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To Walk the Streets Safely. by James Scheuer.

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TO WALK THE STREETS SAFELY. By James Scheuer. New York, New York: Doubleday & Company. 1969. 236 pages. \$5.95.

JOHN L. BARRY*

Law enforcement, and its profuse problems, should be of primary concern to every facet of the American legal picture. By this I mean every citizen, every attorney, every judge, and every law enforcement practitioner. Unfortunately, many of the aforementioned have specialized themselves away from the serious problem of crime in the streets, its prevention and control. Mr. Scheuer's book is, therefore, a timely document to be absorbed by every person upon whom society has placed some portion of the responsibility for the operation of a society free from fear. The vast majority of practicing attorneys are not engaged in criminal law. Civil practice does not lend itself to close contact with the problems explained in *To Walk the Streets Safely*. The result is that the vast majority of attorneys are not cognizant of many of the critical legal problems afield today. The civil, probate, domestic relations judge, too, has specialized himself away from this societal cancer. This book was written for all of these people.

The largest segment of our populace, the citizenry, is informed about crime in the streets only to the extent reported in the local newspaper. Ergo, if he lives in a relatively crime free affluent suburb he feels that the problem is not his; indeed, he may not be fully aware of the total problem. This book is written for him. Every clerk, stenographer, teacher and clergyman in every American community should know what is happening on the American street, and what can be done about it. Congressman Scheuer explains the cancerous impact of crime on the American social and economic scene. He further explains that the cancer can be cured and tells us how. We simply need a better *quality* of law enforcement in this country. We must have available to enforcement agencies technologies already developed which will bring crime control up to the level of sophistication already reached by the criminal element. He calls for vast transfusions of money into the problem, and explains that good law enforcement doesn't *cost* the community; it *pays*. If the concerned citizenry will tally up the cost of its crippled court systems, its non-rehabilitative prison systems, its recidivism rates, its welfare costs (support of the families of incarcerated), property loss and on and on *ad infinitum* against the cost of good law enforcement, it will find that the cost of the latter is vastly less than that of the former.

During the course of his book, Congressman Scheuer suggests various methods to improve the quality of law enforcement in the United States. His recommendations pertain to predatory crime (rape, robbery, etc.) as opposed to white collar or consensual crime (embezzlement, homosexual activity, etc.).

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In the area of communications, the author proposes an increase in the number of police call boxes, both on the street and throughout apartment complexes, so that at no time will any individual be more than seconds away from the means to contact the police. In conjunction with an increased number of call boxes, the author advocates the installation of computerized communications systems between patrol cars and police communications centers, so that immediately upon receipt of a call for police assistance the computer can identify the nearest patrol car and dispatch it to the scene. By coupling the computer system with a teletype, information transmitted while the officer is absent from his car can be recorded for use when he returns. In an area where seconds are of critical importance, computerized technology will cut minutes off response time.

Criminal investigation and identification is an area which is particularly susceptible to computer technology. Computers can function as vast data banks from which police officers can rapidly obtain information needed in a criminal investigation. In order to meet the challenge of a rising crime rate, our means of criminal identification need to be expanded and modernized. The author suggests the implementation and development of vocal and olfactory identification systems. Improved lighting, closed circuit television and electronic sensing devices can and should be utilized for more efficient detection and deterrence.

In the area of recruitment, the author recommends that police recruits be required to attain a higher level of education and undergo a thorough psychological screening designed to eliminate anyone whose psychological makeup would make him unfit for the demands of police work. Police pay scales should be increased in order to make a career in police work attractive to the college graduate. In respect to training programs, Congressman Scheuer advocates an intensive and comprehensive training program for police officers. He endorses the concept of the "Community Service Officer"—a policeman who is specially trained to work with community groups and whose function is to improve police-community relations. A more thought provoking suggestion in the area of police-community relations involves the enforcement of the traffic laws. Since the normal citizen-police confrontation involves some minor traffic infraction, the author opines that these confrontations are productive of nothing better than bitterness toward the police. Therefore, in the author's opinion, if the police were relieved of the responsibility for enforcement of the traffic laws, police-community relations would improve.

The author joins the chorus of voices calling for extensive reform of our judicial and penal system. Our judicial system needs an infusion of manpower as well as a modernization of its methods. Our penal system, as it is now, has failed to rehabilitate the criminal. The author advocates an aggressive program of retraining such as the one now being conducted at Shaw House in Washington, D.C.

In general, the author is exasperated with our present system. He compares

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industry's three percent average spending for research and development with the national police average of less than three thousandths of a percent. How, he asks, can the police effectively wage a modern war against crime with ancient equipment and technology. The author is hopeful that the National Institute for Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, cosponsored in Congress by the author and Senator Edward Kennedy, will be able to develop the new equipment, systems and techniques needed to combat the rising crime rate. The Institute can also develop and promulgate standards for police recruitment and training as well as new theories for rehabilitation of criminals.

Perhaps the most important plea contained in the book is one for a higher level of public concern for an intensified fight against crime. A concerned vocal public, the author believes, is the most effective impetus to a solution of the problem.

I consider this work a must for every citizen. I trust that it will enjoy the success that it deserves. If only a small percentage of the recommendations in this book are eventually employed, the American citizen will have gone far in his desire *To Walk the Streets Safely*.

