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## VISITING EXPERTS' PAPERS

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### CRIME AND CRIME PREVENTION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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#### I. INTRODUCTION

In this first paper, my aim is to provide some basic information, and some key concepts, which can guide us as we try to take forward the main theme of the 129th International Senior Seminar, namely 'Crime Prevention in the Twenty-first Century'.

I want to begin by reminding you of the contents of the first two paragraphs drawn up by the Course Organisers when they set out the formal Rationale of the 129th Seminar. These paragraphs are as follows:

Economic growth and development of modern industry have promoted migration of people from other areas. The living conditions in urban areas have worsened as a consequence, slum areas have emerged and street crime has expanded. Economic growth and other factors have also altered the social fabric; for instance, the extended family has shifted into a nuclear family, and the erosion of human ties in the community has promoted a breakdown in the traditional form of the community. This has been accompanied by a weakening of normative consciousness in the community and it is a cause of the deleterious change in the community environment.

This enervation of living conditions and social environment accompanied by urbanization has also affected crime trends. For instance, in urban areas, crime such as larceny, robbery, violent crime and drug related crime have drastically increased. At the same time, the type of offences committed by organized criminals, youth, juveniles and foreigners have become more serious. This phenomenon generates "feelings of insecurity" in the majority of people who are living in urban areas. This increase in crime has adversely affected the "quality of life" in the community and it will be a serious cause of hindrance to the sustainable growth of a country.

In this short passage, very many different ideas are touched upon — for example, relating to the economy, the family, the community and community norms, migration, crime trends, 'feelings of insecurity', and so on. In the first part of my paper, I want to try to consider some of these issues systematically, before I move on to the topic of crime prevention.

#### II. RECENT SOCIAL CHANGE

History, of course, looks very different in different countries. In the United States and Canada, for example, very few buildings are more than two hundred years old, but that seems very recent by the standards of the great European and Asian civilisations.

In European social thought, a concept that has recently acquired some persuasiveness is that of 'late modernity'. To understand this term properly, we have to understand what 'modern' means in the context of European history. In a nutshell, it has two main reference points:

*First*, in Europe the 'modern' period replaced the mediaeval period; and in terms of social organisation, the pre-modern feudal system was, by stages, gradually dismantled and eventually replaced by capitalism. The advent of capitalism, in turn, eventually resulted in the Industrial Revolution, leading to a huge migration from the countryside to industrial cities.

*Secondly*, in European thought the 'modern' period refers to the period of the so-called 'Enlightenment', when a scientific world-view was increasingly adopted by educated people, replacing earlier and more

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traditional thought-forms. The dominant feature of the scientific world-view is, of course, that it is an *open-ended quest*. In principle, any scientific concept can be falsified or modified by the next discovery or the next experiment; thus, scientists learn to set up hypotheses to test the validity of current ideas. When such a method is fully adopted, all knowledge becomes provisional.

Theorists of 'late modernity' argue that we are still experiencing the long-term consequences of the arrival of *modernity*. In the last half-century, however, modernity has in various ways significantly speeded up. During this period, our lives have in many ways changed beyond recognition. These changes have unfolded differently in different countries, but let me just remind you of some of them, which link very much with the themes introduced by those who wrote the Rationale for this International Seminar (see above). I shall divide the changes into three main clusters, relating to the fields of technology; the economy; and the family and community.

### **A. Technological Changes**

Let me briefly take you back 45 years, to the beginning of 1960. During that year, in my country (the UK), something called "Subscriber Trunk Dialling" was introduced. This meant that, when someone wished to make a telephone call to a different town 50 miles away, it was no longer necessary to be connected by a human operator; one could actually dial direct. At that time, also, the police in the UK had no personal radios. Most households had a television, but all television was black-and-white, and there were only two channels available. Computers existed, but they were about the size of a large room, and only specialists could operate them. There were no communications satellites, so it was not possible to have events on the other side of the world beamed instantly into one's sitting room.

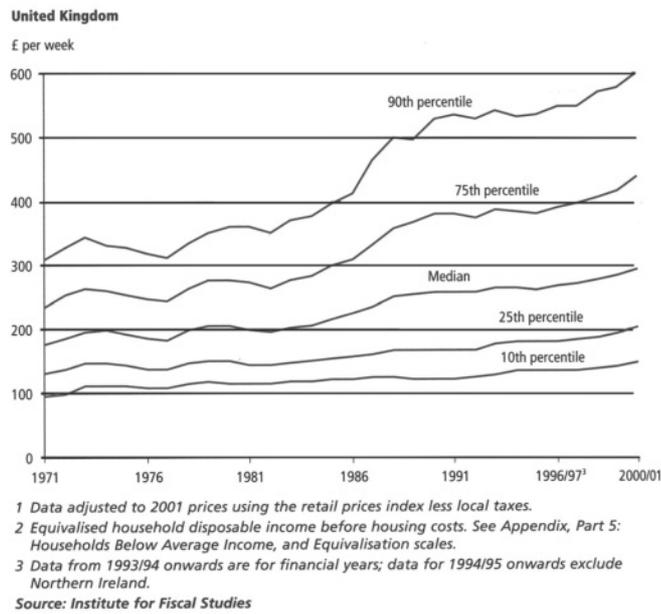
I could go on, but there is little point. Clearly, in less than half a century, our everyday lives have been transformed by technological advances. These radical changes have, of course, in many ways been hugely beneficial. But they have altered our daily routines and our working assumptions, and we need to bear this in mind as we think about crime prevention in the twenty-first century.

### **B. Economic Changes**

One of the most profound economic changes is that created by so-called *globalisation*, which is closely related to the technological change we have just considered. In the 1960s, many countries had fixed foreign exchange rates, and tried to defend them against currency speculation. Most countries have now abandoned such strategies, because of the ease with which computers can now transmit money around the world on a 24-hour basis. Other aspects of globalisation have been the growth of multinational corporations, and an increasing migration of populations across national boundaries, both temporarily (business and tourism) and more permanently (migration for economic reasons, and for political reasons to avoid regimes perceived as threatening).

Another important economic change in many countries is a *growing divide between rich and poor*. In the UK, for example, in the thirty-year period 1971-2000, using stabilised prices the gap between the highest-earning tenth and the lowest-earning tenth of households rose from a difference of £200 to a difference of £450 per week (see *Figure 1*). Among the factors creating this increased division are very high rewards paid to a few who are considered skilled entrepreneurs; and, at the other end of the spectrum, the abolition of many unskilled jobs which have now been replaced by automated processes. And clearly, a growing divide between rich and poor might in some circumstances be of relevance for criminological explanation.

**Figure 1: Distribution of Real<sup>1</sup> Household Disposable Income<sup>2</sup>**



Source: Summerfield, C. and P. Babb (2003), Ch. 5, 'Income and wealth', in *Social Trends* (No. 33), p. 102.

A further feature of contemporary economies, at least in the West, is the arrival of a *consumer economy*. Most Western countries have experienced sustained economic growth during the last fifty years (though there have been annual fluctuations in the growth rate, with some downturns, normally temporary). A consequence of this sustained growth is that more households have more to spend, in real terms, than they did thirty years ago. This trend is well illustrated in *Figure 2*, which shows that in the UK real household expenditure rose 2.3 times in real terms in the thirty years from 1971. As a detailed scrutiny of *Figure 2* will show, there is a strong tendency to spend this additional on so-called 'luxuries' (foreign travel, recreation, clothing) rather than on 'necessities' such as housing and food. Such trends in turn create a culture of consumerism, where shopping is a cultural activity valued for its own sake, and adolescents become keenly interested in exactly *which* brand of clothing or footwear, or which kind of mobile phone, they possess, by comparison with their friends. That kind of consumer consciousness is also increasingly relevant to the public services, such as education and the police – the public in the West are far more willing to question the delivery of 'products' by the public services than they used to be.

**Figure 2: 2001 UK Household Expenditure on Selected Items, Indexed to 1971 = 100**

<b>Communications</b>	<b>786</b>
<b>Household expenditure abroad</b>	<b>669</b>
<b>Recreation and culture</b>	<b>571</b>
<b>Clothing and footwear</b>	<b>350</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>274</b>
<b>Household goods/services</b>	<b>256</b>
<b>Transport</b>	<b>248</b>
<b>All household expenditure</b>	<b>232</b>
<b>Restaurants and hotels</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>Health</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>Housing water and fuel</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>Food</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>Alcohol and tobacco</b>	<b>92</b>

Source: *Social Trends*.

### C. Family and Community

The Rationale for the 129th International Seminar draws attention to the fact that the nature of family life is changing, and that 'the extended family has shifted into a nuclear family'. Moreover, divorce rates have risen, and there are increasing numbers of one-parent families. A simple statistical indicator of this trend is household size, data for which, for the UK, are shown in *Figure 3*. Combining some of the data in this Figure, we may note that in 1971, exactly half of British households contained either one or two persons, but by 2002 the corresponding figure was 64 per cent. By far the largest contribution to this trend came from the proportion of persons under pension age now living alone. We are, indeed, becoming a more *atomized* society. This is a trend that, in the US, has been highlighted by the American commentator Robert Putnam (2000) in his book *Bowling Alone*. According to the Rationale of the International Seminar, this kind of atomization is leading to a *weakening of normative consciousness* in communities. This is possibly the case, and it is a point to which I shall return.

**Figure 3: Household Size 1971 and 2002 (Great Britain)**

	1971	2002
<b>One person: under state pension age</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>One person: over state pension age</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Two people</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Three people</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Four people</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Five + people</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Average household size</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.4</b>

Source: *Social Trends*.

Those who argue against this position tend to say that, while geographical communities are less close-knit than they were, technological developments increasingly allow the development of *networks of interest*, among those who share a similar sporting, cultural or other interest. Even if this is true, however, as we shall see, *geographical place* remains a matter of some importance for community safety.

Other important factors of family and community life include the increasing participation of women in all spheres of life, by contrast with their generally more constrained role in most societies half a century ago. In many societies, too, the result of increasing migration (see above) is to create, in many countries, neighbourhoods that are significantly more multicultural, especially in large conurbations.

### D. Overview

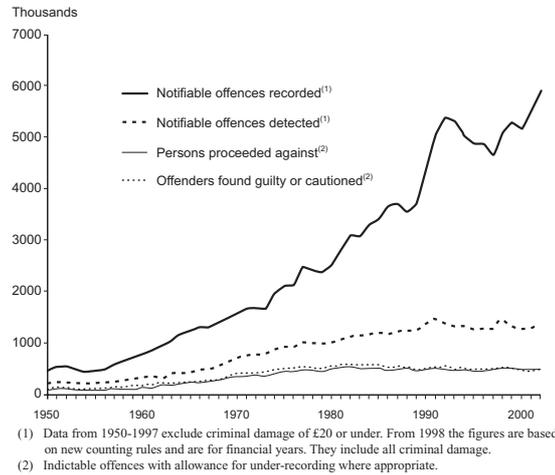
The above sketch has provided a necessarily very selective and abbreviated indication of some of the ways in which many societies have changed in the last half-century. Clearly, taken together, the highlighted trends constitute a massive social transformation. In thinking about crime prevention in the twenty-first century, we therefore need to ensure that we are thinking about crime prevention that is relevant to the kinds of society in which we now live, rather than the kinds of society that existed a couple of decades ago.

At this point, however, an important *caveat* is in order. There are massive cultural and structural differences between Japan and the UK. These kinds of cross-national differences mean that the general trends I have been discussing in the first part of this paper will manifest themselves in different ways in different countries, and any sensible analyst will always take these local contexts into account. This is a point that will become more evident as I move to the second part of the paper, on aspects of contemporary crime.

### III. CRIME AND CRIME-RELATED ISSUES

Figure 4 shows trends in police-related crime, and in detected crime, in England and Wales since 1950. As will be seen, from the mid-1950s to the early 1990s – a period of 35 years – there was a massive and sustained increase in police-recorded crime. My country was, however, not by any means alone in this kind of experience: most Western countries suffered a similarly large increase over much of this period.

**Figure 4: Recorded Crime, Detected Crime and 'Known' Offenders, England and Wales 1950-2002**



Source: Criminal Statistics England and Wales 2002, Cm 6054.

In The Netherlands, an official government committee of 1985 considered the reasons for this kind of increase in crime. They offered two main reasons:

*First:*

'because of greatly increased prosperity many more goods are in circulation which can be stolen or destroyed than in the past'.

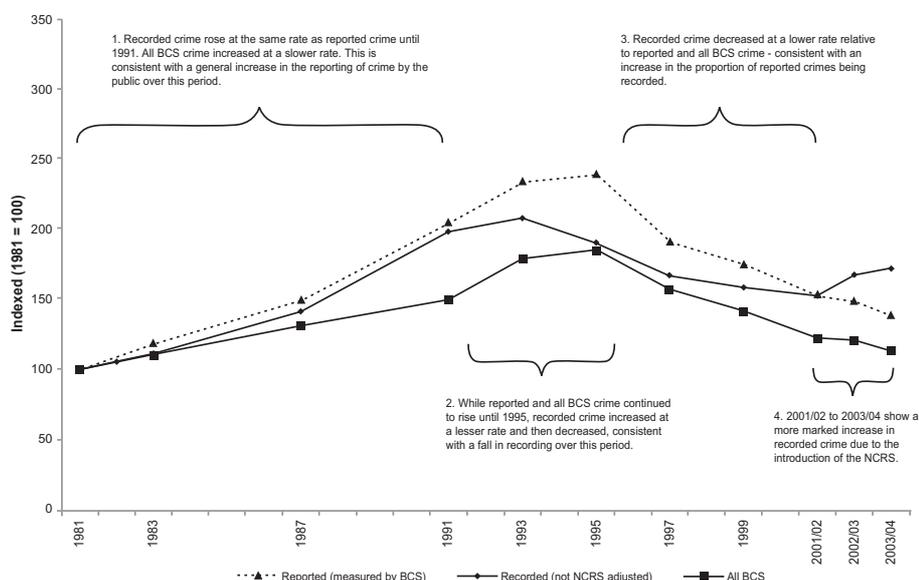
*Secondly:*

'there has been a decline... in the influence of many traditional social institutions within which the behaviour of individuals is effectively normalised, such as the family, clubs and associations, the church and the schools. Society has become more individualistic. In some cases this individualism leads to a tendency to satisfy personal needs at the expense of others or of the community. The increased use of alcohol and drugs also forms part of this pattern of greater individualism' (Netherlands Ministry of Justice 1985, p. 10).

I will come back to these suggestions in a moment. Before that, I want to draw your attention to two other important features of Figure 4. First, the increase in *detected crime* since 1950 has been much slower than the increase in *recorded crime* – in other words, the detection rate has gone down considerably. This, perhaps, is explained by our increasingly anonymous society: as we all know, most crime is detected not by forensic science (although that is very important in some cases), but by good information from knowledgeable witnesses, and in a more atomized, more anonymous society, such witnesses may be less plentiful. The second significant feature of Figure 4 is the marked dip in the crime rate in the 1990s. To examine this further, let us take a closer look at these data, in conjunction with national crime survey data.

Since 1981, in England and Wales there have been a regular series of national crime surveys, known collectively as the British Crime Survey (or BCS). Figure 5 shows police-recorded crime trends since 1981 alongside BCS crime trends, indexing both trends to a starting point of 1981 = 100.

**Figure 5: Indexed Trends in Crime, England & Wales 1981-2003**  
 (On base of 1981 = 100) in: (a) police-recorded crime, (b) crimes that survey respondents said they had reported to the police (in the British Crime Survey or BCS), and (c) all crimes noted by BCS respondents.



Source: Home Office Statistical Bulletin 2004/10, p.37.

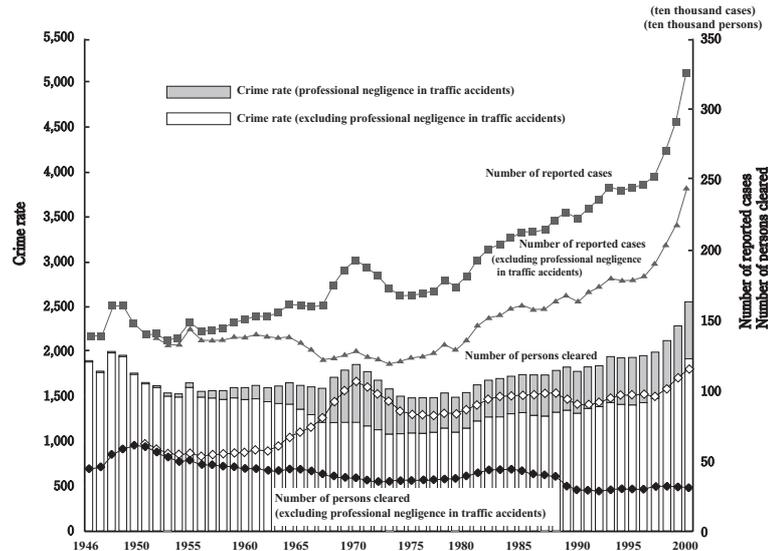
The principal reason for carrying out national crime surveys is, of course, because of the known deficiencies of police-recorded crime data. (A year-on-year increase in police crime data *might* indicate a real increase in crime; or alternatively it might indicate that the public are reporting crimes to the police which they previously would not have reported, or that the police are recording more of the crime that the public have reported to them.) Plotting recorded crime data against crime survey data therefore acts as a vital check on the validity of trends in recorded crime.

There are a number of points of detailed interest in *Figure 5*, and these are set out in the text of the graph. However, the main point of interest for present purposes is that, for most of the twenty-year period shown in the graph, there has been a close correspondence in the trends for both police-recorded and BCS crime. Basically, crime went up, on both indices, from 1981 to 1993, and it went down, on both indices, from 1995 to 2001/2. Moreover, the apparent increase in recorded crime since 2001/2 can be shown, by detailed analysis, to be artefactual (because of a change in recording rules). In a nutshell, therefore, crime has receded in England and Wales since 1995.

Once again, this kind of experience is by no means unique to Britain. Most Western countries have, with local variations, experienced a rather similar reduction in crime in recent years. It has to be said, however, that there are few clearly-understood reasons for this decline.

At the end of the previous section of this paper, I drew attention to the important cultural and structural differences between Japan and the UK. During the period when crime was increasing rapidly in the UK and other Western countries, Japan became famous as a country that was undergoing rapid urbanisation, and economic restructuring, yet where the crime rate had remained stable (it even declined somewhat from 1950 to 1975) (*Figure 6*). Returning to the explanation offered by The Netherlands' White Paper (see above), this strongly suggested that, of the two parts of that suggested explanation, the second (normative bonds) was the more important, since of course in Japan in the 1960s and 1970s consumer goods were much in evidence (indeed, Japan was a world leader in the production of electronic consumer goods).

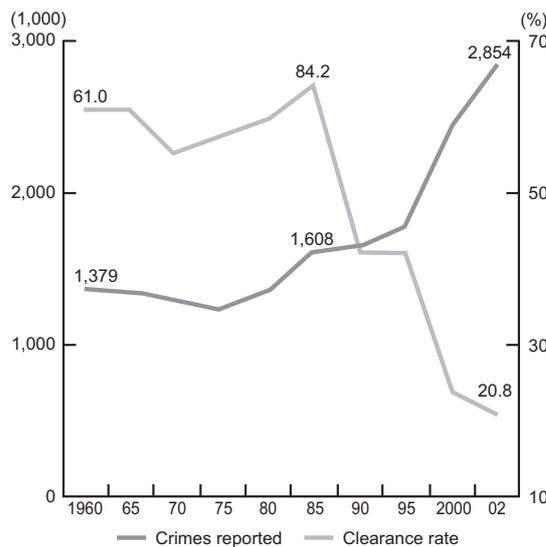
**Figure 6: Japan Trends in Number of Reported Cases, Number of Persons Cleared, and Crime Rate for Penal Code Offences (1946-2000)**



Source: Criminal Statistics by National Police Agency, and population data by Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications.

More recently, however, the crime rate in Japan has risen sharply, and the detection rate has declined (Figure 7). These are very similar to trends experienced in England and Wales in earlier years (see also Figure 8 for a more detailed set of figures on British detection rates). Is it possible, therefore, that Japan is now going through its 'rapid crime rise' and 'decline in detection' period, and that, like Britain and other Western countries, it will in time achieve its 'crime reduction' period? To answer that question properly, we would of course need a good answer to the question 'Why has crime reduced?', and as I indicated earlier, this is not a topic on which we have validated knowledge at the moment. However, I will return to the issue of crime reduction at the end of this paper.

**Figure 7: Trends in Number of Crimes and Clearance Rate, Japan, 1960-2002**



Source: Ministry of Justice, Hanzai hakusho (White Paper on Crime), 2003.

**Figure 8: Detection of Recorded Crime, England and Wales**

1973	47%	
1978	42%	
1983	37%	
1988	35%	
1993	25%	(London)
1997	28%	25%
1998/9	29%	22%
1999/00*	25%	16%
2000/01	24%	15%
2001/2	23%	14%
2002/3	24%	n.a.

(\*New and more stringent instructions issued to police forces re the recording of detections from April 1999. On a 'like for like' basis, detection rates probably fell by about 2% nationally from 1998/9 to 1999/00 –see Criminal Statistics 1999, p. 26.)

Note difference between 'primary' and 'secondary' detections: for example, in 2001/2, 19% of recorded notable offences were cleared up by *primary means* (charge/summons; caution; offence t.i.c. and previously recorded) and 4% cleared up by *secondary means* (mainly interviews with convicted prisoners)

Before I conclude this brief discussion of crime trends, I want to consider some British data which have a slightly broader character. That is to say, these data are not strictly speaking about *crime rates*, nor about *detections*, but they all in some way help us to understand contemporary British public beliefs about what is often called 'law and order'.

The first piece of evidence (*Figure 9*) concerns the public's satisfaction ratings in relation to police performance. Here we notice a marked difference between the first five and the last two matters listed in the Figure. The first five matters all concern satisfaction with the police when the police are in *response mode* – that is to say, when they are called out to deal with a road accident, a burglary or a violent incident; when they respond to an emergency telephone helpline; or when they respond to public enquiries or reports in the police station (or equivalent). In each of these types of response-mode incident, public satisfaction is very high: four-fifths or more of the public declare themselves satisfied with the police's handling of *each* of these kinds of situations. At the foot of the table, however, we see a very different picture: only two-fifths of the public are satisfied with the frequency with which they see the police patrolling in cars or other vehicles; and only one-fifth are satisfied with the level of foot patrols that they experience.

**Figure 9: Satisfaction with Police:  
England and Wales, 1999-2000**

<i>Average consumer satisfaction with:</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Service at road accidents</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Response to burglary</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Enquiry counters</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Response to 999 calls</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Response to reported violence crime</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Level of mobile patrols</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Level of foot patrols</b>	<b>20</b>

Source: Audit Commission (2001), *Local Authority Performance Indicators 1999–2000*, cited in *Policing a New Century*, p. 22.

What explains this very striking difference in results? It seems that the public still trusts the police a great deal in relation to their handling of incidents in those situations where the public calls directly on them to act. But the public also seems to be saying: '*we do not see nearly enough of you on our streets, and in other public places*'. That in turn suggests a degree of *insecurity* among the public with regard to their sense of 'safe passage' in public places. I shall return to this point shortly.

*Figure 10* provides data in answer to annual survey questions in which respondents are first asked whether, in their view, the national crime rate has increased in the previous year; and secondly, whether the crime rate has increased in the area where they live. Looking first at the data about beliefs about the national crime rate, this question has been asked regularly since 1996, i.e. in a period during which crime has been consistently falling (*Figure 5*). Yet, in each year, more than half of the public believe that the national crime rate has risen, and in some years this figure has risen to over 70 per cent. Indeed, since the year 2000, one third of respondents each year actually say that the crime rate has increased 'a lot', although in reality it is falling.

**Figure 10: England & Wales: Beliefs about Change in National and Local Crime Rates**

[% believing that the crime rate had increased over the previous year (numbers in parentheses are % believing it had increased 'a lot')]

<i>Year</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>Local</i>
1992	—	68 (33)
1994	—	64 (40)
1996	75 (29)	55 (31)
1998	59 (29)	46 (29)
2000	67 (34)	50 (30)
2001	56 (31)	49 (30)
2001/2	64 (34)	50 (29)
2002/3	72 (38)	54 (22)

Source: (*England and Wales*): J. Simmons *et al.*, *Crime in England and Wales 2001/2002*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin, pp. 79–80, and update for 2002/3.

The data for beliefs about crime trends in local areas generally speaking present a similar, although more modified picture; substantial percentages believe that local crime has increased, but these percentages are consistently smaller than when assessing national crime rates. The difference between the assessments for national and local rates almost certainly reflects the fact that, for national rates, the public has nothing but national media reports on which to base its judgement, whereas for local areas they have more immediate sources of information. This difference highlights the potential importance of the media in contemporary societies, and the way in which they can convey messages to the general public, not all of which are accurate.

The most important question to emerge from a consideration of *Figure 10* is, of course, *why* are public beliefs so spectacularly out of line with the official figures about crime rates? In a nutshell, the answer to this question seems to be that '*the public feels insecure*' and does not believe the official figures. To understand why they feel insecure, however, we will have to probe a little more deeply into some other data.

As well as asking respondents about victimizations for various crimes, the British Crime Survey also regularly asks people whether various kinds of so-called 'anti-social behaviour' (sometimes also called 'disorders') are a problem in the area where they live. These disorders include noisy neighbours, teenagers hanging around in the streets, litter, damage, and visible drug use. *Figure 11* gives data on subjects' responses to these questions since the early 1990s. And here a very interesting pattern emerges. Remember that crime has gone down steadily since 1995 (*Figure 5*). Yet if we compare the 1994 figures to

the 2002/3 figures for disorders, the rate for *every single disorder has increased during that period*. (Though there are some welcome reductions in the most recent year, for reasons that are not yet clear.)

**Figure 11: England & Wales: Anti-social Behaviour Indicators**

Percentage saying very/fairly big problem in their area

	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2001/02 interview s	2002/03 interview s	2003/04 interview s
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	8	8	8	8	9	10	10	9
People using or dealing drugs	14	22	21	25	33	31	32	25
Teenagers hanging around on the streets	20	26	24	27	32	32	33	27
Rubbish or litter lying around	30	26	26	28	30	32	33	29
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property	26	29	24	26	32	34	35	28
Unweighted base	10,059	14,520	7,978	14,937	9,663	32,824	36,450	37,891

Why, then, have perceived disorders worsened while crime has reduced since 1995? There are, of course, two possible underlying factual possibilities here. They are:

*First*, the public has correctly perceived the level of local disorders, which really have increased, although crime has receded;

*Secondly*, the public is wrong; anti-social behaviours have not increased, and it is merely an anxious public which believes that they have increased.

It is impossible from the BCS data themselves to sort out which of these possibilities is more likely to be correct. However, in general, we know from previous research that usually public perceptions of local disorders bear some relation to the underlying factual situation, but that, in addition, the public tends to interpret that underlying factual situation in the context of wider understandings of a series of other matters, including especially:

- an understanding of the history of that particular area, and whether it is seen as generally speaking improving or deteriorating; and
- an understanding of the degree of social control that the authorities in the area are exercising. Do they, in short, care about residents' anxieties? Is the level of police presence adequate? Is the street lighting adequate? and so on.

In other words, overall it seems likely (though not certain) that the data in *Figure 11* are the end result of a complex mixture of processes – some increases in disorders, but often interpreted through the spectacles of residents anxious about the future of their areas. Either way, *perceived disorder* has increased even though crime has decreased, and that is an important issue in its own right.

I want now to turn to an ongoing research project in England which helps to throw some further light on these matters. The research was born out of discussions between the Chief Constable of Surrey (a county in the south of England, close to London) and researchers at his local university, the University of Surrey. These discussions took as their starting point the facts, highlighted above, about the decline in crime and continuing public beliefs in high crime, plus other evidence about the public's fear of crime. From these initial discussions, the researchers (Fielding and Innes 2002) developed the concept of 'signal crimes'. Essentially, Fielding and Innes argued that different crimes and disorders might have differential effects in what they signify to a wider audience in terms of fear, to the general public.<sup>1</sup> For example, three spouse murders in a smallish town in a year would be unusual, but would not necessarily create widespread fear in

<sup>1</sup> Or, more technically, there are 'social semiotic processes by which particular types of criminal and disorderly conduct [can] have a disproportionate effect upon fear of crime' (Innes and Fielding 2002: Abstract).

the community at large, because they would be seen as 'private matters'; but the abduction and murder of a local schoolgirl on her way to school would almost certainly generate a much more powerful signal of fear throughout the community. Following this general logic, the key question in considering the apparently persisting sense of public anxiety (see above) becomes: 'what is sending signals fuelling the high public anxiety about crime in Britain today?'

These basic ideas have more recently been developed by Martin Innes into some formal definitions, in which the concept of 'risk' has replaced the concept of 'fear of crime'. This change has occurred because Innes's more recent work focuses particularly upon the general public's perception of neighbourhood safety, and 'risk' is therefore now primarily understood as a *perceived potential threat to neighbourhood safety*. The key formal definitions are:

- (i) A *signal crime* is a criminal incident that acts as a warning signal to people about the presence of risk.
- (ii) A *signal disorder* is a form of disorderly conduct that indicates to people the presence of risk. Signal disorders are either 'physical', involving degradation to the environment; or 'social', involving behaviour.
- (iii) A *control signal* is an act of social control that communicates an attempt to regulate disorderly and deviant behaviour. Control signals can be positive or negative.

This set of concepts is now being utilised in a major operational way in a project called the National Reassurance Policing Project (NRPP) in England. As an integral part of the NRPP, detailed qualitative interviews are being conducted by the University of Surrey in sixteen areas across Britain, asking representative respondents in each area questions about what, in their particular neighbourhood, they would identify as the key potential 'risks', as defined above. The early results from such interviews in six wards are shown in *Figure 12*.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 12: National Policing Reassurance Project  
Top 'Signals' Across Trial Wards**

Ward Signal	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Drugs	Youths	Youths	Youths	Youths	Drugs
2	Youths	Litter	Graffiti, Litter & Public Urination	Vandalism & Damage	Drugs	Youths
3	Assault	Damage	Damage	Public violence & drinking	Damage & Graffiti	Public drinking
4	Burglary	Public drinking	Public violence & mugging	Racing vehicles and skateboarding	Abandoned / Racing vehicles	Anti-social neighbours
5	Mugging	Public violence and speeding	Drugs	Murder	Burglary	Damage
6	Public drinking	Verbal abuse	Burglary		Verbal abuse	Gangs

Source: University of Surrey

A number of things are striking about the information in this Figure. First, there is some significant variation by area in the details of the responses. Secondly, however, there are some common themes that clearly emerge as the first three perceived 'signals' of lack of neighbourhood safety in the six wards; namely youths, drugs, litter/graffiti, damage and public drinking. Thirdly, it is extremely interesting that burglary does not appear in the 'top three' in any of the six areas, and only features at all in three areas.

<sup>2</sup> Figure 12 is derived from a presentation made by Martin Innes at the University of Cambridge in April 2004, and is used with permission.

What explains the second and third points above? We will have to await the more detailed results of the University of Surrey's work before a definitive answer can be given, but provisionally it would seem that the answer lies in the fact that the commonly identified signals (youths, damage, drugs, etc.) all focus on what are perceived as *disorderly events occurring in public space*. Thus, perhaps, these events send a powerful message to residents (in a way that residential burglaries do not) that 'my area is out of control'.

Utilising these results, the NRPP (see above) is beginning to alter the focus of police priorities in England. Traditionally, the police have prioritised their resources on *crime fighting* – matters such as burglary, robbery, and so on – and have tended to ignore or down-play small-scale local disorders. The realisation that small-scale local disorder can actually lead to very significant public anxiety about living in the area – often more so than a spate of burglaries do – is leading to a shifting of police priorities towards a focus on disorders. It is described as a kind of 'bottom up' policing – delivering to local publics the policing that they actually want in their local area.

As I indicated earlier, a traditional phrase used in England to discuss crime issues is the phrase 'law and order'. Analysts have, however, realised for a long time that the two concepts are not synonymous – that, for example, the over-zealous enforcement of the law can result in a sense of resentment in some of those policed, which can ultimately provoke violent disorder. Holding 'the proper enforcement of the law' and 'the maintenance of order' together can therefore entail maintaining a delicate balance. There has sometimes been a temptation, in police circles, to emphasise law enforcement and forget the importance of order maintenance. But recent experience in England suggests that order maintenance can, in our rapidly-changing social world, actually be of special importance to local residents. The evidence certainly also is that while crime is going down, there remain significant problems, in England, with order maintenance. All this strongly reinforces the point that I made at the beginning of this paper, namely that, even in a society where *community*, as traditionally understood, is weakening in importance, the *safety of places* remains a vital consideration.

#### IV. CONTEMPORARY CRIME AND SOCIAL ORDER – THE POLICY RESPONSE

So far, I have discussed some aspects of the changing nature of societies, and I have also considered evidence about crime and social disorder.

The brief for this paper suggests that I should also discuss 'measures which have been taken' or 'that can be taken' by current criminal justice systems, or by crime prevention strategies, in the face of the rising crime and disorder associated with late modernity.

In the course of a single introductory paper, it is of course possible only briefly to outline some of these policy responses. In this brief outline, I shall consider the responses under three headings – the criminal justice system, policing and crime prevention.

As regards the *criminal justice system*, there are two matters in particular that I need to highlight. The first of these is (in some but not all jurisdictions) the response of a massive increase in the use of imprisonment. This response has, of course, been particularly prominent in the United States, but on a smaller scale it is very evident also in England. Other 'late modern' Western countries such as Germany have, however, followed such policies to a much more limited extent, and the reasons for these interesting cross-jurisdictional differences have been examined only to a limited extent.

In the case of England and Wales, it is clear that the greatly increased use of imprisonment in the last decade, precisely at a time of falling crime rates, means that the average person sent to prison now is sent for a more minor crime than would have been the case ten years ago. Essentially, what is happening here is that the increased anxiety of the public is picked up by the media, which tends then to focus on stories which concern the public a great deal, such as prominent 'signal crimes', or allegedly dangerous offenders living in the community without proper controls. These stories in turn, in a kind of vicious circle, tend further to increase public anxiety. Politicians, who have to present policies with a view (at least partly) to electoral success, then tend to emphasise their more punitive policies, and to place less public emphasis on their less punitive policies. This general mood is then transmitted also to the judges and magistrates, who make increasing use of imprisonment. The increased use of imprisonment has had some incapacitative effect, but

it does not of itself explain most of the reduction in crime that has occurred in recent years, either in the United States or in England. The increased use of imprisonment is of course also expensive, and that is now leading, in England, to governmental attempts to limit any further increases in the use of imprisonment.

The other recent criminal justice system response that I would like to highlight concerns the increasing use of *offender-behaviour programmes*, particularly those based on cognitive-behavioural principles. These are important not only in terms of their use within criminal justice systems, but also because of their potential use for 'at risk' children, a group that I shall consider more fully in my second paper. England and Wales is one of the jurisdictions which has promoted the development of offender-behaviour programmes most fully within the criminal justice system. Its experience contains a salutary lesson. The scientific evidence is that such programmes can reduce recidivism significantly, by perhaps 8 percentage points. However, recent evaluations of such programmes, as applied routinely in England and Wales, suggest much less promising results. This is very probably because of the so-called 'roll-out' problem; that is, that although programmes are successful when they are delivered by well-trained and enthusiastic staff, when the same programmes are 'rolled out' on a larger scale, and necessarily delivered by less expert and probably less committed staff, their impact can diminish.

The second set of policy responses that I want to consider are those of the *police*. Essentially, three main responses have been attempted in this field. The first concerns *technological innovation*, and the appropriate use of technology. There is no doubt that this is often helpful, but it needs to be put in perspective. For example, in the 1970s in England there was a major move to switch from foot patrols to mobile patrols in order to achieve fast response. Fast response was achieved, but at the expense of a diminution in police-community contacts, which in turn led to less public trust in the police than before, a situation that has had to be corrected by a series of subsequent attempts to reverse matters by listening more closely to public concerns (see the discussion of 'Reassurance policing' above). One major gain from technological innovation is, however, the ability to analyse data much more easily than before, and this has led to the concept of *problem-oriented policing* which, the evidence suggests, holds much promise. The second major police response is *community policing*, and it would be fair to say that many police services are still working out how best to balance technological developments and community policing. The third response relating to policing, much evident in England recently but very difficult to deal with effectively, is to focus attention on the declining detection rate (*Figures 7 and 8*) and to attempt to improve it. Theoretically, this is a sound strategy, because the evidence from deterrence research is that a higher probability of apprehension and/or conviction does have deterrent effects – substantially more so than increasing penalties. The ability to process DNA samples is of course very helpful in the quest for improved detection, but reversing the trends of previous years remains a major challenge.

All three of these police-related developments (technology, community policing and 'narrowing the justice gap') can be seen to be intimately linked to the development of, and the characteristics of, late modernity.

I turn finally to *organised crime prevention* as a response to late modern conditions. This is in itself a remarkable phenomenon; there is no doubt that formally organised crime prevention activities are now much more prominent in most countries than they were thirty years ago, and this is a matter that my colleague Professor Paul Wiles and I first linked to the concept of late modernity in a paper nearly ten years ago. In that paper, we emphasised that organised crime prevention is partly a product of the public sector, but also partly a result of private sector initiatives. In the second category, for example, one could point to the increased sale of alarms and personal protection; the increased use of CCTV in private places such as large shops; and the development of what has been called 'mass private property', that is, large spaces to which the public is welcomed, but where the whole area is privately owned (for example, large shopping complexes and theme parks). The fact that the property is private means that, in such spaces, the owners can legally exclude persons whom they consider to be undesirable, and they can also introduce their own rules about how people should behave in the complex, at risk of exclusion. (There is a famous article about this by Clifford Shearing and Philip Stenning, on social control in a Disney complex.) The evidence is that the public prefer 'mass private property' shopping areas to traditional high-street shopping – the main perceived advantages are convenience (for example, in car parking) but also, and crucially for our purposes, advantages of personal security.

So, both the public and the private sector have seen an increase in consciously-organised crime prevention in recent years. What forms have these taken? In our 1996 article, Paul Wiles and I characterised them into four main types (see *Figure 13*). First, there are various forms of defensive strategy such as target hardening – these initiatives are very predominantly ‘situational crime prevention’ measures. Secondly, there are new forms of *guardianship and monitoring*. We selected here three particular developments – the growth of mass private property, the development of CCTV in public places (which has proliferated very extensively in Britain since we wrote our paper), and the growth of alternatives to the public police. This last development has been very evident in Britain in recent years, as local authorities have increasingly appointed persons such as ‘antisocial behaviour officers’ and ‘community wardens’ to help with social control in difficult residential areas, and to help to meet the apparently insatiable public demand for a greater sense of security in their local areas. The police, too, now have a group specifically linked to them, known as ‘police community support officers’, who are part of the police organisation but have fewer legal powers than police officers.

**Figure 13: Some Features of Organised Crime Prevention Activities in Contemporary Societies**

**DEFENSIVE STRATEGIES**

Opportunity reduction, e.g. car steering locks, ‘target hardening’  
Alarms, Personal Protection  
Internal CCTV (in stores, etc.)  
Defensive community strategies, e.g. neighbourhood watch

**GUARDIANSHIP AND MONITORING**

Growth of alternatives to public police  
CCTV in public places  
Development of ‘mass private property’

**CREATION OF NEW FORMS OF SOCIAL ORDER**

Formal multi-agency partnerships  
Segregation and exclusion strategies  
Changed perception of social harms, leading to new kinds of crime prevention initiative, e.g. re drink driving, family violence and abuse

**CRIMINALITY PREVENTION**

Pre-school programmes  
Youth Action programmes and equivalent

Source: adapted from A Bottoms and P Wiles, “Understanding crime prevention in late modern societies” in T Bennett (ed.), *Preventing Crime and Disorder: Targeting Strategies and Responsibilities* (Cambridge Cropwood Series 1996), pp. 1-41.

Thirdly, Paul Wiles and I drew attention to the creation of *new forms of social order*, of which the most prominent, in Britain, is the so-called local ‘crime and disorder partnership’. These existed at the time of our paper, but in a voluntary form. Since 1998, however, every local authority area in England and Wales has been obliged by statute to create one of these partnerships. The partnerships involve a range of agencies – the police, the local government authority, education, housing, social services, and so on – and they are required to develop analyses of crime in their areas, and to coordinate plans for crime reduction.

The final category which Paul Wiles and I discussed was *criminality prevention programmes*, focused on those deemed to be at risk of becoming offenders. We highlighted pre-school programmes and youth action programmes, but since that date many other initiatives focused on ‘at risk’ children have been developed.

Taken together, these four main developments in organised crime prevention constitute a fairly major social transformation. They are both a response to, and themselves part of, the developing social world of late modernity.

**V. SOME THEORETICAL ISSUES**

In this final part of my paper, I would like to introduce you to some theoretical concepts related to late modernity. These concepts, in my view, may be of assistance in helping you to think about what is possible, and what is not possible, in terms of contemporary crime prevention. Necessarily, I shall have to be highly selective, so I will focus on only three issues.

First, I would like to consider what I regard as the extremely helpful characterisation, by the British sociologist Anthony Giddens, of what he describes as ‘environments of trust in pre-modern and modern societies’. Human beings are profoundly social creatures; anthropologists tell us that they are virtually never found living alone. The social life of humans is, therefore, intensely important to them; but it is also very complex. How do I know what Mr X really thinks of me? Can I trust Mrs Y to do what she has said she will do on my behalf?

The concept of *trust* is, as these examples, indicate, of profound importance to ongoing human social life. Giddens suggests that the nature of trust profoundly shifted as European societies moved from the pre-modern to the modern era – and, by definition, in ‘late modern’ societies the characteristics of modernity have become more overt and apparent. *Figure 14* summarises Giddens’s position. At the top of the Figure, we note his suggestion that in pre-modern societies – continuing, of course, into many contexts of modernity such as rural villages – the ‘general social context’ is of the ‘overriding importance of localized trust’. This is then manifested in particular in three ways, all of which reproduce and consolidate localized trust; they are kinship relations (including extended as well as nuclear families), the local community itself, and religious cosmologies.

**Figure 14: Characterization of Environments of Trust in Pre-modern and Modern Societies**

<b>Pre-Modern</b>	<b>Modern</b>
<i>General context: overriding importance of localized trust</i>	<i>General context: trust relations vested in disembedded abstract systems</i>
1. <i>Kinship relations</i> as an organizing device for stabilizing social ties across time-space	1. <i>Personal relationships</i> of friendship or sexual intimacy as means of stabilizing social ties
2. <i>The local community as a place</i> , providing a familiar milieu	2. <i>Abstract systems</i> as a means of stabilizing relations across indefinite spans of time–space
3. <i>Religious cosmologies</i> as modes of belief and ritual practice providing a providential interpretation of human life and of nature	3. <i>Future-oriented</i> , counter-factual thought as a mode of connecting past and present
4. <i>Tradition</i> as a means of connecting present and future, past-oriented in reversible time	

Source: A. Giddens (1990), *The Consequences of Modernity*, p. 102.

Giddens’s suggestion is that in modernity, and even more in late modernity, the general context of trust shifts so that, increasingly, trust relations move away from localized trust and into ‘trust relations vested in disembedded abstract systems’. Many examples could be given of this: Giddens’s own example is of getting on an aeroplane, where it is necessary to trust many things (the engineers, the flight computer, the pilot’s training, the air traffic controllers, and so on), but none of these are localized or interpersonal. Rather, we trust the *abstract systems* of the computer programmes, the pilot’s training course, and so on.

Of course, personal relationships in such societies continue to exist alongside trust in abstract systems. But increasingly, our identity is not so much made for us by the context into which we were born (we are not, for ever, one of the Smith family from Wyboston village); rather, we move around more frequently, creating *and choosing* friendship relations, and relationships of sexual intimacy, to a greater extent than in

the more static pre-modern world. Hence the increasing social atomization referred to in the Rationale for this International Seminar. But although this kind of very fluid and flexible society gives us, as individuals, much more freedom than we had before, it can also create considerable anxieties as we seek to navigate our way through a complex world where social interaction is necessary for everyday life, but the patterning of that life is not nearly as fixed as it was in an earlier era. These anxieties Giddens describes as *ontological insecurity*, that is, insecurities that can cut right to the heart of ourselves as social beings. This analysis has obvious links with the research findings from the University of Surrey previously described – it is the *safe and predictable negotiation of public space* which is so important to residents in the achievement of neighbourhood safety, and where this is not available, there can be genuine insecurity. So, Giddens's analysis helps us to understand, I believe, why it is not just crime that matters in our contemporary late modern societies, but disorder.

I have so far not commented on the final entry in each of the two columns in *Figure 14*. I have to confess that they are written in an extremely obscure way. Nevertheless, what Giddens is saying here is profoundly important. In pre-modern societies, *tradition* connects past, present and future. Traditional ways of farming, courtship, burial and so on are handed down from generation to generation. Fathers teach sons, and mothers teach daughters, that 'this is the way we do things', and so tradition (the past) becomes part of the present, as it is faithfully reproduced. Moreover, tradition is regarded also as a good guide to actions to be taken in the future. Customs are sometimes changed; but the importance of tradition creates considerable feelings of stability.

By contrast with a village chief in pre-modern times, late modern managing directors of businesses very rarely say that the past is a good guide to the future. Rather, they create 'corporate plans' and 'business plans', based on what they regard as the *strengths* and *weaknesses* of their organisation, and a careful analysis of the *opportunities* and *threats* it may face in the future. (These are known as 'SWOT analyses'.) Thus, there is a deliberate element of future projection in the creation of corporate and business plans; future risks are assessed, and, so far as possible, measures are taken to reduce those risks, and to seize opportunities for advancement of the goals of the organisation. But next month, there may be some external event that will throw all these calculations into doubt; then one has to reassess the potential opportunities and threats. It is, accordingly, a continuous process of looking into the future, and adjusting plans as one goes along. All this has, you will notice, a great deal in common with the experimental method in science, which is why Giddens is right to say that the switch from the trust in tradition to the trust in 'future-oriented counter-factual thought' is an integral feature of the move from pre-modern to modern to late modern societies.

At the beginning of this section, I indicated that I would consider three theoretical contributions. The second of these is to be found in the work of the Dutch criminologist Hans Boutellier (2000), who has focused attention in particular on the question why, in contemporary Western societies, victim-oriented approaches are of growing importance in criminal justice. The Restorative Justice movement is, in many countries, a particularly prominent example of this trend, but in most Western countries there have been many other victim-oriented developments. In England, for example, since 1970 we have seen a greater encouragement to courts to use compensation and reparation orders; the introduction of consultations with victims and their families before offenders who have committed serious crimes are released from prison; the development of a national network of Victim Support Services; strong encouragement to police and prosecutors to keep victims informed about the progress of a prosecution; and so on. Boutellier's argument is that all this is connected to a shift in the understanding of morality in the contemporary world. Fixed 'codes' of morals, such as the Judaic Ten Commandments, no longer attract majority support, and moral judgements on many issues are more contested than they used to be. In this situation, members (especially younger members) of contemporary societies can relate much more easily, morally speaking, to the real sufferings of a flesh-and-blood victim than they can to an abstract moral code. On this reading, restorative justice – especially where the victim is actively involved in the proceedings – is attractive in social policy terms because the tangible loss and injury suffered by the victim helps to provide an element of *moral clarification* in an uncertain situation. More generally, supporting and protecting the victim is seen to be a way of buttressing the norms of our late modern world. None of us wants to be a victim, so this focus on and support for the victim is a way of emphasising what has been called the 'negative golden rule' in ethics: i.e. don't do to others what you don't want done to yourself.

My third and final theoretical dimension concerns *managerialism*, which is a very pervasive feature of criminal justice services in many late modern societies. The reasons for the growth of managerialism are not hard to discern: as societies become less able to achieve order through informal and self-regulatory community social controls, there is a natural tendency to try to 'manage' desirable outcomes, using of course the data increasingly available to senior managers through modern information technology.

**Figure 15: Aspects of Managerialism in Contemporary Public Services**

- 1. Efficiency and effectiveness**
- 2. Systemic approach, including:**
  - (i) inter-agency co-operation**
  - (ii) identification of targets and Key Performance Indicators**
  - (iii) aggregate thinking, hence individual as a 'unit within a framework of policy'**
- 3. Actuarial approach to risk management**
- 4. Consumerist dimension**

In *Figure 15* I have listed four key aspects of contemporary managerialism. The first is a stress on *efficiency* (delivery of services for the lowest unit cost) and *effectiveness* (delivery of services to meet certain specified organisational objectives). Clearly, both of these objectives require good information technology. Then, secondly, and arising from the first point, there is an increasing tendency to think of the criminal justice system *as a system*, a mode of thought that has profound consequences. As a Dutch scholar put it as long ago as 1986, perhaps in a slightly exaggerated way, but making an important point nonetheless:

Criminal policy is no longer occupied primarily with concrete offenders, nor with problems of doing justice, but with the management of the aggregate phenomena of social activity, with criteria for selective law enforcement, with quantitative regulation in the organisational processing of offenders (Peters 1986, p. 32).

Within such systems, so-called 'organisational targets' or 'key performance indicators', imposed by governments, become of overriding importance, and the individual offender is increasingly viewed as a unit within the conceptual framework of the organisational policy. Also, various criminal justice agencies are urged to work more closely together than they have done before, in order to deliver overall system goals set by the government.

The target-oriented character of modern organisations obliges them always to be thinking about future performance, a point that links strongly with Giddens's discussion of the importance of abstract systems and future-oriented goals in late modern societies (see above). As we saw earlier, such modes of thought produce a strong tendency for *future risk* to become a dominant concept in thinking of contemporary managers, and in the criminal justice system this takes the form of an increasing preoccupation with the *future risks* posed by offenders. Complex actuarial systems assessing offenders' future risks are now routinely built into some criminal justice systems, including that in England and Wales; though how these link with more community-oriented initiatives such as restorative Justice is still being worked out.

Finally, in modern organisations there is a strong tendency to want to carry out surveys of 'customer satisfaction'. In the criminal justice system, the offender is rarely seen as a legitimate customer, but victims and the general public certainly are, and their views are regularly sought in both national and local surveys. This is, of course, an offshoot of the 'consumer culture' previously described.

## VI. CONCLUSION

At an early point in this paper, I briefly discussed the suggestion (in the Rationale of this International Seminar) that increasing social atomization is leading to the weakening of normative consciousness in societies. In a context such as that of Japan, which in recent years has seen significant crime rate rises, this is a very natural hypothesis to raise; and, as I have indicated, a very similar suggestion was made by The Netherlands Government in 1986, and widely accepted by other commentators.

However, the decreases in crime since 1986, in a number of Western countries including Britain, raise important questions about this hypothesis, at least as regards the longer term. Here there is an intriguing, but I have to admit wholly speculative, possibility. Following the social upheavals of the Industrial Revolution, crime in England eventually declined in the early twentieth century, after a new urban form of social organisation had developed. Perhaps something similar is occurring now in the West – that following the upheavals of the arrival of ‘late modernity’, and the weakening of traditional norms that it created, we are now working out a new way of living in late modernity, with a new kind of normativity. I repeat that this is speculative, but it perhaps gives us something to build upon as we think about crime prevention in the twenty-first century. In doing so, however, it is important to remember the lesson of an earlier part of this paper, which is that even if *crime* is decreasing, we need to pay close attention to *local social disorders*, which may be just as much (or even more) a matter of concern for local residents.