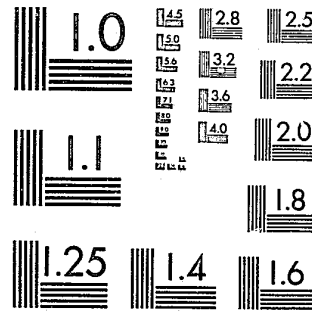


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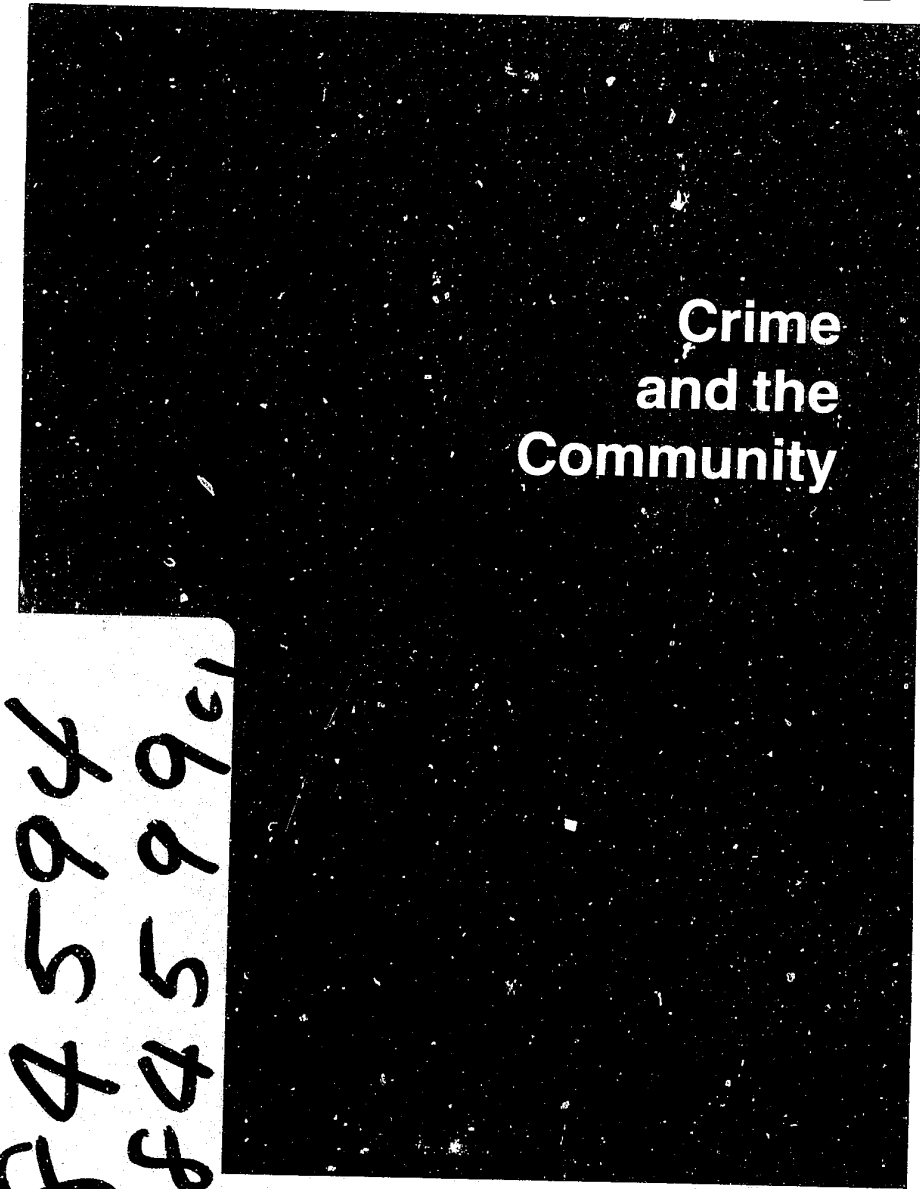
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## Crime and the Community

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84595

## Canadian Crime Rates: Sources and Trends

**R. LORCAN SCANLON**

*Written under contract  
with the Ministry of the  
Solicitor General of  
Canada (Research Division)*

While reported increases in crime rates can evoke serious concern among the public, such information is often received with little understanding of the basis upon which it is generated, and of the controversy that frequently surrounds the reporting of crime and the assembling of official statistics. Moreover, the public is often presented with a variety of conflicting explanations with which to account for these increases.

The purpose of this paper is to document the source of official crime rates, to describe and comment on the extent of changes in these during the last two decades, and to draw attention to some of their limitations as measures of the crime problem. The paper also identifies factors which have been associated with increases in crime rates and illustrates new ways of thinking about the causes of crime. Finally, the paper touches on the extent to which official crime rates, among other determinants, shape the public's perception of the extent of crime.

### The Source of Crime Rates

In Canada, official crime statistics are a record of police activities—from initial contact to court proceedings—with regard to some eighteen legally defined categories of offence. Data on these police activities are first recorded by individual police detachments, then compiled nationally and published annually by Statistics Canada.

In describing crime, it is customary to stay as close as possible to the event itself; accordingly, crimes are counted as the number of offences known or reported to the police less the number of cases subsequently

determined to have been unfounded. In order to describe crime in a summary fashion, certain crimes are selected as representative of two major general categories of crime: violent crimes and property crimes. The category of violent crime includes manslaughter, murder, attempted murder, rape, wounding, and robbery; the category of property crimes includes break and enter and motor vehicle theft. The frequencies of the offences in each of the two categories are then summed and rates per 100,000 population are computed to construct violent and property crime indexes. Table 1 shows the proportion each component crime is of the total for the two indexes in 1978; it also shows what proportion crime represented by the two indexes is of total reported crime for that year.

**TABLE 1**  
VIOLENT & PROPERTY CRIME INDEXES, CANADA, 1978

	Percentage Contribution of Component Crimes to Index	Percentage of Total Crimes Reported
<b>VIOLENT CRIMES INDEX</b>	100.0	1.1
Manslaughter	0.2	
Murder	2.3	
Attempted Murder	2.9	
Rape	8.0	
Wounding	8.6	
Robbery	78.0	
<b>PROPERTY CRIMES INDEX</b>	100.0	15.1
Break & Enter	77.0	
Motor Vehicle Theft	23.0	

Source: Statistics Canada, Crime and Traffic Enforcement Statistics, 1978 (catalogue # 85-205)

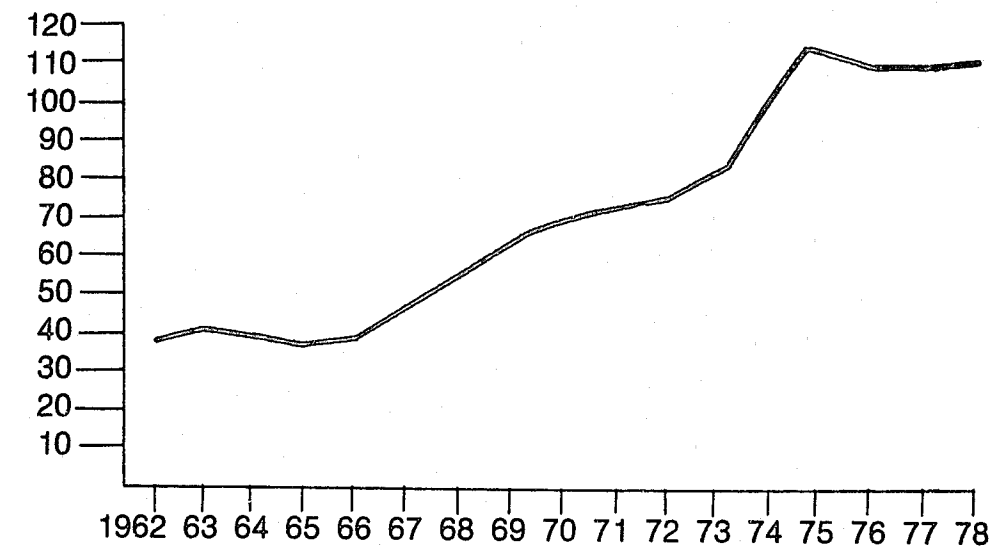
Crime Trends

Figure 1 describes the changes in the violent and property crime indexes over the period 1962-1978. Both curves rose rapidly after 1966 and peaked in 1975. The violent crime index curve then gradually declined and the property crime index curve levelled off.

**FIGURE 1**

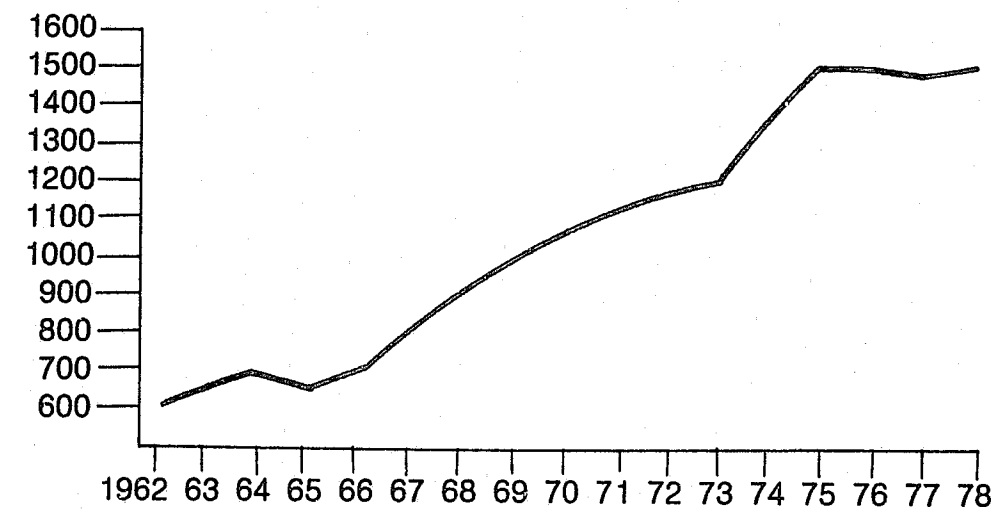
CHANGES IN VIOLENT CRIME INDEX 1962-1978

(a) Rate per 100,000 Population



CHANGES IN PROPERTY CRIME INDEX 1962-1978

(b) Rate per 100,000 Population



Not all component violent crimes peaked in 1975. Rape, which dropped somewhat around that time continued to increase; a similar continuing increase was also true for attempted murder and for wounding. Both murder and robbery dropped between 1975 and 1978.

Trends in the property index crimes have also varied over time. Breaking and entering increased between 1975 and 1978 while motor vehicle theft dropped considerably. Table 2 shows some percentage changes in the rates of the component crimes in the two indexes over the period studied. Murder has more than doubled. Rape, break and enter, and robbery have almost tripled. Attempted murder has increased sevenfold.

In summary, officially reported crime, as reflected in a selected violent and property crime index has increased significantly during the last two decades. Violent crime appears to be decreasing, due largely to changes in murder and robbery rates; property crime is levelling off despite continued increases in break and enter offences. Between 1962 and 1978, individual component crimes have increased between two and sevenfold.

TABLE 2

Number and Rate/100,000 Persons of Violent and Property Offences,  
Showing Percentage Change<sup>(1)</sup>, 1962-1978

INDEX	COMPONENT OFFENCES	1962		1978		Percentage Change 1962 to 1978
		No.	Rate	No.	Rate	
VIOLENT CRIME INDEX	Manslaughter	48	0.3	57	0.2	-33
	Murder	217	1.2	590	2.5	108
	Attempted Murder	83	0.4	742	3.2	700
	Rape	579	3.1	2014	8.6	177
	Wounding	1258	6.8	2165	9.2	35
	Robbery	4951	26.6	19673	83.8	215
PROPERTY CRIMES INDEX	Break & Enter	82104	441.8	278480	1185.9	168
	Motor Vehicle Theft	33482	180.2	83130	354.0	96

<sup>(1)</sup> Percentage Change calculated on rate

Source: Statistics Canada, Crime and Traffic Enforcement Statistics, 1978 (catalogue # 85-205)

### The Reliability of Official Crime Rates

Official crime data are not, strictly speaking, statistics of criminal events per se. Rather, as Leslie Wilkins (1979) has pointed out, they reflect police responses to social behaviour with respect to a particular set of offence categories defined by the Criminal Code. The offences selected for the violent and property indexes are even more specific. In the crime trends described, other offences, less predatory perhaps but in some other ways more serious, have not been considered, for example embezzlement, forgery, tax and insurance fraud, and arson.

It has long been known that a significant proportion of crimes occurring in the community does not come to the attention of the police and that, in consequence, official crime data seriously underestimate the true level of crime. Recent victimization studies both in the United States and Canada have empirically borne out these suspicions, as Table 3 illustrates.

TABLE 3

The Extent of Unreported Crime  
(U.S. and Canadian Sources)

Offence	Percentage Unreported	Source
Rape	40	U.S. Department of Justice, 1977.
Robbery	50	Roesch et al., 1980.
Break & Enter	38	Waller and Okihiro, 1978.
Motor Vehicle Theft	23	Roesch et al., 1980.
In general: Offences against the person	40	Skogan, 1975.
Property Offences	60	Skogan, 1975.

What is interesting about these findings is that not all crimes are similarly under-reported. In general, the more serious the crime, the more likely it is to be reported. Reporting rates for particular crimes can vary over time yielding changes in reported crime rates. It is not unlikely, for example, that the increase in 1978 in the reported incidence of rape was in part determined by a greater degree of support in the community for rape victims who report their experiences to the police or rape crisis centres, or indeed to the very existence of the recently established rape crisis centres themselves.

Crime data produced as a product of police operations are necessarily sensitive, to some degree, to changes and differences in the intensity of police activity—departments' staff size and their investigative and patrol strategies. Such factors may account in part, for example, for differences in rates of violent and property crimes observed between police metropolitan areas (see Table 4). Moreover, the relationship between police activity and reported crime may be complex, involving perhaps a feedback component, where the reported rates for one time period influence police activity during the next. In addition, bookkeeping practices may vary from one jurisdiction to another. While all police departments now use a standard form in reporting crime—the Uniform Crime Report—differences of interpretation in completing and using these forms do occur.

TABLE 4

Violent and Property Crime Index Data for  
Selected Police Metropolitan areas, Canada, 1978

Police Metropolitan Area	Violent Crimes Index	Property Crimes Index
Toronto	598	4601
Montreal	674	4880
Vancouver	983	7345
Edmonton	1092	8185
Calgary	498	5017
Winnipeg	371	5878

Source: Statistics Canada, *Crime and Traffic Enforcement Statistics, 1978* (Catalogue # 85-205)

#### The Interpretation of Official Crime Trends

Despite the limitations attendant on the use of police reports to determine levels of crime, there is some reason to believe that official crime data do reflect, in a relative way, changes over time in actual crime levels, especially at the national level. In the first place idiosyncrasies in police strength, strategies and reporting which may colour the reporting of individual police jurisdictions, are likely to cancel one another out, when the information is aggregated at regional and national levels. Secondly, and related to this, the trends for the component index crimes show considerable statistical similarity over the period studied. With the exception of manslaughter (whose rate varied very little during the last two decades) variations in crime rates are highly inter-correlated. Such high inter-correlations suggest an inherent stability in crime trends at the national level that overrides differences and

fluctuations in rates of reporting. Consequently, it seems reasonable to conclude that, whatever these absolute crime levels, crime rates have undergone the increases suggested by Figure 1 over the last two decades. Over a longer time span extending back into the nineteenth century, however, there is historical evidence to suggest that violent crime has in fact declined and that community tolerance of crime has decreased. It may be for example that much of what the public and police of today identify and report as "crime" (for example, domestic violence, bar room fights, and public disturbances) would not have been so identified at the turn of the century.

There is also reason to believe that regional as well as national comparisons of crime rates may enjoy a degree of validity. Evidence for this claim comes from Hindelang's (1974) exploratory comparisons between official police statistics and victimization survey data in the United States. Though the absolute levels of reported crime were predictably discrepant, there was close agreement between the estimates of the distribution of offences across geographic areas, provided by the two approaches. To the extent that victimization data are considered reliable and valid, this observed correspondence argues for the utility of official (police) crime data in making geographic comparisons in levels of crime.

In summary, official crime rates need to be interpreted with caution. In describing crime they are confined to a specific set of offence categories. They underestimate crime levels in the community because a large proportion of crimes do not become known to the police. Despite these serious limitations which are associated with the crime rates for any given year, official crime trends may accurately reflect relative changes in crime over time. Finally, while differences in crime rates between police jurisdictions may be confounded to an unknown extent by differences in levels of police activity and reporting procedures, there is some empirical evidence to suggest that regional comparisons may be valid.

#### Factors Associated with Increases in Crime Rates

It is generally agreed, but by no means precisely established, that changes in crime rates are associated with a variety of economic, demographic, social and cultural factors. Several studies (for example by Hasenpusch in 1978 and Cohen and Felson in 1979) have attempted to assess the empirical relationship between official crime rates and such variables as gross national product, unemployment, population age structures, population density, family cohesion, and the size of the police force. For the most part statistically significant associations have been obtained, attesting in a general way to the complex reciprocal relationships that exist between various social factors. They do not, however, contribute any real understanding of what specifically causes an increase in crime rates; and, more importantly, they do little by way of prescribing specific measures that would lead to the reduction of crime levels in the future.

For many years, interest in crime and its prevention was oriented around the criminal: attempts were made to determine the biological, psychological, and socio-cultural factors which tended to produce individuals with a disposition to commit crime. In recent years, however, there has been a significant movement away from a concern with the criminal to an interest in the circumstances under which crimes occur. Cohen and Felson have, for example, examined how contemporary life styles can contribute to the convergence in time and space of the three conditions necessary for a crime to occur: suitable targets, insufficient security, and individuals disposed to commit crime. While we may begin with the identification of factors relating to each one of these conditions, it is only in the specifications for interaction of these conditions that any real understanding of the proximate causes of crime will emerge, and more important, that strategies for reducing the incidence of crimes will suggest themselves.

Victimization studies, carried out mostly in the United States, have aided this event-oriented approach to crime by providing information about offenders, targets, and security protection. For example, victim reports suggest the probable nature of the relationship between victim and offender for various types of offence. Such reports reveal who is likely to be a victim of different kinds of offences. Characteristics such as age, sex, and income level, are important variables in determining target suitability. Finally, victimization surveys have pointed to situations likely to serve as locations for the occurrence of crimes because of a lack of security (U.S. Department of Justice, 1979).

Another source of information on the conditions of crime events is that of offender self-reports (see, for example, the work by Hindelang, Hirschi and Weis in 1979 and by Reppetto in 1974). Here, interviews with offenders (usually juvenile) reveal not only the characteristics of those more likely to engage in proscribed behaviour but also some of the strategies which they employ, including their assessment of target suitability.

Finally, the routine activity analysis of Cohen and Felson provides its own framework for viewing the conditions of crime events. This perspective focusses on such factors as: how often and when people of different age-groups are absent from their homes; the vulnerability of parked automobiles to theft; the increased portability (hence 'stealability') of material possessions; and the reduction in informal controls due to increased anonymity and impersonality.

In summary, while increases in crime are undoubtedly related to changes in the socio-economic and socio-demographic features of society, investigations into the correlates of crime, at this level of analysis, tend not to be useful in throwing light on how increases in crime come about and how the incidence of crime can be reduced. An approach called routine activity analysis, which moves away from a consideration of the criminal alone to an examination of incidents of crime and which takes into account target suitability and lack of adequate security as well as offender characteristics, promises to be

more fruitful. Routine activity analysis has been strongly supported by findings from both victimization and self-report offender studies.

#### The Impact of Crime Rates

Given that crime rates have increased significantly during the last two decades, the question of what effect these increases have on people's lives follows naturally. Recent work in the United States, for example by Garofalo in 1979, has suggested that fear of crime can be related not only to knowledge of official crime rates but also to the treatment, both fictional and non-fictional, of crime topics by the media; to one's socialization which includes learned beliefs and expectations about crime in general and one's own vulnerability in particular; to personal victimization; to the prevailing degree of public order and public safety in one's own neighborhood; and to one's view of the effectiveness of the police and other law enforcement agencies. Indeed it is becoming clear that fear of crime is an area of concern in its own right, more closely connected to a generalized fear of strangers than to official crime rates. For these and similar reasons, Skogan in a 1977 paper has suggested that fear of crime be given high priority as an independent area of study. It is only by examining the determinants of fear of crime and assessing their relative importance, that the impact of crime rates on the public can be evaluated. It may be that public conceptions of order and safety are functions of social conditions more general and pervasive in their influence than those circumstances specifically linked to the incidence of crime. It may be too, as Biderman warned in 1966, that the media image of uncontrollably mounting crime may contribute less to the "support of constructive measures against crime than to despair and distrust of the mechanisms for coping with it".



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84596

## Public Opinions About Criminal Justice Issues: Some Cautions About Poll Data

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Division*

The results of some public opinion polls on criminal justice issues tend to generate the image of a highly concerned and punitive Canadian public. In this paper, I will present the data which generates this image and attempt to show how a different image can be produced when other public opinion poll information or the results of more in-depth analysis of public opinions are analyzed. I will also raise questions about the meaning of the concepts of concern and fear of crime as they are measured by public opinion polls.

### The Image

Some polls suggest that a large majority of Canadians are concerned about crime and delinquency. Indeed, when asked by pollsters to state their views on a set of predetermined social problems, Canadians tend to rank crime as the second or third of their social concerns, after inflation and unemployment. For example, in national polls conducted by the Centre de recherche sur l'opinion publique (CROP) in 1977 and 1978, crime and delinquency were considered very important by 72% and 69% of respondents, respectively. In a national study of public priorities in urban Canada, (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation 1978), Canadians ranked the reduction of crime as the third urban priority, after inflation and unemployment.

Other polls or surveys provide data which support the statement that crime is a serious concern of Canadians. In a 1975 survey of British Columbian voters about social services (Koenig, reported in Fattah, 1976) the reduction of crime and delinquency was considered the most important of fifteen priorities to which provincial government funding should be addressed. In a 1976 nation-wide poll, Goldfarb Consultants Limited (1977) observed that their respondents gave crime a score of 84 out of 100 on an index of concern. For 25% of the respondents, crime was the social issue about which they were most concerned. Also, in a 1976 survey, Edmontonians, on a seriousness scale of 5, rated the seriousness of crime in Canada at 3.46 (males) and 3.91 (females) (Alberta Bureau of Statistics and Edmonton Police Commission).

This concern about crime may be related to the belief, shared by a majority of Canadians, that crime is increasing. In a Gallup Poll conducted in 1972, in which respondents were asked whether they thought there was more crime in society than five years before, 63% answered "yes". In 1974, when Canadians were asked by the same pollster whether they thought there was more violence today here and in the world, 85% answered "yes". In the 1976 survey by Goldfarb Consultants Limited, 67% of respondents believed there was more crime than the year before and 50% believed there were more gun-related crimes. In six polls conducted by CROP in November 1976, May 1977, November 1977, May 1978, May 1979 and November 1979, which asked Canadians whether they thought the crime rate would increase during the next six months, 63%, 68%, 58%, 66%, 64% and 67% respectively, answered "yes".

According to some polls, Canadians appear to be punitive toward criminals. For example, increasing numbers of Canadians are dissatisfied about the perceived leniency of the courts. Indeed, Gallup polls taken in 1966 and 1969 indicated that 43% and 58% of the respondents, respectively, were of the opinion that the courts did not deal harshly enough with criminals. Results of Gallup polls on this question in 1974, 1975, 1976, and 1977 and 1980 indicated percentages of 66%, 72%, 73% and 75% and 77%. Similarly, in polls conducted by CROP in 1977, 1978 and 1979, 75%, 75% and 76% respectively, said they believed judges are not hard enough on criminals. A closer examination of the CROP data further suggests that an increasing proportion of the population is holding a *strong* belief about the leniency of the courts. The percentages of those who "strongly agree" with the statement "judges are not hard enough on criminals", has increased steadily from 28% in 1977, to 35% in 1978 and 38% in 1979; whereas the percentage of those who "agree somewhat" has decreased from 47%, to 40% to 38% over the same 3 year period. The percentages of those who "disagree somewhat" and who "disagree strongly" with the statement have remained the same over these years. Thus, the CROP polls suggest that the opinions of Canadians on the subject of the leniency of the courts are becoming more entrenched.

Also, some polls indicate that Canadians favour severe sentences for criminals. Polls conducted by Gallup on capital punishment show that approximately seven in ten Canadians favour capital punishment for the killing of innocent persons (70% in 1971, 63% in 1972, 69% in 1975, 68% in 1977, 68% in 1978). When asked by Gallup whether they "would favour or oppose capital punishment for the killing of a prison guard or an on-duty policeman", 79% and 75% of the respondents answered "yes" in 1975 and 1977, respectively. In 1977, 74% also said they would favour capital punishment for murders committed by terrorists. In a 1977 poll by *Weekend Magazine*, 73% of the respondents replied "yes" to the question: "Do you think there is ever an occasion when it is all right for society to execute a criminal?" Seventy-two per cent of the population believed capital punishment would be the appropriate sentence in the case of child murder, 71% for mass multiple murders, 67% for premeditated murder, 62% for killing a prison guard and 53% for murder during a crime.

A poll conducted by CROP in 1979 on preferred sentences for various crimes lends further support to the belief in the punitiveness of the Canadian population. The survey indicates a high propensity on the part of the population to suggest long sentences of incarceration. For example, 77% of the respondents favoured incarceration for crimes involving physical assault with injury. Of these, 12% and 28%, respectively, believed a sentence of life imprisonment or a minimum of fifteen years to be appropriate, while 37% favoured a term of up to fifteen years. The combined results for "theft" indicated that 70% of the population would favour imprisonment. On the basis of the CROP data it would appear that the Canadian public is more punitive than judges are in their actual decisions in courts. Indeed, on the basis of the latest available statistics, only 4% of those convicted for "assault causing bodily harm" received a prison sentence from Canadian courts, in 1973, while 58% received probation or fine and only 6% of those sentenced to an institution received more than two years. Further, the statistics on sentences handed down in the courts, for that year, indicated that only 21% of those convicted of theft were sentenced to incarceration in Canada (Statistics Division, Solicitor General, 1979).

In summary, the results of some polls suggest that Canadians worry about crime, believe it is on the increase and would like the courts to be more severe with criminals, as they would be themselves.

#### A Perspective on the Question of Concern about Crime

While it seems that Canadians are likely to agree, if it is suggested to them, that crime and delinquency are important social problems, there is also an indication that they may not be especially disturbed by the phenomenon of crime in their day to day life. Indeed they are satisfied with the general quality of life, are not willing to pay more taxes for crime reduction programs, would not appear to be concerned enough about crime to mention it spontaneously as one of their social concerns, to inform themselves of proposals to control

crime or to be fearful of going out at night or to alter their lifestyles. Consider the following.

Seventy-eight per cent of Canadians say they are optimistic about the quality of life in Canada (CROP, 1977) and 89% (1976) and 86% (1977) consider themselves satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of life in their province (CROP).

The CMHC (1978) study on urban priorities in Canada indicates that only one fifth of the population would accept an increase in taxes in support of efforts to reduce crime.

When respondents are asked an open-ended question about social issues of concern to them (i.e. one in which they themselves are asked to suggest the issues), the percentage who mention crime is very low. For example, when asked by CROP in 1972 in an open-ended question: "Which of the things or events presently happening in Canada are you most concerned about?", only 3% of the respondents mentioned crime or other criminal justice issues. Similarly, in their 1976 poll, Goldfarb Consultants Limited observed that crime was an issue of concern to 15% of respondents only, while inflation, the cost of living and the economy concerned 57% of the respondents, and employment 17% of them. In another CROP survey in 1977, only 1% of respondents spontaneously mentioned crime and delinquency as an issue, whereas 24% and 18% mentioned unemployment and inflation. These data suggest that concern for crime-related issues may not be very deep-seated in Canadians.

Data on awareness of government initiatives in the field of crime control would seem to support further an argument that crime is not a very serious issue for most Canadians. In 1976, in their report on National Attitudes towards Crime and Gun Control, Goldfarb Consultants Limited noted that only 29% of the respondents said they knew what Parliament was doing or proposing to do about crime in Canada; of these, 13% mentioned the abolition of capital punishment; 6% the gun control measures; and 1% mentioned longer sentences for murderers. The authors of the report note that these responses were given after considerable probing from the interviewers. When asked in 1978 by the firm Canadian Facts if new federal laws related to capital punishment, the control of guns and wiretappings had been passed in Canada in the past few years, the "yes" responses were 46%, 58%, and 48%, respectively. However, when informed that new legislation had been passed in 1977 and asked to recall any part of the legislation, only 14% of the sample were able to recall any item correctly.

Empirical studies suggest that the public may not be very fearful about crime. While 28% of Torontonians in 1970 (Courtis) believed that crime was very serious in their city and while 73% thought it was going up, only 11% said that they "worry a lot" about their house or apartment being broken into and robbed and only 8% said that they "worry a lot" about being attacked or assaulted. Of the respondents who walked in their neighbour-

hood at night, only 12% indicated feeling insecure or uncomfortable, and less than 10% reported using public transportation less or reducing their visits to theatres, restaurants and friends for fear of being attacked or molested. Waller and Okihiro (1978) observed that, over-all, Torontonians do not worry much (13% worry "much" or "very much") about residential burglary in Metropolitan Toronto and are not "building technological fortresses" for fear of being burglarized. The results of the 1970 and 1974 Gallup polls on the fear of crime indicated that 29% and 37% of Canadians, respectively, said they would be afraid to walk at night within a mile of their house. In 1976, Bibby recorded a similar level of fear (38%) in his national study. While the Gallup and Bibby percentages are relatively high, and would tend to support the image of the concerned Canadian, the results of national surveys by CROP in November 1976 and 1977 indicated that only 22% of respondents would be afraid to walk at night in their neighbourhood; the percentage was 24% in a survey taken in May 1979. It is impossible to say whether the lower percentages recorded by CROP represent a decline in the level of fear compared to the other polls in the previous years, or which of the two sets of data is accurate. However, the CROP figures seem consistent with the results of Courtis (1970) and Waller and Okihiro (1978).

The data reported in this section do not provide the best measure of the degree of concern of Canadians about criminal justice issues. However, they do suggest that caution must be exercised in interpreting the poll results presented in the previous section.

#### An Altered Image

The results of surveys and studies which have attempted to break down the simple yes/no responses of the polls to allow for a wider range of answers suggest that Canadians may be considerably less punitive than the poll results presented in the first section may suggest. For example, in their study of attitudes to capital punishment in London, Ontario, Boydell and Grindstaff (1972) showed that while 70% of the respondents believed capital punishment should be the maximum penalty for "capital murder", only 36% thought it should be the most frequently handed down sentence. In 1974, Vidmar asked respondents to state the strength of their opinion on the death penalty. He observed that 18% were "strongly in favour of the death penalty as an appropriate measure" and that 29% were "generally in favour except in a few cases where it may not be appropriate"; 31% said they were "opposed to the death penalty except in a few cases where it may be appropriate", 22% said they were "opposed to the death penalty under any circumstances". Thus, Chandler (1976) suggests, the polls may have tended to exaggerate the level of acceptance of this type of penalty and thus of the level of punitiveness of the population. Further support for this conclusion is found in the answers to a 1976 Gallup poll which asked Canadians, "If we can achieve better law and order would you or would you not be satisfied to see an end to the death penalty in Canada?" Whereas 48% of the respondents indicated that they would not be satisfied, 41% said they would.

In turn, the results of the Waller and Okihiro (1978) study on burglary, in Toronto, suggest that when respondents are asked to pass a judgment on a very concrete case, they express less punitive opinions than when asked to pass judgement about a case about which they have little information except a legal description, as is typical of the poll situation. They observed that 60% of their sample would favour a sentence of probation, a suspended sentence, a fine or a discharge for the "typical burglar." Interestingly, those in the sample who had been victims of a burglary and who had indicated immediately after the incident that they favoured incarceration, expressed more tolerant views than the non-victims in the sample. These data are in close agreement with actual sentencing by judges. In 1973, 47% of the convicted burglars in Ontario received a sentence of probation and 51% a sentence of incarceration.

Qualitative research on the popular image of violence among a cross-section of Quebecers also indicates that people take many factors into consideration in formulating their opinions and that over-all they are very tolerant of even the most violent crimes. As Baril (1979) states:

*When one takes into consideration all the "ifs", "buts", "unlesses", "provided that", all the exceptions and restrictions mentioned by the Quebecers interviewed, very few serious violent acts would be totally condemnable. Even homicide, considered as the violent crime par excellence, is excused, in many circumstances. (Author's translation)*

Waller and Okihiro (1978) and Grenier and Manseau (1979) also report data on opinions towards sentencing alternatives which indicate that when given an opportunity to speak on these issues, in relation to specific cases, Canadians may be considerably less punitive than some polls may have lead us to believe they are. When Waller and Okihiro (1978) asked their respondents whether they thought the "typical burglar" should have to pay restitution, approximately 83% said "yes." A similarly strong support was voiced for restitution in qualitative work with small business people who had been victims of robbery in Montreal (Grenier and Manseau, 1979). Unfortunately it is not clear from these studies whether respondents believed that this sentence should be used instead of or in addition to other sentences. In this regard, a more interesting finding is from the Waller and Okihiro (1979) study in which 74% of the sample said that unpaid work for the community would be an acceptable substitute for imprisonment. This is the only Canadian study I know of which has explicitly asked the opinions of respondents about sentencing reforms.

The data presented in this section suggests that the image derived from some polls about the state of public opinion on criminal justice questions may be too conservative. Some research data and polls clearly suggest that the Canadian public may be fairly tolerant on some issues, in some circumstances. This question must be examined in further in-depth studies which would attempt to measure opinions in relation to very specific crime situations and which would allow the respondents the time and opportunity to express their views in all of their complexity.

### Some Questions About the Concepts

The conceptual and methodological weaknesses of poll data have been stressed by many authors (Louis-Guérin, 1979) and I will not discuss them here. However, it is pertinent to suggest that it is not clear what concepts the poll questions discussed above are attempting to measure. What does the word "crime" mean to people? Does it mean violent offences against the person? Does it include non-violent property offences? Both? There is indication from in-depth studies of attitudes that words like "crime" and "criminals" are used restrictively by people to cover the most extreme, serious and depersonalized occurrences (Baril, 1979). The polls, thus, may only reflect a concern about the very serious crimes.

Also, what do the concepts of "concern" and "fear" of crime really mean? It is accepted generally that "concern" and "fear" of crime refer to different realities, the first being equated with interest in crime and social issues, the second with fear of personal victimization (Furstenberg, 1971). "Fear of crime" would thus refer to an emotional reality and as such would appear to be the most significant phenomenon to focus on in order to understand the impact of crime on people in our society. However, on the basis of studies of victims' reactions (Waller and Okihiro, 1978) and of results of qualitative research (Baril, 1979; Grenier and Manseau, 1979) there is reason to suspect that the concept of fear may have a different meaning for victims and non-victims and that it may mean something very different than fear of personal victimization. For example, the results of the qualitative work carried out by Baril (1979) in Quebec, revealed that for non-victims the concept of fear of crime appears to mean reprobation of behaviours which are perceived as potentially dangerous. Fear for them did not mean apprehension about being victimized; in fact they seemed to feel immune (Baril, 1979, p. 80). These feelings about crime may describe well what Waller (1979) calls "concern for security" as opposed to fear. As he suggested, fear may refer more to notions of loss of control, discomforting anxiety or a state of mind brought about by perceptions that some situations are unavoidable and life threatening. Polls and surveys to date have not attempted to measure these various levels of emotional reactions of the public. Additionally, they have not collected data on the "fear" which the general public may have of other threatening situations, such as fear of accidents, fire and sickness or on the feelings, other than about crime, people may have about their neighbourhood (Waller, 1979). It is only when the concepts of "concern" and "fear" are operationalized better, and when comparative data is available, that we will start to understand the relative distribution of these phenomena among Canadians.

### Conclusion

In this paper, I have presented a summary of the state of the Canadian public opinion on a number of criminal justice issues. It was argued that while some polls suggest that Canadians are concerned about crime and delin-

quency and punitive toward criminals, others, in combination with the results of more in-depth studies, suggest that Canadians may not be extremely disturbed about crime in their day to day life and that they may be considerably more tolerant than the first set of data presented in this paper may indicate. This suggests that the results of these polls must be used with caution. At best they may indicate a certain uneasiness in the public about crime, criminals and criminal justice, apprehended in the abstract, and possibly based on concerns about violent or other serious forms of criminality. Clearly, more systematic research on attitudes is required. It must focus on conceptualizing and operationalizing concepts such as crime, criminals, concern, fear; on developing indices of tolerance; on measuring the importance of criminal justice issues for Canadians; and at unearthing the configuration of attitudes about various types of criminals and forms of criminality. It is only when such information is available that public attitude information should be taken into account in the development of criminal justice policies. Meanwhile, policy-makers are still bound to develop policies and programs which best attempt to protect the public.

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## Crime and Delinquency Prevention: An Overview of Current Approaches

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In recent years two major themes have emerged in writings about "crime" and other conditions identified as social problems in North America and Western Europe: the concern with preventing rather than reacting to problems and the idea of the community's responsibility for solving its own problems.

While the term crime and delinquency prevention, in its most general sense, refers to any effort by people to control or reduce events they consider to be instances of crime and delinquency, a number of important distinctions can be made which refine the notion of prevention and serve as the basis for several different approaches.

First, approaches to crime and delinquency prevention can be considered in terms of whether they are justice-system or community-based; that is, who takes responsibility for their implementation and operation, the formal criminal and juvenile justice systems or the range of groups and institutions—whether governmental or private sector—outside formal justice systems. Second, approaches can further be subdivided into offender oriented and victim/environment oriented. Offender oriented approaches involve attempting to prevent crime and delinquency by altering the motivation and behaviour (and in the case of incapacitation, the opportunities of the offender); the latter—often referred to as "defensive" approaches—involve attempting to prevent or reduce opportunities for criminal victimization, and the impact on victims and the public.

Table I below summarizes the basic types of approach and provides concrete examples of each. These basic types of approach are sometimes combined in various ways which I will discuss later in my sections on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and the "Situational Approach."

**TABLE I**

Approaches to Crime and Delinquency Prevention

	Justice-System Based	Community-Based
Offender-oriented	Incarceration to incapacitate and/or treat offenders; probation; parole	economic, educational and counselling programs for potential offenders and sometimes referred to as "positive crime prevention"
Defensive or victim/environment-oriented	police patrol and investigation strategies	education of potential victims; security devices (locks, etc.); environmental and architectural design

I will first discuss "positive" and "defensive" community based prevention approaches, CPTED, and then the "Situational Approach" before coming to some general conclusions and policy implications.

"Positive" Crime and Delinquency Prevention

According to a report by Paul Stanley prepared for Solicitor General Canada, the notion of "positive" crime and delinquency prevention refers to "those activities directed toward identifying and changing conditions and situations which are believed likely to result, if not modified, in individual or group involvement in criminal (or delinquent) activity." Positive approaches focus both on changing environmental conditions that predispose individuals to crime and changing persons identified as potential offenders in order to reduce the likelihood of their involvement in crime or delinquency.

Reviews of research assessing "positive" approaches to crime and delinquency such as strengthening family life, special education, manpower training, counselling, the provision of leisure and recreational opportunities, and

direct financial assistance, reveal that while positive measures may be socially beneficial in a variety of ways, few proper evaluations of the effects of such measures on crime and delinquency have been made. In most instances where highly regarded programs have been systematically evaluated, the results have not been supportive. Byles and Maurice, for example, in their evaluation of crisis-oriented therapy for the families of juvenile offenders in the Hamilton area found no significant differences in recidivism (measured by both contacts with the police and court charges) between juveniles who received family therapy and those who did not. Hackler's comprehensive 1978 review notes similar findings for virtually all systematically evaluated programs that he examined.

In addition to the question of *measurable* effectiveness, there is the question of costs. Many positive crime prevention programs are expensive to set up and maintain. Without evidence of cost-effectiveness, the kinds of massive social and economic interventions ("throwing dollars at social problems") called for by some advocates of positive approaches are difficult to justify during a period when fiscal restraint is being emphasized. The reported successes of some programs in both North America and Britain however, and the problems with the methods of evaluation themselves, warrant keeping an open mind. One possibility is the development of new "positive" approaches focussed on specific target groups or geographical areas which research indicates are particularly prone to specific kinds of crime and delinquency.

Defensive Approaches

Defensive approaches came into vogue following a wave of criticism (of the "nothing works" variety) of rehabilitation programs for offenders (for example, Martinson, 1974) and positive crime prevention approaches.

The major theoretical impetus for defensive, opportunity-reduction approaches came from the pioneering work in urban planning of Jane Jacobs and the development and elaboration of her ideas by Oscar Newman and C.R. Jeffery. Newman's name is identified with the phrase "defensible space", Jeffery's with "crime prevention through environmental design." The phrase, "Crime prevention through environmental design" (CPTED), has, however, come to take on a meaning largely independent of Jeffery's original usage. It is used to refer to the attempt to apply a range of both community and justice-system based defensive approaches (including target hardening, defensible space, educational programs and publicity campaigns, citizen mobilization, and law enforcement strategies) to relatively large scale settings such as neighbourhoods, commercial corridors, schools, and public transportation systems with identifiable spatial boundaries.

Defensible Space

Newman's essential argument is that residential environments should be designed in a fashion that would create or enhance feelings of territoriality

among residents, promote easy surveillance of that territory, result in a positive image of the area for both residents and outsiders, and juxtapose public and private (less crime-prone) housing areas. A basic Newman design has housing blocks directly facing streets, a minimum of public access routes, open space areas "assigned to" and overlooked by particular dwellings, and closely grouped dwelling units to encourage social contact and ultimately a sense of community. In his more recent work, Newman has acknowledged more strongly the importance of various characteristics of the resident population (e.g. income, employment status, family structure and age mix).

Although (as Mayhew's 1979 review notes) studies of housing projects specifically designed on the basis of Newman's ideas do not demonstrate significant benefits, some research indicates that measures promoting the "surveillability" of urban environments does reduce crime. Pablant and Baxter's 1975 study of 32 Houston schools, for example, found lower rates of forcible entry to be associated with good street lighting, the "attractiveness" of the schools, and the visibility of the schools to nearby residents. Similarly, Waller and Okihiro's 1978 study of burglary victims in Toronto reported that both openness to surveillance and the presence of residents appeared to protect dwellings away from public housing against victimization, although presence was more important for dwellings in or near public housing. For private apartments, the presence of a doorman provided greater protection than defensible space attributes such as surveillability, level of social cohesion, and building height. A general conclusion from the existing research is that while "defensible space" principles have so far been shown to be of only limited value in crime and delinquency prevention, they are worth pursuing because we are working at the margins, where any improvement, albeit limited, is important.

#### Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

There have already been a number of applications of CPTED in neighbourhoods, urban commercial areas, schools, and mass transit systems. Two projects, one in Portland, Oregon, the other in Hartford, Connecticut—are currently under intensive study.

The Portland project carried out by the Westinghouse National Issues Center under the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NILECJ), is an attempt to apply CPTED principles to a large commercial corridor (50 blocks long by 4 blocks wide) in a deteriorated, high crime area. Included in the project are the following features: improved street lighting, specially designed bus shelters, a bus program for the elderly and handicapped, a public awareness campaign to discourage people from carrying cash on the streets, neighbourhood cleanups and street, sidewalk, and landscaping improvements.

While Frohman's 1977 review of the Portland Project reports a reduction in commercial burglaries (a 29% reduction on the strip as compared to a 9% for the city as a whole during the first 10 months of 1976) and increased

business vitality, it is still too early to make conclusions about the cost-effectiveness of the project.

In Hartford, Connecticut, residents of an area in transition, with a mix of apartment houses and multi-family homes, an increasing minority population, some deterioration, and a high crime rate were encouraged to undertake both individual and group activities and to cooperate with police to reduce crime and the fear of crime. Environmental changes included restricting vehicle traffic in neighbourhoods, narrowing access to streets and fencing yards. Social action changes included the setting up of a neighbourhood team policing unit, resident crime prevention groups, a block watchers system, and a variety of projects to enhance community pride.

In a comparison of pre/post project victimization surveys, Fowler (1979) found that burglary, robbery and purse-snatching rates dropped in the area under study with no evidence of displacement to adjacent areas. Furthermore, there were indications of possible increased police effectiveness (with higher arrest rates and decreased fear of crime being the indicators). Because the police and citizen group changes occurred first in the project and produced no observable effects, the project staff have concluded tentatively that it is the physical environmental changes which had had the greatest effect.

The results of the Portland and Hartford projects are far from definitive. It may be for example, that the positive effects observed have resulted from a short-term response of citizens and police which they will not be able to sustain. A number of other cautions also can be made with regard to CPTED. First, trying to assess the over-all effectiveness of the CPTED approach is difficult because of the number and complexity of the changes being measured. Secondly, the CPTED approach is costly, time-consuming and difficult to implement and manage. Third, in the absence of cost-effectiveness data, it may be difficult to justify the resources needed in setting up CPTED.

#### The Situational Approach

The distinctive character of the situational approach is that its focus is on particular types of crime and crime targets—for example, Reppetto's 1974 study of residential burglary and robbery, Waller and Okihiro's 1978 study of residential burglary and Duffala's 1976 study of robbery of convenience stores—not on crime or delinquency in general. The situational approach is not wedded to either positive or defensive measures; it seeks the development of appropriate strategies or an appropriate mix of strategies to deal with crime and delinquency.

In Britain, the situational approach has been applied to such phenomena as meter theft, vandalism of telephone booths, robbery of subway passengers and theft of cars for resale. Mayhew's 1976 report, for example, showed that the fitting of steering column locks to new cars was effective in substantially reducing the risk of such cars being stolen. The study also showed a corresponding increase in risk to older cars not fitted with such devices.



These findings were congruent with the results of a similar program carried out in West Germany a few years earlier.

Studies of telephone booth vandalism by Mayhew in 1978 and vandalism in a housing project by Wilson in 1978 showed these specific types of vandalism to be linked more to characteristics of the population of the areas involved than to characteristics of the physical site such as openness to surveillance. Vandalism in the housing projects studied, for example, appeared to reflect not so much the level of "defensibility" of the environment as the presence of large numbers of young boys in the projects. This factor indicated the importance of considering positive measures (for example, provision of recreational activities) in lieu of or in addition to defensive measures to impede vandalism.

The best example of a North American program based on the crime-specific situational model is the LEAA exemplary project to control residential burglary (evaluated in 1977 by Cirel, Evans, McGillis and Whitcomb) in Seattle. The Seattle program was established on the basis of research on burglary in Seattle which indicated the following patterns:

- $\frac{3}{4}$  of burglaries were residential and the majority of these were in single family dwellings;
- over  $\frac{1}{3}$  of reported burglaries involved entry through unlocked doors and windows;
- entry into locked dwellings more often involved the use of brute force as opposed to skills;
- most burglaries occurred during the daytime when the residents were at work or school;
- over 90% of burglaries were not witnessed;
- most burglaries where there was an arrest or return of property were witnessed;
- most property stolen had not been marked to permit later identification.

Because it was thought that intensive police patrol would not be cost-effective, several victim/environment oriented measures were introduced:

1. A program (Operation Identification) encouraging residents to mark valuables with an identifier such as a social security or drivers licence number and to place decals on doors and windows warning potential burglars that the goods were marked;
2. A program (Block Watch) encouraging neighbours to exchange information about their schedules and habits, to watch each other's homes, and to report suspicious activities to each other and to the police;
3. A residential security inspection service to provide residents with advice on how to make their homes more secure;
4. Provision of information (e.g. pamphlets) on burglary prevention to residents.

In an evaluation of the program comparing project and non-project households the researchers found the following:

- the proportion of burglaries reported to the police increased by 26% and burglary-in-progress calls increased by 27%;
- the number of residences reporting burglaries dropped by almost half;
- there was no notable displacement of burglaries to areas adjoining those under study.

An important issue to consider in assessing the value of the Seattle program is the cost-effectiveness of the various preventive approaches used either alone or in combination. Of all the individual components of the program, Blockwatch was apparently the most effective. In addition, it was less costly than many other approaches. On the basis of a comparison with his own work in Toronto, and the Seattle evaluation Waller argues, however, that actual presence in a residence or at least simulated presence is the best protection for all forms of residence. He contends that measures like Blockwatch are most effective for detached or new houses and security measures (particularly those that involve a human presence such as the use of guards or doormen) most effective for high-rises.

#### Conclusion

Reviews of the literature have indicated that neither positive nor defensive approaches per se have been demonstrated to be cost-effective measures of reducing crime and delinquency. We should be wary, however, about prematurely rejecting such approaches simply because evaluation has not demonstrated a significant reduction in recidivism rates. Positive measures, in particular, may well be worth continuing on such grounds as the increased likelihood of the recipients of these measures acquiring basic educational skills, and obtaining meaningful employment. Indeed, a shift in perspective might also be required from individual programs with specific and limited short-range goals to concerted long-range programs which aim at a gradual reduction of social and economic disparities. The prevention of crime and delinquency would be regarded as an indirect effect of such programs and would be only one of the factors considered in their evaluation.

CPTED, as practised in the Portland and Hartford projects, is an ambitious approach which would be difficult to justify for Canada on the meagre existing evidence, lesser extent and seriousness of the Canadian urban crime problem, the costs involved, and the possible jurisdictional problems entailed.

Of the approaches discussed the one which seems to be most supported by research and to hold the greatest promise is the situational approach. The value of this approach is that it is not tied to one particular type of prevention strategy and that it allows for strategies of intervention to stem from the detailed analysis of specific crimes or delinquent behaviours in specific set-

tings. It appears to be the most flexible in the consideration of appropriate leverage points to make interventions.

While crime and delinquency prevention approaches can point to few measurable successes and probably will never be the panacea some hoped they would be, they are still early in their development and the basic assumptions behind the prevention movement still appear to be sound. Crime and delinquency prevention is thus likely to be an increasing concern in the future with the major issue being the development of approaches where the justice system and the general public can share responsibility, develop the appropriate competence, and coordinate their efforts.

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## The Victim of Crime

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In addition to direct financial losses, victims of crime often suffer not only from physical injuries, but also from emotional harm which may include long-term feelings of fear, guilt and helplessness. This in turn can adversely affect their quality of life, especially for certain kinds of victims such as the elderly, the poor, victims of rape, and victims of domestic violence. Many victims also have a need for assistance in their dealings with the criminal justice process itself because they are usually ill-informed of their legal rights, and are often subjected to inconveniences such as by having their property held as evidence or by having to serve as witnesses in criminal proceedings.

And perhaps most important of all, crime victims need to feel that justice is being carried out and that the criminal justice agencies are operating with their best interests in mind. For many victims, however, this does not occur. Instead, as recent studies in victimology show, crime victims often end up feeling helpless and frustrated because their needs have been overlooked.

Society's attempt to deal with crime has largely been through its criminal justice system. However, the victim has tended to be the "forgotten person" of the criminal justice system because our police, courts and correctional services focus almost exclusively on the offender. For example, if someone is murdered, almost all the energy, time and financial resources spent on the case go to apprehend, sentence, incarcerate and rehabilitate the offender while the family of the victim receives little attention. A similar situation often exists in the case of less serious crimes such as theft where the offender is either sent to prison (at a current average cost of \$18,000 per year) or is ordered to pay a fine which goes to the state rather than to the victim who suffered the loss. Because of the focus on the criminal, there has been a tendency to think that "justice" has been carried out if an offender has been arrested, convicted, and sentenced. However, as was noted by the Law Reform Commission of Canada in 1974, "Isn't it surprising that the victim generally gets nothing for his loss?"

Over the past decade, however, there has been a rapid expansion in programs, services and research relating to crime victims. These can be broadly conceptualized in terms of three interrelated areas: those programs and services whose major focus is on minimizing the financial impact of victimization; those that attend to the non-financial needs of crime victims; and thirdly, research studies that involve the systematic collection and use of information from surveys of crime victims. The purpose of this paper is to provide a brief overview of these recent victim-related initiatives.

### Financial Aid to Victims

Although not specifically designed for crime victims, programs such as medicare, unemployment insurance, and welfare may serve to minimize the financial impact of crime for certain victims if they otherwise are eligible. In addition, there are four other general ways victims may obtain financial assistance. One of the traditional means available to victims for obtaining financial remuneration for their losses has been by the use of private litigation through civil courts. However, suing offenders is not always possible or practical, because many offenders are not apprehended, and in those cases where they are, bringing a suit can be expensive and be of little use because of the limited assets of many offenders. As a result, this approach has been rarely used by victims.

What appears to be more practical, has been the recent use of civil litigation on behalf of victims to obtain reparations from third parties such as organizations and individuals, on the grounds that these were negligent in providing due protection to victims. Successful examples of third-party litigation in the United States include a case where a woman raped in a hotel sued the hotel on the grounds that the hotel management had failed to provide secure shelter; an assault victim that was attacked in the hallway of her apartment building sued the landlord because he had failed to provide proper security; and a case of a rape victim who sued a public transit authority because it had failed to provide adequate lighting and supervision in the station where the rape had occurred. As was noted in a recent *NOVA Newsletter* (Vol. 2, Issue 2), in addition to the fact that such third parties may be financially able to pay victims for their losses, another advantage is that this practice, should it become prevalent, "may provide strong incentives to businesses, property owners and governmental agencies to take reasonable and necessary crime prevention steps to assure general security to their patrons, tenants, and visitors."

The second traditional avenue open to crime victims for obtaining financial remuneration for their losses is through claims to private insurance. Although precise information is not available on the extent to which this is actually done, a problem with this approach is that many potential victims may be unable to afford such insurance either because they are poor or because they live in high crime areas and may have difficulty obtaining policies at reasonable cost. A way of minimizing these problems has recently been

established in the United States through creation of a federal crime insurance program, which provides for burglary and robbery insurance to persons and businesses which are unable to obtain such insurance from private sources at affordable rates. The popularity of this program would suggest that similar schemes may be attempted in other countries.

The third and fourth ways of minimizing the financial impact of crime on victims are more recent. One is through crime compensation programs where claims to a governmental body which reviews each case and makes the awards. The first such program was established in New Zealand in 1963. As was described in recent articles by Lamborn and Parizeau, government sponsored victim compensation programs have since been established in many countries throughout the world. In Canada, these currently exist under federal-provincial cost-sharing agreements in all provinces and territories except for the provinces of Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia.

The funds for the victim compensation programs in most jurisdictions come from the general revenues of governments so that the financial burden for these programs falls on all taxpayers. However, an innovative exception to this practice is the so-called "fine schemes" such as those of Pennsylvania and Florida. In these states, special legislation authorizes the courts to impose an additional \$10 fine ("crime victim's imposed costs") against persons convicted of certain kinds of criminal offences. These funds then go to the state's general fund, but are specifically earmarked for victim compensation. Thus, the general philosophy of these fine schemes is to shift part of the financial burden of compensating needy crime victims from taxpayers to the offenders themselves.

The fourth kind of program to provide financial aid to crime victims is restitution, where offenders are ordered to repay their victims for at least part of their losses. In Canada, the use of restitution orders as one of the sentencing options has actually been possible since 1954, but at least until recently, was rarely used by the courts. However, the use of restitution appears to be increasing in many jurisdictions, and in Ontario, for example, more than 3,000 offenders are currently making repayment to their victims as part of their conditions of probation. This represents 10% of the probation cases in the province, which compares to its use in only approximately .1% of the cases in Canada in 1969.

#### Victim/Witness Assistance

The second general category of programs and research related to victims are those that deal with the social, emotional, and practical needs of victims and witnesses. These victim/witness assistance (or advocacy) programs and their associated research are quite varied, but can be distinguished on the basis of the kind of crime victims served.

The type of victim service that has probably been the most common in most jurisdictions has been that designed to meet the needs of abused chil-

dren. These generally have been provided through child welfare agencies, but a promising recent development in this area are the multi-agency team management approaches involving police, medical, legal, and child welfare agencies.

Other forms of victim services that have also recently become fairly common in many areas are those provided by rape crisis centers and by transition houses for women victims of family violence. These services would appear to be largely due to the mounting influence of the feminist movement which has stressed that the psychological and practical needs of raped or beaten women were not being met by existing agencies. This recognition of the inadequacy of traditional services for battered women has also recently resulted in other kinds of programs being established, such as those in London, Ontario, where specially trained counsellors assist police officers in responding to calls of domestic violence. As was described by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission in its 1978 report on the problems of battered women, police and court officials themselves have also begun various innovative programs to improve the criminal justice response to these cases. There is evidence to suggest, however, that changes in practice by the police and courts will be more effective if these are implemented in conjunction with an independent victim advocate service whose primary concern is to assist the victims not only to overcome their initial trauma, but also to provide legal counselling to assist the victims in their dealing with the justice process.

Various kinds of services to meet the needs of elderly crime victims have also been established recently in some jurisdictions. Research on crime against the elderly indicates that although the elderly are not victimized more often than other age groups, they tend to be more fearful of crime, that this fear has more negative consequences for their quality of life, and that when they are victimized they are frequently in need of specialized services. In order to minimize these problems, programs have been started (particularly in the United States, through the Criminal Justice and the Elderly Program of the National Council of Senior Citizens) to provide such services as special police-senior citizen crime prevention programs, post-incident counselling, emergency shelter, and aid in improving the security of their residences. Other services include transportation of elderly victims to and from court, and special procedures to ensure a speedy return of stolen property.

Some jurisdictions have also established victim/witness assistance programs that apply to many other kinds of crime victims. Some programs focus on victims of particular types of crimes, such as those from break and enter (e.g., emergency repair of premises), while others are more general in that they provide counselling, information, referral and legal advocacy through a "victim hotline." Also, for those victims asked to act as witnesses, some programs provide improved scheduling and notification of required court appearances, transportation to and from court, child care while in court, special court reception rooms for victims, and regular notices to keep them informed of the progress of the criminal proceedings. While different pro-

grams vary in focus, some, such as the one in New York City, have been established recently to provide comprehensive and integrated services to all victims and witnesses.

Victim/witness assistance programs have been particularly prevalent in the United States where the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) has been carrying out its "crime victim initiative" since 1974. Over the past five years, LEAA has invested about \$50 million to fund projects to provide services to crime victims. A wealth of information is available from these projects, and in most cases, this knowledge has been "packaged" by LEAA (see Recommended Readings) so that other jurisdictions may set up similar or improved programs. To date, the development of victim services in Canada (other than those dealing with the financial needs of victims) seems to have been largely restricted to those related to family violence and rape, although the interest in setting up other programs appears to be growing.

#### Victimization Surveys

The third area of focus has been the systematic collection and use of information from victims. Since 1967 victimization surveys have been conducted in several countries, particularly in the United States where the Bureau of Census has been conducting national as well as city-based surveys since 1972. Although the kinds of information available from such surveys differs depending upon the particular sample of the population surveyed and upon the nature of the questionnaire used, the most common data have been the estimates of victimization rates for crimes such as break and enter, theft, robbery, assault and auto theft. These estimates are more extensive than those available from police statistics because many crimes are never reported to the police. Evidence from the victimization surveys in the United States indicate that approximately 40% of all crimes against persons (e.g., assault) and about 60% of all crimes against property (e.g., theft) are never reported to the police. A similar pattern of findings has been obtained in Canada and in other countries. For example, preliminary data analysis from the Greater Vancouver victimization survey recently carried out for the federal Ministry of the Solicitor General indicated an over-all reporting rate of only 39%. Some crimes are more frequently reported to the police than others; in the Vancouver survey and in another survey by Waller and Okihiro in Toronto, 62% of break and enter victims indicated that the police had been notified whereas the rate of reporting in Vancouver was only 33% in the case of assault.

The fact that both reported and non-reported crime can be estimated from victimization surveys has proved to be particularly useful for evaluating the effectiveness of crime prevention programs because of a paradox that exists when police crime statistics are used for this purpose. Studies have demonstrated that programs designed to prevent crime may also have the effect of increasing official crime rates because of increased detection by police or because of increased reporting by victims (e.g., by making citizens more

aware of crime). As a consequence, official crime statistics may not reveal any reduction in crime and may show an increase, even though the actual level of crime has decreased.

In addition to victimization rates, victimization surveys can also provide several other kinds of data that can be useful for the planning and evaluation of a wide range of criminal justice system policies and programs. This includes data on the factors associated with the risk of being victimized; data on the impact of crime, such as measures of physical injury and financial loss from crime; data on the fear of victimization and its harmful effects; and feedback information on the performance of various sectors of the criminal justice system. Furthermore, rather than a general survey of all victims, an in-depth analysis of a particular crime such as burglary can be achieved by combining data from a crime-specific victimization survey with other data such as offender self-reports and police statistics. Such data can be useful for the planning and evaluation of programs to reduce crime and to minimize the impact and fear of crime. They can also be used for establishing better services to meet the needs of victims and to orient other criminal justice programs.

#### Conclusions

The increasing focus on victims through the kinds of programs and research described in this paper can serve to make the criminal justice system more humane and just by minimizing the cost, trauma, and inconvenience to victims. Furthermore, these initiatives may also encourage victims to cooperate more fully with criminal justice agencies, which may increase the cost-effectiveness of the police and courts. For example, they may result in victims reporting more offences to the police, which may lead to more offenders being apprehended. Recent studies also indicate that victims may also be less likely to refuse to serve as witnesses as a result of these kinds of programs, thus resulting in fewer court delays and cases being dropped. Consequently, despite the current restraint programs of governments, one may expect a further expansion of these types of programs in the future. This may then lead to the emergence of a "victim justice system" rather than one that addresses itself primarily to criminals.

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## Crime and the Community—Some Possible Future Directions

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The preceding articles in this issue have been concerned mainly with past trends and current issues. This article takes a speculative leap into the future and considers what *might* happen in relation to crime and the community in Canada over the next five to ten years. In order to do this, one needs to consider not only projections of past trends, but also new developments which may affect the nature and volume of crime and crime control measures by the criminal justice system and the community. The primary aim of this article is to stimulate thinking about the future and to underscore the need for long range planning in criminal justice. As Altemose points out:

*Whether they recognize it or not, nearly all criminal justice practitioners and scholars are working in terms of the future. Action taken today in the hope and expectation that these actions will make tomorrow better. Unfortunately, this concern for the future has remained mostly unexpressed and unexamined.*

Aside from its consciousness-raising purpose, this paper also tries to provide an 'early warning system' by identifying a number of specific problems and prospects relating to both crime and crime control which may emerge over the next decade.

Before proceeding, a general cautioning note is in order. It is generally assumed that crime and the reaction to it is very much shaped by the social, cultural, economic, demographic, political, technological, and other forces within society at any given time. However, the specific relationship between any of these forces and crime is either poorly understood or at least subject to debate. Given the current state of knowledge regarding causes (or even correlates) of crime, and the difficulties associated with forecasting social

phenomena such as crime, this article should be viewed as a selective overview of primarily "expert opinion" regarding trends and developments in, and the societal reaction to, crime in Canada in the 1980's.

### Societal Trends and Crime

As referred to above, a critical problem in the forecasting of crime rates is the lack of a general model that takes into account the underlying social, economic and other factors which influence the various types of crimes. However, even if such a model could be developed it would still be dependent on the production of reliable forecasts of future values of those variables which predict crime. While the search for a model (or models) should probably be continued and perhaps be intensified, a number of factors have been identified, or are generally assumed as having an important bearing on the incidence and patterns of criminal activity in Western societies. These factors include demographic change, changes in family structure, economic conditions, and changes in opportunity structures.

On the basis of the very limited research undertaken to date, there is little agreement on the actual contribution of the general population increase and the changing population age composition to the nature and amount of crime. For example, in 1967 The U.S. President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice estimated the impact of the age-demographic factors on total volume of crime to be about 40 to 50 per cent for the period 1960-1965. A later study in 1969 by Ferdinand on behalf of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence produced a much lower estimate of 11.6% based on the 1950 to 1965 period. While the actual impact of these demographic factors on crime has not yet been determined, it is generally believed that the number of males in the 16-24 age group, generally considered to be in the "crime prone" years will have an important effect on both the absolute number of crimes and crime rates. For example, in Canada in 1968, the 16-24 year-old age group accounted for more than half of all offenders convicted in adult court for indictable offences, both violent and non-violent, against property. As a result of the post-war baby boom, the number of males in the 16-24 year age group in Canada is peaking in 1981 and is expected to decline thereafter until at least the early 1990's. However, it is interesting to note that since 1975 most reported crime rates have either levelled off or increased only slightly and have therefore not kept pace with the increase in the size of the population in the most crime prone years. This would seem to challenge the notion of the importance of age as a factor influencing the level of crime and would seem to indicate that there were other factors which were operating to check the rapid crime increase experienced over the previous decade. However, it is probably safe to conclude that age does have an impact on crime levels and therefore a decreasing potential offender population after 1981 will bring about real declines in crime in the 1980's if other factors affecting crime remain the same.

It is expected that in the 1980's there will be an increasing proportion of mothers working outside the home, a continued high divorce rate, and a low

birth rate. While the direct impact of these factors is difficult to estimate, it has been suggested by Cohen and Felson that opportunities for certain types of crimes, such as burglary, increase as a result of homes being left unattended during the day because of the increasing number of women working outside the home.

While there is generally assumed to be a relationship between crime and economic conditions, the relationship between the nature and amount of crime and specific factors such as unemployment and income has been the subject of considerable controversy. Grainger has concluded that there is no strong relationship between unemployment and crime at least at the aggregate level of analysis. Looking at studies of the effects of unemployment on individuals, Witte states that

*... it appears that increases in unemployment and the general recession in economic activity usually associated with such increases may not greatly affect the level of crime directly, but may do so indirectly by decreasing the availability of desirable employment opportunities (emphasis added) (p.7).*

In another study, Leveson concluded that it was the *youth unemployment* rate rather than general levels of unemployment which contributed to the soaring increase in the crime level in the United States during the 1960's and early 1970's. Unfortunately it does not appear that this analysis has been replicated in Canada.

What then are economic prospects for Canada within the next five or ten years? According to the 1979 projections of the Economic Council of Canada, the medium term (5 year) prospects for the Canadian economy can be summarized as follows. Depending on the energy pricing policy adopted, Canada can probably look forward to poor performance in real economic growth over the next few years with a return to more acceptable levels by the mid-1980's. The Council's report also forecasts an unemployment rate of between 7.7% to 7.9% until 1982 and then a drop to a range of 5.8% and 6.3% during the period 1982-85. However, until a clear relationship can be established between such economic factors and specific types of criminality there is scant basis for credible forecasts. Furthermore, even if a relationship could be determined and reliable economic forecasts produced (something at which economists have not met with particular success), it is unlikely that criminal justice system agencies would be in a position to effectively control these economic variables and thus crime rates.

### Crime Trends

#### A. Trends in the Incidence of Traditional Crime

##### 1. *Crimes Against the Person*

As described by Scanlon in his article in this issue, during the period 1962 to 1975 the rate of reported violent offences per 100,000 increased by almost threefold. However, in the three year period following 1975, violent offences have declined marginally. According to forecasts made by Hasenpusch, violent offences will either increase only slightly, as in the case of

homicide, or actually show a decrease during the period 1978 to 1984 (the time frame of his forecasts).

##### 2. *Property Crime*

Scanlon also shows that the rate of property crime (for indictable offences) in Canada between 1962 and 1975 more than doubled, and has levelled off since 1975. According to Hasenpusch, if present trends continue, thefts are expected to increase slowly over the next four years while the number of break-ins will level off.

Frauds, and thefts of motor vehicles are expected to decline. However, other factors, particularly those relating to technology as we shall see below, are expected to have an effect on increasing certain forms of traditional crime.

#### B. Trends in the Changing Nature of Crime

##### 1. *New Modes and Targets of Criminality*

While the goals of crime are unlikely to change, the forms that criminality takes, particularly as a result of technological advances, will ensure that opportunities for criminal activities will be increased in some areas and decreased in others. The movement towards a "cashless society" in which cash will be replaced by credit cards and/or funds which will be transferred electronically between banks and stores seems to be accelerating. The reduction (or even virtual elimination) of the use of cash and cheques will certainly change the targets of theft. Credit cards and other methods of identification will be the new targets. Opportunities for computer fraud and theft of personal, business or other information will increase as will the difficulty of detection of such activities and conviction of offenders, partly because of the complexity of such offences and the problems in obtaining "hard" evidence.

With the reduction of opportunities for theft of cash and because cashless thefts require greater expertise than most other types of property offences, some offenders will be diverted to other forms of criminal activity. Therefore, suggest Cohen and Felson, we may see an increase in theft of property, particularly that which is portable, not easily traceable, or is readily convertible. For example, should the price of precious metals remain at high levels, there would be greater temptation to "hit" private dwellings in the more affluent areas. House break-ins may therefore become the target of more criminals, some of whom may not be particularly concerned whether the house is occupied at the time of entry. We might also see during the 1980's increasing use of extortion for purely economic gain, rather than for ideological motives.

Technology, however, will not only tend to eliminate certain forms of criminality but also make some activities more difficult. For example, with regard to break and enter referred to above, there has been accelerated development of target hardening techniques to increase the difficulty or the time required to gain entry without detection into a house or other building.

### 2. Emergence of New Criminal Offences

Given the accelerating rate of social and technological change in society, various authors including Wilkins (1970, 1973), Coates (1972), and Friel (1973), have suggested that new types of crime are likely to emerge or will be required in the coming years. Until recently, pollution was frequently cited as an example but, primarily as a result of the energy crisis, it would appear that use of the criminal law to control this problem has been dampened.

The growth of consumerism over the last decade has spawned a number of developments aimed mainly at the industrial sector in general and large corporations in particular. For example, the Ford Motor Company was recently charged (but was not convicted subsequently) in the Indiana Superior Court with a criminal indictment of reckless homicide as a result of fatalities attributed to the negligent design of the Pinto. This appears to be an example of the continuing blurring of distinctions between civil and criminal remedies to deal with harm suffered by the public. In a recent paper Wilkins (1979) argues that in relation to the assessment of crime we should "restrict our concern to those complaints (about harms and grievances) which we regard as causing *serious impact* upon the victims" (emphasis in the original) irrespective to whether these social harms have been legally defined as crimes.

It is also likely that many of these new crimes will require the complicity of a number of persons and thus crime control efforts will be forced to change in order to deal with a large scale collective "white collar" crime and organized crime. Recent examples include the increasing attention given by the RCMP in Canada and by the FBI in the United States to uncovering sophisticated white collar crime.

### 3. Decriminalization

During the 1960's and early '70's it was generally believed that the decriminalization and depenalization (converting criminal offences into administrative or civil offences) of many "crimes without victims" was imminent. While Canada has decriminalized some sexual offences between consenting adults, legalized certain forms of lottery and removed the offence of vagrancy from the Criminal Code, there is some question about which other victimless offences might be decriminalized. In relation to sexual behaviour, the long-range trend has been towards a more permissive attitude on the part of the public. This could conceivably manifest itself by the liberalization or decriminalization of such offences as prostitution and pornography. The same may be the case in relation to certain forms of drug use particularly in relation to the "soft" drugs. However, given the slowly aging composition of the population and the continuing economic problems, both of which are associated traditionally with social conservatism, it may well be that the movement to decriminalize victimless offences will not gain much momentum for the time being.

### C. Trends in Crime Prevention

Until recently, crime prevention could be put in the same category as Mark Twain's comment about the weather "Everyone talks about it..." Aside from calls from police departments to increase manpower to prevent crime through such strategies as increased patrol activities (a strategy the effectiveness of which has been seriously questioned lately) not much had been attempted to prevent or reduce the incidence of crime specifically. Certainly the vast majority of public resources have continued to be earmarked for programs which react to crime after the fact and which are concerned primarily with the offender (as opposed to the victim).

In the past few years in Canada, however, there has been a growing recognition and acceptance of the need for and implementation of crime prevention programs. One of the important factors which seems to have influenced this emphasis on prevention has been the concern to reduce escalating costs of the various systems, although it is by no means certain that prevention oriented programs are less costly than reactive programs.

Crime prevention to assist in controlling costs while affording the public its desired protection appears to be gaining increasing acceptance among criminal justice system administrators. This stress on crime prevention involves not only the agencies of the justice system such as the police, but also other government agencies such as those which set standards for design of public and private buildings. In addition, there is a growing recognition that the public has a responsibility and an important role to play in crime prevention and a recognition that public agencies such as the police can have only a limited impact on the nature and amount of crime.

What then might be the future of crime prevention during the 1980's in Canada?

First, in some respects we are likely to see "more of the same." At the community level there likely will be more emphasis on defensive crime prevention; reducing opportunities by hardening targets particularly in residential buildings; greater public education, particularly by police forces; and more experimentation on "what works" in crime prevention.

At the provincial and national levels, greater emphasis will likely be placed on the need for a system-wide perspective in crime prevention including much greater collaboration between the public and the private sectors (particularly the private security industry) and among the three levels of government to reduce fragmentation and duplication. Within a given level of government greater efforts will probably be made to coordinate crime prevention efforts across a variety of departments most of which are not specifically in the crime prevention "business." For example, there is likely to be greater collaboration between the traditional criminal justice departments and agencies and others such as those concerned with building standards. These standards will be concerned not only with such security features as locks but also the actual design and placement of residential and commercial build-

ings. In this respect, we are likely to see the enactment of regulations which are specifically designed to reduce opportunities for crime.

Advances in technology will introduce new dimensions in crime prevention. For example, the replacement of the traditional telephone wire by "fibre optics" over the next decade will enable individual houses to be wired for burglar and fire alarms at a fraction of the cost of the same services today. This development should probably reduce the incidence of residential burglary, at least by non-professionals.

#### D. Trends in Relation to the Victim

As Leger (elsewhere in this issue) points out, concern by the criminal justice system about the needs of the crime victim is a fairly recent phenomenon. Many factors appear to have contributed to the growing awareness that the needs of the victim are not being met and this has stimulated the development of a number of programs, services and research related to crime victims. The growth of the consumer movement with its concern for consumer rights and protection has probably been an important influence. The growth of women's rights movements also has focussed attention on crimes such as rape and offences arising out of domestic violence. The elderly will, as a result of their increasing proportion of the population, likely become more vocal in demanding that their needs are met.

Thorvaldson maintains that reparative sentencing (stressing the needs of the victim) will become more prevalent in Canada. Among the changes he sees taking place in future years are the following: sanctions such as compensation, restitution, community service and victim service will be established and imposed by criminal courts as independent sanctions, i.e., as dispositions which are independent of any other sanctions such as probation or fines. Furthermore, Thorvaldson predicts that the victim will not need to apply for compensation or restitution but these along with general damages for pain and suffering will be awarded by the criminal court according to pre-established guidelines.

#### E. Trends in Public Attitudes

In her paper on public attitudes in this issue, Bertrand has documented some of the shifts in public opinion that have occurred over the last three decades, particularly in relation to capital punishment. However, she also points out how little is known about the public's attitudes, both past and present, and factors which influence these attitudes. Consequently, it would be very risky to offer any firm predictions from this very weak base. However, if one was to take the speculative plunge one possible scenario of public attitudes in relation to crime during the 1980's would read as follows:

*During the 1970's Canadians generally became more concerned about crime. This probably reflected to some extent an objective reality in that the crime rates and particularly those of violent crimes were increasing at a virtually unprecedented rate until 1975. It is likely that it was the concern for violent crime which we saw reflected in the calls for harsher punishments by the*

*courts. Since 1975 the rate of violent crime appears to have levelled off and unless there is a new upsurge in violent crime in the 1980's we are unlikely to see much change in public attitudes from what they are today. On the one hand the public will continue to take a "hard line" on predatory crime particularly of a violent nature. On the other hand, there will unlikely be much public opposition to reforms which seek to reduce the use of imprisonment for minor offences particularly given the very high social and financial costs of imprisonment.*

#### Conclusion

The future is always uncertain so it is impossible to accurately forecast the shape of things to come. Readers are therefore left to draw their own conclusions regarding the nature and extent of crime in the future. These forecasts will likely be determined as much by the orientation (e.g., optimist-pessimist) of the forecaster, their interests and biases as by the information used to support the forecast. It is important to recognize that because of the inherently subjective nature of social forecasting (even if the information on which it is based may be objective), planners and policy makers have the opportunity through normative planning to look at alternative futures, determine to what extent these can be controlled and then select the most desirable, or alternatively take action to avoid the undesirable. The future of crime and the criminal justice system, I believe, can be shaped to some extent. This will require not only the determination to pursue desirable objectives but equally important, the pursuit of knowledge of the forces which produce crime, and a better understanding of the societal reaction to it.

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