

[Back to search result list](#) The Aurora Advocate, Volume 15, Number 7, December 21, 1961  — Advocate Editorials ... Our Opinions  
Aurora Police Should Be Whiter Than Snow [ARTICLE]

# Advocate Editorials

## ... Our Opinions

### Aurora Police Should Be Whiter Than Snow

For a moment, it looked like the dust had settled on the Aurora police scandal which saw ten per cent of the force fired by Chief Spencer Garrett on charges of "misconduct unbecoming police officers." The cause of all the trouble was that five officers were tempted beyond their will power by a delinquent 17-year old girl.

Now that one of the dismissed officers has been charged with a Denver burglary, we hope that local authorities will use every means possible to clear our officers of any further suspicion. We have no information indicating that other Aurora policemen are involved in crime but we feel that there should be no resting until our force is washed whiter than snow.

The first section of the scandal, in which five officers were dropped from the force for becoming involved with the delinquent girl, definitely shows some moral decay on the part of the policemen. It does not have the magnitude of the long-term burglar-infestation of the Denver force. The men merely learned the hard way that actions that might be condoned for men in other jobs are completely unacceptable for men in the uniform of a city policeman. Chief Garrett moved fast to prove that point and we hope his quick discipline will strengthen the morals and the morale of the remaining policemen.

Chief Garrett is to be commended for his swift, decisive action when he learned that there was unbecoming conduct among his ranks. Perhaps Denver would not have the wide problem it does now if the same quick strides had been taken by then Denver Chief James Childers, Safety Manager John M. Schooley and Mayor Richard Batterton.

The Advocate is disappointed that the Aurora Police Department did not notify the local newspapers as soon as it gave the information to the Denver dailies.

Perhaps this was an oversight in the heat of the moment and will not recur.

Pay is the first object for improvement. Aurora police now begin at \$379.50 per month as opposed to Denver's \$393. Many find it necessary to work at an extra job to keep their family's standard of living at the par which the community expects of them. However, Denver's starting pay will undoubtedly be raised as a result of the vast reorganization of the city Police Department now under way. There are rumors now, most likely true, that some Aurora officers here will try to join the Denver force. We taxpayers of Aurora must be willing to pay our officers approximately another \$1,000 per year. That will mean that firemen should also have a raise. This improvement may cost the city \$100,000 per year.

Another improvement would be to raise the beginning age from a minimum of 22 to a minimum of 25. This would give a man more opportunity to obtain several years of college or at least several more years of maturity.

In spite of the present drop in respect for policemen, we appeal to the public to look beyond the corruption to see just what a tough job a policeman has. There are still a big majority of policemen remaining who deserve every ounce of respect they receive. The officer's job is tough because he is constantly placed in dangerous positions. The public never knows how many times a policeman is called upon to investigate a burglar alarm. He walks into an area not knowing whether a gunman is lurking in the shadows. He is constantly dealing with disgusting and vile persons whom he brings in drunk or whom he finds fighting and swearing in domestic disputes. He still has these images in his mind when he goes home to his own wife and children.

The officer's job is full of temptation which the average man never experiences. He often enters a burglarized store where merchandise is scattered about and he knows that the owner would not miss a few more items. He is also fronted by propositions from young girls who are attracted to the big handsome policeman in his clean and neat uniform.

The City of Aurora should take all possible action to assure that the police department is free from corruption and it should generally improve the job of

police officer.