

Community Security: The Irish Problem

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Abstract: Consideration of some theoretical literature on community involvement in crime control is useful in clarifying the ultimate objectives of such schemes. Characteristic of crime in Ireland is the high incidence of offences against property rather than against the person, together with the failure of the Criminal Justice System to address them effectively. It is argued here that while modern society lacks the bonding of traditional solidarity, it nevertheless possesses a reciprocal-associational solidarity that could lend itself to a communal approach to crime control. The mutual aim of avoidance of economic loss may account for the motivational factor.

I INTRODUCTION

The current interest in the concept of community involvement in crime control derives not solely from disillusion with the performance of the state agencies in combating crime. Citizen awareness has also focused on their increasing vulnerability to diverse forms of property crime ranging from petty larceny to robbery, sometimes accompanied by threats to personal safety. These pressures have generated a certain urgency regarding the adoption of measures which might lead to a decrease in crime levels. In any community policing scheme the differential distribution of responsibility and authority between police and community poses a consensual dilemma, resolution of which requires adequate debate on the fundamental assumptions underlying the concept of community policing itself. It further requires considered analysis before a system suitable to Irish society can be fully drafted.

In this paper I will argue that in the Irish situation the option of community control of crime may prove to be a viable alternative with which to deal with escalating crime levels. Two factors characteristic of crime in Ireland suggest this: (a) the high incidence of crimes against property as opposed to

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interpersonal violence; (b) the lack of success achieved by strategies in the Criminal Justice System to effectively address the problem. This failure, both substantively and procedurally, is evident at all levels of the system: the declining detection rates by the police, the backlog of cases for adjudication by the district court especially, together with the incidence of recidivism among those detected, adjudicated and convicted to custodial sentences.

Research findings on criminal activity in Ireland point to the "unequal" treatment accorded to working-class offences, i.e., usually property crime, in contrast to predominantly middle-class offences such as price discrimination or overcharging, or pollution (Gardiner, 1984). It is the contention of this paper that community control of crime may prove to be more "oppressive" in its operation against the latter than the former contrary to what is suggested by McCullagh (1985). Before addressing these factors, and suggesting how community control of crime would operate in practical terms, it is appropriate that we take account of some relevant theoretical considerations.

II THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The key to a proposed popular justice system lies in community participation in the distribution of justice (Danzig, 1967; Fisher, 1975; McGillis and Mullen, 1977; Nonet and Selznick, 1978; Quinney, 1977; Bennett, 1983; Tift and Sullivan, 1983). Many of the ideas proposed by advocates of this radical alternative system, not only involve the community, but provide a social control network which does not rely on the traditional roles of police, adjudicatory or correctional agencies.

Quinney suggests replacing the bourgeois notion of criminal justice with popular justice, as part of a socialist revolution. Justice, according to this doctrine (Quinney, 1977), can only be approached in the pursuit of a revolutionary socialist economic structure.

Longmire (1981) contends that mobilisation toward popular justice need not be contingent on the successful overthrow of capitalism. He argues that social justice can be achieved under the political structure of participatory democracy, and that community crime control efforts provide the channel to its realisation. While anarchist writers use the term participatory democracy to connote citizen and community involvement in decision making, and administration, without a centralised state system to defer to, Longmire employs the term to represent the form of society he ultimately aspires to via the channel of community crime control. His proposal "not only encourages citizen involvement at the key decision making levels in the formal criminal justice system", but discusses also radical alternatives which question the very necessity of the formal structures. Eventually, his hope is that "the current dependence on the formal criminal

justice system may dwindle to such a degree, that it is no longer recognisable nor functional" (1981:21).

Danzig, on the other hand, set forth a model, explicitly as a complement to the existing formal system, alleging that the present system "does some things well" in spite of its faults (1967:7). Longmire, however, suggests that at best, "a formal system of control might be maintained in much less significant form than the present system", and with much less power and authority than it now exercises over the citizens' lives. In its ideal form, his system "will negate the need for coercive social control agencies, and will therefore suffice as a complete replacement for, rather than a complement to, the existing law enforcement system" (1981:22). It would appear, therefore, that Longmire's aspiration to participatory democracy is contingent on the success of community crime control, rather than community crime control being realised via this form of political participation. He emphasises that "atrophy of the coercive state controlled law enforcement system" may occur through community action rendering it superfluous.

In rejecting the retributive basis of the criminal justice system, Nonet and Selznick (1978) move this proposed system to a needs-based system of justice. This system, while allocating rewards and punishment, directly addresses the subjective "need" of both offender and victim, through the involvement of the citizenry. A system of justice will emerge that is responsive to the needs of all involved in social conflicts. The resolution of conflicts on an individualised basis will involve all of the community or neighbourhood. As Christie (1977) has argued, social conflicts will once again become the property of those involved in the disputes. This contrasts with the penal idiom of the criminal law, where more severe sentences are computed in terms of lengthier imprisonment, or more stringent pecuniary fines. Innovative ideas would be encouraged, from victims and non-victims in the community, in an effort to identify realistic methods of reward-punishment allocation.

The basic ingredients of a community network for social control are similar, regardless of whether that community is seen as complementing a state centralised system, or fully replacing it. Proponents of either system stress the evolution of a more legitimate definition of "crime" in the context of community consensus, than in a centralised system, outside the control of the majority of people.

There are two important aspects to a consensual definition of crime. The problem of achieving consensus on the seriousness of crimes in general is beset with the perils of competing ideologies at two levels. Schwartz (1978) found that law often does not correspond to commonly held standards. This questions traditional criminal theory which acknowledges the definition of crime as behaviour which is prohibited by the state, as an injury to the state, and against which the state may react, at least as a last resort, by punishment. Implicit here is

that socially harmful, against the public interest, and injury to the state are now synonymous. Many criminologists object to this definition of crime, viewing the law as it stands as a tool in the hands of an élite class, for the purpose of protecting élite interests. Property crime, which comprises the majority of indictable offences, is an example. Another common objection is methodological — the behaviours defined as criminal are not so defined because of any inherent homogeneity in the structure of the behaviours themselves, but because some external authority decrees that they should be illegal.

The traditional definition of crime is attacked because it is said to assume a societal consensus about what should be illegal, when this consensus does not exist. This can also be applied to the problem of community consensus in the context of community control of crime, and must be seen as a fundamental problem to its implementation. It occurs not only in the policing of crime but subsequently is an intrinsic factor in adjudication and disposition by the sentencer in court.

There are some areas in which considerable convergence occurs in moral standards. There is evidence, for example, that substantial consensus exists throughout the population regarding the ranking of seriousness of crimes, at least for the most serious offences (Rossi *et al.* 1974; Blumstein, 1974). Comparable findings are reported from Belgium, Holland (Van Houtte and Vinke, 1973) and Finland (Makela, 1966). Research in Britain has shown that victims of crime, when assessing suitable sentences for offenders, tended to favour the types of dispositions characteristic of state law (British Crime Survey, 1981). It has been suggested that the criminal law, at least, would be more efficient and would be perceived as more legitimate if it confined itself to those offences on which a strong and pervasive consensus exists. This position was given extensive popular currency by Morris and Hawkins (1970). Their argument develops the view stated in an earlier article by Kadish (1967) who urged that the criminal sanction be rid of the obligation imposed on it by moralistic legislation to enforce law against victimless crimes such as prostitution, consensual homosexuality, alcoholism and gambling. Kadish stresses in particular the consequences of such "overcriminalisation" for the corruption of the police, their use of informers, the dangers of entrapment, and the decline in public opinion (resulting from such practices) of the legitimacy of the criminal law.

Longmire identifies three components of the formal criminal justice system potentially replaceable by a community controlled alternative: the police, the courts, and the post-conviction agencies. Analysis of police work shows that order maintenance and service provision occupy 85 to 90 per cent of their time (Rubenstein 1973). Law enforcement is also the duty of the police. The delegation of order maintenance, and service provision functions to the community, appear to accord responsibility for these tasks where it rightfully

belongs, rather than allocating it as a responsibility of the state. In assessing the vast areas of service provision such as emergency ambulance transportation, or vehicle traffic control, which form part of daily police work, it may seem that communities, in general, have been prepared to hand over rights, privileges and duties to a formal agency. The expectation that the state must be responsible for the security of citizens and their properties has resulted in rising disappointment in recent years over its failure to do so. Coupled with this realisation is the anxiety that these threats have become so widespread.

Black's definition of social control as the normative aspect of social life, which defines and responds to deviant behaviour finds correspondence in etiquette, custom, ethics, bureaucracy and the treatment of mental illness (1976: 105). Just as law is social control among the citizens of a state, so the members of a tribe have their own social control, as do members of a family, workplace, church, clique or game. Social control is found wherever people hold each other to standards, explicitly or implicitly, consciously or not: on the street, in prison, at home, at a party. Black holds that social control is a quantitative variable, be it a community, organisation, or family. Where the informal social control of a family is strong, the formal agencies of the law are rarely called into effect. This inverse relationship, according to Black, means that law varies inversely with other social control, so that, all else constant, there is more family law in societies with comparatively weak parental authority. A natural logic predicts that the more informal social control exercised by a community, the less quantity of formal law will be required in that setting. Despite the weaknesses of Black's theory it will be argued in this article that the more informal social control a community exercises the less need there ultimately should be for invoking the formal agencies of control.

While systems of community control of crime which complement the formal agencies of the state concentrate on devolution of order maintenance and service provision to the domain of citizen responsibility, anarchists challenge also the law enforcement dimension of the formal agencies. They hold that the actual law enforcement function of today's policeman could be performed by a community tribunal. This would comprise of a group of elected community members, whose length of service in that capacity would be limited, thus necessitating a rotating membership of the tribunal. This body is envisaged as serving a pivotal function in the community oriented social justice system, in that the formal systems' adjudicatory and correctional roles would be delegated to the tribunal. The tribunal's foremost function is seen as serving as a mediation point for community members to air interpersonal grievances, and obtain resolutions to disputes severe enough to enter the tribunal's agenda. A community mediator, appointed by the tribunal, would deal with less serious community disputes and disagreements.

Anthropologically, this post resembles that of the monkalun, or mediator,

among the Ifugao of the Philippines (Barton, 1919: 87), the dominant feature being his total lack of power. This idea of a mediator, or one who acts as a peace-making go-between, contrasts with the modern "arbitrator", who in similar circumstances, has the responsibility to impose conditions of resolution on conflicting parties. It also invokes a conciliatory process, rather than accusatory. This mediator would be resident in the community, and trained in dispute settlement techniques and interpersonal relations. A rule of minimal interference might encourage community members to settle disputes themselves, without mediation being necessary. However, if a disputant requires third party assistance, this role is available at local level. Only if the community mediator proves unable to handle satisfactorily a given problem, will the tribunal be involved.

An important function of this tribunal is seen as overseeing not only the community mediator, and service workers, but also the formal law enforcers in the area. This "ombudsman" approach, increasing interrelations between community and formal agencies, may be seen as an intermediate phase, with power evolving gradually to the informal community side, in local conflict resolution. The eventual superfluity of the state agencies is contingent on the success of the tribunal, mediator, and citizens' participation in community control of crime.

In America, all these efforts have been supported by, and in some instances initiated by, the formal representatives of the criminal justice system. Based on pragmatic concerns such as court backlog, the formal system is seeking informal, community based alternatives to itself.

There appears to be a diminishing margin of difference between proponents of community control of crime with and without final resort to a state agency. Anarchists predicate the success of their proposals for community crime control in a participatory democratic system, on the absence of state, law and the repressive coercion of a police force, while those who favour a community network complementing the state agencies see citizen involvement at all levels as providing community security within a democratic system while retaining a state framework.

III HIGH INCIDENCE OF PROPERTY CRIME

The NESCS (1984) study on the Criminal Justice System focuses on two of the most common criminal offences: Burglary and Robbery, and contrasts trends in the numbers of offences with trends in the amount of property loss sustained. Burglary and Robbery are selected as the most reliable indices of criminal offence.

The national pattern that emerges shows a sharp increase in burglaries after 1979. Significantly, when studying the value of property stolen through burglaries it is clear that the loss inflicted through burglaries in money terms rose

much more steeply than the number of burglaries. This indicates a more sophisticated pattern of crime.

The changing pattern, however, is primarily an urban one. Outside of the five largest centres, the sheer increase in numbers of burglaries was the major change. Dublin was the location for 54 per cent of all burglaries in 1976 and 51 per cent in 1981. The trend in the value of stolen property was such that £68 out of every £100 lost through burglary, in 1981, was in Dublin. Detection rates for burglary, although falling, have been consistently higher in Dublin than in other parts of the country. Robbery also is accepted as a reasonable index of both the prevalence and seriousness of crime. Geographically, robbery is predominantly urban and Dublin based. The 1976-1981 increases in the number of robberies is attributable to Dublin. The bulk of property stolen was taken in Dublin, and both the numbers and real value of stolen property has been declining in the non urban areas. The concentration of robbery in Dublin is such that it was the location for 68 per cent of all recorded robberies and 66 per cent of the total value of property stolen in 1976; for 1981 the comparable figures are 80 per cent and 82 per cent.

The most recent crime statistics reinforce the trends recorded earlier. In 1984, of all offences against property with violence including robbery, 53.3 per cent were committed in the Dublin Metropolitan Area, where a falling detection rate is documented. For offences against property without violence in 1984, 62.2 per cent of these were committed in the Dublin Metropolitan Area, also accompanied by a lower detection rate than in previous years. This preponderance of offences against property in Ireland is underlined in the 1984 statistics on crime: of 99,727 offences recorded for indictable crimes, 96,948 of these were against property. In contrast, 2,331 offences against the Person were recorded. Furthermore, results from the first Irish Crime Victimization Survey in 1982/1983 (Breen and Rottman, 1985) showed that compared with the findings of the British Crime Survey, Ireland has almost twice the rate of burglary per 10,000 households than in the UK, and a rate of vehicle theft that is twice that of the UK. The ESRI (1985) Survey concluded that the incidence of some major forms of property crime is higher here than in Great Britain. It also found an apparently low level of assaultive offences, and the level of homicide, which cannot be challenged by the results of victimisation surveys, appears to be lower than in Britain, and to be low by international standards generally (O'Reilly, 1983; Breen and Rottman, 1985).

Criminal Justice System

The first observation that clearly emerges is that, as Jenkins (1980) points out: most offenders go free. This is increasingly evident, both by the low level of crime detection, and more obviously by the inability of the criminal justice system to effectively deal with offenders who are detected and prosecuted.

Zander (1979) deduced from a sample of cases tried at the Old Bailey, that the police are primarily successful where an accused is identifiable from the outset, where the public are co-operative in coming forward as witnesses, and where the offenders co-operate by providing confessions. A large number of offences remain "uncleared up" by the police, and of course, a far larger number are never even reported (Farrington, 1973). Much of this British, as well as American, research tends to suggest the majority of offences detected are ones which solve themselves. The Rand Corporation Study (Greenwood, 1977) of 25 police departments in the United States of America, showed that the serious crime which was solved, was solved through information received from the public. Here, 50 per cent of offences were detected because someone, either the victim or a witness, told the police who committed the offence, through identification of the suspect. Many offences are solved by routine clerical work, like checking licence numbers. Only about 3 per cent of arrests result from special investigatory efforts where organisation, training or skill could make any conceivable difference (Greenwood, 1979). Skills, such as questioning, were found to solve only 10 per cent of crime studied by Wald *et al.* (1967) in the New Haven Study. This low level of importance attributed to use of skills results from the inability of police to collect enough evidence to even arrest a suspect, unless he is caught red-handed, or unless witnesses are available and willing to give evidence.

British research tends to support the idea that the investigative work of the police can only contribute in a minor way to apprehending criminals. For instance, Steer (1980) found that 57 per cent of offenders were caught either committing a crime, being at, or close to, the scene of the crime, or because the police were given their identity by victims or witnesses. Softley's (1980) research supports this finding as also does Mawby (1979), who found that 60 per cent of offences were detected by information supplied by civilians in Sheffield. It does appear, though, that this rate of success may be more prevalent in offences against the person, or face-to-face robbery. McCullagh (1984), examining evidence from British and American sources on crime detection, with reference to the merits of extending police powers in the Irish Criminal Justice Bill, concluded that most offences are cleared up without any investigative effort by the police. While this claim may have some basis in regard to offences against the person, it is unlikely that it could be applied unequivocally to offences against property. However, it is increasingly evident that the preventive and detective success in relation to these offences has much to do with ordinary citizens' co-operation.

Recidivism

In Ireland in 1976, the number of persons committed to prison who had previously served prison sentences was 62 per cent. Over half of these people had

served from 6, to more than 20 sentences, previously. This trend continued up until 1981. This recidivist rate means that only 40 per cent of people are serving a first sentence in these years. This figure has fallen, however for 1980 and 1981, where 35 per cent and 34 per cent of offenders had not served sentences previously (Annual Report on Prisons, 1976-1982). With only a third of offenders serving a first sentence, it appears that almost two-thirds of prisoners are habitual offenders. It is possible that the elevated crime rate of recent years is the product of an increasingly professional and sophisticated criminal population, whose prolific performance is reflected in higher incidence rates, rather than in the numerical expansion of that population.

Not only does imprisonment appear to have failed to curb the crime rate in Ireland, but the policy of imprisonment may actually contribute to it. Given the high rate of recidivism, it is evident that offenders have not been dissuaded from engaging in criminal activity. Rather, it would seem that Sutherland's theory of subcultural "differential association" (1963) may prove useful in analysing the recidivist rate noted. Techniques learnt through professional, criminal guidance, may provide encouragement for first offenders to become more proficient at their art. Allied to this, is the possibility that criminals have become so expert, that offences formerly perpetrated with violence, can now be achieved without violence. Thus the reduction of the prison population is seen as an essential first step, if only to halt the professionalisation of criminals, through sub-cultural contact in prison.

Many new forms of sentence have been identified to save offenders going to prison. Probation, suspended and deferred sentences, day centres and community service orders, as well as parole, are measures which can result in many prisoners completing sentences within the community. There is evidence to support the idea that longer sentences do not necessarily prove a deterrent, and, in Holland, where shorter sentences are employed, there was no increase in recidivism (Tulkens, 1979).

Examining the characteristics of the prison population reinforces the potential for community control and the use of community service orders. The majority of prison committals are young people, guilty of relatively less serious offences. Almost half of all inmates are in the category offences against property without violence, made up largely of larceny and trespass, receiving stolen goods, or car thefts (NESC, 1984). Offences against the person comprised around one-sixth of all committals, underlining the theory that while the incidence of property offences causes concern, that of assaultive offences is as yet considered normal. Offences against property with violence accounted for one-ninth of prison admissions, with robbery, malicious damage and burglary the main charges. Paralleling this incidence of property offences is the increase in the prison population in recent years. Numerically the prison population has grown by 50 per cent in the last decade, while the increase of prison officers, by 500 per

cent, is even more dramatic. The cost per prisoner in 1983 is in the region of £430 per week, or over £22,000 per annum. While international comparisons reveal Irish use of imprisonment as moderate, nevertheless the tendency exists towards imprisonment for short sentences and relatively less serious offences. In 1982 there were almost 1,300 early unsupervised releases compared with just over 3,500 committals, early release being used as the main alternative to overcrowding (NESC, 1984).

IV SUGGESTIONS FOR COMMUNITY SCHEMES IN IRELAND

In Ireland, efforts to involve communities in crime control are directed towards ensuring property security for the citizens rather than attempting to evolve an anarchistic social milieu, as some theorists appear to favour. Thus, the organisation envisaged would strive to provide local services as a complement to, rather than replacing, state social control.

Schemes which predicate their functional efficiency on their community base and membership must address the following considerations:

- (1) Who should organise them?
- (2) What format and what back up services such as courts and prisons would be utilised?
- (3) Would it differ, in operation, from the state system?

(1) The established knowledge and expertise of the police favour their initial directorship both in organisation and control of community schemes. While the functioning unit might, at first, require the guidance and supervision of the formal police personnel, ultimately its own efficiency should enable the gradual devolution of control to the community. Admittedly an increase in formal state control may appear paradoxical in conjunction with increased community informal control. However, the effective exercise of self-control by the latter should ultimately relegate the former to the domain of final, rather than first, resort in resolving problems of social control.

(2) and (3) For practical purposes, the divisions by electoral wards could provide the basis for community "units", in contrast to traditional sociological definitions of community. Smaller subdivisions by residential propinquity would further facilitate effective property monitoring. Communal action addressing the protection of personal properties need not be dependent on friendship or other traditional ties or bonds. Rather, it would find its strength in the "norm of reciprocity", or associational bonding essential to this contractual defence of individual possessions. Community defence to property crime may indeed be more amenable to this reciprocal bartering by citizens.

Community self-protection against interpersonal violence, on the other hand, is permeated with difficulties, not least of which is the emergence of vigilante groups. Community spirit, in the context of property security draws on

contractual, material interests, and would thus not need to appeal to altruistic instincts, being predominantly economic in nature. The execution of the community scheme could be effected by the appointment of a community mediator, and the establishment of a community tribunal. This latter would be manned by the citizens resident in the community, on a rotational basis, by random selection. The interests of householders, business and community public services would be proportionally represented.

Problems arising in the community would be dealt with by the community mediator, in the first instance. Failure to find resolution at this level would lead to the tribunal adjudicating the conflict. As outlined in Section 2 above, the ethos fundamental to this post would be conciliatory. However, in the event of the tribunal failing to achieve reconciliation of demands and needs, ultimate recourse to the formal state apparatus at district court level seems appropriate. While hitherto, most of these community conflicts might be channelled to the district court, the use of a community mediator and tribunal should substantially reduce the current backlog of district court work. Additionally, the introduction, here, of lay magistrates might improve the acceptability of the adjudication process, while acknowledging citizen involvement in the formal court proceedings.

A move toward local prisons is advocated by some who regard prisons as part of what Slater (1974) calls "The Toilet Assumption". He believes that ideas about institutionalising the aged, psychotic, the retarded and infirm, are based on the notion that unwanted matter, unwanted difficulties, unwanted complexities and obstacles will disappear if they are removed from our immediate field of vision. However, substitution of community service orders for custodial sentences for all but the most serious crimes such as armed robbery or murder, could obviate the need for extensive prison accommodation. The state prison system could fulfil the function for those for whom only custodial sentencing is seen as appropriate.

The contention that community policing may lead to "oppression of the poor" implying that it might not be in the interests of the working class should be addressed (McCullagh, 1985). This anxiety arises from the identification of dominant forms of community crime with petty larceny, housebreaking and robbery. Burglary and robbery, traditional indicators of crime trends (NESC, 1985) are also traditionally associated with offenders of lower socio-economic status (Gardiner, 1984). It seems inevitable, therefore, that surveillance in the context of the proposals should fall more frequently on this section of the community.

It logically follows, however, that should community crime of a white-collar nature such as overcharging or price offences by traders, or pollution, become a focus for community surveillance, then close scrutiny of the middle classes would ensue. While a community scheme should provide equally fruitful results in

monitoring these areas, it is not presently included. It might be argued that this omission should be redressed in any future drafts of community policing schemes. With the removal of price ceilings on certain goods and the withdrawal of Maximum Prices Orders by the National Prices Commission, the price of many commodities, including foodstuffs, are no longer subject to statutory limits. The market system, and retail competition are adjudged as innate checks on unfair trading practices. The potential vulnerability of the consumer, especially the low-income consumer, to price discrimination indicates the value of a community monitoring scheme in this area.

Two further aspects of the current detection and disposition of these latter offences serve to underline the value of a community scheme addressing this area. While price offences and community pollution are subject to the criminal law in the same manner as offences against property, their monitoring and detection are effected not by the police, but by special agencies i.e. price inspectors and pollution officers. It also appears that, on adjudication, the tendency for offences against property to involve custodial sentencing, contrasts with the imposition of fines for offences against the consumer, or pollution. Suggestions that a reversal of this penal philosophy might be pragmatic are based on the theory that custodial sentences are frequently disposed on citizens whose liberty, it is suggested, may matter little to them. Imposition of monetary fines as penalty for white-collar offences is subject to similar criticism. However, having earlier repudiated the penal idiom of incarceration as fundamentally erroneous, innovation in differential methods of correction must be attempted. The introduction of Community Service Orders provides an alternative to custodial dispositions. Other correctional methods could be adopted in relevant circumstances. Publication of apology by traders or service providers in a community newspaper for contravention of the law might prove effective in reducing recidivism for these white-collar offences.

For those who support a community network addressing the problem of crime the motivation of citizens might require mobilisation. Within the hierarchical structure of capitalist society it may well be overly difficult to convince citizens, of different social strata, to join forces to protect each others' interests. Today, it is commonplace to read of tales of collective behaviour, where a man, woman or child is assaulted or murdered, while onlookers stare, or even move on. The notorious example of the Kitty Genovese case in New York in 1964, where a woman was repeatedly stabbed, and eventually murdered, watched by 38 respectable, law-abiding citizens, hardly induces optimism regarding the willingness of communities to care for the less personal effects, such as property or resources. It is often alleged that people do not want to be involved in other people's problems, even when an obviously unjust or criminal act is perpetrated on an innocent victim. While the Gesellschaft-contractual nature of modern society may be blamed for this uncaring attitude, perhaps this same characteris-

tic could motivate citizens in a scheme to protect property, where appeals to monitor personal safety might require mechanical solidarity with its cohesive bonds, the motivation to protect material interests could find correspondence in the materialistic, consumer orientation of modern society.

CONCLUSION

It is argued in this paper that community involvement in crime control offers a viable complementary, not substitutonal strategy, for combating crime in society. The high incidence of property crimes affords an opportunity for communities to engage in "reciprocal bartering" of surveillance with recourse to a community mediator, and tribunal for the resolution of disputes. The common goal of economic gain, or at least avoidance of economic loss is seen as promoting citizen interest.

It is further suggested that this contractual relationship between citizens could be extended to include monitoring of offences other than those against property, with the proposed inclusion of white-collar offences. Some consensual community-state conception of crime is assumed.

It is acknowledged that increased surveillance could result not just in lack of privacy, but indeed extend to "oppression" of individuals. Clearly, this "oppression" need not be confined to a specific social group, should a comprehensive community scheme be evolved. However, whether any social group should suffer in the pursuit of community security creates a wider philosophic problem. Ultimate resolution may lie in the choice between individual privacy and community insecurity, or individual surveillance and community security.

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