

no paved streets and, in some cases, lanes were rambling, dusty, and unnamed, and undedicated.

Indigent occupancy was commonplace and the area served as a refuge for drunks, vagrants, prostitutes, and floating crap games. It constituted a serious criminal problem for the community. In 1950, a study revealed that 48 percent of the arrests and criminal complaints occurred on one-quarter of section 14, although it represented only one-thirtieth of the incorporated area of the city. Purse snatching and assaults on women were commonplace after dark.

Until 1953, Federal law forbade the possession or consumption of alcohol by Indians. City police carried U.S. Indian officer commissions in order to deal with situations involving Indians. Manipulating tenants and other connivers often supplied their Indian landlords with liquor in lieu of rent or to accomplish some short-term leases. Because of the fear of apprehension, Indians drank excessive amounts of liquor to escape possession charges, only to collapse on the street and be taken into custody as drunks. Drunken fights, clubbings, knifings, shootings, and homicides grew out of this intolerable state of affairs.

After Congress lifted the drinking ban, the alcoholic problem with the Indian residents eased. The compulsion to immediately consume any liquor that came into their possession had been removed. They became relatively tranquil, and excesses were less frequent.

A few Indian families had limited income from 30-day permits and low-cost rentals, \$10, \$15, \$30, and up to \$50 per month. These were the Welmasses, the Hatchitts, St. Maries, the Segundos, Arenases, and the Patencios. You could almost count them on the fingers of one hand. The others were truly impoverished and deprived. They were on welfare and derived some income from admissions paid by visitors to the canyons and patrons of the bathhouses and mineral springs. This was distributed by the Indian Agency to tribal members.

The majority lived on section 14, while a few resided on South Palm Canyon Drive where they operated a low-cost trailer park. The tribe owned the same 25,000 to 30,000 acres it owns today. Its members, however, were uneducated and, with few exceptions, lacked leadership and management knowledge. Conditions on section 14 were chaotic and sanitation was nonexistent. In this slum section, venereal rates were high, and the Agua Calientes were truly an impoverished and deprived people.

About 1956, this blighted area and the plight of its owners and other occupants became a matter of community concern. The Indian Bureau urged the court to take notice of the situation. In 1956, the superior court, presided over by Judge Hilton McCabe, activated the conservatorship program. Examination disclosed that 25-year leases authorized in 1955 were proving useless, since they were found to be unbankable. In 1959, long-term, 99-year leases were sought and approved by the Congress.

The superior court appointed financial institutions, leading realtors, attorneys, and merchants, management firms, and businessmen to serve as conservators and guardians. These men have not limited their interest to financial matters. Frequently, they have had to assume responsibility in family matters and other difficulties that their wards were confronted with. In some cases, serious illness, judgmental deficiencies, and felony crimes complicated the problem of the guardian or con-