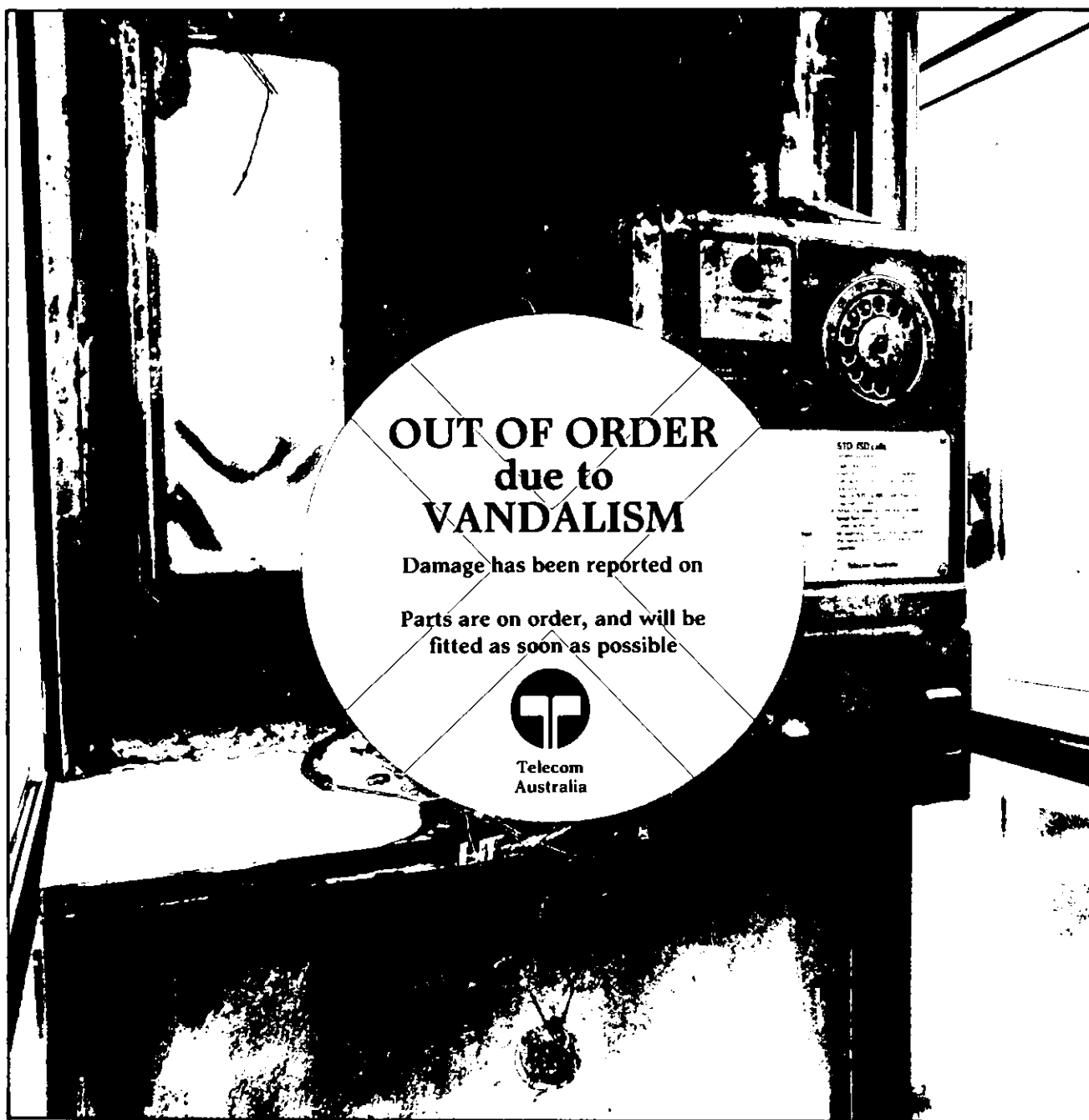


reporter

PREVENTING PROPERTY CRIME

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PREVENTING PROPERTY CRIME

The prevention of property crime requires total community involvement according to Dr Paul Ekblom of the British Home Office Crime Prevention Unit

Speaking at the Institute's November seminar, 'Preventing Property Crime', Dr Ekblom outlined the activities of his Unit and indicated how successful crime prevention initiatives had flowed from wide consultation amongst those affected by particular crimes. He said:

It is vital that people from all levels participate in the planning process, perhaps in some kind of working group. This not only means that the experience and the insights of staff at the workplace are tapped — after all, these are the people who actually know what it's like to face an aggressive passenger, or repair a vandalised phone box — but it also means that they will have some sense of 'ownership' for the project, and their commitment may be the key to successful implementation.

Anybody can generate a whole string of preventive ideas, but not all of them will be of much practical use. Experience shows that even the most simple and attractive ideas can fail on a number of grounds such as cost of equipment or personnel; interference with the main activity of the organisation, such as selling goods or running trains on time; and safety.

Now is the time to work down the initial list of ideas, filtering out those that cannot pass this elementary test of practicality, and adapting others to fit. At this point, the working group should have a set of fairly well developed ideas ready to sell to senior management — and 'sell' it is, because a well-considered and costed case is the only way to overcome disinterest in crime prevention and get the go-ahead.

In the case of shop theft, I had to educate myself not only in the world of the store detective, but also in the world of retail management, to be able to talk persuasively to them in their own terms, ranging from masterbags, gondolas and browsers to 'return on investment', and find ways of making crime prevention mesh with the rest of their policies.

Dr Ekblom discussed his role as a crime prevention researcher by reference to his own work on prevention of theft from shops and robbery on the London Underground. In so doing, he outlined the five steps of the 'preventive process': namely obtaining information on the problem; analysing it; devising preventive strategies; implementing them; and evaluating them.

He indicated, in particular, difficulties with the evaluation stage and said

Assume a hypothetical preventive scheme has been running for some months, teething troubles have been solved the crime appears to be falling in the right places. But has it really worked? Is it worthwhile continuing? And can it be adopted elsewhere?

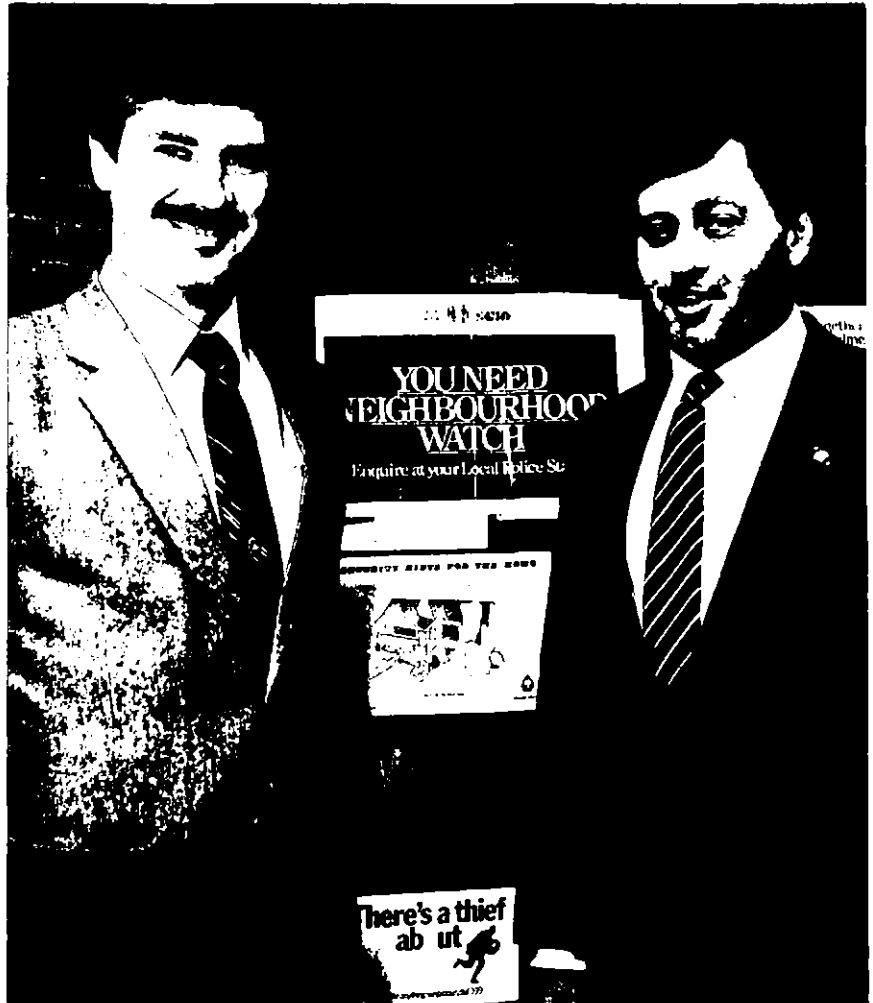
Deceptively simple questions like these have provoked the fiercest arguments among researchers, and the strongest clashes between researchers and practitioners. Evaluation is important in crime prevention, not only to aid the individual local decision-maker in using limited resources to best effect, but as a means of contributing to a collective body of reliable knowledge on what works under what circumstances, and what is a waste of time.

The clashes I referred to can be spectacular. I have seen professional researchers all but lynched by enthusi-

astic crime prevention activists who have just been told that their cherished publicity campaigns, or neighbourhood watch scheme, have had no effect on crime. The researchers may be correct, but practitioners can sometimes be accused of viewing their schemes through rosy-tinted spectacles and succumbing to elementary methodological pitfalls such as tiny numbers or regression to the status quo.

However, in my experience many researchers err too far on the 'nothing works' side, carrying over 'academic' standards of statistical significance testing to a context of practical decision-making where practitioners cannot take the researcher's 'don't know' for an answer and are prepared to tolerate a greater risk of the conclusion being wrong; for them, the worst state is indecision. Airing these issues of uncertainty and standards of inference early in a project is the only satisfactory way for a researcher to work with practitioners.

Later in the seminar, a discussion of neighbourhood watch schemes in Aus-



Sergeant Chris Coster and Sergeant John Hopgood.

tralia provided an example of this difference of opinion between researchers and practitioners. Sergeant Chris Coster of the Victoria Police Neighbourhood Watch Unit commented vigorously on the Institute's evaluation of that program, presented to the seminar by Dr Paul Wilson and Dr Satyanshu Mukherjee and published by the Institute as Number 9 in the *Trends and Issues* series. Further discussion on this topic involved a number of neighbourhood watch volunteers who were present at the seminar.

Two other police officers, Sergeant Jim King from Western Australia, and Sergeant John Hopgood from Queensland, spoke at the seminar about their considerable experience in the crime prevention field. Sergeant King described the move in his state to community policing which, he said, should involve all police being aware of, and able to offer, crime prevention advice. He indicated that the Western Australian Police Crime Prevention Bureau was now offering advice to persons who had reported burglaries to the police, and finding it most readily accepted.

Sergeant Hopgood presented a paper, entitled, 'The Crime Prevention Industry', which focussed on the private security industry and the (crime preven-

tion) services and devices that they provided to the community. He argued strongly for legislation to control the activities of private security operators, some of whose questionable practices he described.

Attempts to prevent damage to public property were addressed by Mr Bill Jamieson, Chief Security Officer of Telecom Australia, and Mr John Allsopp, Director of Properties in the New South Wales Department of Education. Each indicated the considerable extent of damage to public property through vandalism and arson. Each also extolled the virtue of community co-operation in preventing further such offences. Thus, Mr Jamieson spoke of the 'adopt a phone box' campaign and Mr Allsopp spoke of evening patrols of schools by groups of parents.

Despite such initiatives, each of these speakers also emphasised that conventional security approaches were still used. Thus, Mr Jamieson spoke of staking out particularly trouble-prone phone boxes, and Mr Allsopp indicated the increased number of schools that were being provided with electronic surveillance equipment.

Preventing theft in the workplace was a topic addressed by Mr Ray Brown, a security consultant from Melbourne,

and Mr John Rice, National Security Manager for the 'Target' retail chain. Mr Brown indicated that deviance in the workplace was common where employee discontent was high, and suggested that if employees believed they were appreciated and well looked after, their commitment to their employer and subsequent self-policing of deviant behaviour could follow. Mr Rice outlined the important steps that needed to be taken to reduce levels of employee dishonesty.

The role of the insurance industry in crime prevention was addressed by Mr Alan Porter from the Insurance Council of Australia and a discussion of a particular campaign was described by Mr Laurie Monaghan of NRMA Insurance. That campaign — 'Make Life Hell for Car Thieves' — included the joint Institute-NRMA seminar on the topic which was described in the June *Reporter*. Mr Monaghan described the ongoing research to evaluate the impact of the campaign but stated that, at a very basic level, there had been a substantial decline in the number of car thefts reported to police since the campaign commenced.

The full proceedings of the seminar are currently being edited for publication and should be available in May.



Dr Paul Ekblom at the Institute's seminar 'Preventing Property Crime'.

MORE PRISONS?

At a time when a majority of Australian prisons are seriously overcrowded, Victoria stands apart from the other States in maintaining its significantly lower imprisonment rate. Victoria's approach to the problem of prison overcrowding was the focus of a seminar held at the Institute on 29 and 30 September 1987.

In introducing this approach, the Attorney-General for Victoria, Mr Jim Kennan, indicated that since Victoria has legislated that imprisonment is to be a sanction of last resort, imprisonment is restricted to people who are obviously dangerous or whose crimes are such that one would reasonably expect them to be separated from the rest of the community. As a result, Victoria has a hard core of difficult long term dangerous prisoners.

The Attorney-General pointed out that the total prison population is basically dictated by the number of beds in the system. Since each prisoner costs about \$33,000 per year, sentencers should take note of this when they send someone to prison. Taxpayers are reluctant to pay for building more or better prisons, so there needs to be a filtering process to ensure that those in prison are those from whom the community needs protection. Diversionary programs are therefore very important.

Victoria has implemented several changes aimed at building up community confidence in the criminal justice system. These include the removal of the Office of Corrections' administrative discretion to substantially erode sentences; the scrapping of old rules calculating sentences; and the tightening of the pre-release scheme. According to Mr Kennan, a sentence should be publicly understood to be a certain period subject to well-defined remissions or clearly established criteria.

But Mr Kennan felt more could be done. He made a strong plea for more research in a number of areas including community attitudes and expectations to the criminal justice system; real crime rates; the effect of sentencing and need for training and education programs in prisons. He thought judicial training should be pursued and suggested that there should be informed discussions between jurisdictions in Australia. These calls, particularly the need for research, were echoed by many of the other speakers.

Mr Maurice Gerkens, a stipendiary magistrate, gave a sentencer's perspective to the Victorian approach. In his view, nothing could be more destructive of the object of a criminal justice system than to have an offender's liberty de-

pend upon the resource allocation whims of government. The state of prison overcrowding is not a consideration in determining whether imprisonment should be imposed. Rather, sentencers operated within the legal framework and left it to the executive to implement.

He spoke of the sentencer's disillusionment with imprisonment, which is seen as serving little purpose other than to reinforce the criminal inclinations and improve the expertise of the sentenced. Prison conditions overall are so unsatisfactory that sentencers have little difficulty in viewing imprisonment as a punishment of last resort.

Mr Gerkens believed that the key to solving overcrowding lies within Parliament. A comprehensive review of legislative penalties is needed as well as alternative schemes to imprisonment for two classes of offenders: fine defaulters and prostitutes.

The practical aspects of the Victorian Government's strategy on controlling prison crowding were considered by Mr Bill Kidston, Director-General, Office of Corrections, Victoria. He gave a detailed account of Victoria's strategy plan and concluded that it had been successful to date, with the most exciting aspect being the establishment of a highly professional and acceptable community-based corrections program. He acknowledged that Victoria had traditionally had a low imprisonment rate, partly due to the reluctance of the courts to subject people to the appalling conditions which have existed in the State's prisons, but believed that the community-based corrections programs have caused the rate of imprisonment to decline in Victoria at a time when the national rate has substantially increased.

He pointed out that the characteristics of the prisoner population have changed, with a gradual accumulation of prisoners with longer sentences, more serious offences and previous prisons experience. Prison management difficulties have further been compounded by an influx of intellectually disabled and psychiatrically ill prisoners caused by the closure of security institutions, such as psychiatric wards in the major hospitals.

Mr Kidston was optimistic for the

future. He believed prison crowding was not an insurmountable problem. It would need to be tackled through an integrated approach across the criminal justice system, requiring a determination by the legislators, the courts and correctional authorities to deliver programs which maintain a high degree of community acceptance.

Commentaries on Victoria's approach

In commenting on the Victorian approach, Mr Alec Lobban, Comptroller-General of Prisons, Queensland, expressed concern that the present standstill policy of prison intake/construction in Victoria may receive growing public, police and judicial criticism which could generate a backlash. Queensland, on the other hand, is constructing three new prisons resulting in an overall gain of cell space. In addition, Queensland has a range of community corrections available and is improving the process of parole. There is regular communication between community corrections, prisons, police and courts to effect changes in policy, practices and attitudes. He warned that reducing prison accommodation could be provocative to the other criminal justice agencies and susceptible to shifts in power between governments and administrations. He suggested that moderate prison growth is not only tolerated but expected by the community.

Mr David Hunt, Commissioner of Police, South Australia, presented a police perspective on prison populations. He spoke of the South Australia experience where prison overcrowding has led to circumstances coming dangerously close to violating basic human rights — such as use of the City Watch House as a police prison in January 1987. He saw part of the problem to be the increased number of prisoners on remand, and he felt that less costly alternatives to imprisonment could be used for short-term sentences which would greatly alleviate prison overcrowding. But he cautioned that extensive use of such alternatives may not be seen by the community as providing adequate retribution. Mr Hunt spoke also of the frustration of both the police and community with the criminal justice system when inadequate penalties are administered or sentences undermined by early release, etc.

Legislative reform and other changes to traditional criminal justice practices are only likely to succeed if they have widespread acceptance by the community. So whilst it is acknowledged

that many reforms will be necessary to deal with the issue of growing prison populations, care must be taken to ensure that the public are fully conversant with the need for, and benefits to be derived from, such changes.

A senior psychologist from the Victoria Police, Mr Simon Brown-Greaves, spoke of overcrowding as being a 'state of mind'. He suggested it is individuals' perceptions of their conditions that are important. A prison's level of crowding may exceed an individual prisoner's tolerance without affecting the institution's ability to meet general health care, education, safety and programming needs. However, a prisoner who believes he is 'crowded' may show negative physical or emotional responses. Some factors which may alleviate an affected person's perception of their environment are availability of programs and health services, opportunity for gainful employment, reasonable standards of accommodation and reduction of inmate turnover.

Mr George Zdenkowski, Commissioner, Australian Law Reform Commission, strongly supported a reductionist policy throughout Australia (i.e. a moratorium on the building of more prison space and the adoption of policies which will reduce overcrowding). He believed that the policies of co-operation between the various agencies in the Victorian criminal justice system, of providing non-custodial sentencing options and of communicating these policies to the community, have been successful. Although he agreed that imprisonment should be a sanction of last resort he felt that courts should not take prison space into account when sentencing.

Mr Clarrie Briese, Chief Magistrate, New South Wales, suggested that one explanation for the difference in imprisonment rates between Victoria and New South Wales could be differences in the crime rates, there being significantly more serious crime being detected and people being convicted in New South Wales than in Victoria. He indicated the need for more imaginative and resourceful alternative schemes to imprisonment to be devised to reduce prison numbers in New South Wales. He also suggested that remands and bail need to be looked at and that fine defaulters should not be given the option of imprisonment.

The reality of managing crowded prisons

Mr Tom Abbott, Director of Prisons, Office of Corrections, Victoria, warned that it was a mistake to build extra prisons on a large scale stating that 'the



The Attorney-General of Victoria, Mr Jim Kennan, Q.C., M.P.

only sure thing is that as beds become available, they will be filled'. His experience in the United Kingdom had shown that in times of overcrowding, reported infringements in prisons were reduced and both prisoner and staff morale was good. This was attributed to the fact that when prisoners were behind doors the opportunity for prisoner mischief was reduced and that partial lockup was easier for staff to handle. To raise staff morale in Britain, prison officers' salaries have been increased and work hours reduced, more opportunities have been created for advancement within the system and public education has raised staff esteem.

Electronic technology as an alternative to prison

The seminar was treated to a display of electronic home detention systems. A passive system, 'On Guard', was demonstrated by Mr Bob Pearce, Sales and Marketing Manager of Telsol Pty Ltd in Victoria, and 'Vitalcall', an active system was demonstrated by Mr Paul Hanley, Managing Director of Vital Communications Pty Ltd, Sydney. The seminar expressed concern that offen-

ders might tamper with the equipment or otherwise avoid the detention. Both systems had basic deterrents to tampering built in but no one could design a completely tamper-proof system.

Mr Richard Fox, Reader in Law, Monash University, Victoria, pointed out that it was not too serious if the offender decamped during the home detention anyway as it was a measure to be used only for non-serious offenders.

He believed that the legislative framework for home detention already exists in Australia but as yet no one has considered what applications are reasonable and equitable.

Other contributions were made at the seminar by Mr David Grant, Deputy Chairman, Corrective Services Commission, New South Wales; Mr Barry Apsey, Director of Operations, Department of Correctional Services, South Australia; Mr Bill Harvey, Acting Director of Corrective Services, Tasmania; Mr Doug Owston, Director, Probation and Parole, Northern Territory; Mr Peter Chivers, Director, ACT Corrective Services, Welfare Services Branch; and Mr Keith Stewart, Chief Executive Officer, Penal Institutions, Department of Justice, New Zealand.

TOMORROW'S CRIME TRENDS

At a seminar held in October in Hobart, sixteen speakers tried to set out the paths that future criminological workers may have to follow.

In his overview of the discussions, Professor John Western of the University of Queensland developed an argument premised on the notion that the Australian Institute of Criminology could be located within Louis Althusser's ideological state apparatus.

He suggested that one of the functions within the ideological state apparatus was that of agenda setting.

'There are two facets of agenda setting: one is to determine what in fact gets discussed and the other has to do with what does not get discussed.'

Professor Western asserted that the Institute was acting as an agenda setter when it nominated as a theme for the conference 'Crime in the Twenty First Century'.

He went on to ask the question: if the theme of the conference is crime in the twenty first century, how was this constructed? He suggested that the papers implied that crime in the twenty first century was likely to be seen still very much as an individual act. There would be no change apparently in the nature of crime.

Issues such as corruption in government agencies or private companies did not get on the agenda. Corporate crime and computer crime also did not appear on the agenda. A comparative focussing on Canada and New Zealand also was absent.

Professor Western argued that there were several categories of papers at the seminar. First there were two major papers which attempted to forecast the future: Professor Chappell in introducing the conference did so, as did Dr Mukherjee, in attempting to identify the size and scope of crime in the future.

The 'producers of crime' was the second major category. The paper by Dr Mike Presdee on 'Youth Policies and the Creation of Crime' was one such paper; the paper by Dr Pat Carlen on trends in women's crimes was the second.

The third category of papers concentrated on the 'controllers of crime'. Mr Bill Cherrey talked about private policing and Mr David Bradley about future policing. 'Corrections in the future' was the fourth theme. Mr David Biles painted three contrasting scenarios and Mr Ian Hill from Western Australia and Mr Peter Hackett from New South Wales talked about prison strategies in their states.

The recipients of crime were discussed by Ms Jenny David and Dr Stephen Mugford, and Dr Paul Wilson described elements of the content of crime.

Finally, Professor Western concluded, Dr Ben Selinger identified methods of crime assessment in the future.

Opening the seminar, the Commonwealth Minister for Justice, Senator Michael Tate said that breaking down barriers between the various bodies involved in law enforcement would mean that criminals previously thought to be 'untouchable' were now coming before the courts. He predicted that the future would see further developments like the confiscating of assets of convicted criminals.

In a more general discussion of Australia's ability to deal with crime problems in the twenty first century, the Director of the Institute, Professor Duncan Chappell, said that it would depend largely on the country's political and cultural stability. Other important factors would be population growth and density, moral and religious values and technological development.

Professor Chappell said historical studies had revealed that strife-torn nations were normally developing nations, not nations that were the most or least developed.

He predicted that in the next century,

crime would continue to be committed primarily by young people, mostly males, in urban areas. The numbers of such young people, judged from population projections, would swell enormously.

'Population pressures alone do not create crime, but the strains they place upon basic resources like employment opportunities, energy, health care, housing and transportation contribute significantly to the conditions under which crime flourishes,' Professor Chappell said.

Mr David Bradley, dean of studies at the NSW Police Academy, told the seminar that one of the greatest threats to the future of high quality police forces in Australia was the antagonism between rank and file officers and senior police at administration levels.

He said that the recent spate of corruption allegations, trials, and convictions of police around Australia presented police forces with a major opportunity to improve themselves.

The future for women in crime and imprisonment seemed fairly bleak according to Dr Pat Carlen of the Centre for Criminology, University of Keele in Staffordshire, UK.

In both the United States and the United Kingdom at the present time, those women who received custodial sentences were disproportionately black, and from working class backgrounds, said Dr Carlen.



Participants in the seminar were given an opportunity to see at first hand the conditions at Risdon Prison.



Dr Pat Carlen with a prison officer at Risdon Prison during the seminar in Hobart.

This in itself suggested that the crude 'women's liberation leads to crime' was misleading. Dr Carlen refuted that thesis and pointed out that there is no empirical evidence for such a claim. Dr Carlen went on to say that another myth persisted that women criminals were either mad, menopausal or masculine. In fact, women who commit crime do so for one or more of three main reasons: to bolster family finances; to gain an excitement and status greater than that offered them by the traditional roles of doll, witch, wife and mother; and to remedy intolerable domestic situations.

Dr Carlen said that, even though the majority of British women prisoners have committed only minor and non-violent crimes, they have all had to face a sexist judicial system which assumes, on the one hand, that all women criminals are unnatural monsters and on the other, that women's prisons are not really prisons at all but, instead, hybrids between mental hospitals and some rather saucy St Trinians. In reality, and as a growing body of research indicates, British women who go to prison are not sentenced according to the seriousness of their crimes, but primarily according to the judge's assessment of them as daughters, wives and mothers.

If they are young women whom their parents believe to be beyond control, if they are homeless, if they are single, divorced, or separated from their husbands, or if their children are in residential care, then they are more likely to go to prison than are women who, though their crimes might be more serious, are living more conventional family lives.

However one interprets the often conflicting statistics and analyses, one overriding claim can be made that over the last decade women in the criminal justice system have become much more visible as crime victims, offenders and as prisoners. How, then, can we now expect the 'women and crime' scene to change in the next decade?

Retrospective trends that are likely include:

1. More women are likely to be imprisoned.
2. At the same time — and also related to the increasing economic marginalisation of women — there is likely to be an increase in the number of female drug users, a proportion of whom will become offenders as a result of their addiction.
3. Increased links between drug addiction and prostitution could also result in increasing regulation of prostitution as a consequence of growing fears about the sexual transmission of AIDS.

Finally, and to conclude these depressing predictions, Dr Carlen pointed out that prisons feed of their own product. At present, British and American women come out of penal custody into a world that has even less to offer them than the prison itself. Depressed and alone, some then sink into a despair in which they become careless of what happens to them. They re-offend and the cycle repeats itself again and again. People who advocate stiffer sentences should remember, therefore, that too

often today's so called 'new prison admission' will be yesterday's so called 'released' prisoner.

Dr Carlen outlined some future possible progressive trends that would reduce women's lawbreaking, mainly by more material support to high risk groups such as drug and alcohol abusers, lone mothers below the poverty line, women with histories of mental illness, and ex-prisoners.

Dr Carlen concluded: 'I will summarise my arguments about women and crime in the future by stating quite simply that the next decade is likely to see increased numbers of women going through the criminal justice and penal systems both in the United States and the United Kingdom. These increases will result both from an actual increase in the number of women breaking the law and from the development of an even more punitive response towards them.

'We now know enough about the class, gender and racial inequities operative in both society and criminal justice system to be able to cite progressive social and judicial interventions that are possible and which might reduce lawbreaking. In relation to gender in particular, I have listed some progressive interventions that I think are possible, and if made, might reduce the total amount of women's lawbreaking. I have NOT argued for a criminal justice system that is gender-neutral. Rather, I have argued that sentencing personnel need to be made aware both of the inappropriateness of judging women on the basis of outmoded conceptions of femininity and 'womanhood' and of the possible injustices likely to ensue from a judicial refusal to recognise that the rational actions of women are often rooted in life-chances and experiences that are very different from those of men.

'In sum, however, I am pessimistic. With a growing social divide between rich and poor in the US and the UK, and with the major burdens of poverty being borne by mothers bringing up children without adequate economic support, the outlook for poor women — whether criminal or not — is bleak. Women's prisons, by contrast, will probably have a great future: in the next decade at least, they are likely to continue to play their part in transforming today's wayward girls into tomorrow's recidivist women criminals'.

Intense interest has been shown in this seminar and a publication will be available in mid 1988.

ASIAN AND PACIFIC CORRECTIONAL ADMINISTRATORS MEET

The Institute's first Director, Mr William Clifford, was instrumental in establishing annual conferences of correctional administrators from the Asian and Pacific Region. The Institute continues to actively support these annual conferences, past Director Professor Richard Harding currently acting as Executive Director for them. Professor Harding and Assistant Director (Information and Training) Mr Dennis Challenger attended the eighth such conference held in Kuala Lumpur in September 1987.

Each conference determines agenda items for discussion at the next conference. Delegates prepare written papers for each agenda item and these are circulated at the conference. During the conference itself, delegates speak to each of the agenda items outlining the practices and problems they face in their own country.

The Malaysian conference attracted delegates from seventeen countries, whose collective verbal commentaries were summarised by Professor Harding and Mr Challenger acting as rapporteurs. These summaries were ratified by the conference as a whole on its last day and have subsequently been published by the Institute as the *Record of the Eighth Asian and Pacific Conference of Correctional Administrators*. That document is fascinating, for both the similarities and differences that it reflects by way of correctional practices within the Asian and Pacific region.

Prison overcrowding

The first agenda item of the Malaysian conference was 'Counter Measures to Overcrowding in Prisons'. It emerged that overcrowding was commonplace, the Solomon Islands and Thailand indicating a prison capacity rate of 150 per cent. While general causes of overcrowding were identified by participating countries, some identified particular problems. For instance, Hong Kong and Brunei Darussalam reported continuing pressure on their systems from illegal immigration into their countries.

Counter measures to overcrowding were seen to involve all parts of the criminal justice system and the body politic. Indeed, the only counter measure that was seen to be instantly available to the prison system itself was more flexible use of classification and transfer of prisoners.

Work release

Delegates to the conference agreed that work release was an essential part of a prison system's package of programs. However, the difficulty of expanding

work release programs, given a fixed number of possible jobs, was a common problem. Japan and Indonesia pointed out that prisoners' work should be seen as allowing for them to improve their skills and assist their resocialisation, rather than simply emphasising the notion of profit. Particular regional variations were illustrated by, for instance, the Cook Islands' practice of hiring out prisoners to appropriate persons for work on Saturday and public holidays.

Prison industry

'Effective Links Between Prison Industry and the Private Sector' comprised the third agenda item. Discussion revealed that development of prison industries and the growth of links with the private sector were in the course of rapid evolution in countries of the region. Singapore and Malaysia were heavily involved in joint ventures with private manufacturers. At a lesser level, some countries, for example Korea and Hong Kong, were involved in manufacturing products on contract for the private sector. Other countries, for instance India and Sri

Lanka, reported that to all intents and purposes, there were no such links in their countries.

The problems of poor prisoner work skills and capital investment were discussed but all delegates agreed that the primary objective of prison industry was to contribute to the overarching penological objective of correcting, rehabilitating and facilitating the reintegration of prisoners.

External monitoring

Discussion on the fourth agenda item, 'Impact on Prison Management of External Monitoring', indicated considerable differences throughout the region. Japan and Korea indicated no special external monitoring bodies had been established in their countries, while an Australian delegate instanced a long list of agencies and bodies that all exercise some oversight and made some demands of correctional administrators. A number of delegates indicated that they had introduced prison visitors to provide external oversight of their prisons and the extent of parliamentary, governmental and judicial oversight of prisons was shown to be considerable.

External monitoring effected by the media was subject to some discussion and was seen to be sufficiently important to be placed on the agenda for discussion at the 1988 conference.

Prison officer training

'Regional Co-operation for the Training of Prison Officers' was the last item to be



In Malaysia's Kajang Prison, Mr Dennis Challenger inspects a squad of drug offenders during a rehabilitative fitness program.

discussed. It emerged that there was already a substantial amount of regional co-operation and mutual assistance in the training of prison officers. Apart from courses run at UNAFEI in Japan, Sri Lanka had sent officers to Hong Kong, Brunei Darussalam to Malaysia, and the Cook Islands to New Zealand.

Separate training needs were identified for base-grade, middle-ranking and senior officers, and special training for particular matters of mutual concern, such as hostage-taking, were seen to be important. An Australian delegate, speaking on behalf of all Australian correctional administrators, indicated that he was sure places could be made available to personnel throughout the region at training courses run at the various prison training colleges and suggested the Institute might co-ordinate that operation.

Field Visits

During the course of the conference, delegates visited five correctional institutions in Malaysia. Mr Challenger reports that the industry and level of discipline in those particular prisons was most impressive. He further comments that the notion of standard minimum rules for prisons in the region is shown to be inappropriate by simply comparing facilities and activities in Malaysian and Australian prisons. Indeed, the conference formally agreed that no further attempt should be made at this time to develop regional standard minimum rules.

1988 Conference

So far, these annual conferences have always been held in a different location. This is true of the Ninth Conference

which will be held in Sydney in September 1988. The agenda items to be discussed then are:

1. Trends and Patterns of Penal Population: Size, Composition, Types and Characteristics.
2. Inter-Agency Co-Operation Within the Criminal Justice System, namely between corrections and other agencies.
3. Safeguarding Human Rights Within the Penal System.
4. The Media: Its Power and Influence Upon Corrections Systems.

Additionally, Australia will make a formal presentation on the topic 'Home Detention and Electronic Monitoring' as it, of all countries in the Region, is furthest advanced with respect to use of these correctional innovations.



Dr Francois Debaecker commenced work at the Institute as a Computer Systems Officer on 3 November 1987. His position involves collection and processing of crime and justice data, and maintaining existing and future databases. He will also assist the research area in the compilation, access and use of databases to optimum level.

Francois trained in chemical engineering and holds a Doctorate in Chemistry from the University of Paris. Much of his computer expertise stems from time spent in engineering training and completing his doctorate. Then, he became fully acquainted with computers in controlling experiments and processing results and scientific calculations.

Before joining the Institute Francois worked in the Chemistry Department at the Australian Defence Forces Academy where he had responsibility for the departmental computer network and provided advice on all aspects of software. He has lectured in Technical French at the Centre for Continuing Education at the Australian National University, and the Patents, Trademarks and Design office. Additionally, he tutored in chemistry, applied maths and computer science in France. Francois came to Canberra in 1977 as the Scientific Attache at the French Embassy.



On 21 September 1987 the Institute welcomed Ms Julia Vernon as Programs Officer, Information and Training Division. The bulk of Julia's duties will be to develop and design seminars and workshops in the criminology field, and edit reports and proceedings from those events. She will also present relevant workshop material to community groups.

Julia is well equipped for such a position. She has a BA(Psychology) and a LLB from the Australian National University and has had wide-ranging work experience.

Prior to commencing at the Institute Julia worked as a Research Assistant in the National Centre for Development Studies at the Australian National University. Other university jobs include researcher in the Economics Department and Research Assistant to Sir John Crawford.

Casual research jobs add a further dimension. They include research and survey work for various government authorities. As well, Julia's previous work encompasses teaching swimming (including teaching handicapped children); supervising the Royal Lifesaving Society's learn to swim program; co-ordinating a child care centre, and teaching music.

SOME QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS

At a recent car theft symposium organised by the Australian Automobile Association, David Biles, the Deputy Director of the Australian Institute of Criminology, asked some pertinent questions about this serious problem. An edited version of his paper follows:

Without wishing to sound callous or uncaring, I would like to open my remarks by saying that, from a criminologist's point of view, motor vehicle theft is a fascinating crime. It is one of the best crimes in the book. We have far more accurate data on car theft than we have for any other crime, and theoretically — I stress theoretically — it is an offence that we should be able to control much more effectively than we have to date.

Motor vehicle theft is also a cause of great public concern as well as enormous costs. All of the ingredients necessary for improved crime prevention seem to be present but, for whatever reason, the situation continues to get worse rather than better. Why this is so is the fundamental question that needs answering.

Car theft is fascinating to criminologists because it is just about the only offence for which we have data at an acceptable level of accuracy. Statistics of reported crime are notoriously unreliable because of the vast number of offences that are not reported to the police. The 'dark figure' of unreported crime casts doubt on the value of any published figures. We know from victim surveys, for example, that only about 68 per cent of burglaries or house breakings are reported to the police and, for rape, only about ten or fifteen per cent of cases are reported.

Any change in the inclination of victims to report is obviously going to make an enormous difference to the trends, but with car theft the reportability rate is around 96.5 per cent and therefore subject to very little distortion. Any change in the rates of reported car theft must therefore be accepted as reflecting the reality.

It is interesting to speculate about why citizens seldom hesitate to call the police if their cars are stolen and why they are much less likely to do so if they are assaulted, their houses are burgled or their property is stolen. I suspect that the explanation is quite pragmatic: the police may not be able to catch the offenders, but there is a reasonably good

chance they may be able to help the victim get his/her car back. Victims of car theft are of course angry and frustrated, and many would like the thieves to be severely punished, but even more urgently they simply want to get the car back and get on with their lives.

Some years ago I conducted a survey of the victims of car theft in Melbourne which produced some interesting results which I believe would still be valid today. In response to the question, 'What would you like to see done to the person who stole your car?', the victims fall into two groups of equal size.

One group gave the sort of responses that I had expected. They wanted severe penalties, long sentences and even corporal punishment: 'throw the key away' and 'cut off their hands' were typical demands of this group.

The second group was much more moderate. What they wanted was for the offenders to reimburse them for the damage to the vehicle, if any, and for the inconvenience caused by the theft. They seemed to be demanding a civil law remedy to a criminal law offence. I really believe that there is scope for this approach to be explored.

But what should be done with car thieves is really an academic question (in the worst sense of the word) as only a small minority are caught. The best information that I have suggests that the clear-up rate for motor vehicle theft in New South Wales is only around seven per cent with slightly higher rates being obtained in other jurisdictions. As the vast majority of car thieves are not caught, it would be naive to expect any significant impact on the problem from changing the way that we deal with the small minority who come to official notice.

What should be done with those car thieves who are caught is nevertheless an important question, but even more important is: why do our car theft rates continue to rise?

The evidence is really quite disturbing. Over the twelve year period from 1973-74 to 1984-85 the numbers of

motor vehicles reported stolen throughout Australia more than doubled from 50,943 to 103,164 and the rate per 100,000 of the population increased from 374.8 to 663.2. This happened during the period when steering locks, the innovation that was held in the 1960s as the answer to the problem, have become standard features of all our vehicles.

I understand that the introduction of compulsory steering locks in West Germany resulted in a significant drop in car theft in that country, but here it seems to have had the opposite effect.

One cannot but wonder whether the Australian effort has been sufficiently serious, or do we want to suggest that our car thieves are more skilled and more determined than the car thieves of West Germany. I am not an engineer and therefore I do not know the answer, but I simply raise the question of whether it might be timely for Australian design standards in relation to steering locks to be revised.

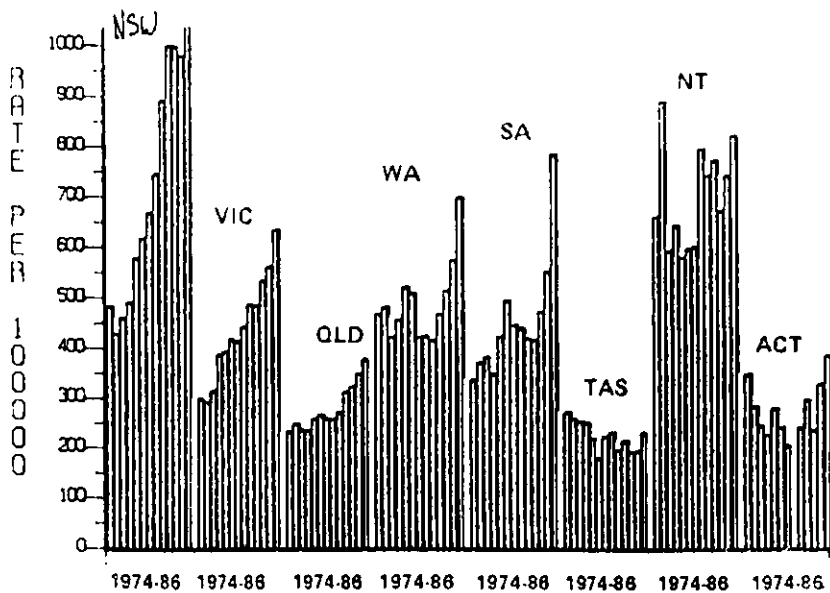
Another question that causes me great concern is: why is it that there are enormous differences between Australian states and territories in motor vehicle theft rates?

Even when calculated on the basis of the number of motor vehicles registered in each jurisdiction, these differences are just as marked, so we cannot explain the rates by suggesting that there are more cars to steal in some parts of Australia. How can we possibly explain, for example, that over the past two or three years the vehicle theft rate in New South Wales has been consistently over 1,000 per 100,000 of the population while in Victoria it has been around 500 to 600 and, in Queensland, it has always been around 400? In Tasmania the rate has remained under 200 for many years and, even more remarkably, over the past decade or more it has been decreasing.

I am aware of very recent newspaper reports which claim that, for the first nine months of this year there has been a reduction of about twelve per cent in car thefts in New South Wales compared with the equivalent period in 1986. If this trend is sustained it is to be warmly welcomed, but the overall New South Wales car theft rate is still very significantly higher than the rates of the other Australian States.

In most other areas of crime it is hard

Figure 1 Reported motor vehicle thefts by Australian jurisdictions 1974-86



to find significant differences between Australian jurisdictions (apart from the Northern Territory which has very high rates for nearly all offences), but, in the case of car theft, where we have the most accurate data, the differences are mind blowing. Again, I do not have the answers and I don't think anyone has, but I raise the question of whether or not the available evidence makes a prima facie case for the proposition that there is an element of sophisticated criminal organisation in car theft in some parts of Australia.

To take this speculation a little further, it could be hypothesised that there is a normal level of car theft, perhaps illustrated by the Tasmanian rate, which is solely the result of individuals, largely male adolescents, taking cars for joy-riding or other private purposes, including criminal purposes, in a totally random or disorganised manner. Even this level is certainly not to be tolerated and rigorous policing is needed to control it together with continuous campaigns exhorting owners to exercise caution, to lock their cars, etc.

The situation is obviously quite different where car theft rates are five or six times as high. Perhaps the normal or underlying individual or disorganised rate might be a little higher in large urban centres like metropolitan Sydney, but Australian kids are not so very different in different parts of the country, and these abnormally higher car theft rates must, in my view, reflect some element of an organised car theft industry. There must be in these situations a network, or more likely a large number of networks, of mechanics and spray painters who change engine and other num-

bers in the classic 'chop shops' for stolen cars.

To the extent that this is a realistic scenario it would seem reasonable to suggest that where car theft rates are abnormally high a quite different dimension of law enforcement is called for. In these situations — under-cover policing would seem to be needed in order to break into the organised networks. Also, it would seem necessary to assign a reasonably large number of experienced detectives to the task of locating the workshops and garages that are used for these purposes.

I make no claim to knowing exactly how the problem should be tackled, but I have no doubt that car theft is getting worse in this country and that more creative responses are necessary at this time. I am also convinced that there are no simple solutions, but progress, if it is to be made, will be found within the combination of the three Es: engineering, enforcement and education.

Time will not allow me to explore the numerous aspects of engineering, enforcement and education that might assist in overcoming the car theft problem, but I would like to add a fourth 'E', this one for evaluation. I believe that it is absolutely imperative that more sustained efforts are made to scientifically and rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of efforts that are now being made. In other words, much more intensive research is needed into all aspects of the car theft problem in this country. I have already raised some of the questions that I believe need to be answered, but there are many, many more. Let me pose just a few.

- What would be the impact of more demanding vehicle registration and number checking procedures?
- Would a national data base of all registered vehicles be of assistance?
- Why are some makes and models of cars more prone to theft than others? For example, in my innocence, I always believed that a Telstar and Mazda 626 were virtually the same car, so why is the Telstar about four times more likely to be stolen?
- Can public education campaigns really work in encouraging owners to lock their cars?
- Why is it that there seems to be an increase, in fact a doubling, of the numbers of females, both adult and juvenile, arrested for car theft over the past twelve years while the numbers of males arrested have increased only slightly?

There are numerous other questions that could be posed but I would like to conclude with just a few words about the punishment of the car thieves who are caught. Even though 15,000 persons in Australia are arrested each year for car theft, in the middle of last year (at the time of our last national prison census) only 409 people were in prison specifically for this offence. It must be inferred from this that the courts in the vast majority of cases impose penalties other than sentences of imprisonment.

Even for those in jail, the actual sentences imposed (the nominal sentences which are never fully served) are relatively short with the most common being between three and nine months, and nearly 60 per cent being under eighteen months. It is clear that the Australian courts are not inclined to impose severe prison sentences on people convicted of car theft, and I must say I am inclined to support that general position.

Except in the most serious and repeated cases, prison is not the answer to car theft. It is probably going to make the offenders worse rather than better and is therefore not in the long term interests of the law-abiding community. The offenders who are caught obviously must be punished and orders for unpaid community work are probably appropriate in many cases, but I would like to see more experimentation with restitution orders and even with negotiated settlements between the offenders and their victims. In this area of sentencing, as in the other areas of concern, it is again a matter of trying to find answers to the question of what really works.

POLICE AND PROBLEMS

In November 1987, Dr John Alderson, CBE, QPM, a former Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall, England, and holder of other senior police positions, addressed an Institute group on Police and the Social Order.

A consultant on human rights and police to the Education Committee of the Council of Europe, and visiting Professor in Police Studies at University of Strathclyde, Dr Alderson is a Barrister of Law and holds the honorary degrees of LL.D (Exeter) and D.Litt (Bradford).

He has had a varied career. Among other activities, he was a research fellow at Nuffield College, Oxford, during 1982-83, and a political aspirant for the Liberal SDP Alliance in 1983. He has also authored and co-edited several books including *The Police We Deserve*, *Human Rights and the Police* and *Policing Freedom*.

His visit to Australia was organised under the Commonwealth Fellowship Plan 1987-88. He previously visited Australia in 1956 when awarded a twelve-month fellowship during which he travelled widely and compiled a treatise on the origins and growth of the Australian police system.

He has observed changes in Australia since then.

'Australian society is now more sophisticated ... perhaps a bit more racist, and Australians seem to crave being part of the wider world.'

His address focused upon the need for academics to guide police in pinpointing, explaining and resolving sociological problems and issues affecting the police.

'It's been a mad world for the last 25 years for police and that's made them feel different!'

He said it is significant that the police are just one of many societal sectors with power having to come to terms with fluctuating social conditions.

He also emphasised that many institutions categorised generically under the term 'state', have much power.

'In England the Department of Social Services can take children away from their families. So it's not just the police in the social order but other components with power too.'

He said to study police effectively one must also study politics and exemplified this by examining original and present-day situations in the Roman, Greek, Irish, German and French police forces and civilisations.

Historically, he said, the Romans favoured a strong, central power, the

Greeks a dispersal theory where power was shared, the French saw themselves as 'tools' of the state, and the Germans sowed the seeds for a 'police state'. He claimed those situations existed today.

As well, he pointed to Northern Ireland where the 1922 Partition saw the two main factions joining the police force.

'Those factions developed and were nurtured ... they continue today of course.'

Basically the Greek model exists in England but at times there's a feeling the Romans may be taking over — and the power's becoming too centralised. Change may be needed there,' he said.

Dr Alderson said a pluralist, multi-racial society whose historical factors intertwine with a multitude of sociological concepts and ideas over many years, brings it inherent problems.

He has also observed that with changing conditions people engaged in activities not anticipated by the law and cited an example from his time as Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall.

Faced with the dilemma of how to handle demonstrators at a construction site where workers were building a nuclear power station, he deemed the demonstrators to be 'nuisances' rather

than 'lawbreakers', and hence the police had no power to arrest. But he said, defining such a difference can be difficult.

In England Dr Alderson said rapidly changing conditions are made even harder to grasp with detrimental conditions some of which he explained thus:

'We've got a defective electoral system with a non-elected Upper House and people thrash about not being able to get into Parliament to try to do something, or implement change.'

'There's massive centralism. Where formerly many things were left to local government and spread out, it's all coming under one bureaucracy now — it's far too big.'

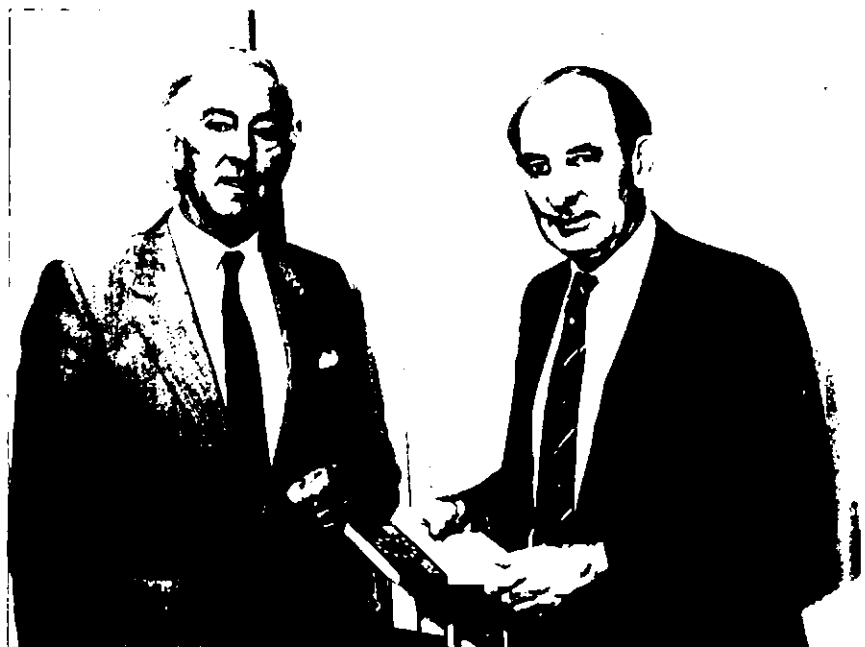
He said the situation is exacerbated by England having no Bill of Rights with 'the only rights being those that the law doesn't take away.'

'Subversion is ill-defined. People are often smeared as "enemies" when they're nothing of the sort — there's a lot of non-criminal intelligence stored — a lot of information on many people, unnecessarily.'

Individually, he said, such problems may seem minute, but cumulatively they frustrate many people.

And so he harked back to the need for academics to help police.

'Police must embrace these social phenomena — they need help. But they've no time to study economics, philosophy and other social sciences. That's where academics can help — and police must reach out and grasp those helping hands.'



Dr John Alderson and Mr Peter Loof, Chairman of the Board of Management of the Australian Institute of Criminology.

MINISTER LAUNCHES IVORY SCALES

Sixty representatives of the criminological and Aboriginal communities attended the launch at the Institute of a new book about Aboriginals and the law.

Ivory Scales: Black Australia and the Law, edited by Kayleen Hazlehurst, was launched by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Honourable Gerry Hand, MP, in November.

The book, which gives a sober background to the recent media uproar regarding Aboriginals and their legal position in Australia, comprises twelve chapters by more than a dozen prominent authors.

Some of the crucial matters raised in the book are:

- Is the present law system harsher to Aboriginals in terms of trial procedures and punishment?
- Is the legislative framework of our country simply a progression of a discriminating system of the early colonials?
- What are the inconsistencies between tribal law and European law in regard to property and punishment?
- At what points are Aboriginals most likely to be disadvantaged within the criminal justice system?
- What discretionary powers exist to allow Aboriginals to be disadvantaged within the legal system?
- Are more Aboriginals imprisoned because they commit more crimes?
- Is the high imprisonment rate among Aboriginals a result of a cultural collision between Aboriginals and Europeans?
- What are the central issues in the Australian Law Reform Commission's report? What conclusions can be drawn?

The gathering was addressed by the Director of the Institute, Professor Duncan Chappell, who introduced Mr Hand. In launching the book, the Minister praised the Institute and the NSW University Press for making the book available at a time when leadership was required in seeking action on matters that are of justified concern to Aboriginal people.

Responding Ms Hazlehurst stressed what she said seemed to be one of the fundamental lessons of the research enterprises distilled in *Ivory Scales*.

'In many parts of the country there are Aboriginal people taking the lead: some working alone, others working in management positions in large towns or in

remote communities, who have largely gone unnoticed.

'Together with a growing number of dedicated administrators, police, judicial, health and welfare workers, they have been identifying the faults in our systems and seeking to develop new programs and procedures.

'Some of this activity is exceptionally innovative — not just for Australia, but in relation to overseas developments as well — some of it is exceptionally singleminded and dedicated.

'The efforts of the CADAP, and similar alcohol addiction prevention groups, have put new meaning into the 'team-work' approach. They have trained Aboriginal teams to develop their own community-based primary programs to divert young Aboriginals away from the kinds of lifestyles which lead to boredom and eventually crime.

'We have seen Aboriginal communities assume responsibility over an extensive range of justice administration, including policing and community courts in the Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia, in effect revolutionising western law.

'It should become the passion of the media, not only to record the moments of crisis in black/white relations in Aus-

tralia, but also to publicise this quiet tide of innovation and community development which has been going on over the years.

'In fact, in the present climate, it is probably even more important now for the media to provide positive coverage when relations, confidence and hope seem at their lowest ebb during the inquiry into deaths in custody.

'I personally feel we are approaching a new phase in black/white relations. I have found a receptivity, and even an earnestness, for change in many quarters — among ministers and magistrates, station sergeants and young constables, Aboriginal parents and street kids.

'The message of this book is that, while there are no single or quick solutions to the afflictions of Aboriginal people, whether they be in relation to the criminal justice system or any other area, there can be advances in well thought out programs and policies for change.

'A genuine commitment to re-empowering Aboriginal people to take control of their own lives is a crucial part of this process, but it must be sustained by an undaunted and communicated conviction that they have a place in Australia's future. A future, we hope, which will guarantee justice and equality for them.'

Ivory Scales: Black Australia and the Law. K.M. Hazlehurst (ed.). NSW University Press, 291 pages.



The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Gerry Hand, M.P., and the editor of *Ivory Scales*, Ms Kayleen Hazlehurst.

ABORIGINAL PRISONERS— THE PICTURE GETS WORSE

by David Biles*

Each year since 1982 the Institute, with the co-operation of all corrections departments, has conducted a comprehensive census of all persons in prison in Australia. The report of the 1986 census was recently released, after some delay caused by technical problems.

The five reports of these censuses are a mine of valuable information and have been used for a range of planning and research purposes. One of the many purposes to which this information can be put is to monitor the level of Aboriginal representation in prison.

One item in the census asks if the individual is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. If the answer is no, the form is marked as 'other' but the response can also be 'unknown'. In a small number of cases there is genuine doubt as to whether the person is an Aboriginal, but the major reason for the number of 'unknowns' is the policy of the Queensland Government not to provide this information.

Table 1 shows the actual numbers in each of these categories for each of the five national prison censuses conducted to date. From this table it can be seen that the proportion of 'unknowns' has always been around 20 per cent.

Only Western Australian and the Northern Territory have been able to provide complete information on every occasion.

Using the figures shown in Table 1 it is relatively easy to calculate for each year the proportion of prisoners who are Aboriginal out of the totals of those for whom Aboriginality is known. The results of these calculations are shown in Figure 1.

The trend shown in this graph is most

disturbing. It shows that, of those prisoners for whom full information is available, the proportion who are Aboriginal has increased over five years from 13.1 per cent to 14.5 per cent. This has occurred during a period of increasing public concern about the gross-over representation of Aboriginals in Australian prisons.

Figure 1 Percentage of Aboriginals in prison 1982-86

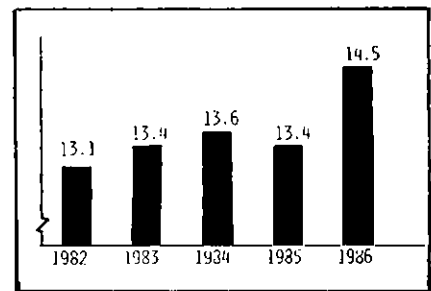


Table 1 Australian prisoners by known Aboriginality 1982-86

	Aboriginal	Other	Unknown	Total
1982	1 049	6 951	1 826	9 826
1983	1 118	7 225	1 853	10 196
1984	1 018	6 484	2 129	9 694
1985	1 153	7 472	2 219	10 844
1986	1 313	7 746	2 438	11 497

*Deputy Director, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra.

Notwithstanding the many efforts that have been made in different parts of Australia to reduce Aboriginal imprisonment, the picture is getting worse rather than better. Furthermore, these percentages would almost certainly be higher if there were no 'unknowns'.

The actual proportions of Aboriginal prisoners in each jurisdiction for 1986 are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Percentages of Australian prisoners by jurisdiction and known Aboriginality, 1986

	Aboriginal	Other	Unknown
NSW	8.0	89.0	3.0
VIC	2.1	96.1	1.8
QLD	—	—	100.0
WA	31.3	68.7	—
SA	13.7	78.3	8.0
TAS	6.1	85.0	8.9
NT	67.1	32.9	—
ACT	—	100.0	—
AUST	11.4	67.1	21.5

Aboriginals are over-represented in all jurisdictions, but the degree of over-representation clearly varies from place to place.

The available evidence suggests that the highest Aboriginal imprisonment rates are found in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and South Australia.

CHILDREN AS WITNESSES

This seminar which was to be held in February 1988 has been re-scheduled for 3-5 May 1988 because of the considerable interest shown in this topic.

The seminar seeks to bring together child welfare workers, law reformers, academics, police and others interested in discussing the issues raised under this subject.

The issues proposed to be discussed include the question of whether the court is the best forum available; the most effective way of securing reliable evidence from children; use of recorded evidence, screens, video linkups and other aids; the role of the experts; conflicts with traditional court practice and the ongoing effects on child witnesses and their families as a result of giving evidence.

If you are interested in participating in this seminar or have any suggestions please contact:

Julia Vernon, Programs Officer
Australian Institute of Criminology
PO Box 28, Woden, ACT 2606
Telephone (062) 833850

LIBRARIES NETWORK

At the Second Asian Pacific Special and Law Librarians' Conference in Brisbane in September, John Myrtle outlined the Institute's role in developing and co-ordinating an informal network of criminal justice libraries including police, adult and juvenile corrections and criminology organisations. Below is an edited version of his paper.

Firstly I draw attention to the federally-funded Institute's functions.

They include:

1. Conducting criminological research;
2. Communicating the results of research to the Commonwealth and States;
3. Conducting research seminars and training courses;
4. Publishing material resulting from or connected with the performance of its functions.

The Institute's library, the J.V. Barry Memorial Library, opened in 1973. From the start it gave high priority to supporting Institute research and training programs, and promoting co-operation between criminal justice libraries. Several types of organisations participated including juvenile correctional departments, law courts, law teaching departments and government departments.

The Institute held the first seminar for criminal justice librarians in 1977. Its broad aims were 'to improve the effectiveness of criminology libraries in Australia' and to address 'the possibility of rationalising the services and collections of Australian criminology libraries as the basis for extended co-operation ...'

The seminar recognised the necessity of a co-ordinating role for the J.V. Barry Memorial Library if a network of criminal justice libraries was to be sustained.

The library established a union catalogue of monographs; individual libraries contributed the main entry cards. The Institute library also maintained a union list of serial holdings established by the Monash University Law Library. Four seminars followed and are now held biennially.

From the first seminar, 13 libraries contributed to one or both of the criminology union catalogues. These libraries benefited from improved access to each other's collections.

The rationalisation hoped for, that is certain libraries having responsibility for specialist areas, has not occurred. Because criminal justice libraries are a

disparate, geographically dispersed group there may need to be another forum in addition to biennial seminars to enable librarians time to consider rationalisation. No such forum exists.

The 1977 seminar highlighted the need for prison library standards in Australia to be established, and to survey their existing status to set minimum standards.

Not a great deal has happened since. Various budgetary cuts have worked detrimentally in any expansion of government library services. In 1986, corrective services librarians reactivated the issue. They polled the amount of resources and services available within the Australian prison libraries. Library Adviser to the Queensland Department of Family and Youth Services, Phil Roberts, collated the survey.

General resolutions were passed by the Library Association of Australia's General Council to endorse the establishment of a working party to develop prison library standards and to prepare a proposal for implementation, including funding requirements and possibilities.

There is still much work to be done in this area. Here in Brisbane this week librarians involved with juvenile and adult corrections hope to formulate more precise ideas in developing Australian prison library standards.

In 1986 the J.V. Barry Memorial Library became a full participant member of the Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN).

The library aims to service a nationwide library network, and with Institute information requirements extending beyond the library's own selection policy it encourages inter-library loans, particularly from criminal justice libraries.

Upon joining the ABN the Institute closed its card catalogue and criminology union catalogue cards were not added. Since, there have been very few requests for information from this catalogue. Criminal justice libraries often use ABN in inter-library work and all participants benefit.

We have catalogued on this system

for 18 months with two catalogues, the closed card catalogue and the ABN-based fiche catalogue and are assessing the costs and benefits of undertaking a full retrospective conversion of our card catalogue. The criminal justice community would benefit from accessing the Institute's library catalogue in the form of a single online machine-readable file.

Significantly we have progressed from nett borrower to nett lender status with inter-library loans. I expect that will continue.

Another Institute library function, developed in the early 1970s, is the role of national clearinghouse of criminological information, involving research and library staff.

The procedure entailed collecting current and historical Australian criminological information and processing it in a computerised system known as CINCH (Computerised Information from National Criminological Holdings). Initially the citations were mainly from journals: data were loaded onto a CDC CYBER 76 computer operated by CSIRONET. Library and research staff undertook literature searches batch-mode from the database for criminal justice organisations or researchers.

By 1981, the database had more than 7,000 citations. Alas, government cuts retarded Institute programs and indexing ceased. In 1984, when my predecessor Nikki Riszko and the then Institute director, Professor Richard Harding recognised the value of CINCH's public use commercially, it became available on AUSINET from March 1985.

Database usage has grown steadily. There are more than 16,000 citations of Australian criminological subject matter and 500 records are added each quarter.

The library offers a document backup for users of the database through inter-library loans. Items indexed for CINCH represent the library's Australian holdings and are available on request from the library.

Another feature of CINCH is that material indexed straddles many bibliographic forms including journals, newspaper articles and monographs.

Institute management is satisfied with the growth of support for the database, but ironically CINCH usage from criminal justice libraries has been fairly limited.

Staff at the J.V. Barry Memorial Library have undertaken searches for many

ROAD SAFETY STUDY

A recent Institute publication has urged that the drinking age should be raised and alcohol made harder to get in an effort to reduce death and injury on the roads.

Death and Injuries on the Road by Dr Ross Homel of Macquarie University and Dr Paul Wilson, Assistant Director (Research and Statistics), Australian Institute of Criminology, is the result of a study in which the authors considered the following questions:

- (a) What international studies have been conducted on the effectiveness of traffic law enforcement measures in terms of their cost-effectiveness?
- (b) What is the relevance of the international experience with traffic law enforcement measures to Australian conditions?
- (c) What legislative provisions, in traffic law enforcement generally and drink driving specifically are effective given Australian conditions?
- (d) Based on objectives (a) to (c) above, what are the most appropriate enforcement strategies to achieve the maximum road safety benefits in Australia?

The report also recommends that hotels drive drunks home and random breath testing be made Australia wide; alcohol should be more expensive and fewer outlets should sell it.

Other recommendations are that first year drivers be not allowed to drive at night and learner drivers be kept on 'L' plates for two years before being given a provisional licence. While on provisional licence, zero blood alcohol levels should be maintained.

The specific recommendations are listed under the headings: Random Breath Testing; Legal Penalties; Changes to Social Environment; Server Intervention Programs; Youthful Drivers; Police Enforcement; and General.

Random Breath Testing

1. While deterrence measures (such as Random Breath Testing) have been effective in reducing alcohol-related deaths and injuries, such deterrent countermeasures, in some jurisdictions, are not cost-effective, and our preoccupation with punishment is often irrational.
2. There is increasing evidence, however, that RBT in NSW has actually achieved what many thought impossible — a permanent deterrent effect, and police enforcement of other non-

criminal traffic offences has also produced temporary positive results.

3. The distinguishing marks of RBT in NSW are intensive and sustained enforcement combined with massive and sustained media publicity. A deterrence threshold, testing at least one driver in three each year, was reached. Other jurisdictions need to follow this example if they are to achieve cost-effective success with enforcement programs.
4. Evidence from RBT in NSW shows that the effects of this enforcement measure actually intensified in the first year of operation — an achievement which has not been made in any other state or nation for any offence.
5. RBT only results in a permanent reduction in alcohol-related crashes where it is implemented in full — sustained media coverage, breath-testing of at least one driver in three and maintenance of the entire program over time.
6. Results from South Australian studies show that there is a marked decline in impaired driving subsequent to RBT among drivers previously charged (or convicted) with drink-driving offences, that this decline is sustained, and that it holds across age, sex and levels of drinking groups.
7. The trend for police to revert completely to an apprehension-based policy is not recommended, since the essence of RBT is visible, preventive patrols. RBT works not only by catching offenders, but by deterring the average motorist, although motorists with convictions are much more responsive to the legal threat than those without.
8. Despite the success of RBT in NSW, self-reported drinking and driving is still at unacceptably high levels and a third of fatalities still involve alcohol.
9. One negative side-effect of RBT in NSW was that a minority of heavy drinkers (8.5 per cent), found it harder, not easier, to resist group pressure to drink under the new law.

Research Report, 1987, 146 pages, \$12.00.

AND, IN BRIEF...

Victimology

The World Society of Victimology has called for papers for the Sixth International Symposium on Victimology to be held in Jerusalem, Israel, from 28 August to 1 September 1988.

The symposium will have a special focus on victim assistance movements and will emphasise: one, victim assistance projects and schemes and two, research and theory in the field of victimology. Abstracts to reach the Secretariat, PO Box 50006, 61500 Tel Aviv, Israel by 1 May 1988.

Australian Conference

The Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminology will hold its fourth Annual Conference from 22 to 24 August 1988 at St Andrews College, Sydney University. Offers of papers should go to Conference Secretary, Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, GPO Box, 56, Sydney, NSW 2000, by 14 February 1988.

North Australian Research

The University College of the Northern Territory has established a data base in which details of research in progress on North Australia and Aboriginal topics will be recorded.

Scholars working in these areas are invited to send in details of their current projects. A questionnaire for this purpose can be had from Alan Butler, College Librarian, University College of the Northern Territory, GPO Box 1341, Darwin, NT 5794.

LIBRARIES NETWORK

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criminal justice libraries not equipped to do so themselves, free of charge. That suffices as a method of using royalty revenue to promote the database.

The Information Bulletin of Australian Criminology is the print version of quarterly updates of CINCH plus selected acquisitions of foreign material. It is most useful to libraries with no online access to CINCH. Although the Information Bulletin is under review we remain committed to publishing a regular bulletin with Australian criminological subject matter.

BOOK REVIEW

ABORIGINES AND THE LAW: A DIGEST

By John McCorquodale

Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 1987, pp. xvi and 512, \$44.95.

Reviewer: Ms Kayleen M. Hazlehurst, Australian Institute of Criminology.

McCorquodale's *Digest*, long awaited and widely welcomed, will at once take the pre-eminent place as a comprehensive reference source on Aboriginal people and the law in Australia.

Aborigines and the Law: A Digest is in fact three works in one. The first is a listing of Imperial, Commonwealth, and State legislation that 'specifically mentions Aborigines'. Each act or ordinance is glossed in order to highlight its relevance to Aborigines. Thus we learn that the Northern Territory Workmen's Compensation Ordinance (No. 3) 1968 defines a member of a family in relation to an Aboriginal workman as "'a relation of the workman whether by blood, *tribal marriage or custom*" [emphasis added]. On the Mining (Gove Peninsula Nabalco Agreement) Ordinance 1968, McCorquodale helpfully points out not only the clause covering rights of access to Aboriginal people over leased land but also the omission of references to training or employment of Aborigines, respect for sacred sites, prohibition on alcohol, etc.

The second section is a select bibliography of 800 books, articles, reviews, unpublished papers and theses, and official reports. Most items are briefly annotated where necessary to indicate their content. Comments include candid evaluations: 'a shallow look', 'superb chapter', 'a not very profound examination', 'over-generalised and fallacious assumptions'. McCorquodale lists a useful selection of honours theses; but researchers should note that such theses are normally only available to be read in the department for which they were written.

Users of the bibliography should note that it supersedes a preliminary version published in Peter Hanks and Bryan Keon-Cohen (eds) *Aborigines and the Law*, Sydney, 1984; they will also find it helpful to consult the complementary *Aboriginal Criminal Justice: A Bibliographical Guide* (Hazlehurst (ed.), Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra 1986) and the section on 'Sources' therein.

The third major section of the *Digest*, its most valuable contribution, is a list of over 500 cases, arranged both chronologically and then alphabetically by jurisdiction. McCorquodale describes this compilation as encompassing 'all available Supreme Court and higher court cases, reported and unreported, that have affected Aborigines or included them as one party'. The editor's objective has been 'to illustrate the attitudes, opinions or prejudices of white judicial authority to Aborigines since the white colonisation of Australia'.

Accordingly, he includes for most cases excerpts of the judgment or summing-up to convey 'the actual flavour and judicial comment on the "Aboriginal condition" as it then stood'. Future scholars will be greatly aided by the headnotes and by the thorough identification of persons concerned.

McCorquodale explains that his work is that of a practising lawyer mainly for the use of other lawyers and law students. But he has provided amply for the needs of historians, anthropologists, administrators and other potential users. Alert journalists will find the index a timely guide to the thoughts of Mr Justice Muirhead but will be disappointed to find no entry for deaths in custody.

Regrettably, it has taken some five years for McCorquodale's original manuscript to emerge from the publisher. Although there has been an attempt to keep abreast of recent developments, the legislation section does not go beyond 1982 and there are no cases later than 1985.

It is to be hoped that further editions of this splendid volume will appear regularly. As Justice Michael Kirby suggests in a characteristically pungent foreword, 'McCorquodale', as it will undoubtedly be known, should evolve into a service that is 'comprehensive, instantaneous and on line'.

RESEARCH AWARD

A frequent speaker at Institute seminars, Mr Richard Fox, recently received a prestigious research award. On 9 November 1987 he received the inaugural award for excellence in research of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. The presentation was made to Mr Fox by His Excellency, the Reverend Dr John Davis McCaughey, the Governor of Victoria at a dinner at the University of Melbourne.

The citation to the award referred to Mr Fox, who is a reader in law at Monash University, as a distinguished scholar whose research into sentencing was highly regarded both nationally and internationally. It also referred to his continued commitment to encouraging young scholars.

Richard Fox, together with his colleague Mr Arie Frieberg, received a major grant from the Criminology Research Council in 1979 for a study of state and federal sentencing law in Victoria. This study resulted in the publication of a book by Fox and Frieberg which has become the accepted authoritative work on this subject.

The Institute warmly congratulates Richard Fox on this well deserved award.



Mr Richard Fox



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