

What do you have to do to be a successful undercover agent?

Live like 'em. Look like 'em.

Did you ever have to use drugs to be convincing?

Oh, no. You never do anything illegal. You might simulate using drugs.

What do you mean?

You know, simulate it. It's easier to pretend to use marijuana than some other drugs, of course.

Did anybody ever suspect you were doing what you were doing?

You mean did they know I was a narc?

Yeah.

Sure. One time I came out of this place and there were ten guys waiting for me.

What did you do?

I got help. There's always help around.

The short preceding conversation took place between a **Daily Nebraskan** reporter and an employe of the Nebraska State Patrol. The man worked undercover for the Lincoln Police Department in 1969. He said he has never operated in that capacity for the State Patrol. The conversation was cut short when he was called out of the room.

According to Lt. Rowe, head of the Nebraska State Patrol Division of Drug Control, any of the 20 division officers may be working undercover at one time or another. But, he said, "that's the hard way to do it."

For the most part the undercover officers work singly. More personnel are brought into the case to serve the warrants. Rowe pointed out that a large number of State Patrol drug arrests are made by troopers, spotting some other violation. The drug violation, in that case, is subsequent and incidental to the original reason for contact.

Rowe said arrests are made "at the time it become apparent a crime is being or has been committed." Then he



modified that slightly. "You don't make an arrest the first time of course," he said. "That would ruin any chance for a long range plan."

Drug-related arrests in Lincoln or Lancaster County are generally handled by one or a combination of three agencies: The Lincoln Police Department, the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office, or the Nebraska State Patrol Division of

Drug Control. According to the State Patrol's Activity Summary there were 610 such arrests in Lancaster County during 1972.

Deputy County Attorney Bob Gibson thinks the three agencies are doing "a good cooperative job of handling drug abuse" in Lancaster County.

Gibson said the main emphasis of all the agencies is on getting to the "traffickers and dealers." He even indicated a soft spot toward marijuana.

"I think it's generally true and this is only my personal observation—that habitual marijuana users are not in the same psychological state of mind as other drug users," he said. "And a marijuana user doesn't usually resort to crime to support a habit. It's just not that expensive."

But Gibson said he wouldn't favor decriminalization of marijuana simply because "everybody's using it."

"That would be analagous to legalizing shoplifting because a lot of teenagers do it," he said.

Gibson said he would favor a possible revamping of the statutes, particularly those that pertain to people arrested for being in a place where a controlled substance is used.

"The officers have to arrest anybody there," Gibson said. "The problem is in

Turn to page 12b

