

Juvenile Justice: The Economics of Ineptitude

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During one of the remoter eras of antiquity, my childhood, there was a song that rather euphorically averred that "The best things in life are free." If one is willing to accept the validity of that thesis today, he must immediately conclude that our juvenile justice system, and the problems with which it attempts to cope, are not among the best things in life. Because of the extent and complexity of the system and its attendant problems, it is impossible to accurately compute the true cost, however, a brief review may evoke a measure of insight into both its staggering scope and our financial involvement.

NATIONAL COST

In 1950, United States citizens under the age of 18 were involved in 9.7% of all arrests for indexed crimes.¹ During that year the federal government spent little or nothing for purposes related to juvenile justice or delinquency prevention. In contrast, by 1970 the

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1. FBI, 1950 UNIFORM CRIME REPORTS 111. See Fig. 1 at 264 *infra*.

arrest rate for persons under 18 for indexed crimes had skyrocketed to 46.1%², and the financial commitment of the federal government had mushroomed to \$99,490,554.³

During the twenty years from 1950 to 1970, the United States population increased by over fifty million, or 34%.⁴ The purchasing power of the dollar dropped from \$1.19 to \$0.78,⁵ a 35.3%⁶ decrease. Adjusting these figures to arrive at somewhat reliable statistics, we find that index crime arrests of persons under the age of 18 increased from 1.5 to 12.6 per thousand population, or 748 per cent over the twenty year period. The total number of arrests increased from 15.3 to 27.4 per thousand, or 79 per cent.⁷ At the same time, the funds expended by the federal government for prevention of juvenile delinquency jumped from \$0 to \$77,602,632.00 based on adjusted dollars at the 1950 level.

These figures, which indicate that we are spending more and buying less, seem relatively insignificant when we take into account the enormous amount of public funds expended at every level of government on juvenile correctional systems and institutions of

2. FBI, 1970 UNIFORM CRIME REPORTS 137. The apparent drop in proportion of juvenile arrests between 1965 and 1970 results from the comparatively smaller proportion of 10-17 year olds in the population in 1970. According to figures on delinquency petitions, excluding traffic offenses, the rate per 1,000 population of 10-17 year olds has increased from 23.6 to 32.3 in the same five year period. See BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, STATISTICAL ABSTRACT OF THE UNITED STATES 156 (1972).

3. This figure is the total of amounts expressed in reports filed with the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Senate Judiciary Committee. It is broken down as follows:

- \$71,360,554—block grants to states for delinquency prevention programs through the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA)
- \$ 8,000,000—training grants (LEAA)
- \$ 2,530,000—grants from the Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Administration (YDDPA)
- \$ 7,600,000—Delinquency prevention activities of the HEW Office of Education
- \$10,000,000—YDDPA budget

See *Hearings on S. 1428 Before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Senate Judiciary Committee*, 92nd Cong., 2nd Sess. (1972).

4. 1972 STATISTICAL ABSTRACT OF THE UNITED STATES, at 5.

5. *Id.* at 340.

6. Computed on a base of 1957-59 dollars.

7. These figures are arrived at by taking the percentage of juvenile arrests on the total arrest rate per 1,000 population reported by the UCR for the given years.

sometimes dubious merit. In 1969, the average annual cost to the taxpayer of an institutionalized child was \$5,031.00.⁸ Obviously the same child could have been kept at a resort hotel or sent to an Ivy League prep school with all expenses paid at a considerable tax saving. During the same year a total of 258.2 million dollars was paid to support institutionalized children.⁹ This figure does not include the vast amounts spent on juvenile probation systems, juvenile courts and the proportion of total law enforcement budgets which were committed to handling juvenile problems.¹⁰

The actual cost of crime committed by juveniles is simply not determinable, but is unquestionably staggering. Attempting to arrive at a figure by multiplying arrest statistics by the average cost per crime is misleading. However, the most recent statistics from the Uniform Crime Reports shows that property losses from robbery, burglary and larceny alone total over 2.6 billion dollars annually.¹¹ Add to this the losses from arson, vandalism, lost wages and the medical expenses of victims of assault, and the overwhelming economic impact of crime begins to come into focus.

Juvenile arrest figures reveal only the tip of the iceberg. One recent study, conducted with a sample of 180 high school boys age 15 to 17, indicates that perpetrators of delinquent acts are undetected or unacted upon more than 90 per cent of the time.¹² The more serious the offense the greater the probability of detection. For example, the perpetrators of arson were undetected only 40% of the time, as opposed to armed robbery 80.4% and breaking and entering 85.6%. Acts of vandalism or malicious mischief are rarely detected in a statistical sense.¹³

THE HUMAN COST

The average young person knows the odds against detection, although not by percentage figures. His more graphic analysis is based upon his knowledge of what his buddies have "gotten away with." These acts are frequently made common knowledge by the buddy because of their status value, or perhaps because of

8. *Hearings to Extend the Provisions of the Juvenile Delinquency Act of 1968 before the General Subcommittee on Education of the House Education and Labor Committee, 92nd Cong., 1st Sess.* 157 (1971).

9. *Id.*

10. U.S. STATISTICAL ABSTRACT, *supra* note 4, at 143 (1970). See Fig. 2 *infra* at 265.

11. FBI, 1970 UNIFORM CRIME REPORTS 143.

12. M. ERICKSON & L. EMPEY, *Court Records, Undetected Delinquency and Decision Making*, in DELINQUENCY, CRIME AND SOCIAL PROCESS 131 (Cressey and Ward ed. 1969).

13. *Id.* at 138-139.

his own experiences. Generally, at this age, the young person has little or no concept of his own mortality. The simple extension of this condition is the feeling of one's own invincibility or the "they'll never catch me" syndrome. Add to this the witch's brew pushers, possible drug involvement, weakened family structure, popularity of violence, and lack of guiding parameters, and it is a small wonder that the urbanized youngster may become involved in crime.¹⁴

It is unrealistic to attempt to place human sorrow, lost potentialities, emotional impoverishment, and anti-social attitudes in any sort of value scale. We can, however, dimly recognize that when a child is run through the mechanized meat grinder of a "system", the bell tolls not only for his scarred existence and lost potential but for all of society.

Many children, whether through misadventure, coincidence, "has-sling", or just plain bad luck, are simply "ground up" by the system and are destined to carry hidden life-long scars and negative attitudes toward the law and their status as citizens. Statistical studies¹⁵ support the experience of practicing attorneys¹⁶ that the poor and minority child is not only overrepresented in petitions filed, but is likely to receive a more punitive disposition than a child of a more "privileged" social group for similar offenses.¹⁷

14. The case history set out in this and following footnotes is taken from my own experience in defending juveniles. Names and fact patterns are altered but the situations are typical: John, 15, had just been expelled from ninth grade in junior high. He had a B average and no prior record, but in the eyes of the law he was a "pusher", allegedly purchasing bottles of one hundred "reds" for \$15.00 a bottle and selling "racks" of 3 pills at \$1.00 apiece. In his own mind he was achieving two worthy objectives: making friends, and saving money to buy a surfboard.

15. See, e.g., Scarpitti and Stephenson, *Juvenile Court Dispositions: Factors in the Decision Making Process*, 17 CRIM. AND DELINQ. 142 (1971); WHEELER, *Children of the Court: A Profile of Poverty*, 17 CRIM. AND DELINQ. 152 (1971); Arnold, *Race and Ethnicity Relative to Other Factors in Juvenile Court Dispositions*, 77 AM. J. OF SOC. 211 (1971).

16. For a first hand account of a legal services attorney's experience with the inherent presumptions against the children of the poor, see L. FORER, *NO ONE WILL LISSSEN* [sic] (1970).

17. James, *supra* note 14.

James was 16, black and from a black neighborhood. A policeman stopped him for a routine investigation and discovered that the serial number had been filed off the bicycle he was riding. Originally charged with stealing the bicycle, at the time of trial, James was accused of being in

In considering costs, whether economic or human, we cannot limit our thinking to the delinquent child and equate the costs of the juvenile "problem" with the actual costs of crime and enforcement. To do so would be to neglect the very substantial numbers of non-delinquent children who are simply victims of circumstance, and the high but probably undeterminable cost, both financial and human, involved in their assistance.¹⁸

Not all youngsters, of course, are caught in the gears of traditional structured treatment which gives lip-service to the philosophy of *parens patriae* but in many cases proves to be rigid and inflexible to the point of inhumanity; i.e., *Gault*.¹⁹ It is anybody's guess what percentage of institutionalized children actually should be in such placement as opposed to those who would do better

possession of a bicycle from which the serial number was removed. This offense requires knowledge, but although five witnesses, also black, testified at trial that James had purchased the bicycle, the court without explanation found him guilty and put him on probation.

Approximately six months later James saw police cars in front of his home and went out on the front porch to observe. He was seen by the officers and arrested for a purse-snatch some six blocks from his home, which had taken place 15 to 20 minutes earlier. Although nine people were prepared to testify that he had been in the house all evening, he was detained, because of the holidays, until Wednesday of the following week, when the District Attorney determined that a petition should not be filed. A petition was, however filed for an incident which occurred approximately one month before, involving his older brother, who used James' name when he was discovered driving a car with a half empty bottle of wine under the front seat. At the detention hearing James was released to his mother after she explained the mistaken identity, which was corroborated by the police report indicating that the purported James was five feet nine inches tall and had a scar on the right side of his face. James was actually over six feet tall and had no scars.

18. *George*;

George was a shy, retiring, and somewhat inarticulate boy of 15 years. When I first met him in Juvenile Hall he proudly displayed a small gift given him by the Juvenile Hall nurse. It soon became apparent that he was eager to collect friendships and treasured any small memento that he might receive from "friends." His father was unknown. After the unexplained desertion of his mother he lived with his grandparents in Oregon until the day, approximately 3 years before my visit, that his mother came to Oregon and picked him up without explanation. After that, the mother and George had traveled for approximately three years, living from hand to mouth.

His mother and her latest boyfriend finally abandoned him in a motel approximately six months before my visit and he had not seen or heard from her since. Because his grandparents could not, despite intensive efforts, be found in Oregon, he was placed in a 24-hour school. He ran away from the school, was caught, and subsequently the staff requested that he be removed for acts of misbehavior. He was then placed in another 24-hour school, this time with the stated intention of succeeding so that he might ultimately achieve his dearest goal, placement in a foster home.

19. *In re Gault*, 387 U.S. 1 (1966).

elsewhere at a lower immediate and a lower prospective dollar cost. Theorists, economists, probation officers, parents and the law²⁰ have long recognized that the best place for a child is at home if his problems can be solved in that situation. A tremendous amount of intelligent effort has been expended, both at grass roots and state levels²¹ toward this goal, but it remains true that once a child is in the machine, it is simply easier to institutionalize him than to seek a less structured, less expensive, and more creative situation.

Ideally, the ultimate goal of every dollar should be to purchase happiness for people. Economically, we are spending dollars exponentially on a staggering scale but buying very little happiness. Again, ideally, there should be an inverse correlation between human cost and economic cost. This, obviously, is not the case. There is no single villain or cause. In this sad sea of lost potential, bureaucratic callousness, and damaged lives, there is, however, a colossus among villains.

LACK OF LEADERSHIP

The federal government, gravely concerned with foreign wars, ecology, and the exigencies of an election year has displayed little or no interest in coordinating its own scattered efforts in delinquency prevention, or in learning from self criticism.²² The recent amendment to the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act of 1968 accomplishes little toward providing national leadership and realistic techniques of evaluation.

Under the current act, \$75,000,000 will be appropriated annually for fiscal 1973 and the succeeding fiscal year. Eighty per cent of the appropriation is to be used to fund grants to local communities

20. CAL. WELFARE & INST'N CODE § 502 (West 1972).

21. A California example is the Probation subsidy program which provides state grants for intensive supervision in the community of juveniles who would otherwise be institutionalized. The grant is based on the amount by which a county reduces its commitments to the Youth Authority.

22. See *Hearings to extend the Provisions of the 1968 Juvenile Delinquency Control Act Before the General Subcommittee on Education of the House Education and Labor Committee*, 92nd Cong., 1st Sess., at 161 (1971). (In its annual report the Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Administration found that the total Federal effort was less than the sum of its parts).

“to establish and carry out community based programs, including programs in schools, for the prevention of juvenile delinquency.”²³

As has been the pattern in the past, technical assistance will be provided to grant recipients. However, if the provisions regarding coordination of all federal activities in the field of juvenile delinquency are to bear fruit, provision must be made for effective communication. Congress leaves to the discretion of the Secretary of Health Education and Welfare and the Interdepartmental Council on Juvenile Delinquency what steps shall be taken to eliminate costly duplication of effort and efficient utilization of assets.

It cannot be doubted that many worthwhile and effective programs will be supported and much research funded through the proposed grants, but without a national clearinghouse for nationwide dissemination of the results, their value will be lost to all but those immediately involved.

With the application of relatively few dollars, but a great deal of intelligent effort, it would be possible to create a national clearinghouse which would not only prevent duplication of programs, but would permit utilization of pre-tested programs and techniques and the development of model systems for communities, which would otherwise be unlikely to benefit from federal largesse.

Federal leadership need not mean federal control. What is here proposed is that every program, and particularly programs operating under federal grants, be required to demonstrate its effectiveness in terms of cost/benefit analysis, and to disseminate the results through a national clearinghouse and a national organ.²⁴

Concomitant with this effort should be an intelligent and rational program to develop materials to be used and understood by children. The primary function of the bureaucratic structure is, of course, to satisfy the requirements and demands of its leadership. Frequently, these are only remotely related to the stated purpose of the structure. Of the reams of material available concerned with juvenile delinquency few are capable of comprehension by those presumed to be their ultimate recipients, children. Many of the books designed to combat drugs, for example, require a medical degree, or at least a college education, for their comprehension. A few can be read and understood by the above average

23. Act of August 14, 1972, Pub. L. 92-381, 86 Stat. 532, *amending* 42 U.S.C. 3801 (1968).

24. A similar proposal is suggested by a bill introduced during the 92nd Congress to establish a national institute for the continuing study of juvenile justice. The House version (H.R. 45), introduced by Rep. Railback was passed, but the Senate bill (S. 1428) never reached the floor of the Senate.

adult. Fewer, if any, can be read and understood by the child they are supposedly designed to help.²⁵

Specific problem areas in which effective leadership would have significant impact in reducing present human and economic costs are innumerable but among those blatantly apparent are:

1. 18 to 21 year olds are treated as adults in criminal court but have a much higher arrest rate than any three year age bracket of older persons. They are, obviously, not necessarily mature. Specialized treatment in appropriate cases could reduce initial costs and minimize emotional impact.²⁶
2. The intent of the law is to keep a minors "record" confidential. These laws are replete with loopholes and many young persons futures are jeopardized by youthful indiscretion.²⁷
3. "Agencies" dealing with youth have proliferated until every major city can boast of literally hundreds. In an effort to maintain credibility and effectiveness, many agency counselors daily break the law themselves through a "no-bust" policy which means, simply, that they do not reveal crimes to the authorities. Legislation is needed to clarify their position.²⁸

25. An initial survey made by the San Diego District Attorney's Office indicates that much of the material developed by the California Department of Justice meets with scorn or indifference from the students to whom they are addressed. District Attorney Edward Miller is attempting to meet the problem by setting up a Youth Advisory Board, composed of high school students in order to conduct a survey of youth attitudes toward law enforcement.

26. New York State's Youthful Offender Procedure, for example, though it provides a non-criminal procedure for appropriate youths, applies only up to age 19. N.Y. CRIM. PRO. § 720.35 (McKinney's Consolidated Laws 1949).

27. "The grim truth is that a Juvenile Court record is a lengthening chain that its riveted possessor will drag after him through childhood, youthhood, adulthood and middle age . . . [I]t will be a sword of Damocles hanging over his head in public life, it will be a weapon to hold him at bay as he seeks respectable and honorable employment." *In re Holmes*, 379 Pa. 599, 611, 109 A.2d 523, 529 (dissenting opinion by Musmanno, J.) *cert. denied*, 348 U.S. 973 (1955).

28. CAL. PEN. CODE § 32 (West 1971) is rather typical of similar codes across the country and provides, "Every person who, after a felony has been committed, harbors, conceals, or aids a principal in such felony, with the intent that said principal may avoid or escape from arrest, trial, conviction or punishment, having knowledge that said principal has committed such felony or has been charged with such felony or convicted thereof, is an accessory to such felony."

RATE OF SOCIAL RETURN

If there is to be a viable way to evaluate programs we must look to an analysis which will maximize resources. An essential attribute of any truly successful organism is its ability to utilize with maximum efficiency available resources. The nature of these resources may vary from economic power to brain power to manpower, but the principle remains the same. There are many functioning organisms, such as the Armed Forces, which have traditionally refused to recognize this principle and have attempted to evade it by brute economic and manpower force. There is some recent recognition, even here, that these efforts have not been entirely successful, in that the vast manpower of yesterday is now being supplanted with a smaller, more highly trained force.

One may use a wedge analogy appropriately. A wedge can overcome vast resistive forces with a nominal amount of applied force if that force in application is skillfully and appropriately applied. A similar principle, this time in the sociological area, can aptly be termed "the rate of social return." Here, the comparison is to the investor who, for his dollar, seeks to obtain the highest rate of economic return. The function of each individual, organization, bureaucracy and government structure functioning in the field of delinquency and delinquency prevention should be clearly and unequivocally oriented toward maximizing limited resources to the best possible advantage.

The efficacy of delinquency prevention programs has traditionally been measured in terms of recidivism. This standard, while seemingly objective, is of limited value in a comparative evaluation of programs in different geographical areas. Areas with strict law enforcement policies will, typically, produce more law enforcement contacts per child than others where law enforcement is less rigid. It is possible, however, to use such statistics in a limited geographical area, such as a city where all law enforcement is under one department and where standards are generally uniform. To use recidivism as a measure of program efficiency it is necessary to take into account the dollar cost of administering that program, as compared to other similar programs. In short, for the dollar invested, we need to buy the program or programs which have the greatest effect in preventing recidivism.

FORMULA

One possible formula, with apologies to mathematicians, would be the following:

Where RSR = rate of social return

C = cost factor (i.e., cost per child for the given program)
 X = recidivism units of test group
 Y = recidivism units of control group
 B = cost of benefit sought (in this case, reduction in recidivism)

$$B = \frac{C}{Y - X}$$

Then, the rate of social return may be expressed as the ratio of B:C

$$RSR = \frac{B}{C}$$

Recidivism units could be obtained in the following manner:

1.0 per petition filed
 .5 referral to probation
 .1 police contact

Adding the aggregate number of units thus acquired and dividing by the number of children in the test and control groups gives a recidivism unit factor, the cost factor being that of the cost per child in the program.

Another primary consideration if we are to have a realistic evaluation would be the type of children the program was handling. First offenders would, ordinarily, be more susceptible to treatment than chronic offenders. Using the same recidivism scale to measure contacts prior to the initiating contact would result in a difficulty factor. The results could then be read, for example, a rate of social return of .8 while dealing with a population with an average difficulty factor of 1.5.

The rate of social return concept neglects, obviously, many important factors and mathematical variables but would give at least a rough indication of the effectiveness of a program in the sense of return for a dollar invested.

The key to the measurement of the benefit becomes increasingly complex as we consider factors less easily quantified than recidivism. A program's effectiveness must be evaluated in terms of its goals, and the goals must bear a rational relationship to the overall result to be achieved, i.e., reduction of cost of social disruption.

Recidivism is really a poor measure of what we are, or should be, trying to accomplish. Recidivism measurement requires that the

young person commit an offense initially, or (in California) be in danger of leading a lewd, idle, or dissolute life before coming to the attention of authorities running the program. It presupposes that he will be caught for his first offense and, to measure recidivism, each subsequent offense. It further presupposes that the measure of good citizenship is the number of crimes committed or, more directly, the number of crimes not committed. These presumptions are partially valid only if our sole objective is the prevention of acts defined as crimes. We have traditionally accepted this standard because it is convenient and tends to lead to a degree of objectivity. The result has been to attempt to keep the lid on a serious boiling pot with astronomically soaring investments of millions of inappropriately applied dollars. The panacea of dollars, sans intelligent application, isn't working, will not work, and, as a policy, is resulting in a morally and socially defective citizenry.

Many programs, such as police ride-along, court visits, talks by lawyers and mock classroom trials, are widely utilized throughout the nation. These activities are not as concerned, at least immediately, with recidivism as with long term prevention of crime and with good citizenship. Primarily, they are concerned with the young person's attitude toward the law and law enforcement.

ATTITUDE AND MEASUREMENTS

The key to many of these problems, and likewise the key to their reversal, can be summed up, with admitted oversimplification in one word, "attitude." Attitude can be individual or group, popular or unpopular, transient or semi-permanent, but whatever else it may be, it can be changed. In adopting any position, it is necessary to postulate certain basic assumptions. It is a basic assumption of this article, and many will not agree, that our way of life is worth preserving, albeit with constantly shifting and fluctuating values. There are many threats to this way of life, and to life itself, including aggressor nations, pollution, depletion of resources, overpopulation, technological advances, et cetera, ad infinitum. A second basic assumption, and this is supportable with evidence, is that the greatest threat and the most immediate one, is the changing attitudes of our people, and particularly of our young people.²⁹

The old saw, a nation may be governed only with the consent of the governed, is absolutely accurate. When respect for the law fails, when the jails are full, when the police officers' name is anathema

29. See generally K. KENISTON, *THE UNCOMMITTED: ALIENATED YOUTH IN AMERICAN SOCIETY* (1965).

and he can no longer protect his charges because of his own fears of violence, when our leaders cannot walk safely in a crowd of citizens, when bombs and violence replace ballots and reason, when national pride is merely camp, when a citizen is not secure in his person or possessions, a nation is engaged in a deteriorative process which, unless reversed, contains the seeds of its own self-destruction.

A change of attitude is, of course, the simple key and across the nation, on a local level, we are engaged in a veritable blizzard of programs designed to prevent, or cure, juvenile delinquency through modification of attitudes.³⁰ Most of these programs, either actually or tacitly, have a stated objective of attitude modification. Whether attitude modification is fundamental or incidental to the stated objectives of a program is, perhaps, immaterial. With limited exceptions, such as coercion, successful techniques for the reduction of present and prospective juvenile crime are dependent upon the adoption of a more favorable and constructive attitude by the young person toward his society and its "glue," the law. A person who believes in this country and accepts its philosophy and its ideals, is less likely to attempt, directly or indirectly, to participate in its destruction through commission of crimes which unswervingly lead to that ultimate result.

If we accept this premise and if the stated or unstated objective of most juvenile programs is to engender a more favorable attitude in young persons toward the law and the obligations of citizenship, it must follow that the measure of effectiveness of these programs is their ability to actually modify attitudes.

This of course, suggests an attitude-measuring device, used before and after a program, to test program effectiveness, per dollar investment.

A possible device for measuring attitudes is that developed by Travis Hirschi in his 1969 study on the causes of delinquency.³¹ He designed a questionnaire to test the ties of the test subject to conventional society. Among the most important of the factors which make up these bonds, he found to be attachment to people and institutions, commitment to conventional success goals, involve-

30. See note 25 *supra*.

31. HIRSCHI, CAUSES OF DELINQUENCY (1969).

ment in conventional activities, and belief in the validity of legal and moral rules.³²

Using the previously proposed formula, it would be possible to measure a program's efficiency in behavior modification on a cost basis. Values would be assigned to each of the four factors tested, using before and after test scores as the X and Y components of the formula. Whether or not we use the Hirschi measurement it is clear that we need to measure programs whose avowed purpose is attitude modification, with before and after testing, utilizing the Rate of Social Return concept to insure maximum return for dollar invested.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

The roots of delinquency cannot be oversimplified, for they are intricately interwoven with problems of broader implication. A typical community may be trying in various uncoordinated ways to deal with these social roots. A study done for the San Diego County Department of Human Resources indicates that a troubled family may be dealing with as many as eleven agencies at any given time.³³

Long range studies³⁴ have shown that the rates of juvenile delinquency tend to remain fairly static, and consistently high in low income urban neighborhoods, although the ethnic composition of those neighborhoods has shifted many times. Taken together, the effect of multi-problem families in problem neighborhoods is a deadly combination. Even assuming the current system of corrections could work a behavioral change in the individual youthful offender, placing him back in a community which has no supportive influence after program completion is an exercise in futility.

Among the findings of the President's Task Force on crime and its impact³⁵ was the general feeling of helplessness among the public as to their role in crime prevention. Crime prevention was viewed as the responsibility of law enforcement, or some vague and

32. *Id.* at 247.

33. Task Force Report on Social Services Delivery System (presented to the Steering Council of the San Diego County Human Resources Agency, June, 1972). The report designed and recommended a pilot program to develop an interagency approach to social service delivery, assigning one primary case worker to a family, with review and consultation by representatives of other involved agencies.

34. C. SHAW AND H. McCAY, *JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND URBAN AREAS* (rev. ed. 1969).

35. THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE, *TASK FORCE REPORT, CRIME AND ITS IMPACTS: AN ASSESSMENT* at 95 (1967).

undefined "agency." There was little belief in the utility of community organization. In open-ended questioning few of the people surveyed connected crime with other social problems, instead emphasizing "lack of discipline" or "lack of Morality" as being the cause.³⁶

Experiments with decentralized probation units, and interagency coordination are attempting to bring the community into the corrections process in a more active role.³⁷ Again, however, there is no measure of the effectiveness of these programs in attitude modification and little concern with their long term social result. Needed then, are tools and attitudes conducive to maximum utilization of available resources to achieve maximum results in behavior and attitude modification. Any other approach is necessarily inefficient, inept and unintelligent.

IN SUMMARY

In the 20 years elapsing from 1950 to 1970 there has been an increase, on a per capita basis, of 748% in juvenile arrests for index crimes. In the general population, including juveniles, the increase was 79%. In 1950, the federal government spent little or nothing for delinquency prevention. In 1970 the amount spent was almost 100 million dollars. Obviously, we are spending more and buying less. If we wish to engage in recrimination, it is possible to point the finger at many causes. As always, however, this is an exercise in futility since, with our present way of life, most of these causes are simply not modifiable.

There is one glaring exception to this general rule, however, and that is the incredibly inept performance on the part of the federal government. Riding a wave of popular causes, it has in effect failed and refused to recognize the most important of all causes; youth, the future of our nation. It is true that astronomically soaring investments of millions of dollars have been spent in a belated and ineffectual attempt to solve the problem, but this money has been spent without substantial direction and without adherence to the most basic of business principles.

36. *Id.*

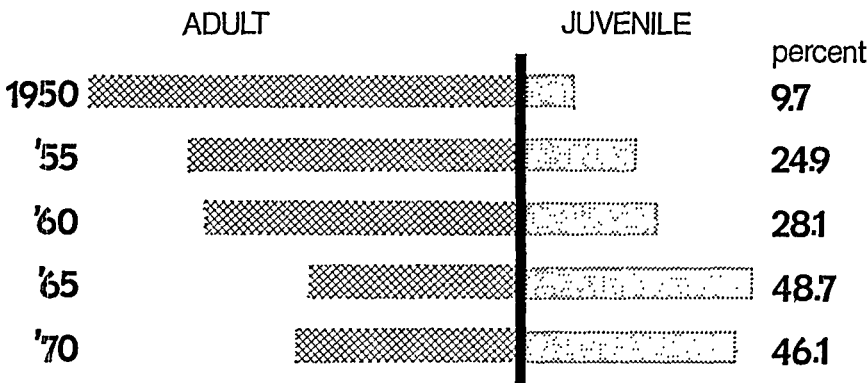
37. *But see* Reid, *Interagency Co-ordination in Delinquency Prevention and Control*, 38 Soc. Sci. Rev. 418 (1964), for an assessment of the problems involved in interagency coordination.

Perhaps, it is not too late to reverse what seems to be an irreversible trend. In any event, the effort should be made, and made immediately. Specifically, the federal government should:

1. Assume leadership, not command.
2. Recognize the validity and importance of attitude modification as a program objective.
3. Lead the effort to put constructive and understandable materials into the hands of children.
4. Publicize, preferably in a magazine or similar periodical, the efforts, techniques and programs utilized in various areas of the country, together with their rate of social return factor, so that effective programs may be known and utilized.

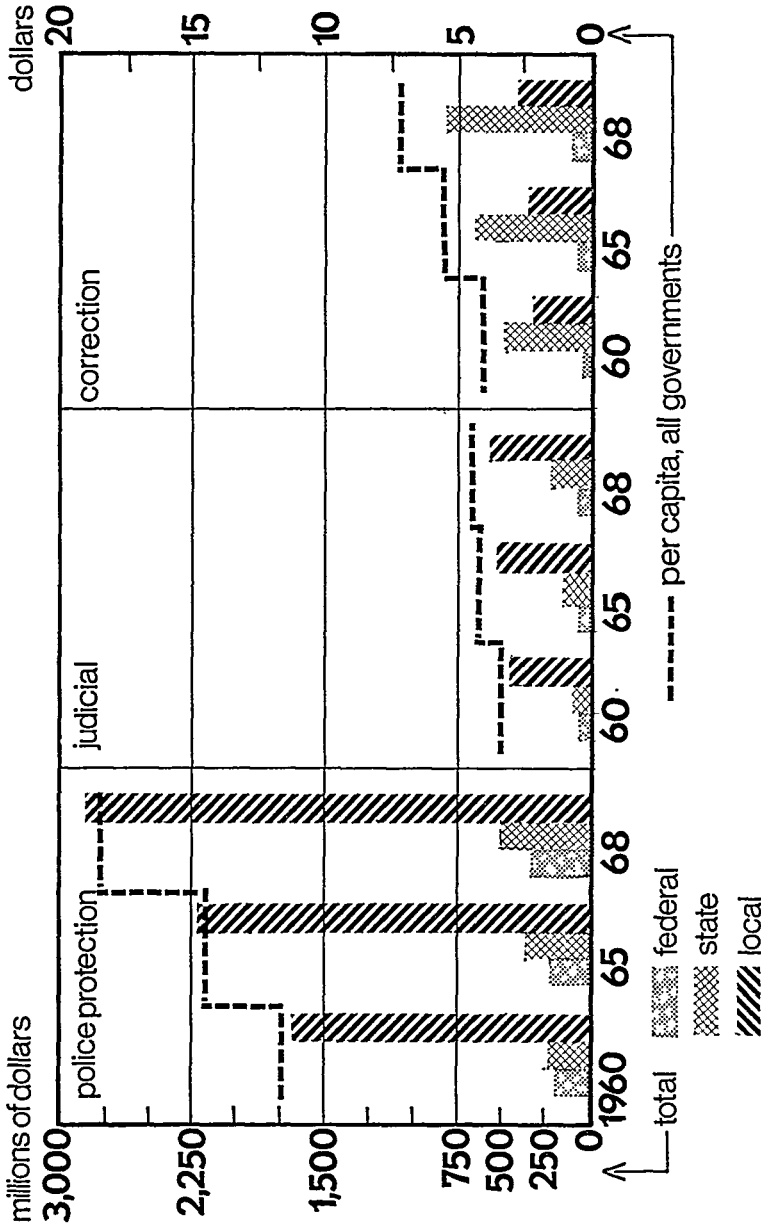
Herculean efforts have been and are being made, usually at the local level, by alarmed citizens and social agencies. These efforts lack national leadership and thus the effect is diffused and dissipated. It is afternoon at Armageddon. It is time for national leaders to recognize and accept the urgency of this problem that, perhaps as imminently as any other, threatens our national survival.

Fig. 1. Proportion of adult to juvenile arrests for Index crimes, 1950-1970.



Source: F.B.I. Uniform Crime Reports.

FIG. 2. PUBLIC EXPENDITURES FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT, BY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT 1960, 1965, AND 1968



Source: Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.