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# Police Guide on Organized Crime

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Technical Assistance Division  
Office of Criminal Justice Assistance  
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration  
United States Department of Justice  
Washington, D.C. 20530

**BILL ARAUJO**

**POLICE GUIDE  
ON  
ORGANIZED CRIME**

**U.S. Department of Justice  
National Institute of Justice**

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**FOREWORD**

This book answers the questions that many officers pose concerning their role in combating organized crime. It depicts the strong impact of organized crime upon the police officer's experience. It outlines in some detail the many local signs of organized crime activity. It describes the value of organized crime intelligence information and stresses the vital importance of the policeman's role in developing such information for use in prosecuting organized crime figures. Finally, it tells how to deal with the bribery attempt that is the stock in trade of organized criminal groups.

You will find the information in this book of value to you, to your department and the police profession. It will help to make you an effective partner in the drive to rid our country of organized crime.

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ACQUISITIONS

## Reasons for Reading This Guide

By translating what is contained in this *Guide* into on-the-job action, the police officer will be performing a vital service to his country, community, and profession.

Many authorities describe organized crime as one of the nation's foremost long-range problems. As a police officer patrolling your beat, post, or grid, you occupy a key position in the first line of defense—and offense—against organized criminals. This is so even though your “free time” to patrol and observe is frequently almost nonexistent because of the many other demands of your job—such as servicing calls for assistance, attending to paperwork, making court appearances, coping with the crisis of the moment, et cetera.

This *Guide* is not intended to take the place of existing procedures or policies your department may have instituted to combat organized crime, but to reinforce them and to make them even more effective. In the following pages you will obtain answers to questions such as these:

- What is organized crime? How does it differ from street crime, from the “organized” burglary ring?

- How does organized crime relate to your job? How would your job be easier if there were no organized crime?

- What are the major activities of organized crime?

- How can you observe signs of organized crime activity when on patrol?

- Do you have an obligation to report suspected organized crime operations? What constitutes a good report?

- How should a police officer handle corruption attempts generated by organized crime figures?

A consultant to the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice commented that when organized crime starts "to undermine basic economic and political traditions and institutions . . . the real trouble begins. And the real trouble has begun in the United States." Obviously, the officer on patrol cannot wipe out organized crime single handedly; but, just as obviously, without his day-in, day-out help, the fight against this "real trouble" will never get off the ground.

### **Who is the Enemy?**

**What are some of the differences between street crime and organized crime?**

As a practical matter, when a mugger,

purse-snatcher, or car thief is arrested and convicted, the number of future assaults and thefts will be fewer than would otherwise be the case. If a member of an organized crime group were arrested for running operations involving policy, loan sharking, or labor racketeering, he would merely be replaced and the illegal activity would continue as if nothing had happened. With organized crime, loss of personnel does not necessarily destroy the organization's operations.

Also, in contrast to those who commit street crimes, the arrested organized crime defendant is likely to have his legal expenses taken care of by the syndicate. If he is convicted, his family is often provided for during his jail term and he is guaranteed a job upon release. There may even be attempts to bribe the arresting officer, the judge, district attorney, the parole officer, or probation officer in order to secure a speedy release from prison, or to have the charges dropped or reduced. Finally, upon apprehending members of a local burglary ring, for example, you are generally able to arrest the leader or leaders of the ring. But if you arrest lower-level personnel working for organized crime, there is only a slim chance that higher-ups will thereby fall into the net of the law. This is so because leaders of organized crimi-

nal groups usually insulate themselves from arrest by giving orders to subordinates who in turn pass the word down to lower-level criminals for the purpose of effecting commission of crimes.

**How do victims of street crime and organized crime differ?**

All too often the targets of organized crime are *willing* victims or victims too unsophisticated to realize they are dealing with criminals: a factory worker who seeks and obtains money from a loan shark to meet medical expenses or to pay off gambling debts; the businessman who engages the services of a labor racketeer to avoid paying employees a union wage; the slum dweller who plays policy against hopeless odds; a bargain-hungry public that patronizes a discount outlet selling stolen appliances supplied by the organized underworld. Of course, there are plenty of unwilling victims too. But unlike most of the unwilling victims of street crime, those who suffer at the hands of organized crime frequently—if not usually—refuse to step forward to press charges, supply information, or give testimony. The reason for this is fear—fear that they or members of their families will be maimed or killed. Indeed, organized crime is so powerful that even the

government must go to extraordinary lengths to keep cooperative witnesses alive. Sometimes this means giving a witness a new identity, physical appearance, social security number, etc., or sending him abroad to live. In other cases, witnesses have been protected by arranging for them to live in secured quarters.

**Where in the United States does organized crime operate?**

The tentacles of organized crime stretch from coast to coast, although metropolitan areas are favored targets. Even rural sections of the United States have not escaped the attention of organized crime. It will operate wherever the profits appear attractive. This includes doing business with, and in, other countries—such as supplying Iron Curtain nations with rare metals, establishing insurance and casino operations in the Caribbean, and converting money obtained through illegal activities into “respectable” profits by running such funds through Swiss banks.

**How much income does organized crime gross each year?**

The exact figure, of course, is impossible to pinpoint, but all estimates by reliable authorities indicate that organized crime's an-

nual gross income is well into the multi-billion dollar range. One federal agency calculates that untaxed underworld profits from gambling alone are realized at the rate of \$600,000 per hour. Profits are so lush that many racketeers occupying bottom-rung positions in the criminal hierarchy have become millionaires within short periods.

**Is one ethnic group responsible for organized crime?**

No. Members of organized crime belong to many different ethnic groups; organized crime encompasses more than those in any one group or section of a community. This is so even though the various terms used to describe organized crime sometimes convey the impression of control by one ethnic group.

Organized crime syndicates or groups are composed of people representing a wide variety of backgrounds. Taking into account outerfringe personnel who are associates, though not members, and including political organizations, unions, businesses, and other groups directly or indirectly under the thumb of organized crime, the manpower available to the organized underworld could conceivably number in the hundreds of thousands.

**How is the inner core organized?**

Inner core personnel are dispersed among various operating groups. Each group operates in a manner similar to a business enterprise. Tight controls and discipline are maintained by organized crime leaders over their employees. A recognized chain of command provides an insulating barrier between the low-level workers, who commit the overt criminal acts and the bosses who direct operations. This insulation makes it difficult to obtain evidence to convict the leaders of organized crime. The low-level workers commit such acts as: soliciting bets, hijacking trucks, collecting payments for loan sharks, vandalizing businesses, et cetera. Organized crime leaders employ the talents and advice of a variety of "staff men." They have access to attorneys and accountants to advise them on tax matters, business experts to help them with their "legitimate" enterprises, enforcers who collect overdue gambling and loan shark debts, and corrupters to purchase protection.

**Aren't members of the organized underworld basically just a bunch of eccentric, colorful and harmless hoods?**

No. Actually, some members of organized crime groups are capable of the most vicious

acts conceivable. A police officer is regarded with disdain, despite the "friendly" attitude an underworld member may display toward him.

A veteran law enforcement official advised that a rookie patrolman expressed utter disbelief when told that a certain person on his beat was mob-connected. The person was always most congenial, courteous, articulate, and refined. He often inquired about the well-being of the patrolman's family and went out of his way to say hello. The veteran official replied that the rookie was describing the same "nice guy" who, a few years earlier, was within seconds of completing the strangulation of an upstart racketeer in a bar when a patrolman entered to investigate why the lights were still on at such an unusual hour. The would-be killer slipped outside, saw the officer's unsuspecting partner behind the wheel of a parked cruiser, sauntered up to the driver's side of the vehicle, and shot the officer in the face on the chance that he might have noted the assailant's getaway car. In another case an organized crime figure impaled an informant on a meat hook and tortured him. In short, organized crime figures can be animals when the need arises.

They follow a twisted code of conduct—a code where one is insulted if told, "Go get a

job"; a code that, in the words of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, "preaches a sermon all too many Americans heed: The government is for sale; lawlessness is the road to wealth; honesty is a pitfall and morality a trap for suckers." Organized crime is considerably more than a semi-humorous bunch of bumbling hoods. It's a force that if permitted to thrive will erode this nation's educational, cultural, political, moral, economic, and legal systems. A "Statement of Findings and Purposes" set forth in the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-452, 91st Congress), clearly recognizes the insidious nature of this threat by noting that, "organized crime activities in the United States . . . threaten the domestic security, and undermine the general welfare of the nation and its citizens. . . ."

### **How Does Organized Crime Relate to the Police Officer's Job?**

**If organized crime is as well insulated from the law, as well-heeled, and as powerful as just described, what can the lone patrolman, trooper or sheriff's deputy possibly contribute to the fight against organized crime? Isn't this a matter for other levels of law enforcement?**

As a matter of fact, these "higher levels of law enforcement," such as special units or squads established to cope with organized crime, depend to a very considerable extent on the patrolman's observations and information. The fight against organized criminals is not a job for plainclothesmen and detectives only. Because he knows the conditions on his post, the uniformed officer can often spot criminal activity that a detective might not observe.

Each patrolman, deputy, and trooper should consider himself as part of a vast, front-line intelligence network that funnels information back up the line to be pieced together and evaluated. Without this assistance, your department's special unit or squad would be operating at a severe disadvantage.

**What kinds of organized criminal activity are possible for me to observe?**

This question will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. However, at this point you should be aware that many activities of organized crime groups first come to the surface at the street level. Frequently, you will arrive at the scene of a crime before any other unit of your department and the victim or perpetrator of the crime may blurt

out information relating to some facet of organized crime that he would not reveal at a less emotional moment. For example, a patrolman upon responding to a report of a wife-beating incident was told—without asking—by the individuals involved in the squabble that (1) the husband did strike his wife, (2) the argument began because the husband seldom came home with a full pay envelope because he was paying off so-and-so, who was a loan shark, and (3) the reason he became involved with a loan shark was that he owed his bookie a considerable sum. All of this information was volunteered during the heat of the moment without any questions being asked by the investigating officer. In this type of situation, the patrolman or trooper has the opportunity to uncover significant details of organized crime operations. Granted, you may have little time to devote to gathering such information. However, during the time that you do have, try to be observation-minded, intelligence-minded.

**Why shouldn't the patrolman's efforts be directed exclusively toward street crime and related offenses?**

Among other reasons, because much street crime is often caused by organized crime.

The cause of many felonies occurring in our larger cities can be traced to organized crime's role in the importation of hard drugs, particularly heroin. On the average, an addict spends \$30-\$40 daily on drugs. To raise this money, he must usually resort to theft. Frequently, the addict receives as cash no more than twenty percent of the value of stolen articles, which means he must steal as much as \$150-\$200 worth of merchandise each day. Multiply this by the tens of thousands of addicts nationwide and the implications of organized crime's trafficking in drugs become startlingly clear.

Organized crime also stimulates thefts committed by nonaddicts. The organized underworld's elaborate fencing operations enable the thief to market his stolen goods with a minimum of difficulty. Who would want to burgle if there were no way to convert goods into cash or if the process for doing so were troublesome and risky?

For some slum dwellers, the standard of living is so low that a life of crime may seem attractive. Organized crime helps to perpetuate such substandard conditions by siphoning off a substantial percentage of the income in ghetto areas through gambling, narcotics, prostitution, and other operations. For example, New York State's Joint Legis-

lative Committee on Crime estimated that in a recent year narcotics pushers and numbers bankers garnered about \$223 million from three New York City ghetto areas. The picture of "success" that so many racketeers present to our youth (even bottom-rung participants can become millionaires) is hardly one that inspires respect for law, order and justice. In a sense, it is amazing that street crime is not more extensive than it is. Looked at from the standpoint of pure self-interest, your job of controlling street crime and other offenses would be far easier if there were no such thing as organized crime.

**Is there any other way in which my job would be improved if there were no organized crime?**

Yes. For example, in some instances merit promotion systems would operate in a more objective manner, and assignments would be made on a more equitable basis without the influence that organized crime groups have been known to exert on law enforcement agencies. In such situations, your effectiveness, reputation, and profession may be placed in jeopardy by the dishonesty of others who have taken the bait planted by organized crime. This fact alone should con-

vince any patrolman or trooper that the fight against organized criminals is very much his business and that he has a personal and professional stake in the outcome.

**Of what possible value are the bits and pieces of information that alert officers can supply about organized crime?**

As will be noted in more detail, even small items of information can be extremely important to the intelligence unit or special squad of your department. No one can solve a puzzle without all the pieces. And so it is in the effort to control organized crime—dozens of informational items are pieced together to make a case. The so-called minor details are even more important in this day and age when many departments are utilizing computers or are preparing to install them. The advantage of the computer, of course, is its ability to absorb vast quantities of detailed information and to process the data in various ways at fantastic speeds. However, before the computer can go to work, someone must feed it data. The officer on patrol is in an excellent position to supply much of this information—such as names, occupations, addresses, license plate numbers, color, make and model of automobiles, et cetera. He also has an excel-

lent opportunity to keep such data up to date. For example, organized crime figures frequently change license plate numbers. Experience proves that the officer on patrol is often able to spot such changes.

The important thing to remember, however, is that it usually takes a great deal of effort to develop an organized crime case. It requires patience, initiative, aggressiveness, and dedication on the part of law enforcement officers acting as a team. Each member of the team doing his job properly provides the means for the team to fit together the pieces to make cases.

**In brief, what is my role in relation to organized crime?**

Primarily, your role is one of an observer and, when appropriate, investigator. You are a supplier of information. Just as a mill needs iron to turn out steel, so do police units require facts to make a case. Factual information is the raw material of prosecutors. More likely than not, the facts you dig up will not be sufficient for you to make a case; but combined with information obtained from other sources, they may permit others to do so. Your intelligence gathering in the organized crime area is a vital part of the effort required to contain organized crime.

## What Are the Activities of Organized Crime Groups?

In financial terms, what is the most serious activity engaged in by organized crime?

Gambling activity is the most serious form of organized crime. This activity supplies the financial grease that lubricates the machinery of other operations, such as importation of narcotics, penetration of legitimate business, corruption of officials, and so on. A raid on twelve gambling locations in a major city turned up records indicating an annual \$285 million gross. Taking into consideration that the twelve locations represented only one-third of the city's known gambling spots, officials estimated a yearly gambling take of close to \$1 billion. In another city, two patrolmen thought a little old lady was acting suspiciously. Upon searching her shopping bag, they discovered policy tapes indicating the existence of a \$580,000 operation.

Whenever feasible or necessary, organized crime is not above cheating its gambling public. This may involve bribing athletes (as in the case that implicated dozens of basketball players), manipulating the winning combination in numbers play, influencing track odds by betting large sums on a given horse at the last minute, et cetera.

What are some of the principal forms of gambling?

*Bookmaking* involves the solicitation and acceptance of bets on the outcome of horse races or other sporting events. *Numbers and policy* are lottery type games wherein bettors pick a number and winning numbers are determined by a drawing, by regularly published stock or bond figures, or by other means. A *Treasury balance* lottery is one where the winning number coincides with a certain part of the United States Treasury balance, a figure which is published daily in many newspapers.

Is the street bookie a member of organized crime?

The street bookie should be considered a vital part of the total picture of organized crime. Those who doubt this should ask themselves how the street bookie can service his many accounts; how he can keep informed regarding the "line" or odds; how he learns of sports results so quickly that no one is able to "past post" him, that is, place a bet after a race or game is finished; how he can protect himself by "laying off" bets; and how he obtains a steady flow of sports information? These considerations indicate clearly that the bookie is merely the outward

manifestation of a complex gambling hierarchy operating unseen.

#### **What is this "gambling hierarchy?"**

On the bottom-rung is the street bookie, handbook, street agent, commissionman, or runner. Regardless of what he is called, his function is to serve as a contact with the betting public. This contact may be in person, by phone, or both. He may remain at a fixed location or call on his customers. Working on salary or for a percentage of customer losses, he funnels bets to his employers. In addition to employing commissionmen, bookmakers may solicit bets personally. They often operate behind the cover of a "legitimate business," such as a cigar store, candy shop or restaurant. Frequently, the bookmaker faces the situation where, if a certain team or horse should win, he would sustain a heavy loss. In such cases, he places "lay-off" bets with a lay-off man, usually another bookmaker who undertakes such risks. This position is often held by an underworld leader. These bets are made to balance the bookmaker's books so that he no longer faces the possibility of a serious loss. There may be several lay-off men in a large metropolitan area. They, in turn, may find their books out of balance and therefore

would lay off part of their betting action with a larger lay-off operation—one that serves all the lay-off men of the area. There are statewide lay-off centers, which service a number of metropolitan lay-off operations, and there is a nationwide lay-off organization, which serves the various statewide lay-off-groups. Gambling that started out as the "innocent" endeavor of a "nice-guy" bookie on the street thus develops into a full-fledged, highly profitable underworld operation.

#### **Is there a similar gambling hierarchy for numbers or policy?**

As the case with bookmaking activity, terminology relating to the forms of this game varies somewhat from city to city. A numbers or policy racket might be operated as follows. Working in a grocery store, bar, or dry cleaning establishment, a policy writer accepts bets from the public. Sometimes there may be a collector stationed just outside the writer's place of business. The collector receives the bets and conveys the information and money to the writer. Spotters keep a watchful eye on the neighborhood and warn the policy writer if a stranger is in the area or if any other potentially dangerous situation develops. A controller supervises the activities of several writers. At

predetermined times the writers deliver their betting slips and money to the controller at a "drop." The controller may or may not station himself at the drop. If not, his messenger will visit the drop or drops and return with the slips and money. Sometimes slips go to one drop and the money to another. The controller often works on a commission basis.

At the next level of the policy organization is the policy banker who supervises the activity of several controllers. At the policy bank, clerks and accountants record each day's action. Winners are determined, commissions computed, and proceeds distributed to controllers, writers, collectors and winning bettors. Occasionally, policy bankers utilize the same lay-off men used by bookmakers—and for the same reason.

#### **What activity supplies organized crime's second largest source of income?**

Loan sharking provides organized crime with its second largest source of income. Some loan sharks can provide loans amounting to \$1 million. What often happens is that an underworld boss distributes large sums—\$100,000, for example—to his underlings who pay the boss one percent interest ("juice" or "vigorish") weekly for the

funds. The underlings in turn parcel out this money to lower-level personnel, who are charged one and a half to two and a half percent interest. These lower-level personnel (loan sharks) charge the borrowing public five to twenty percent weekly. Many borrowers are unable to keep up with the interest payments. The body of a borrower is the loan shark's ultimate "collateral" and beatings often occur if payments are not met. However, frequently the person in debt to a loan shark is told he can settle his obligation by stealing securities, setting up a burglary or hijacking, adding a racketeer to his payroll, accepting a racketeer as a business partner, shipping stolen goods, or "losing" his credit card, et cetera. Much of the income that finances loan sharking and a large percentage of loan shark victims are generated by gambling operations. Many a gambler has been surprised to learn that his debt to a bookie has been turned over to a loan shark. A \$2,000 gambling debt on which twenty percent weekly interest is paid means that the loan shark victim must pay \$400 a week or \$20,800 yearly for the interest alone.

#### **To what extent is organized crime involved in narcotics and prostitution?**

As a general rule, organized crime groups

limit their role to the importation and initial distribution of heroin. The drug passes through several levels of distribution and dilution before it reaches the pusher (dealer) and then the addict.

The prostitution racket is also the domain of organized crime in many areas, and just as the narcotics involvement of organized crime leads to street crime by the addict to finance his habit, so does the underworld's prostitution operation result in extortion of clients. In some cities organized crime has abandoned its prostitution interests. However, when organized crime is involved, the call-girl approach—in contrast to street-walkers—is usually favored. One such operation used a number of fourth-rate hotels owned by the underworld, one of which served as a central casting office to which girls reported, and from which they were dispatched to customers in the other hotels. In one city, underworld bosses take forty percent of the gross. This forty percent is practically all profit because it is up to the prostitute and other lower-level personnel to take care of expenses. Because discipline is difficult to maintain in the prostitution racket, a long chain of command is utilized to help insulate the inner core of organized crime figures from arrest stemming from the

testimony of a rebellious prostitute or other front-line employee.

### **How serious are the hijacking and fencing activities of the organized underworld?**

In many cities, these activities are considered very difficult problems. The trend toward larger trucks and containerization has probably whetted organized crime's hijacking appetite—indeed, the organization and resources of organized crime groups enable the leaders of such groups to mastermind hijackings. Before commission of the hijacking, these hoodlums determine who will get the proceeds, who will finger the job, who will execute it, where the transfer of goods will be made, and where the goods will be distributed. A syndicate's fencing apparatus is a ready-made outlet for merchandise stolen either through syndicate-planned hijackings or through burglaries executed by "independents" who might be filling an "order" placed by the underworld. Stolen meat may be used to supply racketeer-owned restaurants or hijacked appliances may provide the stock for mob-run discount outlets. Untaxed truckloads of cigarettes have been hijacked, counterfeit state tax stamps affixed, and distribution made to retailers, at a profit not only to organized

crime figures, but also to the "legitimate" dealer who usually pockets a ten dollar kick-back on each case. In some areas, organized criminal groups favor ownership or control of beauty salons because a good deal of stolen merchandise can be moved through such businesses.

**In what ways is organized crime active in labor racketeering?**

According to many authorities, unions rank as organized crime's prime target in the future—not that they have been especially neglected in the past. A major lure is the \$100 billion plus in union welfare and pension funds, which are growing at the rate of \$1 billion a month. Upon penetrating a given union, organized crime attempts to use these funds for its own purposes, such as investing the money in the stock market for personal profit, creating welfare programs that are nothing but an excuse to pad the union payroll with racketeers, et cetera. Often, the syndicate's control over a union serves as a club to threaten employers with labor trouble unless they come across with some money, do business with mob-controlled companies, stay out of territories served by organized crime enterprises, or add a racketeer to the payroll. Dishonest employers read-

ily seek and accept sweetheart contracts, which are nothing more than agreements with racketeer locals to pay workers less than the union wage. Such employers obtain a competitive edge while the racketeers collect a fee from each company participating in these undemanding contracts. Frequently, labor racketeers will operate under the guise of being labor relations consultants, who can miraculously straighten out—for a fee—labor crises that somehow develop just before the consultants knock on the door. In addition to fees, such "consultants" frequently demand control of part or all of the business.

**If gambling and other operations of the underworld are so successful, why do members of organized crime become involved in legitimate business—or is this involvement exaggerated?**

Rather than exaggerated, organized crime's involvement in legitimate business is usually underestimated. What happens in most, if not all cases, is that after penetration, a legitimate enterprise is operated in an illegal manner—competitors are intimidated, stolen merchandise is purchased at cut-rate prices for resale, employees are paid less than a union wage, et cetera. The re-

sults of one investigation indicated that of one hundred and thirteen major organized crime figures, ninety-eight were involved in one hundred and fifty-nine businesses. The President's Commission reported that "racketeers control nationwide manufacturing and service industries with known and respected brand names."

On the local level, it has been revealed that theaters, hotels, dry cleaning establishments, drug stores, bowling alleys, vending machine distributors, restaurants, florist shops, bakeries, saving and loan institutions, cartage companies, and many other businesses are owned by organized criminal groups. In one city, leading racketeers owned or had substantial interests in eighty-nine businesses with total assets in excess of \$800 million and yearly revenues of over \$900 million.

There are a number of reasons why legitimate business is of interest to organized crime figures. First, the legitimate enterprise offers investment opportunity. For example, narcotics profits might be invested in a legitimate business as a means of converting dirty money into clean money. The profits would no longer come from the narcotics racket, but from the legitimate business. Also, organized criminal groups are finding legitimate business profitable in it-

self—especially since illegal methods are employed. Secondly, the legitimate business offers a source of reportable income for income tax purposes. Business payrolls can be padded with racketeers who draw company salaries for illegal activity totally unrelated to the legitimate business. Needless to say, a racketeer is not about to tell the Internal Revenue Service that he supports himself and his family by committing crimes. Thirdly, legitimate business interests impart respectability and social standing to the racketeer and mask his illegal activities.

#### What is a scam?

A scam is a form of bankruptcy fraud occasionally committed by organized crime groups. A businessman heavily in debt to a loan shark, for example, may be forced to take on the shark as a partner or even turn over the business to him. Thereafter, the racketeer gradually begins to order increasing quantities of merchandise on credit—often including goods not related to the usual line of the business. For example, a jewelry store involved in a scam may place orders for fur coats or appliances. The merchandise is then sold, usually at discount prices. The racketeer pockets the money and leaves a

bankrupt business and unpaid creditors unaware of the change in management.

**What are some of the other activities of organized crime?**

If the money is there, the organized underworld is capable of almost any type of offense—blackmailing indiscreet executives; bribing inspectors to accept shoddy materials; counterfeiting credit cards; stealing and forging government bonds; sabotaging the equipment of a competing business; burning down a warehouse of an uncooperative company (a large grocery chain suffered over \$10 million worth of arson damage because it would not agree to distribute a racketeer product); counterfeiting and distributing prescription drugs. The ultimate crime—murder—is committed to silence informants or to achieve other ends when less violent methods have failed or are judged inadequate.

**What Signs of Organized Crime  
Can You Spot While on Patrol?**

Is it not a bit unrealistic to expect a patrolman to observe evidence of organized crime activity in this day and age of the one-man police cruiser and rapid rotation of beat assignments?

From an intelligence-gathering standpoint, the ideal situation is the assignment of a foot patrolman to a post for a sufficient period to allow him to become very familiar with his patrol area and to strike a rapport with the people in it. But even when the ideal situation is not possible, there are still opportunities for the alert patrolman to gather information valuable to organized crime specialists in a police department.

**How can anyone expect the patrolman to secure information on organized crime if he has to start without prior training?**

In some departments, he does not have to start at a disadvantage. He has the opportunity to inform himself concerning the identity of organized crime figures on his post, their meeting places, and their activities. A number of departments are initiating regular orientation procedures because administrators have become aware that the bulk of intelligence relating to organized crime does little good if it is accessible only to a relatively small group within the department. Suggestions have also been made that each patrolman should maintain a file consisting of reports relating to his organized crime observations—as well as other information—that would be given to his succes-

sor on the post. Some point out that this might be a particularly valuable procedure where patrolmen are rotated among posts on a frequent basis and thus would have little opportunity to become acquainted with their areas. However, even when an advance briefing is not supplied, there can be plenty of opportunities for a "heads-up" patrolman to observe the manifestations of organized crime. Much depends on how well you want to function as a police officer.

**Generally speaking, what techniques should the patrolman employ to dig out the desired information?**

Instead of "techniques" you will undoubtedly be applying old-fashioned common sense. You may see a good deal that could have significance beyond what appears on the surface. You may hear things about organized crime participants and activities through casual conversation with shopkeepers and others. An easy-going rapport with merchants, shopkeepers, and the general citizenry will be a valuable asset in this regard. Questions asked in an informal, friendly manner will produce useful answers more frequently than one would assume. Many will cooperate with you willingly in this area of interest. They should

be encouraged to keep you informed regarding what is going on, who is doing what, when, and where. Such information can be surprisingly reliable and helpful. Finally, information received during the course of responding to service calls may relate to organized crime, as illustrated by the case of the wife-beating husband described earlier. Essential to any attempt at gathering information pertaining to organized crime is the development of a mental attitude that does *not* accept facts at face value—a mental attitude that makes you ask yourself, "How might this event relate to organized crime?" In the majority of instances, there probably will not be such a relationship; in other cases, the answers you come up with will reveal a connection with organized crime—but *you will never obtain these answers until you develop a frame of mind that leads you to probe deeper for such relationships.*

**Specifically, what are some of the visible signs or symptoms of organized crime that the police officer may see or hear about while on patrol?**

Though by no means an all-inclusive list, the following examples should help you to develop a healthy and effective curiosity about events you might normally attach little, if

any, significance to as far as organized crime is concerned. Undoubtedly, you will be able to add your own examples to this list—especially as you gain experience in this area of investigation. Each item on this list was suggested by one or more of those who rank among the top law enforcement officials in the nation. A brief description of what you may see or hear while on patrol is followed by an indication (in italics) of how these occurrences might be linked to organized crime:

1. A candy store, grocery store, drug store, or other retail establishment seems to be doing a brisk business—many customers coming and going. But the customers do not remain in the store very long and do not leave with packages or other evidence that purchases were made. The store may have a meager selection of merchandise, which raises the question of how it can attract so many customers day after day. *This could indicate the presence of a policy operation at the writer level or the place of business of a bookmaker's commissionman.*

2. At about the same time each day, a package is delivered to a newstand, bar, or other location. Later the package is picked up by another individual. *The newsstand or whatever could be a policy drop—*

*the place to which a policy writer sends his slips and/or day's receipts.*

3. A number is chalked on a street lamp pole. The same number is observed in other locations. *It might be the winning number for the day's policy play.*

4. You are called to investigate a beating in a bar or at a location near a factory or other place of employment. The incident may occur on a payday or within a couple of days thereafter. *The beating may have resulted from the impatience of a loan shark who has not been paid on schedule.*

5. A parked car—often double parked—is observed daily at the same location and at the same time. The driver remains in the vehicle while a number of "friends" come up to say hello. *Such a situation may indicate bet-taking activity.*

6. A well-dressed individual is often seen driving an expensive late model car in the area. No one seems to know what his occupation is. One patrolman pursued observations similar to this and found out that *the individual was a policy operator—and had been for 21 years—without so much as an arrest.* On the basis of this information and further investigation, a special squad of detectives made a case against the operator and his employers.

7. A shopkeeper complains about poor business and notes that as a result he had to borrow money recently. A few comments by the patrolman about the high interest rates and the shopkeeper might disclose the imposition of an interest rate above the legal maximum. *If so, the shopkeeper may have been dealing with a loan shark.* If the shopkeeper advises that he cannot keep up with the payments, the officer might find an opportune time to ask for the identity of the shark. Depending on the desperation and temperament of the victim, the suggestion to cooperate may bring positive results.

8. After arriving at the scene of an assault, a patrolman learns that the victim is a union official. This information should be noted because if there have been other similar assaults in the city, the overall total, when analyzed by an organized crime intelligence unit, may strongly indicate an *attempt by racketeers to gain control over a union local.*

9. Merchants complain about another price rise by the cartage company that removes their garbage or trash. They also mention that there is either no competitor to deal with or if there is one, it will not accept their business. *Not infrequently, this is an indication that an organized crime group is trying*

*to monopolize the cartage business or limit competition through territorial agreements.*

10. During a routine check of a restaurant, a patrolman recognizes several organized crime figures at a table, or many double-parked cars are spotted in front of a bar that is either known or suspected as a meeting place for racketeers. The patrolman should jot down the license plate numbers and phone in his observations immediately, so that investigators can be dispatched to the scene. *Such signs indicate that underworld figures are meeting for one reason or another. However, they also may be indicia of hidden ownership of the bar or restaurant by organized crime.* In some instances, bars can be closed down if they are frequented by criminals.

11. A new set of vendors begins to service a business—a restaurant, for example. The linen supplier is new, as are the meat provisioner, fuel oil company, and cartage firm. Perhaps new vending machines or jukeboxes are observed being installed. Some of these suppliers are recognized as enterprises run by organized crime. *These are fairly solid indicators that organized crime figures have purchased, or have otherwise secured a degree of control in the business being serviced.*

12. A rash of vandalism strikes a number of establishments engaged in the same type of business—such as dry cleaning. *Racketeers may be trying to coerce reluctant owners into joining an association or into doing business with mob-controlled vendors.*

13. Appliances are seen being loaded into the storeroom of a sporting goods store. *Scams or bankruptcy frauds frequently involve the ordering of goods (on credit, of course) unrelated to the customary line of the business.*

14. Determining who the bettors are in your area can be as important as knowing who the bookmakers are—indeed, many times the identification of a bettor leads to the identification of a bookie. Patrolmen have identified bettors through conversations with those on their posts—sometimes even by observing who buys racing forms. In some instances, you may even get close enough to a bettor to observe the number dialed when a bet is placed. *Observations such as these could trigger an investigation leading to the prosecution of the upper echelon of organized crime's gambling hierarchy.*

15. Just as identification of the bettor is important, so also is identification of addicts and loan shark customers. In two separate incidents, an arrested burglar revealed, un-

der questioning by a patrolman, that he was stealing to finance his heroin purchases; while another arrested thief said he had to raise money to keep up with his loan shark payments. *This information led to the arrest of a pusher in one case and the loan shark in the other.*

16. Make a habit of checking out new businesses that set up shop in the area. If the enterprise is one that requires a license—such as a bar—ask to see it if for no other reason than to observe who the owners are, ascertain the identity of the company which distributes or services the jukeboxes, et cetera. *If, for example, the distributor of the jukeboxes or vending machines is a company controlled by the organized underworld, so also might be the bar in which they are located.*

17. You note pickets outside one or two stores in the same line of business. The picketing may be a perfectly legitimate tactic, or it may represent an attempt by organized crime to coerce employers into doing business with an underworld firm, to extort payments in return for labor peace, to convince employers to join an "association" and pay substantial dues, or to demonstrate the advisability of hiring a "labor consultant"

*who is able to resolve such troublesome activities as picketing.*

18. A cheap hotel appears to be doing a reasonably brisk business. Its patrons travel light—many do not carry luggage. A bar has a reputation for being a clip joint; charges of watered-down liquor are frequent. *These signs indicate a possible call-girl operation at the hotel and B-girl activity at the bar.*

19. A truck is loaded at a location other than a depot or shipping dock. Goods are transferred from a truck of a well-known company to an unmarked truck or vehicle. A warehouse that is almost always empty is now full. Unusual activity at an unusual time occurs in a warehouse area. Merchandise is transferred from a truck to the garage of a residence. *Any of these activities could point to a hijacking.* License numbers, locations, times and other facts should be noted.

20. A group begins to congregate at a certain street location at certain times during each day. *The group could be composed of addicts waiting for a pusher to make his rounds.*

21. A business establishment suspected of being mob-controlled burns to the ground. *One possibility is that arson was committed to collect the insurance.*

22. Certain individuals always seem to frequent a certain bar although none of them live in the neighborhood. *Perhaps they use the bar as a bet-taking center.*

23. A club shuts down at irregular times—sometimes early in the afternoon, other times at mid-evening. Do these times coincide with the completion of racing or when the results of other sporting events become available? *If so, the club may be a base for gambling operations.*

24. A known racketeer frequently meets with certain unidentified individuals. If possible, note the license plate numbers of the vehicles of these individuals as well as the time and location of the conversations. *Racketeers, like most everyone else, are victims of habit and associate with each other.*

25. Many cars pull up and park in front of the suburban home of a suspected racketeer, who is ostensibly throwing a party for friends. Jot down license plate numbers and call in the information promptly. The party may be bona fide or *the real purpose of the gathering may be to conduct underworld business, as was the case at the famed Apalachin meeting, where an alert officer noted unusual activity at a country estate and blew the whistle on what turned out to be a nationwide assembly of high-ranking mem-*

bers of the organized underworld. Knowledge of who associates with whom is highly important—whether the occasion is a bona fide social activity or otherwise.

### **Why is it Essential to Report What You Observe?**

Why bother to report offenses such as gambling, prostitution, et cetera? The public seems to demand these “services” or wink its eye at those who operate them? Besides, some might say, if a report does lead to an arrest of, say, a numbers operator, either prosecutors permit a plea of guilty to a lesser charge or the courts fail to treat the matter seriously.

No matter how much you may disagree or become discouraged with what happens to defendants after their arrest, this is no reason to slacken. Just because one link of the chain may be weak is no reason to lessen police efforts in these areas. Gambling, for example, is the most visible of underworld activities and supplies the bulk of money going to organized crime, money that is used to finance narcotics operations and other offenses that the same public strongly opposes. Remember, the link between organized crime and street crime is direct and strong. Also, if police ef-

orts are halfhearted toward what are regarded as “harmless crimes,” this helps to promote a climate of disrespect for the law and those who are supposed to enforce it, which in turn can only lead to an increase in all categories of crime.

**If my observations are not sufficient to make a case, why prepare a report? My information may be insignificant or already known to the intelligence unit or special squad.**

Your information alone may not make a case but combined with that from other patrolmen it could supply a missing link. Do not worry about whether your observations are significant or important. Let those to whom your information is sent judge for themselves. In other words, let others do the evaluating. Always assume that others do not know what you are about to report. Report everything you feel relates to organized crime. When in doubt: *REPORT IT!*

### **What constitutes a good report?**

As a rule, your reports will involve filling out forms. Each entry should be complete but not wordy. Do not omit significant details just for the sake of brevity. Accuracy is extremely important. Whether someone is referred to as “Nickie” or “Mickey” may mean

much to your intelligence unit. Reports must also be timely. Don't always wait to write the report before submitting it. Under some circumstances, such as when you believe an underworld meeting is taking place, you should call in the information immediately so that investigators can arrive on the scene as quickly as possible. In such instances, your observations would lose much of their value should you delay. When forms are not provided for your reports, you will want to be sure to include the who, what, when, where, how and why that pertain to your observations.

### **How Should Attempts at Corruption be Handled?**

**How important to organized crime is corruption?**

Payments for corruption probably represent the largest single "expense item" of organized crime. Without corruption, organized crime could not exist as we know it today. For example, gambling is the most lucrative activity of the underworld. It is also the most visible, and therefore, potentially, the most vulnerable. However, this vulnerability is not exploited due in large part to the protection that organized criminals have secured through corruption.

**What are typical approaches made by organized crime to induce a patrolman to look the other way?**

Cash offers have been relayed to patrolmen in various ways. In one case, a patrolman was introduced to a "shopkeeper," who was told that the patrolman was a nice guy. Upon being invited into a backroom, the patrolman was given \$40 in cash by the shopkeeper and informed he would receive this amount each month. When he inquired why he was being given this sum, the patrolman was told, "Just because you are a nice guy," and when you're promoted or work in plainclothes, you get \$60 a month." In another case, two patrolmen returned to the station house with policy tapes that indicated a very large operation. Within minutes, the lieutenant on duty told them someone wanted to see them downstairs. The "someone downstairs" offered to buy the tapes for \$5,000 and was promptly arrested by the patrolmen.

Another approach involved an offer to an investigator. He was asked if he would like to win a house in a raffle. Playing dumb, the investigator inquired how anyone could be sure his number would be picked out of the raffle bowl. The answer: each number in the bowl would be his number.

Sometimes organized crime figures will attempt to take advantage of personal crises or financial difficulties faced by police officers. For example, \$3,200 was offered to a police officer to take care of medical bills resulting from his son's illness. The offer was unconditional—no mention of looking the other way and no need to even repay the loan. He was to consider it a gift from "a friend." Despite the no-strings-attached offer, the police officer would have been obligated and the "friend" would have considered him obligated. Organized crime does not offer "gifts" or anything else without wanting something in return.

**If you are offered a bribe, what should your reaction be?**

The proper reaction, of course, is the one that will lead to the conviction of the person making the bribe and any person or persons he may be representing. However, one's initial reaction would probably be to accept the money and immediately arrest the briber. Nevertheless, you should avoid a "his word against mine" situation. In such cases, your word would be pitted against his, and the charges would probably have to be dropped. Even if you do make the case, the briber, with nothing to lose, will frequently claim

that you, not he, demanded a sum of money and that the only reason you arrested him was that you had to cover up because you thought a patrolman across the street had spotted the transaction. While patently untrue, the accusation might succeed in raising sufficient doubts in the mind of the public and your fellow officers to tarnish your reputation and that of policemen generally.

Another initial reaction might be to become angry and indignant with the individual endeavoring to offer the bribe. Though certainly springing from the proper motive, such a response is hardly calculated to result in the conviction of anyone.

Report the matter to your superior, who will undoubtedly instruct you how to proceed so that you will have the best chance of building an airtight case—perhaps in cooperation with the local prosecutor.

**What does it take to make a bribery case?**

Generally, a prosecutor must prove that something of value was offered to a police officer in return for a certain "service" from the officer. This service may consist of acts of commission or omission or both. Finally, the bribe offer must be corroborated so that the matter is not a word against word situation. In appropriate cases, the bribe offer

may be witnessed electronically; that is, the patrolman may be allowed to carry a radio transmitter. His job then would be to wait for the next approach—thus avoiding the entrapment issue. Upon being contacted again, the officer would then be in a position to let the offender state the bribe amount and what the patrolman is expected to do in return. As the offeror of a bribe is usually a representative of someone else, the patrolman may be instructed to inquire who really is offering the money, ostensibly because, "I want to know who I am doing business with." He may also be instructed to inquire—in a worried fashion—whether his name is going to be entered in a little black book or whatever and, if so, whether the entry will be coded. The officer's name will most likely be entered on some sort of payment record, whether or not the briber will admit it. If the patrolman can induce the briber to reveal the location of a record book, such information is highly desirable. In one case, a book of this type contained over one hundred names. By accident or by design, those who take become known. When this happens, the shame that descends on the guilty party and his family always dwarfs the material benefits he may have derived from payoffs—not to mention the cloud of suspicion his action

casts over many other honest law enforcement officers.

**How is the extremely friendly attitude of reputed racketeers, toward patrolmen explained?**

Do not let this friendly veneer fool you or catch you off guard. Friendliness does not cost organized crime figures anything. It is just a tactic to soften you up, to start you thinking, "How can this person be with the mob—he's such a genuinely nice guy." That is exactly what you are supposed to think. The object is to have you accept a favor as a generous gesture from a friend. Then, as far as the underworld is concerned, they own you. A favor received calls for a favor in return. Do not be caught in this trap.

**Is it not detrimental to talk so openly and frankly about corruption?**

Not according to many top law enforcement officials. Just as a cut on your finger needs a certain amount of air to heal properly, the disease of corruption requires a good airing. Too often what is left unspoken tends to recede into the background as if it did not exist. This attitude tends to allow the problems of corruption and organized crime to grow unchecked.

## Conclusion

"In many ways organized crime is the most sinister form of crime in America. The men who control it have become rich and powerful by encouraging the needy to gamble, by luring the troubled to destroy themselves with drugs, by extorting the profits of honest and hardworking businessmen, by collecting usury from those in financial plight, by maiming or murdering those who oppose them, by bribing those who are sworn to destroy them. Organized crime is not merely a few preying upon a few. In a very real sense it is dedicated to subverting not only American institutions, but the very decency and integrity that are the most cherished attributes of a free society."

The foregoing statement, found in the Task Force Report on Organized Crime published by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, concisely reflects a legitimate basis for your concern.

A statement made by President Richard M. Nixon on June 4, 1970, on the occasion of his establishment of the National Council on Organized Crime also causes us to pause and seriously consider the magnitude of this problem. The President stated that "Or-

ganized crime in the United States has three goals: exploitation, corruption and destruction. What it cannot directly exploit, it seeks to corrupt; what it cannot directly corrupt, it seeks to destroy. Its degrading influence can be felt in every level of American society, sometimes in insidious, subtle ways, but more often in direct acts of violence and illegality. It is a malignant growth in the body of American social and economic life that must be eliminated."

These statements are a call to arms. The police officers of the nation should be among the first to answer this call. They cannot be expected to perform the entire job, but neither can the whole job be done without them.

**END**