Larimer Tours

Egon Bittner

Bittner, Egon. 1965. *Larimer Tours*. Bureau of Sociological Research Report no. 32. University of Colorado, Boulder, CO.*

CONTENTS

* Selections from *Larimer Tours* have appeared under the title 'Keeping the peace in Skid Row' in *The American City: A Sourcebook of Urban Imagery*, ed. Anselm L. Strauss (London: Allen Lane, 1968). We thank Egon Bittner for permission to reprint the entire report, and Penguin Press for their advice.

ISSN 1366-4964. DOI 10.5449/idslu-001091497.

SOCIOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

In June of 1965 Egon Bittner* came to Denver to accompany the police on their patrol through downtown Denver. On the Eleventh, a Friday, he rode in a patrol car through downtown Denver with two officers, Garrison and Thompson. On Saturday the Twelfth he rode again, this time with Officer Ford to various parts of Denver as well as through the downtown area. On Monday and Tuesday he walked with Officer Konecny along Larimer Street. The following report gives an account of what Egon Bittner saw, what was talked about, and what he could make of this.

We have secured here some fine products of natural sociological inquiry, particularly instances of how persons on the scene themselves observe and make sense of what they are involved in. In episode after episode Egon Bittner points out how sense is brought to a scene or abstracted from it, how thus sensible objects, actions, persons, episodes and settings are essentially generated as scenes unfold.

Very fortunately, the general spectacle was Larimer, the skid row area we have been investigating for our report on THE UNATTACHED SOCIETY, Bureau of Sociological Research Report No. 24, University of Colorado. Egon Bittner has allowed us to use his own account for reference in our study.

LARIMER TOURS is restricted in circulation at this time, for Bittner wishes to improve the copy and add comments and interpretations when he has the time. This report, accordingly, is to be regarded only as a first draft. Actually it is hard to see how LARIMER TOURS can be much improved, though this is Bittner's plan.

We appreciate the excellent counsel Egon Bittner gave us during the week he was in Denver and the courtesy he has extended in allowing us to submit this report as part of our study of the Skyline Area undertaken this summer for the Urban Renewal Authority of Denver.

The Monday night walk with Officer Konecny is the most impressive tour. Egon Bittner's responses to all the tours are impressive: he can make eventful the uneventful.

It is worthwhile to compare LARIMER TOURS with THE JAILING OF JOHN RALPH KRUTHSHIFT and A QUIET STRIP, Bureau of Sociological Reports 20 and 26.

Edward Rose
September 1, 1965

---

* Langley Porter Clinic, University of California Medical Center, San Francisco, California.

LARIMER TOURS*

This is an account of experiences while riding with the police on Friday, June 11.

June 11, 1965

ARRANGEMENTS

Bittner: Professor Rose and I appeared in Lieutenant O'Neill's office at six o'clock. After short introductions, we filled out some papers relieving the City of Denver liability in case of accident or injury. I was given to understand that I would be riding with officers patrolling the eleventh section or section eleven and that this would start at seven o'clock. I felt slightly uncomfortable because of the hum of activities around the police station. And so I left at six-thirty and returned at seven o'clock. As it turned out the car patrolling Section Eleven had left, apparently inadvertently. They were called back.

STARTING OUT ON PATROL

At about twenty minutes after seven I left Lt. O'Neill's office and started out on the patrol. The two officers in the patrol car were Garrison and Thompson, the first being a senior officer of some years' service, the other one a rookie still on probationary status with the police department. I was told that the eleventh district extends from Seventeenth to Twenty-Third Street and from Curtis to the Valley Highway. In principle the car patrols this area. In fact, it may occasionally be called out to attend to matters in other parts of the city. As we drove off I complimented the police officers on the state of their automobile, which, as I told them, compared favorably with the automobiles used by the San Francisco Police Department. They remarked that their fleet has just recently been revamped and they are now driving 1964–1965 automobiles. They have, however, in the past, had bad cars too. In the course of conversation it came up that by and large the radio cars are not used to transport apprehended persons to the jail. There are some exceptions, of course, and on occasions, to expedite matters, someone will be transported in a radio car. For the most part, however, the officers like to avail themselves of the paddy wagon, which is called the scout car, to pick up the people they apprehend.

* The following accounts were put on tape by Egon Bittner immediately following the tours. Anthony Gorman listened to the Friday and Saturday evening reports.

DOUBLE SURVEILLANCE

As we drove into the District, going along Curtis, I was told that this is a particularly troublesome area and that for this reason it is a demarcation line between patrols eleven and sixteen. In this way, the border gets double surveillance from the radio cars of both districts.

CRIMINAL ELEMENT

Proceeding on Curtis the officers explained that nineteenth seems to be a dividing line in the district, there being between nineteenth and twenty-third more of a known criminal element, whereas between nineteenth and sixteenth there is more of a wino problem. In answer to my question of what kind of known criminals hang out in the area between nineteenth and twenty-third, I was informed that these are probably not big-time criminals but persons who are known for property crimes, narcotics and a good number of persons who are simply known as ex-convicts. By and large, of course, these people are familiar to the police and they are kept under surveillance.

IF A WINO CAN WALK, YOU LET HIM WALK

On the other hand, the people one encounters between nineteenth and seventeenth are generally left alone by the police unless they are in such a state that they are dangerous to themselves or to others. The rule appears to be that as long as a wino can walk, you let him walk. I may add now that later in the evening I saw some winos who could just barely walk, and they were let go. That is, they were permitted to continue wherever they were bound.

A COUPLE WALKED INTO A BAR

The first stop we made was on Curtis. As we were cruising, a couple walked into a bar. The officer slowed down immediately. When I inquired what was remarkable about this couple, he said the woman was quite drunk. We stopped at the curb. After waiting for a little while at the curb, we left the car and went into the bar. The couple sat in a booth. The man was drinking a soft drink. The woman was having a cup of coffee. The senior officer, Garrison, walked over to the bartender and there was a brief exchange during which the bartender gave the officer assurances that coffee would be the only thing this woman was going to drink in this place.

POLICE CONVERSATIONS

I want to note now that there is something peculiar about police conversations with citizens: namely, the conversations proceed at an enormously slow rate. Police officers insert pauses between their remarks, between their questions, that would be extraordinary in any other conversational situation. Well, what I mean is that the substance of the conversation could be easily compressed into a much shorter period of time. It is typically a fragmented conversation. One can imagine taking a script from a situation of police interrogation and having this script played off on the stage. And it would probably be utterly insufferable for any audience because of the pauses in between remarks and, incidentally, because of the obscurity of the conversation, to which I will return later. One might consider that the pace which police set for conversations and interrogations is deliberately set and the habit well assimilated by officers but not by persons on whom they use it. This would impose a certain stress on the interrogated person who has to fill the silence with guesses about the officer's thoughts and might be led to say things he would probably not reveal – or conceal better – in a normally paced conversation.

THE MISSIONS HELP

We continued driving on Curtis, turned left and then turned left again and proceeded in the opposite direction on Larimer. As we passed the missions the officers explained to me that the missions do quite a good job and certainly must have some effect in reducing alcoholism. The make a strong effort not to admit people in a state of extreme intoxication and also not to admit people in possession of liquor. Even though the police have doubts about the alleged greater effectiveness of the benevolent approach, they do find the mission helpful in a more immediate sense: every little bit helps.

THEY'RE LOOKING

As we were driving through Larimer, the officers repeatedly stopped the automobile or slowed down practically to a stop and would just stare into bars or at groups of persons on the street without saying anything. They would stare long enough for all audiences around to notice that they were on duty, that they were looking, that they were looking at someone and that they were apparently seeing something and perhaps by implication, telling everybody to behave himself.

HE JUST SENT THE KIDS HOME

Going on further, we encountered three or four little boys between the ages of six and ten. All four were engaged in shining someone's shoes. At this point the hour was slightly after eight and we stopped. Garrison, the senior officer, walked over to the boys, talked to them for about ten minutes and as he came back, told me that he sent them home because it wouldn't be unusual or remarkable for these boys to be rolled for the few pennies they earned. Garrison stated that he makes it a habit to try to chase kids out of the Larimer district after eight o'clock, because he worries for their safety. Now that's all he did. He just sent the kids home, but it took him about ten minutes. He was about twenty paces away from the car talking to the man whose shoes were shined and to the children who were doing the shining. And although his message was simply to go home, or to pack up, he nevertheless managed to extend that to ten minutes, or something like that.

A GOOD DEAL OF TIME

As we drove on we passed through a warehouse area, where the officers spent a good deal of time looking into alleys and kind of looking at doors and into doorways. I heard stories about some of the drunks, winos and bums one might find sleeping in the alleys, in cartons, under piles of papers and doing all sorts of things one would expect to encounter in this type of a neighborhood. This sort of cruising takes a good deal of time, perhaps the better part of an eight-hour shift. Apparently officers can learn to conduct this type of search for the untoward in a manner which does not require intensive attention. I say this because I have noticed that that they might be absorbed in a conversation but will nevertheless stop occasionally, walk over to a pile of rubble that is not usually found in some location and search it, or shine a flashlight into a darkened establishment that is ordinarily illuminated. It is as if the unusual was sufficiently active to come to their attention without effort on their part.

BARS: GIRLS, PREDOMINANTLY NEGRO

As we traveled back into the lively area, several bars were pointed out to me, reputed to be hangouts for prostitutes and pimps. There was nothing remarkable about the bars: a rather slow level of activity. The time at this point is eight-thirty. There were a few people sitting in these bars – girls, predominantly Negro – and virtually all of them were young. All of these bars were on Curtis or between Curtis and Larimer, but not on Larimer.

A CUP OF COFFEE HAS SOME SORT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFECT

At this time we took a break and spent about ten minutes in a café drinking coffee. Officer Garrison knows the proprietor and he says he feels that his going to have a cup of coffee has some sort of law enforcement effect too, because this is a particularly decent place. The proprietor is a very nice man and it helps in business to know that this place is under close police surveillance. It helps the proprietor to avoid troubles. Apparently the proprietor has complained on several occasions about drunks coming in, about boisterous youth and about some fights there. Presumably the police coming there at various times for coffee reduces this.

KENO

Across the street from this café there is a movie theatre in which a game called Keno, something like that, is played. We walked through that theatre and while we were there prizes were given out to those in the audience who had certain numbers on the ticket. The only remarkable thing about it is that the audience sat in complete silence. I doubt that anything but the prospect of winning money could discipline an audience equally well. According to Officer Garrison, the theatre is a hangout for homosexuals who make their pickups there and, in fact, engage in sexual activities in the balcony. For this reason he patrols this theatre and goes through it every night.

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE OF PEOPLE

We proceeded to travel again and after a short while, a woman was stopped going the wrong way on a one-way street and given a citation. The younger officer was writing out the citation while the senior officer gave me a little bit of history of law enforcement and his theory concerning the knowledge of people. He proposes that efficient law enforcement is possible only if 1), the law enforcer has an adequate knowledge of the people he is working with, or who are the subject of his work and 2), he in some way or another has or acquires the trust of a substantial portion of the community, because without that trust he probably could not do anything. In the course of talking he gave several examples, saying that he was to a very large extent dependent upon information supplied by bartenders, or proprietors of bars or restaurants about people of known unsavory activities. He is therefore dependent on their good will and personal trust. Another point he talked about was that it is necessary for police officers to have familiarity with the ways of living of the people in his district. Otherwise he cannot make any sense out of what they are saying, or what they are doing in his presence. The officer's

view, therefore, is that law enforcement ought to be assigned to people who are pretty stably assigned to the same area.

SUBSTANTIATION

He gave me a further example in an attempt to explain his theory. Earlier, when we were in the movie house that gave away the Keno prize the following happened: the younger officer stopped a man and proceeded to inquire about this man's identity. This was about six paces away from me and I couldn't hear the conversation between the officer and the suspect. Garrison was at that time at the other end of the hallway. He turned and noticed his partner talking to the suspect. He walked over and in a discreet manner motioned to the younger officer that things were all right. This terminated the conversation between the younger officer and the civilian. Garrison knew the man. He knew that he had a criminal record, is now apparently working, was not presently in trouble and should not be stopped. Garrison added that he has known this man for several years and that in fact he knows a very considerable number of people here, if not the majority and that this kind of personal knowledge of people – knowing their names, knowing their histories – is an immensely important resource in police work. The younger officer does not have the benefit of this experience. He stops the wrong people, at the wrong time, gets wrong impressions and is apt to make wrong decisions.

HORSEPLAY

Moving on we drove to a corner bar called Jigg's, surveyed the scene for a while and walked cater-corner across the street to a place which consists of two rooms. In the first room there is an eating place and in the back there is a U shaped bar. Garrison is friendly with some people who apparently work in the place. I can't quite say what these brief exchanges were all about, but there was a good deal of familiarity going on, including references to past events and known people that are obscure to outsiders. In the presence of the officers and myself there was a bit of horseplay between the barmaid who is white, in her late thirties, rather homely looking and a Negro sitting at the bar: stepping on each other's toes and such. As Garrison approached this man he too became part of the play, which lasted a few minutes. And then he withdrew abruptly. This is the only evidence of what might be called impolite conduct on the part of the officer, namely that he doesn't have to make proper entries and the proper withdrawals. There is no, 'I'll see you later,' or anything of this sort. He just walks on.

A CONVERSATION WITHOUT EXPECTATIONS

He walked quite purposely a few steps to a barstool further down and tapped a girl on her shoulder. She was a blonde in very tight capri pants. The girl turned around as if she kind of expected the tap on the shoulder, although all along she quite conspicuously avoided looking at the officer. And he motioned to her to leave the stool and come with him. They moved into a corner of the room and he asked for identification. She handed him a driver's license which he proceeded to study. It only contains about two or three lines of script and a picture, but he kept reading it and reading it and turning it over as she stood next to him. Well, a later development made it appear that all this was just passing the time, because he knew the girl quite well. He had arrested her five times earlier. After a while he started to question the girl in a slow and quiet manner saying, 'What are you doing here?' and she was answering, 'I'm not doing anything,' and there was then his repeating a question of the same sort and her giving again an answer of the same sort, all of this having an aspect of a conversation without expectations. The master met his match: she could hold out for as long as he could wait. It lasted for about ten minutes. You must understand that this is a hard ten minutes for someone who isn't really part of it.

IMPLIED UNDERSTANDING

After that he asked the girl to come with him across the street. We walked to the car and he invited the girl to sit in the back of the car and there again we went through this elaborate way of passing time. He gets himself seated in the front seat. He pulls out some papers. He puts some things in order. He takes off his cap. He puts it down next to him. And there is silence while all this is going on. The girl sits in the back with her hands folded between her knees. Finally Garrison turns around and again it starts: 'Remember, I told you not to come here any more?' And now comes this spiel of, 'Who's the girl friend?' And that now gone over in great detail: name, address. He learns that the girl friend lives in the hotel. 'What room?' 'Tell me the name again.' And now he turns to his partner and he says, 'Make up a card.' His partner asks, 'Are we going to take her in?' and there is an almost subliminal motion of his head – Garrison's head – 'No, we're not.' And a card is being filled out. There is more conversation and Garrison says, 'You know he wouldn't be happy if he knew you were down here,' and she says, 'Who do you mean?' and he says, 'Well, I'll give you three guesses who I mean.' All this appears to be embedded in a matrix of implied understandings within which the spoken remarks are even less than the proverbial visible part of an iceberg. Now, in later conversation with Garrison it turned out that he did not know the details

of the girl's life. For example, he is not at all sure where she lives, although she gives an address in North Denver. Neither is he sure whether she's an inveterate prostitute, although she has a record of prostitution. He believes that she drinks a great deal and that, incidentally, was made part of the conversation, but he doesn't think she's an alcoholic. The knowledge is not the knowledge of facts about the girl, but rather it is sort of a knowledgeability about her and the likes of her. She knows what he is driving at and he knows what she means. The exchange is supported by tacit information about conditions, circumstances, agreements, earlier events, prospects, but also by familiarity and a type of cooperation that is not incompatible with conflicting interests. It is almost as if a certain sympathy arises out of the fact that both parties make the concession of not going against each other as far as they might.

A RUN TO ANOTHER PART OF THE CITY

Well, that was pretty much all that directly concerned Larimer Street. At that point a call came over the radio to make a run in the matter of some family quarrel in another part of the city. I inquired how it is that they're to make runs in other parts of the city and Garrison explained that apparently all other units are busy in some other parts and the Larimer Detail is called in. This happens only in extreme situations, when there really is no one else, because they don't like to keep this part of town uncovered. Apparently the foot patrol will try to do as much as they can in the time of the patrol car's absence.

Now I will very briefly go over the two incidents that occurred while we were off Larimer. The first case was concerned with an old lady who complained that some kids on bicycles trampled on her flowers. The old lady doesn't speak any English – this is a Mexican neighborhood – but there is a girl there who apparently lives with her and does the translating. Now the remarkable thing about that incident is that it is a fine example of how extremely difficult it is to get anything like a story, or an account or a sensible statement from some of the people with whom the police have to work. Thus, in such cases they operate on the most sketchy, most marginal type of information. They have to take steps, not really knowing whether something has happened and if it has happened, when it happened, who was involved and the rest. It's not known whether the woman knows the kids: maybe she does, maybe she doesn't. Her remarks admit both possibilities. It's not clear whether there were three or four, although it seems as though there were three. It is also not clear whether she would recognize them if she saw them: although at one time she says yes, later on again she says no. Finally, it is not clear what she expects of the police. So when Garrison, for example, asks her outright, 'What do you want us to do?' she walks away from

him. Now I don't know whether this is because the girl doesn't translate Garrison's question adequately, but my guess is that this is routine, even if there hadn't been any language difficulty. In any case, we gave chase after some kids and we finally sighted them at the end of the block but they managed to elude us. It is, of course, not known whether the kids we sighted were the ones that trampled the flowers, but there were kids who were running away from the police.

We returned to the scene and by then there was a crowd of kids around the middle of the block and Garrison talked like a good father to them. And he asked the children to pass the word not to trample the lady's flowers and would they please do that as a favor to him, because if they do it and the lady calls again then he will really have to do something. He'll have to take some kids in. At that point a woman comes out of the house in front of which were we are all standing, inquires what happened and is told by some children. And she says, 'Oh that bag is complaining.' And now it turns out that the old lady is a victim in a double sense. First of all, she has her property destroyed, about which she apparently cares a good deal. Second, she has now offended some neighbors by complaining. It is in this way now that a person becomes hated for what is done to him more than for what he does. Well, that's all about that.

THEY'RE HIS CHILDREN

As we were moving back to Larimer, another call came over the radio about another family disturbance in the same neighborhood. And Garrison simply picked up the radio phone and said that he was passing by that place and he would take care of that run. We came to the house. A young woman opened the door and addressed us in fluent English, although she was apparently Mexican. She has a document in her hand which turns out to be a court decree about separation from her husband and also a court order that bars the husband from entering the home, a restraining order. Well, the husband apparently does come often and troubles her, although it is not clear what the trouble consists of. He is sometimes violent, and she is asking for police protection. She doesn't want him around. The officers read the restraining order from beginning to end. Then they advise her that the safest thing for her to do is to complain to the court and the judge then will issue an order for this man's apprehension, which will be delivered by a sheriff. They say to her that the police can do nothing unless they catch the man in the act. As we were about to withdraw, the woman cries after us saying, 'Here he just passed in a white Ford.' Well, we are in the car by that time. We turn around and are just about to follow the car that moves in the direction that the woman motioned, but it turns out that the car we see is not a white Ford. And

just at that moment Garrison sees out of the corner of his eye a white Ford. I mention this because there is a certain particular kind of acumen or skill that officers have for seeing things that I, at least, don't see.

We do not follow the car but turn into a sidestreet and Garrison explains: 'It is standard police practice. You sit here for awhile and then you go back and you see whether the man returns to the wife after the police left the scene.' Now that was planned, but no sooner do we turn into the alley and wait for about a minute than looking back we see that the white Ford goes in the opposite direction, that is, in the opposite direction from where he would have to go if he were to return to his wife. We give chase and after a couple of blocks he stops and he comes out of the car and is quite drunk – a young man.

It would take more skill than I can muster to give you even an impression of what goes on in the subsequent twenty minutes. This is an ebullient, cheerful, happy, belligerent, fighting Mexican, who speaks fairly good English. He has had half a dozen beers and says he wants to see his kids. After all, they're his children. There is no coherence to the conversation, but again the officers take time to talk to him for twenty minutes. The conversation lacks any topical focus. And while it rambles there is no particular effort made on the part of the officers to bring it back into any focus. It kind of outlasts itself without coming to any conclusion, but it is over at a certain time. Clyde, that's the man's name, goes to his car. How a Mexican ever gets the name Clyde, I don't know. And he takes off.

Gorman interrupts:* 'Was Clyde left to his own devices at the conclusion of that talk?'

Bittner: Yes. As Clyde was walking back to the car, he was told by Garrison to 'walk the center line,' and Clyde responded by walking quite well about thirty paces, to his car, on the center line. His disturbance was rather in his cognitive functioning. He couldn't talk a story but he could walk a line and then go to the car. They didn't follow the automobile. He just went off and was driving perfectly competently as far as we could see. Now we return to Larimer Street.

RETURN TO LARIMER STREET

No sooner do we hit Larimer Street than there is a radio call about an officer who needs assistance. We report to a bar called The Joker in the Deck Club. As it turned out the run had nothing to do with The Joker in the Deck Club. It was merely to identify a location. We meet an officer there who has two matters on hand. The first matter occurred when he was walking off duty. When passing a place of business, he saw an open safe through the plate glass window. When he looked closer he found that the safe was cut with a torch. The officer who called

* As this passage indicates, Anthony Gorman was listening to Bittner's account.

us was apparently of similar seniority as Garrison, that is, with several years of service. And both of them said to the younger man who works with Garrison, 'Call headquarters and check that out.' The younger man gave headquarters several emergency phone numbers listed on the door of the establishment. Several minutes later there came an answer. Headquarters contacted the owner: the safe was cut open a couple of weeks ago, it's an old case, and they were advised that they need not pursue this matter any further.

In the meantime, Garrison and the other officer went around the place of business into the alley to check the rear exit. They had to scale a fence there, and the younger officer drove the automobile into the alley and we picked up the two senior men.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? I DON'T KNOW

Now to the second point of business: as we arrived, the officer we met said to Garrison, 'I have two points of business.' That was not his language, but he said, 'Here is this boy. Put him in the car and let's attend to the other one first,' namely the safe. Now the boy was put in the car. We didn't know why. As it turned out later, the officer who called for us also didn't know why he picked the boy up except that, you know, there he was.

The boy sat in the car for about twenty minutes. No one asked him any questions. The boy was unperturbed, waiting until the business of the safe was solved. The business of the safe being solved, there was more shop talk between the officers, which lasted about ten minutes in the alley with finally a friendly goodbye. Now, Garrison went through the same spiel as with that earlier street-walker. He got himself seated in front, you know. All of this took time. And then he turned around and there was, I would say, a seemingly harsh beginning of the conversation with the boy. Garrison turned around, asked him for facts: 'What's your name? How old are you?' And that was delivered in a dry, matter-of-fact tone. I may add that I do not ascribe the relative harshness of the beginning of the conversation to the fact that the boy was Negro. Rather, the tone seems to discriminate between familiar and strange persons.

The boy answered, and from the beginning the boy radiated this very, very pleasant kind of appearance. He was a very dark sixteen-year-old Negro. It turned out that he ran away from his parents. He lived in St. Louis. He was on his way to California. He just came to Denver fifteen minutes ago on a freight. And they asked him, 'What are you going to do?' And he said, 'I don't know.' And they asked him, 'Where are you going to stay tonight?' It was now eleven-twenty. 'I didn't give any thought to that. I don't have any place to stay.' 'Do you have any money?' 'No, I don't have any money.' 'Have you eaten?' 'I haven't eaten.' 'How

long have you been on the road?' 'For a month.' That meant the boy already knew how to get along, how to make do. Nevertheless, Garrison decided at that point we'd better take him to the Juvenile Hall. And the remainder of the conversation with the boy was really in a friendly, although patronizing tone. Garrison worried whether the boy would get a meal in the Hall at this hour, but he ought to have a bed in any case. And he ought to be sent off, somehow, to his uncle and aunt in California, wherever they live. Well now, to take the boy to the Hall would probably take an hour, and I decided I'd quit. They delivered me at the hotel and that was the end of that day.

# # #

June 12, 1965

NOTHING HE COULD DO

Okay, now this is the story of June Twelfth, Saturday. I went to the police at about six-forty-five P.M. When I arrived there I was told that the lieutenant was not in this day but left orders that I was to ride with Sgt. Ford. Sgt. Ford greeted me, invited me to sit down. There was to be a roll call, and we were to get on the road at seven o'clock. As it turned out, immediately after the roll call a woman came in and wanted to talk to someone in private, and I sat around for one hour while Ford was talking to this woman at the police station. There is a good deal of horseplay in the police station. I don't want to recount this. Part of it had to do with guns and police talk about weapons and things like that. Part of it had to do with homosexuality and there were expressed the typical fears of homosexuals and also a good deal of chagrin with recent court decisions imposing various restraints upon the police.

At eight o'clock, Ford came out of the interviewing room and gave me a brief story of what went on. It turned out that this woman was the wife of someone who had been recently arrested. She had feelings that the police didn't quite understand the case, and she was trying to elaborate and inform. But Ford felt that actually she needed to cry on someone's shoulder. I didn't quite understand. And Ford explained that he felt obliged to help this poor woman whose husband was in jail and who was facing some real difficulties, even though there was nothing he could do.

TERRITORIAL DISTRIBUTION

As we left the station he gave me an exquisite introduction to the territorial distribution of the law enforcement resources of Denver, which was entirely wasted on me, because I didn't have the foggiest notion where we were traveling. I didn't know what neighborhood we were going through and, therefore, much of this, since it came so rapidly, I missed completely.

I'll be talking mainly now about that part of our patrol that refers more or less directly to Larimer, and I'll disregard what has happened in the rest of the city, because I simply didn't understand it. We made no stops. There was just a long explanation of various neighborhoods. Incidentally, the sergeant covered the entire downtown area of Denver, which is rather large. The boundary is seventeen miles long, and we traveled all of it. Actually, it was not a very productive evening. It was on the whole uneventful, and it was merely on my account that we made several stops and walked through the bars that I had seen earlier. I got the standard explanation of who was in there and what was going on there.

A VERY QUIET EVENING

The big difference between my travel on Friday and my travel on Saturday was that Saturday was a very quiet evening. Not only did I observe this, but Sgt. Ford mentioned this several times. Bar owners or the bar managers invariably would come up to Ford, shake hands and talk to him and would make remarks about slow business. One or two of them remarked that this apparently had something to do with the strike in the building trades which, 'was really killing them.' They were in considerable distress about the falling off of business on account of the strike, talking about the declining income and the possibility of trouble, or business trouble, if this lasted much longer.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Now at Jigg's we were accosted by a man who might have had a couple of drinks but who was otherwise in command of his senses. He was dressed in a business suit, white shirt and tie and during the conversation revealed that he was an army man and complained to Ford about the lack of excitement on Larimer. He said he had heard that this was a real rough town and that there was a lot of excitement. But there's nothing going on and where do all these rumors come from? Ford conducted himself in a well-rounded, public-relations-man manner, on the one hand telling the man there wasn't too much of it because of adequate law enforcement and on the other hand telling the man not to give up: it may yet come out.

So on the one hand he was protecting the business end of this, making sure that the dude would leave his money there and, on the other hand, he was telling him that things were not all that seamy.

MEXICANS, INDIANS AND NEGROES

There followed a good deal of talk between Ford and me about who the people are and what the problems are in the larger Larimer area. According to Ford the Mexicans and Indians are a much bigger problem than the Negro, in law enforcement. I didn't quite know what was meant by this and asked why it should be so. It appears that the police officers have by and large shaken off the old stereotype of the Indian as a person who is unable to hold his drinks. They learned that the Indian is pretty much like everybody else except he has a different upbringing. He can hold his drink as well as the white man, but he drinks differently, and he presents something of a puzzle because of his different ways. There is also a language difficulty. What creates the difficulty with the Mexican and the Indian is that they are not sufficiently stereotyped. Contrary to this, the Negro is known in a stereotyped fashion, and therefore, the officer feels much more competent in dealing with him. He does not figure that the conduct of the Negro is as much of a puzzle as the conduct of the Indian. He knows what to do about him. He doesn't have to be right, but he knows nevertheless. The Mexican, on the other hand, and the Indian particularly, are people with whom he is more uncertain and uncomfortable.

NEGROES: THE THREAT OF VIOLENCE

Now turning to the Negro particularly, the troublesome thing is that there is a deep undercurrent of violence, or threat of violence, that is present in the Negro. It seems that below the happy-go-lucky ongoings in bars that cater to the Negro, underneath all this playful dancing and music, there are profound and long-lasting tensions. Later in the evening we stopped in a bar patronized exclusively by Negroes. We encountered a private officer there, that is, a policeman who is hired by the business establishment. There was a ten to fifteen minute conversation between Sgt. Ford and this officer in which the officer told Ford that he was going to give up this kind of work and Ford told him, 'I'm sorry to see you go, because you've been doing good work. But I'm glad for you, because it's merely a matter of time until you're going to be hurt and I don't mean hurt a little.' Later on Ford told me that the increasing chances of this man's getting hurt had to do with the fact that he had more and more enemies and retribution was becoming less and less avoidable. This, Ford regards as the unique Negro problem. He sees

an overwhelming pattern of violence in Negro pastime or Negro recreation. That's the Negro-Indian-American problem.

THE REALLY NAÏVE

Another item that we talked about was the law enforcement problems that have to do with patterns of exploitation. There are three patterns of exploitation that are prevalent on Larimer Street. First of all, there is the exploitation of the really naïve, foremost of whom are children. It seems that occasionally children who live in the vicinity will come down here and do shoeshine work, things like that. These might be children between six and ten, and there is a real risk that they will be rolled. In addition to children, there are simply other naïve citizens who somehow or another get here and are victimized.

NAÏVE WITH LARCENY AT HEART

The second type consists of persons who also are naïve but are naïve with larceny at heart. That is, they come here because they know that Larimer is the street of sin, crime and vice. And they want to taste a little bit of it. But in the course of their explorations they get hurt. These are frequently dudes who would like to buy the sin and vice for entertainment but frequently don't know when to leave and find themselves in trouble.

LITERALLY UNPROTECTABLE

The third group are people who are literally unprotectable. And these are people who will not leave Larimer. They are by and large the clients of our study, the winos, who want it that way and to whom this risk of exploitation is simply a fact of life. The police can do very little to protect them. As we were talking about these unprotectables, Ford was saying that they do not present a law enforcement problem. He reminisced about New York. He knows New York fairly well and he says that contrary to New York, where one can see hundreds of drunks lying in the gutters and doorways, Denver seems able to keep them moving. It's only rarely that one finds someone who can't take care of himself at least in public places and in public view. What happens in the flophouses only the Lord knows.

COLONY OF THE WINOS

A good deal was said about the fact that Larimer Street is probably not properly understood if one pays too much attention to the wino. The wino is its most

conspicuous aspect, the thing that is perhaps the most colorful in it – colorful in a sort of a perverse way. But it's really only a very small part of it. There are other things about Larimer Street which make it possible for these poor wretches to congregate here. Furthermore, one mustn't think of this colony of winos as a stable phenomenon. It's in a sense a socially stable phenomenon, but its composition is continuously changing and, according to Ford, there is some movement up and down from it. That is, according to Ford, there are some people who are here only periodically or only episodically, and then they move on to other parts of life.

LARIMER STREET: A SHOPPING DISTRICT

In addition to the wino and ambiguously separated from them are the ranch hands. Ranch hands and people working on farms and ranches near the surrounding cities are ambiguously separated from the wino, because 1), one can always find people who are primarily winos, but they do get jobs on farms or on ranches occasionally, and 2), one can find people who are primarily working on the ranches and farms, but occasionally go on the drunk and stay around Larimer. While the ranch hands, on one hand, blend into the winos, on the other hand, they encompass people whose position is, relatively speaking, comfortable and stable. For example, there are people who have families on the farms, who, however, belong to Larimer Street, because Larimer Street is for them a shopping district, and to a lesser extent, the entertainment district. They come here and buy a good deal of their household implements in the second hand shops. When a moment ago I said that they are relatively comfortable that is not to be meant that they have anything like an adequate income. In terms of income they probably belong to the impoverished, but comparatively speaking, they have more or less stable resources. It was pointed out to me that during the day and during the night you can always encounter ranchers, or ranch hands, who come here with their families. You find automobiles containing a man, a woman and several children, who come to Larimer Street as the place for them to go when they come to Denver. This group undoubtedly provides an important clientele for the retail business of Larimer.

Another significant part of business income derives from residents of the city of Denver who find certain specialty stores, for example, sporting goods stores, pawnshops and printing establishments concentrated in this area. Well, I'm talking exclusively of retail business now. There is, of course, a good deal of wholesale business.

Gorman interrupts: 'At the barber colleges one sees many children being taken in by the parents, with the whole family getting their hair cut at a reduced rate.'

Bittner: Right. In a certain sense, Larimer Street represents a very cheap bargain basement for a wide range of the population.

RAMBLING

Now I would like to turn to what might be called item three, topic of conversation between Ford and me. It revolves around difficulties in interrogating people on Larimer Street. This difficulty in interrogating apparently has to do with the fact that the conversations of the people here, not only with the policemen, but in general, lack anything that resembles structure. They don't have a beginning and an end. They're not properly thematized. They're rambling. It's very hard to know what it is one is talking about when one is talking with these people. And, therefore, one can never say that the conversation has just started, or even when it started. Neither can one say that it is over. You just withdraw. At a certain point it peters out. Or you have decided you've had enough. And in this sense one really doesn't get any information. One gets an awful lot of talk but no information.

INERT

We talked a little more about the winos and how they are seen by Ford. I can't say now that I am expressing Ford's opinion faithfully but rather the kinds of things that I learned from talking about it.

The view is that the typical wino is a fifty to sixty year old man who is emotionally and intellectually inert. That is to say, on his own power, without any external support, he is, as it were, immobile. Nothing is going on in his life. He is breathing, his heart beats, but that is all there is to it. If you ask him, 'What are you doing?' 'What are you thinking about' 'What are you about to do?' 'What did you finish doing?' then there is no response. That's not to say that you can't make him respond, but that whatever he will do when you force him to respond, when you say, for example, 'Now I want to interview you,' or 'I want to ask you some questions,' are likely to be things that are kind of disconnected from the roots of his existence. Now, this being so, it may be supposed that alcohol has a function of producing an almost autonomous kind of emotional and cerebral activity. You achieve by drinking this sort of a state that is associated with being alive. While drunk one can think of oneself as being I, or Me. One acquires some substance: that is, time passes; things happen. It may be reverie; it may be fantasy, but it fills a certain void.

A DAY'S WORK

If there is any validity to this construction, then a good number of these people are not in the true sense alcoholics, or if they are, then they are a special run of alcoholics. For example, alcohol cannot be thought to be in line with some oral dependency traits, or something like that, but would merely have the character of an activator or a catalyst for vital functions. Many of these men merely seem to seek out this state of being in an alcoholic glow, or, if not seek, having achieved it, are able then, perhaps, to go to bed. The remarkable thing is that it takes eight hours to make sure that they get enough to drink, but as soon as they do, the street clears. One might say that by seven or eight o'clock in the evening pretty much everybody in this population has had the minimum required to be able to go back to the flophouse and go to sleep. And they don't stay out to get more and more and more. It is almost like a day's work.

# # #

June 14, 1965

THE BEAT MAN

I arrived at the station about ten minutes to seven on Monday. Lt. O'Neill was still off, and I was assigned to a sergeant who inquired briefly about the nature of my interest and suggested that I walk the beat with the man assigned to Larimer Street. This was agreeable, and we met the beat man on the corner of Larimer and Eighteenth. The beat man and I proceeded on Larimer Street in the direction of Seventeenth and moved on Seventeenth in the direction of the Cambridge Hotel. About half way down, on the left side of the street, we approached two Indians, both obviously intoxicated. The younger man was hardly able to stand up, and the older man was just able to answer questions and stand on his legs. Since there are going to be several other such scenes, I will say now that it is rather difficult to describe the ongoings.

EXCHANGES

The exchanges between the officer and whomever he addresses are only in their most external aspects a question and answer sequence. For the most part, the answers are only poorly or not at all related to the questions. Often the answers are incomprehensible. At times it is quite obvious that the interrogated person is not capable of giving an account of himself. For example, he issues a groaning

sound and an unfocused stare. As if to make sure, or perhaps to assure me, the officer asks more questions than are necessary to establish the facts of incompetence.

At other times an interrogation takes approximately the following course: Q: 'What's your name?' A: 'I'll be all right!' Q: 'Where do you live?' A: 'I'm on my way home!' Q: 'I have asked you where you live!' 'I just had a couple of beers and I am going straight home!' etc. On the face of it the officer could do whatever he will finally do, for example, chase the person off the street, let him proceed at his own pace, arrest him, etc., in much less time than he takes. That is, the necessary facts are usually quite patent in the first few moments. Is it possible that here again we see that policemen do not react immediately to the patent characteristics of persons and situations? Or is it another example of the ability to sustain inquiry in the face of a very frustrating, to me, denial of information?

The younger Indian made several attempts to state his name, finally managed somehow to say it, but he was never able to state anything like his address or date of birth, which is information the officer apparently needs to complete an arrest card. The older man was able with some stumbling and fumbling to say these things, but whenever he let go of the wall and attempted to stand on his own feet, he was quite wobbly. After these men were picked up by the paddy wagon, Officer Konecny explained to me that these Indians come from the Dakotas. And a great many of them are connected with some rehabilitation project. He couldn't describe this rehabilitation project to me except to say that Indians who are invited to leave the reservation, are taken care of, maintained and trained in some sort of occupation. In the officer's view the projects have been largely a failure. The Indians who come into Colorado from the Dakotas very soon take up drinking, and he has yet to see one man who has established himself in some sort of a gainful occupation.

NEW SHOES

This accomplished, we crossed the street and walked toward the bar called Denver's Greatest. The officer walked rapidly toward the end of the bar, on his path greeting several people who apparently worked there. At the end of the bar he shook hands with a young man whose bearing indicated that he was perhaps the proprietor or the manager of the place. There was a brief exchange, but I didn't understand the references to yesterday and how business was and how he or some other person made out, all this lasting a few minutes. The officer turned and proceeded to walk out. At the exit end of the bar, there sat two men, an empty stool between them. On the empty stool stood a pair of practically new shoes, soiled on the bottom, but otherwise new. The officer asked whether they

were selling the shoes, and as this was confirmed he asked what they were asking for them. The answer was three dollars. He looked the shoes over, turned them over twice or three times, asked the man's name, asked him where he worked, put the shoes back on the chair and walked out. He explained to me that here we had a man who apparently does spot jobs, perhaps held a job of longer duration, bought a pair of shoes, used them barely once or twice, now is running out of boozing money and is selling for three dollars a pair of shoes which he probably bought for twelve dollars. All this was delivered in the nature of a comment about life on Larimer which ought to be of interest to me.

A NINETEEN-FORTY CADILLAC

We walked back up to Larimer where we were met by a radio car patrolling the area. The officers and I then went into the Sanitarium Café where we had a cup of coffee. While sitting in the café, all three officers remarked on the adequacy of the café, praised it as a place where the people of Larimer get their money's worth and where meals are prepared in clean circumstances and where by and large the pensioner, that is the poor but honest man, hangs out. This is contrary to some other places that are hangouts for bums and winos. It was pointed out that most of the men at the bar were old. Most of them probably were living on social security checks and coming down here for a beer or two and then returning to their rooms.

As we were sitting at the table, two men approached us, one of them quite intoxicated and insisting on singing Irish songs. The other man gave the appearance of being sober. The sober man wanted some information. He said that he was driving a Cadillac – a nineteen-forty Cadillac – and his rear fender fell off. Now he had no stop light. Would it be all right for him to go back to Boulder in this automobile? The man kept repeating the question. Each time the officer answered that it was none of his business, saying the man could do what he wanted. But, the officer added, it is not wise to travel in such a car. The State Patrol was bound to pick him up for driving without a stop light. He suggested that the man have the automobile fixed before it was taken out of town. Well, this, as I said, came about three times and each time the man repeated the question, in different words, but got the same answer.

I WANT ANSWERS

After finishing the coffee we walked out on the street and ran into two men standing in front of the café. Although I didn't see it, coming out of the café, Konecny apparently noticed that one of the men was showing a knife to the other.

Konecny stuck his hand out and insisted on getting a look at the knife. The man who was doing the showing, laughing heartily, said, 'No, you can't have it. It's the only thing I have. I just hit town. I need some money.' The officer said, 'All I want is to look at it.' The man finally pulled the knife out of his pocket and showed an ordinary short-blade pocket knife. The officer didn't open it but started asking the man his name and his place of origin. He pulled out a little black book and wrote this information down, getting the standard personal data and descriptive item about the man. When the man was asked where he came from, he said he just came from Wisconsin. And to the question, 'By what means?' said he came in his own automobile. No sooner did he say, 'I came in my own automobile,' than his face, which had been all along in smiles, became serious, and he gave an obvious expression of regret for having said this. Since this couldn't have been missed, the officer immediately caught onto it, asking where the automobile was. At that point, all this going on within seconds, the man grew angry, withdrawn, and said that the officer didn't have to see the car, and he wasn't going to show it to him. The officer said, 'Now, don't give me answers like that. Take me to the car.' The man refused. This went on, went back and forth once or twice more, and the officer took the man by the sleeve of his shirt and forcibly led him to the squad car that still stood at the corner. Remember we were at the café drinking coffee with two other officers a moment ago. He put the man in the squad car, wrote out an arrest card for loitering without visible means of support, that is, for vagrancy and had the man taken to jail. Before leaving the squad car he gave the man a stern lecture, saying, 'You've just come to town. You don't play it this way with me. Let this be a lesson to you. I run this street. I ask you a question, I don't want any guff. I want answers and that'll teach you a lesson.' He left the squad car and the man was taken to jail.

A CHECK BOOK

As we turned to walk further in the direction of Jigg's we were stopped by an Indian couple, the man about twenty-four, the girl about eighteen or nineteen. The man asked the police officer to call him a cab. As the request seemed rather strange, the officer asked for an account of the circumstances. Although I can't give the full story, it seemed this Indian couple was out looking for their sister-in-law. The sister-in-law came down to Larimer Street a couple of days ago and has not returned home since then. They were sent out to look for her by the woman's husband. The couple was unable to locate the sister-in-law and now they wanted a cab to go home. When Konecny told them the police doesn't run a referral agency for cabbies and told the man to go to a café to make a phone call, the man said that he didn't trust the café owner. Konecny was about to help him with this,

to get this phone call done, when in some way or another there appeared a check book. The check book, as it turned out, belonged to the woman the two were looking for. How did the couple get the check book, and had they been writing some checks? Now it turned out that they had found the check book in an automobile parked a half a block away. We walked to the automobile. The officer opened the door and found in the glove compartment other evidence that the automobile belonged to the woman that was being sought. It appeared that the woman came to Larimer Street two days ago, left the car unlocked with the check book in it. The couple found the car and decided to take the check book with them. The story became more involved as other information was collected from the couple as to where they came from, where they lived and what they were doing. Konecny called a tow truck, had the automobile towed away, again told the couple to go home.

Although it seemed that he did have suspicions about them, he could not translate the suspicions into an adequate justification for an arrest or further interrogation. The young man asked the officer how they would get home and the officer said it was none of his business. He tried once more. 'Well, call me a cab.' There was, in this remark, a tone of insolence. The officer grew increasingly harsh and the Indian increasingly demanding. The girl stood by enjoying the exchange and making ironic comments. Finally Konecny turned to them and said sharply, 'You're just one second away from getting arrested.' And that was all it took. They turned around, and off they went, just about as quickly as he suggested originally that they move.

DECENT CITIZENRY

As we walked away from this scene, getting back on Larimer, Officer Konecny quite spontaneously proceeded to give me an interpretation of the events, that is, his interpretation of the arrest of the man from Wisconsin and the dealings with the Indian couple. Here is the interpretation. Larimer Street is a place in which a large number of old-timers congregate. A good number of them have small incomes, mainly from pensions and social security. They get their checks at the beginning of the month. The checks are for small amounts. They need to budget to last the month. They like to come down to the bars every evening to have a couple of beers. This is what may be called the decent citizenry of the street. These are very vulnerable people. They're unable to protect themselves. Many of them are uneducated. Many of them are not very smart. Most of them tend to be in a state that exposes them to potential exploiters. The exploiters are persons of all ages who come here, have no visible means of support and prey on and live off

the older, unprotected pensioners. The exploiters may stay on here. More likely, however, they move from town to town and hit Denver periodically.

Whenever a new man appears on the street, Officer Konecny likes to interview him. He wants to know who the men are that frequent the street. He wants to know the old pensioners and he wants to know the others. He insists on running the street and he wants this to be understood by everybody on this street. As long as he can maintain this state of affairs he can insure some measure of safety for the people who get their fifty or one hundred dollars a month and have to live on it.

THE REIGN OF THE POLICEMAN

The maintenance of this sort of order, through direct scrutiny and continued supervision, is the only guarantee of safety for the poor, old pensioner who has no other place to live. The order is threatened all the time by riff-raff that flock to Larimer. Unless Konecny forcefully impresses his authority on everybody he encounters, a lot of people will be hurt. How unstable the situation is can be best realized by the fact that leaving the street unprotected for two or three nights usually results in disorders and complaints. It is entirely possible that the man from Wisconsin or the Indian couple did not have larceny at heart. But the officer could not let them get away with insolence. It would show others that it is possible to elude his controlling influence.

The moment the reign of the policeman on the beat breaks down, anything might happen and usually most things do. Konecny then told me that he keeps rather detailed notes on all the people he stops to question. He carries a notebook containing such information which encompasses recent encounters. In addition to this, he keeps a file in the back room of one of the bars, to which he resorts whenever he needs additional information. In a certain sense it appears from the officer's comments that he runs the beat quite autonomously, or at least to a great extent, autonomously. Every sign of possible escape from the direct control, disobedience to instructions, expressions of hostility, arrogance, insolence, refusal to answer questions properly, all these things are apt to land the newcomer in jail.

CENSUS TAKING

As we moved on to the Mission, which we were now to check, I got a lesson on how the census taking, that is, the census taking of new people, works. We went into the Mission, walking through slowly between rows of chairs, and the officer spotted a group of men that he didn't know. Their average ages were somewhere between twenty and thirty-five and there were five of them. He walked toward

them, sat down in a chair in their midst, pulled out his book and asked all of them for identification. Some of them pulled out slips of paper, for the most part social security cards, and put them down on a chair in front of the officer. All the men were sober. The officer proceeded to register these men. He picked up a card, read out the name. The man identified himself and gave the rest of the information: place of birth, date of birth, height, weight and so on, tattoos, scars, a rather comprehensive list of identifying data. All five men stated that they were recent arrivals on Larimer. Konecny registered them in his book. Oh, I wanted to add that in each case he asked the man whether he was working, whether he had a job, or whether he was looking for a job. Two had jobs lined up, another one was already working and two of them were still looking for jobs. Now these two, the two who had no jobs and no definite prospects of jobs, to these two he lectured. He said they had better find jobs, because they only have a week. If he finds them without a job next week, he is going to run them out of town. All this was very serious. All of the men nodded their heads and kept saying 'Yes sir.' It sounded very business-like, very paternalistic on the part of the officer. The men were quite submissive and without the slightest expression of insisting on anything that might be called the citizen's rights of refusal to answer.

HI, NEIGHBOR

From all this as well as from the officer's comments it was quite clear that what he was conducting was not a law enforcement activity in the strict sense but rather a sort of autonomous peace-keeping activity. He worked almost like an independent ruler. He could, of course, invoke the endorsement of the city, the police department, etc. He could call other men to help him out in dire need, but, in general, he seemed to manage his own affairs without advice and without direction. I must add that this autocracy was in the preponderant majority of cases benign, though patronizing. The ruled seemed to accept the domination compliantly and for the most part in good cheer. Konecny's initial approach to persons was invariably lighthearted and easygoing. His favored approach was, 'Hi, neighbor!' His decisions, however, were final, and he was apt to decide rather harshly when he was offended. I should have added that as we walked into the Mission about a dozen men were standing outside, and before we walked in the officer shouted loudly for all the men to get inside, and the order was met with full and immediate compliance. As we walked out of the Mission there were again about twelve or fifteen men congregated on the sidewalk, and we went through the same routine. The officer shouted for everyone to go in, and within about ten seconds the place in front of the Mission was clear.

The officer described the Mission as a worthwhile enterprise, although he had misgivings about the fact that it tends to encourage a dissolute and inactive life. He feels that, on the whole, he wouldn't want to be without missions if we have to have a Larimer Street.

One more point about our visit in the Mission: Konecny observed a young man about whom he wasn't sure whether he'd seen him before or not. He consulted with the clerk at the Mission and obtained the man's name and other data, this time, however, not by asking the man but by taking it off the Mission file cards. When I asked him how come he didn't interview the man, he said, because he had a feeling that he already had interviewed, and that he had the information somewhere in his file.

SEVEN DOLLARS A WEEK

After leaving the Mission we went to the William Henry Hotel. We walked upstairs and turned down one of the corridors. At the end there was a man in the doorway. The officer walked up to him and inquired who he was. The man gave his name and said he was just leaving the place to run some errand. The officer walked into the room, poked with his nightstick at clothes and at the bed, turned around and asked the man what he had in his satchel, and the man said he had some papers there. He didn't ask to see them, but turned to the man and said, 'Weren't you sick recently? Didn't I take you to hospital?' As it turned out this man was once quite ill and the officer was called. This happened some months ago. And he obtained an ambulance for the man and delivered him to the hospital. All this lasted for about five minutes and the conversation was quite friendly, the officer expressing hope that the man would get well and saying he was glad that he felt better now. The man expressed gratitude and every one of his utterances was prefaced by 'Sir' and ended with 'Sir.' At one point the officer asked the man how much he paid for this room and the answer was that it was seven dollars a week. The room was about ten by seven. There was a cot and a chair. In the corner there were a couple of boxes which apparently contained old clothes and there was also a clothes hangar on which two or three garments were hanging. There was a musty smell in the room. It was obviously not clean. The bed was covered by a blanket, but I couldn't tell whether there were any sheets underneath. From this room we moved to the other end of the hotel, the officer walking on his tiptoes and listening to what was going on in the rooms.

STREET WALKERS

In one room there was rather loud conversation. I cannot say they were extravagantly loud, but they were louder than people in other rooms. Konecny knocked on the door. In answer to the question as to who was there, he said he was a police officer. And after some hesitation the door was opened. Inside there was an old woman sitting on a bed. She was obviously senile. With difficulty she stated her name but could not say where she was. This didn't prevent her from continuously talking or doing something that resembled talking. Next to her, on a chair, was a man of about twenty-two with a recent injury around his eye. On another bed sat two women, one appearing to be about seventeen and the other twenty-five. In answer to the officer's question, they gave a rather confused story of who was who, I mean in relation to each other. We actually never found out who was whose sister or sister-in-law or cousin or, etc. It also was possible but not clear that the old woman was someone's mother. Despite this lack of clarity the officer at one point interrupted all the questioning and left. Walking out, he stated that the two younger women were quite clearly street walkers getting ready to move on the street. I may add that one of the younger women was combing the other's hair. The older girl also said, at some point in the interrogation, that her husband was in the county jail.

THE VULNERABLES

As we walked out Konecny pointed out to me that now I had seen in the same hotel and virtually next door to each other the prey and the predator. The sick old man being the one he mentions as the person deserving protection and usually not getting enough of protection. The prostitute and the younger man in the room were the ones from whom the older man has to be protected. Only by riding roughshod over the population, only by letting them know every moment of the day who the boss is on the street, is it possible to maintain the sort of order in which some measure of protection could be offered to the vulnerables.

IF THE STREET IS RAZED

I asked Konecny what he thought about the fate of the old timer would be if Larimer Street was to be razed. The answer was rather complicated. Konecny gave me an account of the failure of a bond issue that was related to urban renewal, and the fact that he didn't think this place will be razed within the next year or two, but finally he acknowledged that it probably will be removed sooner or later. And he also remarked that it appears that many of the old timers already

now are moving in the direction of First and Broadway, and that a considerable colony of these retired old men is growing there.

DEGENERATES

During this conversation we were walking rather briskly on Seventeenth Street. We walked all the way to Curtis, turned right on Curtis and walked into a theatre showing nudist pictures. As it turned out, they were showing a foreign movie. We stayed for about a minute or two. The theatre doesn't present a law enforcement problem of any serious proportions. It bears some watching, however, because it is a likely place for degenerates to congregate.

KIDDING

We walked out and on the same path back to Larimer talking about the predicament of the old timer. The officer likes to talk about them. He knows a very, very large number of them by their first name, and they address him by his nickname. All these are men in their sixties, of modest, if not poor appearance. I observed that most are quite comfortable with the officer, kidding, etc.

I may add here in the manner of a footnote that on several occasions I had a rather strange scare. Here is a man, Konecny, who deals very harshly with someone who refused to point out his automobile and on this ground alone arrests him for vagrancy. In later encounters we met several men who made arrogant and even insulting remarks to the same man, Konecny. In some instances the insults came from persons who were old timers. In all these instances I thought, 'Oh, oh, here it comes,' only to find that it was a bit of horseplay Konecny tolerates or perhaps even enjoys. When the insult comes from someone he knows, Konecny tolerates it goodnaturedly. Every time somebody walked up and on account of darkness had to come quite close, Konecny slowed down, looked at the man, without telling me who he was. And there were always these brief exchanges, and I could never tell what it was going to come to. Is this man working his way to jail by making a remark of this sort? Or is he a friend and entitled to an expression of familiarity? What I want to point out is that once one seems established with him, then apparently considerable liberty is allowed and there is a tone of kidding and friendship. I cite this because it appears to be compatible with his expressions of concern for these men and his favorable sentiment toward them.

THE GREAT INJUSTICE

As we walked Konecny expressed his views on the great injustice: the fact that these men rarely get enough to live on, that after a life of work or service, because a lot of these people are apparently retired servicemen, these men are not provided with adequate means of support by the government. He felt that it was a shame that we are unable to mobilize adequate resources to take care of our own aged. The officer's idea is that we should somehow provide them with a community to live in, in which the conditions would be considerably above what is available to them now.

THE OLD TIMER'S BUDGET

Konecny tried to give me something of what might be called the budget of the average old timer in the neighborhood. He receives between eighty and one-hundred dollars a month. He pays somewhere between twenty-five and thirty dollars for his room. He is apt to buy four meal tickets at the Sanitarium Café, which will cost him five dollars apiece, for which he gets five dollars and fifty cents worth of food. This adds up to fifty dollars. He may have a shoe repair bill, or he may be in a position where he has to buy a shirt or a pair of trousers from the Salvation Army, which again will take ten or fifteen dollars. The remainder of the money has to last through the month for various other expenses, mainly for the couple of beers that he needs every day or which he likes to have every day.

THE SANITARIUM CAFÉ

The Sanitarium Café came up several times as something of a place of refuge for many Larimer pensioners. The proprietor was lauded as a fair man. Not only does he give the old timer his money's worth, but he also keeps the café clean of the predators and in this sense provides something of a safe haven for the old timer. As a further item of recommendation for the proprietor of the Sanitarium Café, the officer told me that on several occasions the owner has provided some money for the burial of men who die.

FOUR MEN IN COWBOY GARB

At this point we were crossing Larimer and walking down the first block on the other side of it in the direction of the Cambridge Hotel. As we were walking down, the sergeant's car drove up. It was not the sergeant who brought me down. And he pointed to four men in cowboy garb standing on a side street just parallel

to Larimer. At that point we were at the corner where the Denver's Greatest was located. The sergeant was about to go into Denver's Greatest and Konecny said he would talk to the men. We walked over and Konecny proceeded to inquire about their identity.

The first man stated his name. It went very rapidly. He stated his name, his place of residence and apparently was someone Konecny knew. And he sent him off. He told him to beat it: 'Get off the street as quickly as you can.' The man turned and walked away rather rapidly. Then Konecny turned to the remaining three men. One was quite old and obviously intoxicated. One was young, about twenty-two. And one was a man of forty. The young man and the man of forty may have had something to drink but were able to give adequate answers. The old man was giggling, laughing, slurring his name, not able to say where he lived. Konecny turned to the two men who were able to give answers. After some questions about who they were, he insisted that they point out their bottle to him, and all three of them assured him that they weren't drinking, that there was no bottle. Konecny said to them, 'If I find a bottle, all three of you go to jail. You'd better point it out to me.' But they kept insisting there was no bottle. Konecny used his flashlight to search the vicinity for the bottle. As they stood next to an automobile, he looked under the automobile. There wasn't a bottle anywhere. Later he did locate a bottle with about an inch of wine left, in a doorway. But he made no arrest, perhaps because the doorway was too far from the scene.

In the course of interrogation of the two sober men, they pulled out work slips. It turned out that they registered with an agricultural employment agency. Neither of the two men had any place to stay, but the work slips apparently vouched for the fact that they were taken care of. The officer expressed some warning to them, saying that he'd better not see them anymore on the street tonight. He told them to beat it and they walked off.

THE OLD MAN

Now he turned to the old man who was laughing and giggling and asked him for identification. The man pulled out something that looked like his social security card and the officer took the information and wrote it on an arrest ticket. Now, the man was not terribly drunk. He was obviously intoxicated and he mildly protested the arrest in a way like, 'Oh, Jesus Christ, do you have to do that?' And there was some expression of unhappiness but not really to the point where his remarks acquired the tone of insolence. In the course of the old man's pleading with the officer to let him go he said, 'Can I talk to Ray?' The officer laughingly said, 'What do you want to talk to Ray for? He isn't going to bail you out.' The man answered, 'Oh, yes, he will.' 'No, he won't.' 'Yes, he will. Just let me talk to

him. Come on with me. You'll see.' Well, that went on awhile, this exchange about Ray. And finally the officer said, 'All right. Where's Ray?' It appears Ray is the bartender in the bar across the street from Denver's Greatest. The officer went into the rear door of the bar and called for Ray. Ray came out and he merely humored the old man. He said, 'There's nothing you can do. He already wrote you up. You're going to jail. It's not so bad. Quit bitching. Just go.'

At this point, while this was going on, the sergeant came out of Denver's Greatest and Konecny turned to the sergeant for a brief conversation. As I remained on the scene with the drunk I heard Ray tell the old man, 'You should've called me before he wrote you up. Maybe I could've helped you then. Now there's nothing I can do for you.' While we were waiting for the paddy wagon to arrive – Oh, I must say that the paddy wagon is summoned by a walkie-talkie radio – While we were waiting for the paddy wagon to arrive, it turned out that the man does sporadically work on the ranches and farms in the neighborhood, that he usually has no place to stay in town, but he never stays long. This conversation was really beside the point, because the ticket was written up and about three or four minutes later the paddy wagon came, and the man had quite a bit of trouble climbing into it. He was obviously more intoxicated than he showed while standing still. And off they went.

LONG STANDING FRIENDLINESS

At this point the hour is ten o'clock and the officer asked me whether I was ready to have a coke or something like that. And, of course, I consented. Incidentally, I consented to anything whenever they asked me whether I wanted to go some place or see something. As it turned out we went to have a coke in Denver's Greatest which is a rather typical lower middle class burlesque show. The show was underway. We sat there about ten minutes, at most fifteen minutes, during which time one of the waitresses joined us at the table, but I couldn't hear the conversation. Other people came over, the bartender, another waitress. And all of this was pervaded by an atmosphere of long standing friendliness. The part of the conversation that I did overhear, involving the proprietor and his son, had to do with how bad business was. Again reference was made to the strike in the building trades and the fact that it affects business.

As we left the place and walked toward Union Station, a man driving an old car, something like a nineteen thirty-seven, stopped us. He turned out to be an acquaintance of the officer, and there was a friendly exchange for a little while. Then we walked on. We came to the Union Station, and I was taken into the USO where I was invited to sit down and watch the news on television while Konecny

made a telephone call. I sat there for about ten minutes and after Konecny came back we had a cup of coffee at the USO.

PROCEDURES OF INTERROGATING

While sitting at the USO we talked about procedures of interrogating. I described to him what I had observed on the night before, namely, this business of asking [ ] a person's identification card and studying it at very great length. And I asked Konecny what that is all about. In fact, I mimicked the situation. And here was the answer he gave me.

He said that – and incidentally, he prefaced this by saying that now we talked about it, the whole thing became clear to him too. He uses the tactic, but he was never quite explicit about its meaning, at least not to the extent to which it occurs to him now. He proposes, and I paraphrase, that if you take a man's ID card and ask him for his identity, and ask him to give an account of where he is going, where he's coming from and what he's about to do, and while he's giving you all these answers, you look at the card, that is, you look down instead of looking at the man while he's talking, you provide him with an opportunity to give you a line. That is, the situation is so structured that the man will be tempted to tell a lie if he wants to lie, if he has something to hide. You let this go on long enough, possibly without interrupting the person, interspersing the silences for him to kind of tie the noose around his neck. The silences are quite useful because, during the silences, the man has to wrack his brain trying to figure out what the officer already knows about him and this creates a certain situation of tension. But the fact that he is not looking at him gives the officer the appearance of unconcern and makes it possible for the interrogated person to perhaps blabber out something that may, later on, turn out to be compromising. Now, once this situation of having the person talk while you don't look at him went on for a sufficient time – I may add here that this provides the officer with an opportunity to reflect on the identity of the person: very often he tries to remember whether he has seen a person of this sort or this person in particular earlier. After this has gone on for a sufficient length of time, then you look up at him, start asking him questions about the things that he has just said. And when you do that, you stare him down. That is, you stare him right into his eyes. And it's rather easy for someone who is compromised to get confused in these two sequences of these two confrontations.

I asked Konecny how an officer proceeds when he has the thought that things are not in order, but he has no idea of what specifically might be wrong, that is, when he has nothing to go by to structure his procedure of interrogation. Konecny proceeded to make a distinction between the art of interrogating specific suspects. He spoke about people who are suspected of molesting children, where

one can organize the interrogation topically and tried to distinguish this type from another type, namely, the one that Konecny encounters all the time, that is, people on the street he doesn't know, where their strangeness itself is the thing that puts the finger on them. Konecny admitted that there is no single effective procedure of interrogation in such cases. He plays it by ear and in answer to my question couldn't say what his ear is attuned to. He did have this little trick that he had described earlier: looking down during the first part of the interrogation and straight into the eye during the second part, is something he can use to unearth whatever there is to be unearthed.

ETHNOGRAPHIC GRASP

During this conversation, which lasted about fifteen minutes, I got the impression that what Konecny was often talking about was a kind of knowledge of a district and its community that might be properly called a good ethnographic grasp of it. That is to say, a knowledge of the scene that is, as it were, 'An outsider's ability to take the perspective of the insider,' pretty much in the manner whereby the anthropologist creates a beachhead of understanding in his field work. This is a notion, incidentally, that deserves further exploration as a maxim of police surveillance: I mean the possibility of cultivating the anthropological attitude in the course of training of police officers who are given a good deal of vulgar psychology but are not given anything resembling an introduction into ethnographic field work. I have sensed it in San Francisco, and here again, that officers, in their own groping way, try to formulate the methodological basis for anthropological field work.

THE JOHN

The stationmaster entered the USO and related to the officer that there was a man sitting in the john for quite some time and apparently drunk. We walked to the men's room and there was a man at the wash stand. There was a brief inquiry of who he was and where he was going, lasting perhaps no more than a minute or two. The man said that he was waiting for a train and this appeared to satisfy Konecny. He walked toward the end of the men's room and there, on one of the seats, was someone asleep. He poked him with the nightstick. The man woke, got up and appeared to be sober. However, he had a hangover. He was just sobering up. We got his identification and, in the conversation, Konecny pulled out his arrest book and was about to send the man off to jail. Incidentally, I must add that, before he pulled out his arrest book, the man stated an address that was located in downtown Denver. The man proceeded to plead with Konecny to let

him go, stating that his drunk was over, and he was sober now and promised to walk straight home. With mock exasperation Konecny put away his arrest book and said, 'If I see you again, I'll run you in.' The man in an over-solicitous, very, very polite way, interspersing remarks with 'sir' this and 'sir' that, promised to go straight home and was sent off.

MY CANDY BAR

While this was going on, another man walked toward the station. This was a lean, tall man with a rugged face. He was rather handsome looking, fifty-five to sixty years old, walking rather unconcerned in our direction. When he passed the doorway, and we stood just inside of it, Konecny stopped him and asked him where he was going. The man said, 'Why, I'm going to the can,' and explained that he was walking home, and the station happened to be on his path. Konecny let him go. The man went inside and we stood around and talked some with the station master when someone drove up in a station wagon. The driver was someone who is known to the officer, and the four of us stood around there for about ten minutes waiting for the old man to come out of the can and go on his way as he said he would. He didn't reappear, so Konecny and I walked in, and there he sat, outside of the men's room, eating a candy bar. Konecny walked up to him, and as he walked up to him, he pulled out his arrest book. He approached the man and said, 'I told you to get home.' The man said, 'Well, I just want to eat my candy bar.' 'Well, let's go.' The man was sitting on the bench and Konecny after he said, 'Let's go,' nevertheless sat down and asked the man for an identification. The man produced a sheet of paper of some sort. I don't know what it was. And Konecny proceeded to ask questions while reading the document. After a while and without looking up, he started to write out an arrest card.

The man said that he works at a race track and that he is on the way out there. In the following exchange the man asked the officer, 'Do you ever go to the race track?' and the officer said, 'No, I never gamble.' There was some more of such small talk, all in a very friendly tone. The man was not protesting the arrest at all, but did ask why he was being arrested. He's sober and he's got a place to stay and no sooner does he say that he has a place to stay when the officer broke out, 'Oh, quit that bull shit. You can't give me this line. You know you don't have a job out there, and I know it too, and let's not get into this sort of lying. You can't lie to me.' To this, there was no answer. Konecny completed the arrest card, and now we all got up and walked outside of the railroad station. The officer called a paddy wagon.

A BIBLE BOOK

And while we were waiting for the paddy wagon another man walks up, an Indian. He was stopped and asked to identify himself. The man told a story of having come to town from the Dakotas a couple of days ago, and that he stays somewhere across a creek with relatives. He can't give an address, but he gives a name and gives again a sort of identification of the place of his residence. There is a brief question and answer period, asking the man where he has come from, where he is going, what he's going to do. He has no job. He is staying with his relatives, but he doesn't know exactly where they live. He can find the place but can't name it. The man carries a little package. The officer asks him what it is and the man says, 'I bought myself a Bible book.' Now the officer wants to see it, and he is handed the package. It is a new Bible. He asks how much it cost. It cost three dollars and forty cents. 'That's an odd price for a book.' 'Well, that's what I paid. I can show you where I bought it.' Then the conversation turns to what Bibles cost. And the man says that his folks bought once a Bible for seventeen dollars. 'That must have been a beautiful book.' 'Yes, it was a beautiful book. And this too is a beautiful book.' 'Yes. It is.' 'But it's a strange price to pay for a Bible.' 'Well, that's what I paid.' And, says the Indian, he believes in it, too. 'You do, don't you?' 'Yes, I do.' 'Well, all right. Get on your way and don't let me see you on the street.' And now the man, instead of taking off as I would have expected, says, 'But I came here to buy a candy bar.' And Konecny says, 'All right, get your candy bar.'

We are standing now outside waiting for the paddy wagon and with us still is the man who drove up in the station wagon. And there is some more horseplay between the officer and this man. About five minutes passed, and the Indian with the Bible doesn't come out, but the station keeper comes out. There is some question of where the Indian is, but he is quickly forgotten and he does not come up again this evening. The paddy wagon drives up and the man who lied about working at the race track is taken in.

HUNCH

As we walk off up on Seventeenth Street, in the direction of the Cambridge Hotel, I asked Konecny how he had decided that the man was lying about working at the race track. Konecny laughed and he said, 'Well, I looked at his pockets, and in his pocket he had a razor. A man who has a place to stay doesn't carry a razor with him. And he doesn't carry other things with him. It was quite obvious that he wasn't working anywhere or staying anyplace, and that he was giving me a line. Of course, he might be working at the race track occasionally, but not tonight.' Konecny continued, 'I went on a hunch that he didn't work there. I said outright

that he was lying, but I meant only to suggest this.' However, when the man didn't protest, it was kind of a moment of disclosure that settled it.

Sometime during the conversation the man actually admitted that he did not live at the race track, and that he was not on his way to the race track when he came to the station. He continued to insist, however, that he worked there, and he produced a pair of bailing wire pliers as evidence. To this demonstration Konecny responded by saying that he should not have lied from the onset. To be even more precise about this part of the episode, the bailing wire pliers came to light when Konecny frisked the man, just after he had finished writing the arrest ticket. They were a rusty old tool, and nothing was made of it.

WITNESS

We continued walking on Seventeenth Street, and about half way up to Larimer, we saw from a block away a man standing on the street, the left side of the street. And Konecny said to me, 'Now watch. As we walk toward him he's going to turn around and walk away.' Well, the officer was wrong. The man did not turn around, but instead started walking toward us. He was a little bit unsteady on his feet and, as we met, Konecny stopped him and asked who he was. It turned out that he was quite intoxicated, quite unsteady on his feet, with slurred speech. Konecny asked him where he was living, and the man said he stayed at the Alaska Hotel, and he gave the room number. The officer said, 'All right, let's go and get you into your room.' And the man said, 'But I'm walking off a drunk. Just let me be on the street for awhile.' 'No. Let's go to your room.'

Now at this point I had the feeling that the reason why Konecny said, 'Let's go to your room,' instead of telling the man to get going by himself, as he had done with all the other people, was because he didn't believe the man lived at the Alaska, which was just a short distance from where we stood. I later checked on that and it checked out. Konecny knew that men of this sort don't live at the Alaska, although the Alaska is a low class hotel.

As we came to the Alaska, the man didn't want to go in and, in fact, he didn't live there. He had no place to stay. He kept insisting quite loudly that he was merely walking off a drunk and then gave some other place of residence saying he would go there if the officer would let him. However, the arrest book was already out, and Konecny asked for identification and took down the man's name, etc. At this point we walked to the corner on which the Denver's Greatest is located. The man was quite loudly protesting the arrest: 'You'll never get a conviction. I'm going to take you to court.' Konecny was quite calm as the man increased the aggressiveness of his remarks and, if anything, showed faint amusement and kept his responses low and aloof.

About five minutes passed and the man turned to me and asked my name. The officer said, 'You don't need his name.' He said, 'Yes, I do. I want to have a witness.' 'No, you don't need a witness. He's going to be a witness for me. You wouldn't want him as your witness.' At that point I got a little worried and moved a few paces away. Thus, I didn't have the record of the rest of the conversation.

HE WENT TO JAIL

As we were waiting on the corner for the paddy wagon, Konecny walked a few paces into the side street, and he was now at the scene of where, some time ago, we were talking to the two cowboys who had the work slips. There were two men in a doorway. One of them was standing up and the other one was in a crouch on the floor. The man who was standing up immediately turned to the officer. He was quite sober. He answered in a matter of fact manner the questions of who he was and where he lived. And he was sent off with a slap with the nightstick across his butt. All this with, 'Yes sir,' 'Thank you officer,' 'Goodbye officer,' 'Sure I will,' 'Yes, sir, officer,' and off he went.

The man who was in the crouch turned out to be the very same man that earlier was pleading in the Union Station, the one that was sitting on the can when we woke him up. Now this time he went to jail. Konecny told him, 'I told you to go straight home. You didn't do what I told you. When I tell you something, you do it or else you go to jail.' Now there was a bit of pleading again. He was on his way home. He was just stopped by this man, and he was just talking to him. And he was just about to go on anyway. Well, he's not going any more. He's going to jail. 'Why, I didn't do anything.' And no sooner does he say this than Konecny bends down and picks up a paper bag and pulls out of the paper bag an empty bottle. This is sufficiently compromising, and the man stops pleading and now we have two men waiting for the wagon.

The paddy wagon arrived and the first arrested man was still asking for my name as a witness. They were both ushered into the paddy wagon and we were again on our way.

SWEEPING THE STREET

At this point the time is about eleven-thirty, and I'm enormously impressed by this cold efficiency of keeping the street clean. Konecny is a man who works rather fast. That is, he walks fast. There are continuous glances in all directions, and he's really sweeping the street. Men are being sent home, sent to jail, being ushered into bars or into cafés, out of them, off the street, etc. And it seems like everybody

is taken care of. He literally hovers over the neighborhood, and it seems that nothing escapes his attention.

I do not propose that we stopped everyone we met. Persons in bars or cafés are virtually always left alone. Most men in the two blocks of Larimer proper were not addressed, except when they congregated in front of the missions or hotels or when they were obviously drunk. In the sidestreets, however, it was a rare instance that we passed someone. The few men we did pass on sidestreets walked briskly, nodded their heads in greeting and had the appearance of men working in the warehouses located there.

THE DISPLAY OF COMPETENCE

The impression I have is that it is fairly safe to linger in the lights of Larimer after ten o'clock, provided one is not drunk or congregating in groups of more than four or five. But on the side streets, one is safe only by displaying obvious evidence of competence and proper justification for passing through the area. To be sure, it is quite easy to distinguish the competent from the incompetent. In fact, however, we did pass a few men I thought we would have stopped, and we stopped one or two I thought we would have passed. I must add that on the sidestreets there is no such thing as simply passing someone. At the very least, there is a greeting exchanged.

THE FAMILIAR AND THE STRANGE

It seems, therefore, that superimposed upon the distinction between the competent and the incompetent is the distinction between the familiar and strange persons. Of those Konecny knows, there are some he addresses by name, some he can tell something about. Others he merely identifies as vaguely known regulars. I would say that these two groups encompass about sixty to eighty per cent of all the people we encountered. I may add that seeing the remaining cohort of strangers against the similar background apparently makes it easy to cope with them.

THE NIGHTSTICK

Whenever he is adequately assured that a man he stopped has a place to stay and will and can get there, he's sent off in a commanding tone of voice. It's always something like, 'You get,' 'You run,' accompanied by a poke with the nightstick. There is no violence in this poke, but it's rather the kind of slap that a parent may give to a child. Verbally he threatens them with a crack across the brow or a blow on the butt, but in fact I had not seen him use the nightstick in this way. Instead,

the nightstick is something that is supposed to have a psychological effect. It is, incidentally, also the tool of frisking. For the most part he uses his left hand to lift a man's coat tails or jacket and he passes the nightstick on the side, down the trousers. Whenever it hits a hard object, then he feels it with his hand. Apparently this is the way he searches for bottles.

ABSOLUTE HELL

We have just sent off the liar about the Alaska and the man who didn't follow the order to go home. We continued walking and we entered the Kanber Hotel. We got up there. There was no one in the [Hallways]. Incidentally, there was no one in the hallways in the other hotel we visited earlier. But I must say that the Kanber Hotel deserves some more description. It is absolute Hell. We went to two rooms. The doors to both rooms were ajar. Each of these rooms was actually divided into two subrooms with no door between them. There were two beds in the first part and four or five beds in the second part. In one bed there lay a half naked man, sound asleep, snoring, about forty years old, with a lit cigarette in his fingers. Konecny took the cigarette out of the man's hand, dropped it on the floor and squashed it. In the next bed there lay two men. One woke up, sat up and kept saying, 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry,' and Konecny told him to lay down and go to sleep. On the floor there was a man sprawled. Konecny turned him over and shone the light in his face. And he woke with a gasp and fell right back to sleep. It was absolutely impossible to describe the stench and the atmosphere of this place. It was literally inhuman. I should think that any place in the world, any place at all, would be better suited for human habitation. All the same, of course, no force could corrupt a place to this state but humans living in it. I think one ought to go there and take some pictures, preferably some pictures at night with infra red light. It was by far the worst that I have seen any place in all my life.

We left that room and we merely glanced into the other one: the same picture. We proceeded down the hall and there a light became visible through the crack under the door of one room. We heard some talk. Konecny knocked on the door and a man said, 'I ain't gonna open.' And he said, 'Oh, yes, you will. This is a police officer.' As we stood waiting we heard what sounded like bottles knocking against each other. A man giggling in a silly manner opened the door. The man was alone and this room was in an abysmal state. There was a sheet on the bed. It was spotted with Lord knows what. The mattress underneath had spots and holes burned into it. There was a torn blanket on the bed. The man denied having a bottle and Konecny told him, 'You'd better show it to me and if you do I'll give it back to you. If I find it, I'll break it.' Well, the man said he had no bottle. Konecny looked around and he found no bottle. The man asked, 'Was I too loud?' All this

went on while the man was giggling in a silly fashion. He was, incidentally, small, about five feet four, abysmally dirty and Konecny didn't ask his name. In this case this appeared to be of no interest since he was already home. Now there was a warning. 'You'd better get to bed now.' And the man said, 'Yes. I have to get up in the morning. I have a job.' We left the hotel, I must say with some relief.

COMPARISON

Now for the sake of comparison, Konecny took me to the dormitory above the Nevada. We walked into this place right next to the bar. We entered the lobby which had a white stone floor – I say this to identify the place – and there was a smell of Lysol. Konecny walked to what was the clerk's desk, pushed a buzzer and asked me to open the door to the upstairs while he held the buzzer. It seemed that the entrance to the Hotel from the lobby was locked, and one cannot get inside without being noticed by the clerk.

We went upstairs and there were two large dormitory rooms. Most of the beds were filled with sleepers. I noticed one or two men with eyes open, but for the most part everybody snored and appeared to be undisturbed by our walking through and by the beam of the flashlight. One large dormitory room, encompassing about twenty-five or thirty beds, seemed to be more congested than the other one, and I learned that there was a difference in price between the two. As we walked through the cheaper dormitory, Konecny noticed one man who had a bandage on his face. His face was swollen and there were signs of blood on it. The man was lying on his back with what seemed to be shallow breathing. Konecny poked him with his nightstick on his foot and the man stirred, which was apparently a satisfactory indication that the man was O.K.

We went downstairs. As we arrived in the lobby, the outside door was being locked by a boy and there also was a hotel clerk in the lobby at that point. Konecny introduced himself to the clerk and asked who he was. The man told him his name and that he had worked here only a few days. Konecny urged him to call the police any time there was any trouble. He agreed and so did the boy who was swabbing the floor.

Konecny praised this place, saying the sheets were changed every day, that they kept the place quiet, they don't let anybody in who is drunk, and they check very carefully on arms being taken upstairs. Altogether, they provide the men with relatively adequate living conditions there. Konecny added that many of the men living there have spot jobs and have lived in this place for a considerable length of time. He also pointed out that one can get a walled cubicle which affords some privacy.

KNOW THE PEOPLE

As we came down from this place and came back to the street, the sergeant's car drove up and we were to go and have something to eat. Now we drove far away from the district and went to a restaurant where we had a sandwich. I would say we took about an hour for the meal. And during this time we talked about police work in general, about the business of police training. Konecny's point was that there is altogether too much book training and not enough practice, and that one must learn the hard way. Of foremost importance is that a policeman must know the people. Although one never knows more than three out of four and perhaps not even that many, as long as this is the case, the rest fall into place, and one can keep the stranger under control. What he was talking about as 'knowing the people' was by no means anything like a detailed knowledge of individual cases. Rather he was talking about the type that shows through the variations of individual appearances. And I took this to be a confirmation of my hunch that the anthropological acumen that comes with seasoned police work.

VOLUNTEER

As we left the restaurant the sergeant happened to be driving by again and he took us back to Larimer. We left the car in front of Jigg's. We went in and observed the dancing and playfulness that goes on there about midnight. As we were walking out of Jigg's, there was a drunk man leaning on the side of a house. This was a simple affair. The man could hardly answer any questions at all. Konecny managed to extricate some identification, a social security card. He called a paddy wagon and the man was picked up.

Just as the paddy wagon drove up, another man approached and volunteered to go to jail. The other man was quite clearly intoxicated, but he was not nearly in as bad shape as the first one. When the man said to Konecny that he volunteered to go to jail, Konecny responded, 'You do? All right.' And he pulled out his arrest book and wrote out an arrest slip for the man. And away he went.

Before the two men left, a squad car drove up and one of the officers came out. He recognized the man who volunteered to go to jail. And it turned out that this man was a habitual resident of the jail, that in fact, he is something of a trustee. And the officer asked him, 'Are you going to cook there again?' And the man said, 'Yes sir, I will.'

CITIZEN'S INDIGNATION

Before I close the story of this incident, I want to say that while Konecny was writing up the ticket of the first man who was in such bad shape, the other man – Oh, I would say he was about sixty-five and white haired. He walked up to me from the doorway of Jigg's and murmured, 'Look here, he's picking up a drunk, and I could point out to you ten criminals right there at Jigg's. Why doesn't he pick them up? Do you want me to pick out criminals for you?' I didn't respond to this. And he said, 'Well, here you got one. Here you got another one.' And he was pointing to young men, sitting at tables. While the man was saying this I took it as an expression of a citizen's indignation about the work of the police, the familiar statement, 'There they go around giving decent people tickets for minor things instead of catching big criminals.' And I would never have expected this man to come up a moment later and volunteer to go to jail. But I don't know whether such things need be reconciled.

One other thing: while Konecny was concerned with these two men, Johnny O'Hair stood in the doorway of the dormitory next to the Nevada. He appeared sick to me. He was heaving. I don't know whether he noticed me. He made no approach to me, and I made no approach to him. When I looked again at the place where he was standing, I saw him walking off in the opposite direction and was glad of not having to intervene in his behalf. My impression was that Johnny O'Hair was drunk and just by the very skin of his teeth he avoided being arrested.

At this point the time was well after one o'clock and Konecny walked me down to the Cambridge Hotel. And that was the end of the day.

# # #

June 15, 1965

GREETING AND CONVERSATION

The following is a recording of experiences of Tuesday evening. I believe it was June 15: on the whole, a rather uneventful evening. I was at the station twenty minutes to seven, but we didn't leave the station until about twenty minutes after seven. I was again to walk the beat with Officer Konecny. And on my request I saw Lt. O'Neill who was at the station. He talked briefly with me, and I told him that this would be my last evening of this run.

We drove down to Larimer in Konecny's private car. And as we left the car we walked down the street and met a radio car. There was a brief conversation and we went into Denver's Greatest. There was no one in there, no patrons, that is.

And again there was a big greeting and conversation with the proprietor and the waitresses.

We left the place and just as we left it started raining. This, I suppose, spoiled the evening. The rain cleared the streets. It rained for about ten or fifteen minutes, rather hard. And by the time the rain was over, the street was virtually empty and never became alive again.

CARTED OFF

Shortly after the rain stopped, Konecny found a man leaning against a wall who was terribly intoxicated. He could hardly speak. He could certainly not stand up under his own power. The officer summoned the scout car and took the identification of the arrested man.

No sooner was he done with doing the write-up of the arrest slip when another man walked by, quite unsteady, and was unable to give an address, who kept pointing to hotels in various directions, and it became quite clear that he had no place to stay. The man was quite intoxicated. But I should think that had Konecny been satisfied that the man lived somewhere in this vicinity he would have let him go. Since he had no place to go, he wrote out an arrest ticket for this man. The arrest ticket was completed by the time the scout car came and both men were carted off to jail.

BETTER LOOK OUT

All of this went on in front of the Volunteers of America. And as Konecny was writing the arrest tickets, the first man banged against the door. There was a religious service going on inside. And a man ran out, a man in rather poor shape, poked me in the back, and said loudly that I'd better not do that again. The man didn't see the officer, who was standing outside the man's field of vision, but the officer heard him and saw me jump at being poked. He initially just scolded the man loudly, but after the two arrested men were carted off, he went into the Mission and pulled the man out from the Mission. It was quite clear that the man was drunk, although not terribly so. Konecny told him that he had better look out at who he was poking and sent the man home. The man was old and [disheveled] and quite apologetic and quickly shuffled off from the Mission.

WHY ALL THIS THING

We walked on, turned into Larimer, in the direction of the sporting goods store. We stopped at every bar. And in one of the bars, the Gold Mine, the proprietor

said something to the officer. I couldn't hear the remarks because the jukebox was playing. But it seemed that he pointed out some young man, who made tracks to the rest room. The proprietor and the officer walked in the direction of the rest room. The proprietor pulled the young man out of the rest room, and the four of us walked to the street. As we got out on the street, Konecny had the man identify himself. He was about twenty-two years old, a six-foot tall, young boy who did not seem drunk. He kept asking, 'Why all this thing? – All this inquiry? – Why do I have to give my name? I haven't done anything. Or is there anything that I am suspected of?' Konecny told him, however, that there was no trouble. He merely took down his personal data and sent the boy off. In the course of the conversation, he found out that the boy was just laid off. He had been doing cement work.

YOU HAD BETTER DO IT

As we walked on we picked up a man whom Konecny had stopped earlier. The man was drunk, not very drunk, but drunk. During the earlier encounter Konecny told this man to make tracks home, and the man promised he would. Now, three-quarters of an hour later, he was found standing in a doorway. It became clear that he did not have a place to stay. And Konecny wrote out an arrest ticket for him, summoned the squad car and sent the man off. Again the whole thing indicated that when you are told to do something by Konecny, you had better do it. And if you don't, you can be sure of landing in jail.

TO FIND HIS WIFE

From then on we made every bar. We looked into every liquor store and went into both sporting goods stores, walked up Sixteenth and went into a hotel. The hotel was very quiet. I may add that all this time the street was quite empty, and those men who were on the street appeared to be quite sober and presented no problem. Similarly, in the hotel all was quiet. There was no noise. All doors closed except for one, where there was a man sitting on the bed in a T-shirt. We walked in, and the man identified himself. He was cold sober. He recently came to town from Louisiana and gave us quite a lengthy account of his life history and his miseries. He came to find his wife. He needed to find her in order to get her to sign some papers to obtain a divorce.

In the course of the story, the man presented himself as a quite adequate human with bad luck. His first wife had divorced him after his child was born. He showed us a picture of a boy whom he described as retarded and also a picture of his daughter. He seemed to maintain family relations, but he is, in his own words, a bum, an alcoholic. He is a painter.

The appearances were that Officer Konecny was quite moved by this story. He took down the information about the wife that the man was hunting and promised to help. The man, incidentally, had information that the wife was presently in Denver. As we were walking out, Konecny told me that he would, as soon as he could get to it, make a check of recent arrest records to see whether he can locate the woman to help the man. In addition to the old timers, people like this man also need protection and help. They too are very vulnerable, although they have brought a good deal of their misery on themselves, mainly through drinking.

DROPPING IN

We moved on to another hotel, this time a dormitory type. It was relatively clean, but most beds were unoccupied. We walked through it quite quickly and departed, again dropping in on bars, shops, liquor stores and dropping in on the sporting goods once more. We turned on Seventeenth, walking in the direction of the Cambridge Hotel, stopped again at Denver's Greatest and had a 7-Up there. The time was now about ten o'clock, and we moved to the Union Station.

Contrary to yesterday, the Union Station was crowded. All places on the benches were taken. There were enormous numbers of children and very young people. It appeared that train schedules had been fouled up for some reason, and that accounted for the congestion.

LITTLE OLD MAN STAMMERING

We left the Union Station a short while later and walked back up to Larimer, turned left on Larimer walking toward Jigg's, when we noticed a squad car on the other side of the street. We walked over to it, and it appeared that the squad car had been called in because of a sick man in the hotel. The officer standing on the outside informed us that the man had DT's and that they had summoned an ambulance. We went upstairs, and there was a little old man stammering. I don't believe that he had the DT's. He was quite drunk and he may have been in a state of alcoholic hallucinosis. He gave an account of being very much afraid of someone who was after him and who threatened to kill him. The officers took these remarks as hallucinatory, but I am not quite as sure. There was no typical evidence of alcoholic hallucinosis and DT behavior. Nevertheless, he made a very pitiful appearance: he was a man about five feet tall, of indeterminate age. And about ten minutes later the ambulance came and took the man to the hospital.

REMARKABLE INCIDENT

Compared to San Francisco this was a rather remarkable incident, because in San Francisco a man of this sort would have been taken to the hospital in the squad car or the paddy wagon and no ambulance would be summoned. The officer would book the person as mentally ill, in the hospital. Here, apparently, the experiences with the hospital are such that officers prefer not to go to the hospital. I had been told about that by Sgt. Ford, and now I again inquired about this with Konecny and found that unless the situation is really dangerous and there is some risk of getting out of hand, an ambulance will be summoned in case of any ill person, including a mentally ill person.

As the ambulance departed, the two officers and Konecny decided to have something to eat. The time was about ten minutes after eleven. And since going to eat would have meant being out for about forty minutes without seeing anything interesting, which would have led up to midnight, I decided to quit at this point and go back to the hotel to do my dictation this evening, most particularly, since I believe that I wouldn't even be able to dictate even as little as I am dictating now, tomorrow morning.

SOLID CITIZENS

I want to make one concluding remark. It appears to me, from the two nights of walking on Larimer and from the one night I spent in the radio car patrolling Larimer, that this street has what might be called its solid citizens. These are for the most part older people. All of them drink, and all of them are occasionally arrested. Nevertheless, by and large they are well-liked and are left alone as long as they can monitor on their own. These people are the object of protection by the police officers. In a certain sense the police look out for them. There is between the police, particularly between the officer walking the beat, and the solid citizen a friendly relationship that is continuously maintained by meetings on the street. Most of these people will be on the street in the later afternoon and early evening hours. To some extent these people can count on real help from the police, not merely protection in the event of danger, but advice, guidance, even a handout now and then. I noticed, for example, that Konecny took a cigar from one man, who apparently was also one of these solid citizens, perhaps one who was slightly better off. He took the cigar and gave it to another one who was worse off.

HARD LUCK GROUP

This cohort of the solid citizen has a certain gradation where it slopes off toward the dissolute and unwanted. The continuum shades into younger people who are known to be in trouble, who have lived on the street for some time. These younger people are known to work when they can work, but they are thought to suffer from some form of disability that leads them to drunkenness. The officers are inclined to be generous with these people. They are in some way moved to respect the fact that these people work, as far as they can work, and the officers seem to think that these people are victims of periodic binges. Their own ways of disabling themselves do not earn them contempt but rather pity. A prime example of such a person is the man from Louisiana looking for his wife whom we met today in the hotel. There were many other instances of these persons, either in a state of intoxication of moving toward a state of intoxication or being sober, who were treated as being down on their luck.

PREDATORS

The hard luck group blends into the third category of persons who are of interest. This last group includes pimps, thieves, prostitutes and other criminals. They are thought to be deliberately vicious. They are more clearly the predators. The distinction between the predators and the hard luck people is difficult, in part, because the predators themselves are quite vulnerable to exploitation.

DISTINCTIONS

Perhaps the most telling distinctions between the three groups are as follows: the old timers are segregated from the rest by their age and the fact that they are residentially stable. The hard luck people are younger and they typically come and go. In the terminology of the street, most of them are on the burn. Both of these groups are easy to spot, in fact they tell you their story at the drop of a hat. They, typically, don't mind being arrested, though they prefer to stay out of jail, even if it means sleeping out. The predators are the hardest to spot, and it appears that in encounters with unknown people the officers first consider this possibility. Perhaps one further reason for the difficulty in distinguishing between the predator and the hard luck person is in fact that the former does not occur on Larimer in good form. There is a streak of bad luck in the predators, and bad luck persons are apt to prey.

Every new person, however, represents a puzzle and causes suspicion. The fact that Konecny hasn't seen you yet is already two strikes against you. When he does

see you for the first time, you'd better make a good appearance, and you'd better make yourself known in some way as a respectable citizen, as someone who at least occasionally is sufficiently sober to take care of himself. Once this is demonstrated, then one can count on getting along. Needless to say, the standard of appearance and [demeanor] I am talking about is relative to the rest of Larimer and quite low indeed.

ARREST RECORD

One thing one mustn't do. And that is to cross an officer. If a person crosses an officer, he surely will be arrested. An arrest record, however, does not speak against a person. The fact that someone was picked up a dozen times in recent weeks does not seem to contribute to the likelihood of being picked up again. Quite to the contrary. It seems that one way to become acquainted with the officer is to have an arrest record. Somehow this gives the officer an assurance that the person appreciates the officer's strength and authority, and that he will take this into account in his conduct. I must add, however, that the matter of the record of prior arrest is undoubtedly more complicated. What I said pertains, probably, mainly to the street regulars with whom having an arrest record is no more remarkable than having two arms.

KEEP THE STREET FREE

If I am to describe the principal function of the man on the beat, it's to keep the street free of drunks and to control those who prey upon them. And I mean the street. It appears that no matter how drunk a man is in his room or in the dormitory of the hotel, or in fact in the bar, there is a good chance that he will be left where he is. However, one doesn't need to be terribly drunk to be picked up on the street. Most incriminating in the case of drunks is the lack of a place to stay. The officer has displayed something of an uncanny instinct in being able to pick out the people who give him a false address. I suppose that he is more often right than wrong in this. I'm saying this because it is, after all, possible that someone who says he is staying at the Mudd, and the officer doesn't believe him and sends him off to jail, the man nevertheless does stay at the Mudd. I think the officer is right in most of these cases. I had asked him what he takes into account and what he reckons with in making up his mind. And his answer was that he matches the person giving the answer with the hotel, and he knows who is likely to stay where. For this reason he can rather easily and plausibly discriminate the liars from those who tell the truth.

JUST A BANDAGE

I further found that a disabled man, a man carrying a cane, or in fact, someone with just a bandage on his foot, is likely to get somewhat of a softer treatment. One of the men who was stopped today had a bandage on his foot, and I had the impression that the presence of a bandage seemed to contribute to his being let go. There is some irony in the fact that the man was unable to capitalize on his apparent advantage. He was told to leave the street but was found three-fourths of an hour later and finally sent to jail.

This is the end of my recording.