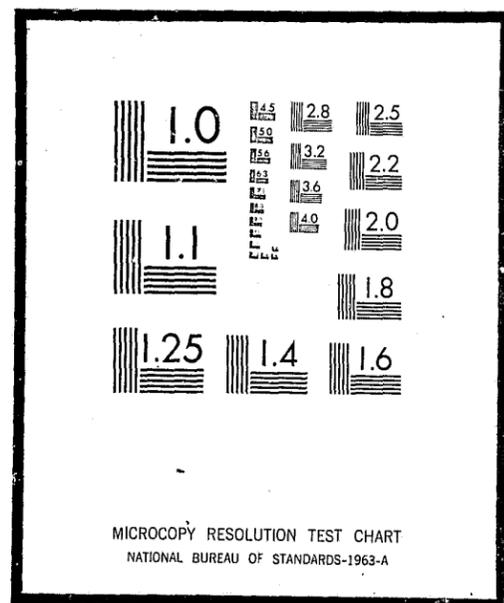


# NCJRS

This microfiche was produced from documents received for inclusion in the NCJRS data base. Since NCJRS cannot exercise control over the physical condition of the documents submitted, the individual frame quality will vary. The resolution chart on this frame may be used to evaluate the document quality.



Microfilming procedures used to create this fiche comply with the standards set forth in 41CFR 101-11.504

Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author(s) and do not represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION  
NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFERENCE SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20531

Date filmed

7/16/76

The New York Times Magazine, November 24, 1968

Copyright 1968 by the New York Times Company.

Printed by permission.

The project described in this article was supported by Grant #157

provided under the Law Enforcement Assistance Act of 1965.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE  
ADMINISTRATION

LEAA INFORMATION MATERIALS  
\* \* \*  
SELECTED REPRINTS

## Violence, Like Charity, Begins at Home

**An experimental New York City police unit is learning how to break up family fights without fighting**

By RONALD SULLIVAN

"All I've got for you is a little family trouble at Sixteen-Thirteen Madison." He'll tell you which floor and thank God it isn't the top, and so you'll climb, climb, climb, and all the while you'll be preparing to say, "Listen, what's the matter with you folks? Pipe down, can't you? Oh, shet ep, sister. Look—people are complaining; you're waking up folks in the building. O.K.—so you can't get along. O.K.—so you're drunk too. Now, look, I want you out of here. And quit socking your wife, and if I see you around here again before morning—before you're sober and ready to behave—I'll break your head wide open!"

That's the little speech, the succession of disciplinary directions that you'll be composing as you trudge upstairs; and then you hear the shuddering gasp, and somehow you're through the door before they've opened it for you, and he's standing there alone. The woman is on the floor with her skirts around her middle, and what beautiful red rosy tights she wears—all slick and damp—and the tights are extending themselves into a big evil patch on the floor. But beyond her he is there. He's very large; he looks colossal to

you now. He doesn't have anything on except a pair of striped underwear shorts, and his eyes are rolling. He keeps watching you. He has a bloody bread knife in his hand, and you keep saying "Put it down, put it down—let go that knife," as he comes toward you a step at a time, and as the woman grunts and shifts on the floor in her blood, and still

he keeps coming in, you've got to decide, and all in the instant. Do you shoot or do you try to use your stick? Do you try to take the knife away from him? ... You don't like to be alone, nobody would like to be alone.

—MACKINLAY KANTOR,  
"Signal Thirty-Two."

**T**HE threatened cop in Kantor's novel, like policemen everywhere, had every reason to feel alone. The odds were against him because it seems that violence, like charity, begins at home. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, one of every five policemen killed in the line of duty dies trying to break up a family fight. The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of

Criminal Justice reported last year that family disputes "are probably the single greatest cause of homicides" in the United States. And if policemen don't get killed in a family fight, they still stand a good chance of being bloodied. "There is a strong impression in police circles that intervention in these disputes causes more assaults on policemen than any other encounter," the commission reported in "The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society." In fact, the New York City Police Department estimates that 40 per cent of its men injured in the line of duty were hurt while responding to family disturbances. Moreover, the department estimates that such calls take as much time as any other single kind of police action. "Yet the capacity of the police to deal effectively with such a highly personal matter as conjugal disharmony is, to say the least, limited... an activity for which few policemen—or people in any profession—are qualified by temperament or by training," the commission reported.

But that was before an experimental New York City police unit began intervening in family quarrels in upper West Harlem. Despite the high statistical probability of being knifed,

shot at, gang-jumped, or pushed down a flight of tenement stairs, none of the 18 volunteer patrolmen assigned to the Family Crisis Intervention Unit in the 30th Precinct has sustained a single injury, much less a fatality, in the unit's first 15 months of operation. Moreover, after intervening in more than 1,000 individual family crises—an average of a little more than two a night—the unit has not been involved in a single charge of police brutality, and this is an area in which such accusations are commonplace.

But perhaps just as important, none of the interventions resulted in either a homicide or a suicide. There are no conclusive records in the precinct to show how this deathless record compares with the outcome of family fights in the precinct in previous years. Nevertheless, Police Commissioner Howard R. Leary, the United States Department of Justice and the project's originator, Dr. Morton Bard, director of the Psychological Center at City College, are convinced that the new unit unquestionably has saved many lives.

There are no records connecting deaths with family fights because no police function is more misunderstood, more underrated, and more grudgingly performed than calls to break them up. Unlike other police activity, such as murder investigations or criminal surveillance, inter-

vention in family fights is commonly regarded at all levels in the Police Department as a thankless job that poses the danger of grave personal risk and the distinct possibility of becoming embroiled in charges of police brutality, with very little, if any, promise of reward. A cop makes detective or becomes a sergeant by the big arrest or the daring rescue—not by breaking up a family fight. It is not surprising, then, that there are few references to the subject in police literature or at police training academies.

Now, however, it seems likely that the apparent success of the Family Crisis Intervention Unit will have an impact on the way policemen are motivated, trained and ultimately rewarded by their departments. In fact, this year's report by the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders recommended New York's pilot program as a "model for other departments." The report said, "The commission believes the police cannot and should not resist becoming involved in community service matters. . . . Such work can gain the police the respect and support of the community."

Its importance was pointed up by the Governor's Select

Commission on Civil Disorder in New Jersey. After investigating the causes of the Negro rioting in Newark in July, 1967, the commission reported that most complaints of police brutality originated from incidents that began as family-disturbance calls—and that these complaints had been increasing before the rioting broke out.

According to Dr. Bard, out-moded police organization is the silent factor underlying the growing tension between police and community, particularly in the urban ghettos. And the violence of family conflict in these areas is matched only by the indifference of society outside to its existence. Professor Bard emphasizes that only the police, of all social institutions, are present 24 hours a day, every day of the year, to answer the call when family violence threatens.

**T**HUS, with the full support of Commissioner Leary, and \$94,736 from the Federal Government, Dr. Bard's Psychological Center began a two-year experiment last year in training police to intervene in family fights. The pilot program, which is scheduled to end next April, does not aim to turn cops into psychologists or social workers. "That's just exactly what we're attempting to avoid," says Dr. Bard, who was a cop himself for a short time in the late nineteen-forties before he became a group worker with street gangs and ultimately a professor of psychology. "We have no intention of creating a family cop, or a family division, or making family crisis intervention an esoteric police specialty. All we're trying to do is give the ordinary policeman a new skill, one that will help him do better what he now does most—and that is help people in trouble." If, at the same time, he can become a primary mental-health resource in the community, so much the better, of course.

The program also is part of a growing revolution involving the training of clinical psychologists and the development of community mental-health programs in the cities. There simply never will be enough psychologists to treat poor persons in the slums, where most of the aggressive behavior and mental disorder is. So the idea at the center is to train psychologists to train other persons to do it.

At the same time, the university is given the chance to break out from its pedagogical shell by turning the surrounding community into a teeming psychological laboratory rather than a hostile environment. What better place is there than Harlem to study marital breakdown, aggression, sadomasochism, and the effects of violence on early childhood development? And who is better equipped to study it than the persons who face it every day, like Patrolman John E. Bodkin, a 32-year-old, cigar-smoking, no-nonsense, seven-year veteran and member of the Family Crisis Intervention Unit?

"It was up on 145th Street," he said. "And the couple was from the South. We went in there and I could see right off that this guy was tight, very tight. He was a Negro fellow, about 21 or 22 years old, only up in New York six months. She had called the police because of a dispute — a minor thing. But there he was, a little guy, and he was really tense because when we walked in with our uniforms and our sticks, you could see that his earlier associations with police officers must have been very rough.

"You could see the fear in his eyes, the hostility in his face. His fists were clenched, and he was ready to do combat with us. God knows what he would have done if he'd had a gun or a knife. I moved toward the kitchen table and opened my blouse and I told him in a nice quiet way that I wanted to talk to him, but

he's still tense and he's still looking at my stick. Well, the stick is under my arm so I hung it up on a nearby chair, purposely, to show there's no intent here. 'Look, I don't need it,' I'm trying to say to this guy. 'I don't need it because you're a nice guy in my eyes. You don't threaten me, so I'm not going to threaten you.' I've got to show this guy that I'm not a bully, a brute, a Nazi or the Fascist he thinks all cops are.

**S**O he calms down a little. Then I took my hat off and I said, 'Do you mind if I smoke?' And he looks at me funny. And I say, 'I'm a cigar smoker and some people don't like the smell of a cigar in their house, so would you mind if I smoke?' And the guy says, 'Oh sure, sure,' and you could see he was shocked. I felt he saw a human side of us, that I had respect for him and his household.

"Then the guy sat down and he and his wife proceed to tell us what it was all about. When we explain to her why he's upset, she smiles. 'Yes, yes, yes.' You see, she thinks we're on her side. Then we tell him why he's mad and he smiles. 'Yes, yes, yes.' Now we're on his side. Well, they eventually shake our hands; they were happy and we never had another call from them."

Patrolman Bodkin and the 17 other policemen in the family crisis unit operate in biracial pairs out of the 96-year-old, four-story 30th Precinct station house on the southwest corner of 152d Street and Amsterdam Avenue. The 30th is one of New York's smaller and more insignificant precincts, running north from 141st to 165th Streets and east from Riverside Drive to Edgecombe Avenue. Most of the old apartment houses on Broadway have been taken over by Puerto Rican and Negro families. The remaining whites in the precinct, many of them apparently Jewish, are virtual-

ly barricaded in the big apartment houses overlooking the Hudson on Riverside Drive. Actually, the 30th is just what Dr. Bard was looking for: a poor, rat-infested neighborhood, but without the wretchedness of some of the other black precincts in Harlem, one free of big crime and big institutions and one that comes alive every week when the welfare checks roll in.

**L**IKE Bodkin, most of the cops in the family unit were already working in the 30th before the program began. None of them was picked because he evidenced a bleeding heart for minority problems. All of them, and this includes the nine Negroes, were used to feeling hated, feared and envied in the ghetto. None of them has a college degree. They tend to be young, in their late 20's and early 30's, because it is very hard to teach old cops new tricks. What Dr. Bard, along with Dr. Bernard Berkowitz, a psychologist with 12 years as a policeman in his background, looked for in choosing from among 45 volunteers were experienced cops who expressed enthusiasm for the experiment and frustration with their present inability to deal effectively with family crises, and who showed every indication of being sensitive to the changing role the police must assume in the cities.

The 18 men, who were released from duty, spent nearly a month with professional psychologists at the center in mutual exploration of the best methods of successful intervention. The psychologists knew all about such things as aggression, trauma, neurosis, alcoholism and all the other behavioral patterns associated with family violence. And that is what they taught the men during the first three weeks of intensive psychological classroom work. But the center's pedagogy and its proclivity for reflective analysis generally failed the psychologists when they departed from the laboratory or the textbook for the explosive, instant-action world of police confrontation with family violence. "No one has a textbook for that. This is

where we had to learn from each other," says Dr. Bard.

During the third week, the cops were subjected to three days of family-crisis psychodramas staged by a group of professional actors. The short plays showed typical family crises and were written without conclusions; the endings were improvised by the patrolmen themselves, who intervened in pairs at the end. For example, in one play, a young Negro actress portrayed a wife who was cowering against the rear classroom wall, away from a tall, husky Negro, playing her wife-beating husband.

"He's going to hit me, he's going to hit me again," she screamed as the two cops burst on the scene and split, one of them going to the aid of the stricken woman, the other confronting the man.

"Whaddaya doing that for?" the patrolman snarled at the man as he pushed him toward a corner of the improvised stage. "That's no way to treat a woman, that's no way for a man to act. You're no man." With that, the Negro actor, even though he knew it was only a play, reacted angrily and moved toward the advancing patrolman, bellowing, "Who says I'm no man . . .?"

At that point, the play was stopped and the cops and the actors analyzed their respective reactions. For one thing, the cop who confronted the husband was told this is how most cops get hurt—challenging a man's masculinity. Moreover, the cops were told that the wife may very well be a masochist who has spent the day provoking the man into attacking her. He gets an outlet for his aggression; she has the simple pleasure of getting beaten up. The idea, the policemen were told, is to give the combatants alternatives and the help they need to understand why they fight.

**B**UT an unsophisticated cop can go only so far, and this is where their fourth week of training came in. They took field trips to various social, health and welfare agencies where experts explained the kinds of help available to poor

families in trouble. Later, the men took part in human-relations workshops where they were prompted to examine, in group sensitivity discussions, their individual prejudices and preconceptions of disrupted family life in the ghetto.

After this, the unit began operating out of the 30th station house in the precinct's special family car. Two members of the unit work each of the day's three eight-hour tours and are dispatched on all complaints involving family disturbances. They also continue their normal police duties—they give out parking tickets and speeding summonses; they patrol a given sector of the precinct; they are expected to respond to any emergency just like any other cop on the beat. At the start, they were subject to considerable jeering from other patrolmen, but their capacity to handle both missions effectively has turned the initial jibes at the station house into inquiries on how to deal with family crises.

Meantime, all of the 18 men continue their training, taking part in six-man discussion groups led by professional psychologists. In addition, each man has a weekly private consultation with a third-year graduate student in clinical psychology. The consultation cuts both ways. The officer reports the way he reacted to a particular family crisis and is given advice on ways he might have responded differently. Some of the students have become intrigued with the research opportunities afforded by these exchanges. One has formulated a research proposal in which he will attempt to measure differences in aggressive threshold stimuli among children of families in which day-to-day violence is a part of the environment. These children will be matched with children raised in nonviolent homes.

**A**DRIAAN HALFHIDE, a 27-year-old Negro cop assigned to the family project, is convinced that 60 per cent of the people in every block in the precinct are aware of the new unit. "We're more aware of them, too," he says.

"We go into a family dispute and we can pick up certain signs, statements, gestures, looks and facial expressions that enable us to get a basic idea of what's going on. For example, I notice whether a man is gritting his teeth, whether the veins in his temple are throbbing. Before, I only looked for whether he had a weapon, or whether he was bigger than me. Later, when they just want someone to yell at, someone to use as a butt for their anger, I say, 'O.K., get mad at me.' Then everybody yells at me. But they're all together, yelling together, but at me, and that's groovy."

Halfhide and the other family cops have some fundamental ground rules. They always stay calm; they don't threaten and they don't take sides. They don't challenge a man's masculinity; they don't degrade a woman's femininity. They intentionally give people verbal escape routes to save face. And mother isn't always right—they know about Oedipus complexes. They notice that most family fights tend to break out on Sunday night after a festering weekend of drinking. They say the major causes of conflict are, predictably, money and sex. Families fight more in the summer because it's hot, and more in the winter because it's so cold outside they can't escape one another.

On the back seat of their patrol car the family cops keep two small wooden boxes with card files showing whom the unit has previously been sent to. The file is kept by street numbers so the men on duty can determine immediately whether any other team has called upon a family to which they are on their way. The cards show whether an earlier intervention involved any weapons so that the responding patrolmen can be on guard. The cards have 35 entries, including besides usual vital statistics: "What happened IMMEDIATELY before your arrival? What do you think led up to the immediate crisis? (Changes in family patterns?) (Environmental changes, etc.?) Impressions of

the family: How long has this family been together? Who is dominant? What is the appearance of the house? Appearance of the individuals?

Other impressions? What happened after your arrival? (How did each disputant respond?) How was the dispute resolved? Mediation ( ). Referral ( ). Aided ( ). Arrest ( ). Full details. Summarize the crisis situation and its resolution."

Every intervention is different and each of the nine teams reacts differently. Nevertheless, there are some standard procedures. The patrolmen go in together, then split, with one of them going toward one of the antagonists, the second toward the other. Guns are rarely drawn. In fact, the cops often leave their nightsticks in the car. They don't shout, they don't push and they don't threaten to lock up everyone in sight. All the while, the two men are scooping up any knives, scissors or other weapons, putting them where no one can get at them. Windows are checked in case the crisis involves a potential suicide. Children are accounted for.

Generally, the cops attempt to mollify both sides, taking the combatants into separate rooms so they can be questioned without one of them challenging the other's version of the crisis. The cops try to draw out the underlying facts, compare the differing versions and then, in a kind of group therapy, they attempt to explain to the family why it is fighting and recommend ways for it to stop. Normally, the family will be referred to a health or social agency. The cops carry printed slips with the addresses, offer to make the appointment — and in some cases drive the family down in the patrol car.

**M**ANY times, interventions do not involve violence. There is, for instance, a five-story walk-up on Amsterdam Avenue, a squalid rooming house taken over by prostitutes and narcotic addicts. But up on the top floor an old Negro couple—she in her late 70's, he in his 80's—were

barely surviving in abandoned isolation in a tiny rear room. He was weak from advanced age and malnutrition and had fallen out of bed. She did not have the strength to lift him back. They had no children, no friends, no neighbors and no money. So she called the police and the family unit was dispatched. Instead of just putting him back in bed, which is what a lot of cops would have done, the unit called the Visiting Nurse Service. The V.N.S. told them that they should call a physician. So the cops went out and got one. And the couple are now visited regularly by V.N.S. nurses who make sure they are getting along the best they can.

Violence, though, or the forestalling of it, is the rule—especially as weekends draw to a close and the relief checks are gone, some of them spent on gin. This particular night, Patrolman Bodkin and his partner, Frank Madewell, get the call on the police radio: "Man with a gun at One-Six-Three Street and Amsterdam." They weave fast against traffic and screech up at the address behind three other patrol cars. Upstairs, there are six cops in the third floor hall and a thin, hysterical woman in her nightgown shouting obscenities — alternately through a closed apartment door and at the cops for not breaking it down. "He's got my kids inside, and he's got a gun!" she screams.

From inside, the man roars, "You come in and I'll blow your ——— head off." With that, a burly sergeant pushes by the woman and bangs on the door. "Let's go! Open up, or we'll kick it down!" he shouts. "Come right ahead, ———," the man bellows back.

Meantime, Madewell goes back to the car and checks the address in the card file. The couple has quite a file; he is marked as violent and possibly armed. Madewell goes back up and tells the sergeant, who jerks his thumb toward the closed door and replies: "O.K., you're the family cops. You go on in." And slides out of the line of fire.

"First, we used his first

name," Madewell recalls. "We tried to con him. I said, 'I can't scream through the door, and besides it's cold as hell out here and all your wife wants is her clothes.' But he just tells me to do you-know-what and I'm sweating. 'You can at least give her her clothes,' I say to him. 'We won't say a word to you; we won't even look. C'mon, it's getting late and we can't stay here all night. Tell me what happened; you're a man, you can tell me. Did she try to put you down?'"

"God, I'm talking and talking to this guy, and the other cops are over by the stair with their guns out. Finally—I can't say how long—I feel the lock give and the door open a crack and we go in and take him."

Later, detectives from the 30th squad determined that the man had attempted to fire a .32-caliber revolver at the sergeant through the closed door, but that the firing pin failed each time to strike the shell hard enough to shoot the bullet. The man said he had stopped trying to shoot when Madewell called him by his first name and started to talk to him.

○ R spend the early-morning hours of a recent Saturday on duty with Albert Robertson, a 42-year-old family cop, a Negro with 11 years in the department, most of them in the 30th. He and his partner, William Robison, a nonunit patrolman who has been pressed into family-car duty on this tour, prowl through the precinct's garbage-strewn streets.

The first radio call sends them to St. Nicholas Avenue, where they climb, climb, climb to the sixth floor. At an open door, the young, buxom Negro lets them in and jerks her thumb toward a big man asleep in the bedroom. "Robbie," she says to Patrolman Robertson, whom everyone on his beat seems to know, "he's nothin' but a bum who's been

whippin' me for eight years. I want him arrested before he kills me. He beat me somethin' awful before he drank hisself to sleep."

"But, sweetheart," Robertson replies, "you know he'll be out tomorrow. And are you going to give him the bail money?" (It turns out later that she simply wanted to get rid of him for the weekend so she could go to Atlantic City.)

There's another call. And at 150th Street and Amsterdam a woman shouts down from a second-floor tenement window: "Robbie! Robbie! He's got a gun. He's messin' with us with his pistol."

So Robertson and Robison draw their guns this time, and tell the woman to stand back. "Open the door!" yells Robbie. "For what?" the man inside growls. "That bitch is nuts." He finally opens up but he has no gun on him—and they have no search warrant.

Then it's back quickly to a big, run-down apartment house on St. Nicholas Avenue where a man and wife in a shabby basement apartment have been at each other all night. She says: "Look what he done to me; he kicked me in the belly. I want him locked up, officer." He says: "Hell, lock her up, too," and holds out his arm to show where his wife has cut him with a kitchen knife. "I'll go as long as she goes, too; otherwise, you got to fight me."

Carefully, with a look of weariness in his round, good-natured face, Robertson takes off his blouse and cap, lays his black notebook on the hall table, and sinks slowly into the only comfortable chair in the living room. "What's you folks been drinkin'?" he asks. "Scotch," the glowering, heavy-set man answers. "Sweetheart," Robertson says to the woman, "get me a small drink, will you?" Then he takes off his shoes and rubs his arches and wiggles his toes, and the man just

sits and looks at him incredulously. The man gives Robertson the Scotch, but the drink has no ice, so Robertson asks the wife to bring him some.

"By this time," Robertson explains later, "they're so shook up with me sitting in their chair, sippin' their Scotch [he actually never drank it] that now we can find out what they're really fighting about. Before you know it, I'm part of the family."

She tells Robbie that they'd always drink and end up fighting. And it begins to come out, five years of it: He can't stand the dirty dishes, the food left for days on the stove, the messy apartment, and she knows he can't. She says she can't stand his all-night drinking, his playing around, and he knows it, too. So Robbie gives them a little advice—"Look at her side; look at his"—and tells them that next time they want to fight, call him up at the station house and they can fight with him and keep it in the family. He offers Robbie another drink. . . .

The car radio sends Robertson and his partner to Riverside Drive, where a young, attractive Negro woman is standing in the lobby of one of the better apartment houses facing the river. She says she had a fight with her husband and that he won't let her back in to get her baby or her clothes. She said he threatened to kill her, too. Robbie goes up and talks to him, and the man finally agrees to let her take the baby but not the clothes—"because I paid for them." But the cops persuade him to let her have them.

Suddenly, as she's packing, he pushes by Robertson and grabs her, and as they escort her out, he lunges at her again. Then he rushes into the kitchen and comes back with a bread knife. "If she goes with the clothes, you're going to have to kill me tonight. Tonight I got to die,"

he says. Robertson ignores him. But as they turn to leave, the man moves toward them, waving the knife.

Robertson draws his revolver and tells the man: "Put that away and settle this in court tomorrow." The man keeps coming. Robertson cocks his revolver and says: "Buddy, it isn't a question of me shooting you, but where you're going to get shot." As the man hesitates, Robertson grabs the front door, shouts: "Merry Christmas, happy New Year and a good night to you," and slams the door in the man's face.

"You know what he was doing?" he says later. "He was looking for a little sympathy. And what better way to get it around here than get shot by a cop?"

SOMETIMES the intervention ultimately fails, as happened earlier this year when a woman, mumbling incoherently, her hands and legs covered with blood, staggered into the 30th station house and threw a bloody paring knife on the desk. Two unit patrolmen, Tony Donovan and Joseph Mahoney, happened to be there and they led her gently to a side room.

"O.K., sweetheart," one of them asked her quietly, "where are you hurt? What happened?" They gave her a cigarette and lit it for her. And as she held it in her trembling hand, she moaned: "He kept nagging me. All day, kept after me. Couldn't stand it no more. Oh, God, go help him."

Six months earlier, the woman had called the police and the family unit had been sent to stop a fight between her and her husband. The unit determined then that both were alcoholics and tried to get them to go to Alcoholics Anonymous, but they refused. However, they did agree to separate, but he came back later. The drinking began

again, and the inevitable happened. They began to fight. But instead of calling the

cops this time, she had stabbed her husband, nearly killing him.

○ R there's the night when Patrolmen John Edmonds, a quiet, 41-year-old Negro, and John Mulitz, a tall, 35-year-old Pennsylvania Dutchman, get the call: "A man shot," and Mulitz, who's driving, turns on the flashing red light and uses the siren to get through traffic up Broadway to 163d Street. The address is not in the car's card file. The dying man, a middle-aged Puerto Rican, is on his back in the bedroom. Part of his intestine has bubbled through his abdomen where the steel-jacketed bullet came out. His wife mumbles incoherently to Edmonds: "We have ze argument. He goes into ze bedroom. . . ."

"Maybe if she called us earlier. . . ." Edmonds says.

Then it's another call and Mulitz and Edmonds pull up in front of a sagging tenement on 149th Street where a young, scrawny Negro, his right hand swathed in bandages, comes rushing out screaming that one of his wife's sisters just threw acid on him. It seems that he and his wife had got drunk together earlier. They started to fight, and he put his hand through a bedroom mirror. When he tried to resume the fight after being treated at Harlem Hospital, one of his wife's three monumental sisters (they could have been a beef trust, Mulitz remarks later) heaved him out while another threw a panful of cleaning ammonia on him. In the scuffle, he stabbed his wife in the leg.

When Mulitz tells him that he must be arrested for this, the Negro takes out another knife hidden under his belt and snarls: "I ain't goin', and you can't make me." Mulitz orders him to drop the knife, but he continues to move up the front steps. Mulitz opens his holster and shouts: "Drop it!" but the man just looks at him.

Finally, Mulitz, who towers easily more than a foot over the man, crosses his arms and says: "Listen, you don't have to prove you're a man to me or to your wife and her sisters. I know you're a man; you already proved it to me. Now drop the knife like a good fellow." The man stops, waivers a few seconds, then bursts into tears—and drops the knife.

And one night, George Timmins, 33, and his partner, Ernest Bryant, a 33-year-old Negro who cuts his hair Afro style and wears love beads off-duty, pay their fifth visit to a Puerto Rican couple on 145th Street who are determined to destroy each other. This time, the husband has methodically dismantled the family bed and stacked the pieces neatly against the bedroom wall before leaving for his nighttime job. "She's no goin' to mess around in this bed while I gone," he says.

Normally, the man's wife would have tried to kill him for taking the bed apart. In the past 16 years she has opened him up across the chest with a carving knife, shot him on three separate occasions, and once has thrown lye on his sexual organs. She is an obvious sadist. He, on the other hand, doesn't seem to mind much and he proudly pulls up his work-shirt to show the cops his battle scars. She only glares at him and turns to the cops. "You think he look bad now, ha," she says. "He keeps this up, he's really goin' to get hurt."

FEDERAL officials such as Louis A. Mayo Jr., the 39-year-old program manager of the family-intervention project in the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, a new agency within the Department of Justice, consider the experiment a success, even though its full results have yet to be evaluated. "We are very encouraged," Mayo said recent-

ly. "For a very limited financial investment, there's been a handsome payoff on a cost benefit basis alone—and that doesn't include the personal agony that goes with a homicide."

"Look," says Mrs. Carole Rothman, a petite and attractive 23-year-old graduate student in Dr. Bard's project. "I used to have the typical 'dumb cop' image. I simply couldn't believe a cop had the capacity to figure out the psychological nuances of family conflict. But you should see how fantastically sensitive they really are. They pick up on things that I would miss, and they challenge things I let go by. Now I've become intolerant of people who have cops stereotyped. I see cops as faces, not uniforms."

"If you ask the average psychologist, 'Who becomes a cop?'" says Dr. Bard, "you know what quick, glib answer you get off the top of his head? You get: 'A sadist, a latent criminal, a paranoid.' I have yet to have someone answer: 'Somebody who wants to help.' I suspect very strongly that a significantly large percentage—not all—of the men who seek to become cops do so out of a wish to help. They're idealistically motivated."

"But the police establishment quickly disabuses any such notion. There's no mechanism for a guy to develop along these lines. He learns very quickly that the only way he can make it is to give up this helping aspiration. The system does not reward this kind of behavior and it does not encourage it because its guiding principles are repressive, restrictive and in keeping with the horse-and-buggy days when conflicts were resolved in the middle of Main Street by the man with the quickest draw."

"Some of these guys make a compromise; they go into youth work or rescue service. A significantly large number quit. The ones who stay make more compromises and become the most cynical transmitters of the same values

which they themselves deplored when they first came in. Now, a wholly different organizational structure of the police must prevail in which the system addresses itself to the problems that society really has, rather than those which society once had. The way it is now is neurotic.

"Let's face it. The very nature of the cop is to preserve the status quo. And the reason for the confrontation between the police and the intellectual is that, if there is anything the intellectual is for, he is for change."

A former New York City police official said: "It is a fact that until very recently a patrolman who got in a gun battle was immediately rewarded with a promotion to detective. And it is unfortunately a fact that the tradition of rewarding the man who winds up in a violent confrontation is still a very real part of the New York City Police Department and most other departments, too."

Dr. Howard E. Mitchell, director of the human resources program at the University of Pennsylvania, and an expert on police, contends that the day of holding a once-a-year Brotherhood Week at the station house, on the one hand, while beefing up the Tactical Patrol Force on the other, is over. "It's a different ball game now," he says. "The police are going to have to make a lot of changes, and it doesn't take any great intelligence to know that a person trained for riot control is not the one to send out to stop a family fight in a tense community."

In a sense that is pretty much what the Family Crisis Intervention Unit is all about. Or, as Capt. Vincent T. Agoglia, the commanding officer of the 30th Precinct and a 30-year veteran, remarked as he watched his men turn out the other morning: "You've got to have the people in the community on your side or else you can forget about police work. Look at the changes here in the way the community has reacted.

We've got families now who come in here and ask for the family cops. Last year, they might have to come in here looking, instead, for the civilian complaint review board. It's not what the police say, but what they do, that counts." ■

END