentium in rebus, but quickly transferred because, as a whole, it was more prestigious. The closeness of the notarii to the higher imperial offices gave them the oppor-

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[155] Not. Dig. 18.

[156] Sinnigen, "Two Branches," 243.

[157] Ibid.

[158] G. Lopuszanski, "La police romaine et les chretiens," L'Antiquite Classique XX (1951), 45ff.

[159] Lib. Orat. 42.24.

tunity to attempt to gain the throne. Three senior primicerii notariorum tried unsuccessfully to obtain the purple in the late fourth and early fifth centuries: Petronius Maximus, a former notarius, actually succeeded for a few weeks in A.D. 455.[160] There is no evidence that the agentes ~~in~~ rebus harbored similar aspirations.

The importance of these two groups centers on their role as a secret police force. At the time of Constantius II, certain members of these corps ferreted out treasonable plots, both real and alleged.[161] Other than that, as a whole, the agentes ~~in~~ rebus never were police: this function was invested in their duties as inspectors of the post. They were a humble company, lower in prestige to the notarii, and no agens ever rose to eminence in the state.[162] This was the view put forward by A.H.M. Jones in his magnum opus, The Later Roman Empire, A.D. 284-602.

Jones, however, failed to realize that, while the notarii had greater prestige than the agentes in rebus, and no agens appeared to have any political aspirations, they were, nevertheless, widely indispensible to the central government. Such men as Gaudentius, an agens who reported the activities of the governor of Pannonia Secunda to Constantius II, were instrumental during the last half of the fourth century as secret police.[163] After the Pannonian affair, Gaudentius was then promoted to the corps of the notarii to spy on the emperor's cousin Julian.[164] Later, this same man was dispatched to Africa to fortify the coastal areas there and keep it out of Julian's control. The position of Gaudentius is peculiar in that he was given

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[160] CIL. VI.1749.

[161] Jones, p.581.

[162] Ibid., p. 582.

[163] Amm. XV.3.7ff.

[164] Ibid., XVII.5.14.

such power by tne emperor. such an arrangement, tnough, was not unique. Luring the reign of Valentinian I, a group of men, including a notarius, was sent to Africa to lead the defense against the usurper Procopius.[165] Notarii were used in such a capacity in the Rhine frontier and Pannonia as well.[166]

Qaudentius was not tne only man who rose to fame as an informant. Paul, nicknamed catena, tne chain, because of his relentless espionage, informed against tne friends of Gallus Caesar after the latter's execution.[167] Paul also revealed plots of tne adherents of tne general Silvanus to Constantius II; Silvanus' downfall had been engineered by an agens in rebus.[168] Apodemius, himself an agens, supervised Gallus' arrest.[169] Procopius, the kinsman of Julian and later usurper to the throne, as a notarius was placed in command of 30,000 soldiers on the Roman side of the Ligris with the cooperation of the general Sebastianus.[170] And again there were tne notarii Jovian, Johannes and Petronius Maximus who sought to gain the throne.

Both the agentes and the notarii at tne beginning were assigned specific functions within the state, but as the need arose, they were transferred to other positions, so that by the mid fifth century one could find these groups in a variety of offices. While not soldiers in the strictest sense of the word, both organizations operated in a supervisory capacity: often senior or retired members of the corps exercised their duties in hazardous situations.[171]

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[165] Ibid., XXVI.5.14.

[166] Ibid., XXVIII.2.5-9; XXX.3.2.

[167] Ibid., XV.3.3-4.

[168] Ibid., XV.6.1.

[169] Ibid., XIV.11.19.

[170] Ibid., XXIII.3.5.

[171] Cod. Iust. XII.21.6.

aoth groups, however, were utilized in law enforcement, the post in which they are well-known. Agentes arrested prominent Romans and brougnt them into court.[172] St. John Chrysostom was escarted into exile under the charge of an agens in rebus, later returning to Constantinople in the company of a notarius,[173]

Men in both corps also acted as ambassadors. Euplutios, a magistrianus, was ordered by the emperor Honorius to secure the release of his sister Galla Flacidia. wno was being neld at the camp of the Visigothic king Vallia.[174] Luring the reign of Justinian, those forces were indispensable in such positions. One agens, upon the conclusion of a commercial treaty for the Byzantine Empire, became a notarius and a member of an ambassadorial party sent to seek peace with the Persian king Chosroes i in A.D. 540.[175]

Tnese policing agents served the Church as well. During the Athanasian persecution, the orthodoxy swore loyalty to Constantius II and urged the praefectus Aegypti and his curiosi to bear witness to it. This action, then, indicates an active use of tne agentes in rebus as an ec- clesiastical security force.[176] In A.D. 407, agentes were ordered to prevent gatherings of Lonatists and wanichaeans in Africa.[177] Notarii carried messages from court to bishops, and were empowered to settle disputes over episcopal sees.[178] The Uonatist heresy became such a problem tnat in the early fifth century a notarius, Elavius Marcellinus, on imperial order., presided at the Council of Carthage, called

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[172] Ibid.

[173] Symm. X.31.

[174] Frag. Olymp. I.31.

[175] Amm. XVII.5.15; Procop. De Bell. Pers. II.7.15; Zosim. V.40.

[176] Athan. Hist. Arian ad Mon.

[177] Const. Sirm. 12.5.

[178] Ambrose. Epis. XX.22.

in A.D. 411 to arrive at a solution.[179] Again, both groups appeared at the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451, informing the prelates there of imperial mandates.[180]

The two corps also performed the miscellaneous tasks typical of bureaucrats. As curiosi litorum, or harbor customs, the agentes in rebus regulated sea commerce at home's numerous ports.[181] In the sixth century an agens was permanently stationed at Clysma, near Suez. His purpose was to regulate the Abyssinian ships that were allowed to use only this port: he also led a yearly fleet to the Abyssinian coastal city of Adulis.[182] The emperor Julian placed a notarius in charge of Bononia in northern Gaul to prevent ships from leaving for Britain, since the commander there was pro-Constantian and Julian did not want the news of his recent elevation to the throne reaching him.[183] Agentes oversaw as well the transportation of urban Roman supplies from Africa to Portus, a duty reminiscent of the older frumentarii,[184] Agentes were also responsible for the maintenance of public buildings; a notarius investigated the faulty construction of a bridge during the prefecture of Symmachus.[185]

From the extent of their responsibilities, it is apparent that both the agentes in rebus and the notarii were integral components in the greater bureaucratic machinery. Unlike the frumentarii, they were no longer a semi-independent organization, but now a vital extension of the

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[179] Cod. Theod. VI.29.11.

[180] Acta Conc. II.6.149.

[181] Cod. Theod. VI.29.11.

[182] CSEL. XXIX. CSEL. =Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticum Latinum.

[183] Amm. XX.9.9.

[184] Symm. X.18.

[185] Ibid., X.26; CIL. X.7200.

government itself, hike their predecessors tney possessed innocuous intentions at first, but their diversity and inherent abilities allowed them the opportunity to expand into more nefarious areas. hided by the increasing totalitarianism under such emperors as Constantius II, they took on the air of a personal force, ready at imperial command to enforce his policies. Tney were no less pervasive than previous state police, but their attachment to the administration made them respectable members of the system. This relationship was further strengthened when, as the western portion of the Koman Empire collapsed, they transferred their allegiance to tne nascient Byzantine state in the East. Now they became a much more powerful and efficient police network.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In the creation of a later Roman police force, the government reached a successful oonclusion in its attempt to establish a viable security system. Now the state had a body that would function under its complete control. The process was long and difficult, paralleling Rome's transition to a highly stratified, totalitarian entity. There was no long-range objective: proposals were tested and, if found unworkable, were then discarded. home's penchant for not creating a precedent hampered an all-inclusive solution. Thus, a patch-work quilt of programs was all that sufficed.

Throughout the Hepublic, the function of a security force was dissipated among a variety of different groups, each with overlapping duties, thus emphasizing the government's policy of spreading power over a wide area, While this arrangement instituted an idea of checks and balances, it aroused questions concerning its role in a crisis. The centralization required in an effective police network was lacking, leaving it weak and emasculated. Any reorganization, however, had to be accomplished within tae parameters of the status quo. This is clearest in the resolution of Augustus, in which he sought to maintain the existing institutions, supplementing them as neccessary with his own legions. By doing so, he hoped to achieve a relative balance, bringing peace and quiet to the state. Soon, continuing problems forced him to revise this position, making these temporary measures permanent. In the long run, this decision proved to have disastrous consequences,

The involvement of the army in civilian affairs demonstrated the military nature of the homan state. They secured tne empire's frontiers from barbarian attack; they were the basis of imperial power. Nevertheless, the government conceded little to them outside of participation in the

Pretorian Guard wnich was limited to men of Italian stock. While their titular nead remained the emperor, actual command was delegated to the praefectus praetorio. Theoretically, the relationship between the two offices was to be a symbiotic one: in fact, an uneasy partnership was formed wnereby loyalty to Caesar was based on the amount of money he was willing to offer. strong principes were able to overcome this difficulty and turn the cohorts to their advantage. Others became helpless, bound by their own weaknesses; their prefects seized the opportunity to advance their own positions. Meanwhile, the remaining legions, as locally-recruited provincials, were largely excluded and alienated from candidate selection.

in choosing the Flavians, the army recognized the potential to elevate successfully its own imperial nominees to the throne. These new rulers were battle-hardened field generals who would bring an end to the state's troubles and return home to a period of strength and vitality. To accomplish this, they instituted a military form of government, including the use of informants. buch men as the frumentarii had been trained in legionary espionage. Still better was their affiliation with the military: they would prove more reliable than the cohortes praetoriae. By being involved with the grain administration, they were keenly aware of provincial affairs. In dealing with local bureaucrats, these men formed contacts upon whom they could rely for information. There was, however, one drawback: the frumentarii remained on the rolls of their respective legions, thus placing them outside of complete civilian authority.

As the third century progressed, this deficiencg became tragically apparent. increased barbarian invasions and constant usurpations left home with no single, prolonged administration to act effectively. Consequently, the government made no conscious effort to control the spies and informants that were harassing the countryside; in fact, these men were given free reign to operate as they wisned. During

the period of chaos which followed, the frumentarii established sovereignties free from state interference. There, they could exert enormous pressure on the local population, ferreting out brigands and extorting those delinquent in their payment of taxes. Petitions to the autnorities listed their abuses and attested their sinister reputation. These cries, however, went unheeded: only until Rome itself recovered could the brutalities stop.

Theresolution of Diocletian was, in many ways, simihar to that of Augustus; its effects were wide and sweeping. One of his most important changes was the abolishment of the frumentarii and their reconstitution under the civilian bureaucracy as agentes in rebus. Where the frumentarii nad been uncontrollable, the secret police of the Late Homan Empire worked within certain governmental limits, Their transfer to the command of one of the emperor's advisers brought them completely under state authority. While many of their continued activities might seem a sign of renewed independence, they were, nevertheless, doing so at the insistence of the government.

This association gave the agentes and their counterparts, the notarii, respectability; the membership they enjoyed offered numerous advantages. Positions of high honor, such as the nigher civilian and proconsulas appointments, were often available. Even the imperial throne was in reach. Still, the offices provided enough to swell its ranks. This was not true of the frumentarii wnose reputation for inconsistency became a hinderance.

The lack of additional information leaves many questions concerning these groups unanswered. Much of what is known has been gleaned from epigraphical sources or scant references in many of the classical authors. They provide valuable insight: not only is there an increase in the general body of information, but also the authors' own personal-observations and prejudices are evident. This, however, only

deals in generalities; their actual duties are left to conjecture. hither the omnipresence of the secret police failed to ellicit extended comment or the fear of reprisal contributed to this information not being detailed.

Owing to this lack of literary material, little else other than journal articles have addressed the subject; they concentrate on the specifics. While such authors as William G. Sinnigen on the origin of the frumentarii, P.K. Baillie Reynolds on the relationship of these groups with the Castra Peregrina and Ramsay MacMullen with his discussion of the interaction between the military and civilian population in the Later Roman Empire have mused on various aspects of the network, no cohesive entity emerged, tracing their origins and development.

Such a transition closely follows that of an authoritarian state which required internal controls for an effective operation. Like many modern counterparts, the Roman state utilized such agencies for the continuance of the administration's control. Their success is traceable throughout the entire course of the homan experience and the increasing reliance of the government on their services show these units to be an integral part of the system.

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