

# Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology

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Volume 23  
Issue 6 *March--April*

Article 2

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Spring 1933

## Editorials

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### Recommended Citation

Editorials, 23 *Am. Inst. Crim. L. & Criminology* 909 (1932-1933)

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## EDITORIALS

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### THE PROGRESS NUMBER

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As already announced, this JOURNAL for May-June, 1933, will be designated: "The Progress Number." The development of the "A Century of Progress, 1933" is primarily responsible for suggesting that the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology and its JOURNAL take some stock of progress in the field of Criminology—especially of the expression of the scientific attitude in dealing with the practical problems that criminologists have to meet.

The President of the Institute, the Hon. Andrew A. Bruce, will contribute an article in which he will trace the development of Criminology and its applications in the State of Illinois during the last one hundred years. Several other American students will contribute articles on as many specialties. Each one will cover the last twenty-five years, showing developments and trends that have come into being within the period in the country at large. For example, there will be articles dealing with the police, with prisons, legislation, and six other subjects.

Contributions from eleven foreign nations have been arranged for. A leading criminologist representing each of these peoples has accepted our invitation and has undertaken to write of the developments of the last quarter of a century in the criminal law and its administration in his own country.

All non-English manuscripts (excepting one from France) are now in hand and are being translated.

The entire May-June number will be made up of the special articles that have been alluded to above. It will contain approximately 270 pages and it should be a very important addition to our literature.

ROBERT H. GAULT.

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### LOCAL COOPERATION AGAINST ORGANIZED PREDATORY CRIME

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The series of articles, begun in the January-February number of this JOURNAL has attracted wide-spread interest. Our editorial on

"How to Combat the National Menace of Organized Predatory Crime" pointed out that local coöperation was now positively indispensable.

But we have been asked by responsible parties, What is meant by "local coöperation"? Coöperation with whom? And by whom?

What we meant by "local coöperation" is this:

(a) For each of these industries, trades, or forms of property that is the victim of these predatory crimes, there is a National or State association that has a protective committee—for example, for banks, railways, automobiles, farms, jewels, insurance, and so on.

(b) In each sizable town there is a Chamber of Commerce, as well as a mayor, sheriff, district attorney, chief of police, and other responsible leaders.

(c) Let this latter group sink all local jealousies (if any) and and organize a Vigilance Committee; and let the Committee ascertain what are the special local instances or risks of depredation. Let this group then get in touch with the former group (the National or State association), find out what are the protective measures recommended, ask for assistance if needed, and be ready to furnish information to the central body for use in its files. Let the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce (usually an active minded younger man) be the executive secretary of the Vigilance Committee. If he does not know what would be the appropriate central body to look to for help against the particular local brand of crime, let him write to the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice at Washington, and they will send the needed information.

As an example of what to do, take the case of bank robberies. The Illinois Bankers Association will send on request a list of recommendations for local protective action. Here it is:

"The board of directors of every bank should designate some employe and charge that person with the responsibility of the protection of the bank and its funds. The duties of this person should be to see that the rules laid down by the bank for its protection are rigidly adhered to:

"FIRST. Perfect a systematic plan for the safe opening of the bank in the morning.

- a. By making a survey of the premises to be sure no criminal is inside the bank awaiting the arrival of employes.
- b. Devise some secret plan of YOUR OWN, so that if employes enter the bank and are taken captive it will be known to outside persons. As a rule officers and Town Guards will gladly co-operate with you.

"SECOND. Install within the enclosures electrical and other protective devices for outside communication and inside protection.

"THIRD. See that every precaution is taken to reduce loss as much as possible in case of a robbery:

- a. By keeping a minimum amount of cash in cages.
- b. Reserve as low as practical and under time lock during business hours.
- c. All bank officers and employes should be on duty when time locked vault and safe are opened and closed during business hours.
- d. Where possible avoid leaving single officer or employe in bank during business hours. NOON CLOSING IN SMALLER BANKS IS RECOMMENDED.
- e. Keep doors leading from lobby to working space securely locked and admit none but officers and employes.
- f. See that mechanical and electrical protective devices such as alarms, etc., are systematically tested and at all times in proper working condition.

"FOURTH. Assist in seeing that the Town Guard organization is properly organized under the direction of the county sheriff:

- a. Each Town Guard should be legally appointed, bonded, and sworn in.
- b. Assist in seeing that Town Guard equipment and ammunition is properly supplied and cared for and that the Town Guards are instructed so that they are prepared for instant action and are familiar with their firearms.
- c. Help in working out a definite plan for the rapid and systematic spreading of information in case of a bank robbery. Notify the sheriff's office, local police department and the highway police. If possible arrange to have the information broadcast through the nearest radio station. IF TOWN GUARDS ARE NOT GIVEN NOTICE BY ALARM, ARRANGE TO NOTIFY THEM FIRST.
- d. Assist in working out a plan for transportation of Town Guards in case of a holdup.
- e. Work out a plan for the systematic watching of suspicious strangers.

"FIFTH. Identification and Evidence.

- a. Train employes, in case of a robbery, first, to protect themselves, and second, to get as clear and accurate a description of bandits as possible.

- b. Make a record of the numbers of all revolvers and other fire-arms in use in the bank and by Town Guards. Also record numbers of watches carried by persons employed in the bank.

“SIXTH. Precaution. Keep sufficient tools in the bank vault to effect speedy release from imprisonment therein.

“SEVENTH. Every member bank should be protected by the \$1,000 reward offered by the Association, which is available to any member who is willing to pay the small charge covering the premium for underwriting the reward. The reward card, which is furnished by the Association to the participating banks, should be conspicuously posted in the bank lobby.”

JOHN H. WIGMORE.

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### MEETING THE PRISONER FACE TO FACE

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Social responsibility for the released prisoner rests lightly on the public conscience. We have here the “untouchable” of America, but he is a minor factor in the modern mind. Society is largely to blame for his predicament, yet the state does next to nothing to remedy it. This is an immediate menace to society and the last one we can afford to ignore. So far as the average citizen is concerned, when the sheriff takes a man away to prison, he is out of sight, out of mind. He seldom asks what kind of a place he is going to. Neither does it occur to him what is going to happen to the man when he comes out again to face an indifferent or hostile world with a better purpose in life.

The gigantic proportions of this problem are little realized until we come to think about it. There are in the United States 130 major state and federal prisons and reformatories. A careful estimate of the average population of the institutions, under present crowded conditions, is 1200 inmates each, or a total of 156,000. It is also known, that on each week day of the year, an average of one prisoner is released, either by expiration of sentence or on parole. A total number, therefore, of nearly 50,000 offenders are annually emerging—thence to be merged into the general population, either for weal or woe. The question is, shall we meet this problem with intelligence and tolerance, or with prejudice and patchwork?

It may be well to remember that unless we are willing to greet the released prisoner with a hand-clasp of helpfulness, we may be

called upon to meet him face to face—in a hold-up. He belongs to the race, either for good or ill. Shall we win him to manhood, or drive him to distraction? There should be nothing of the sentimental or sob sister spirit about this question. Just common sense rather than the primitive emotion of revenge, should rule. In this enlightened day, the spirit of recovery should take the place of retaliation. The task of rehabilitation is the surest means of protection for the public, and the prevention of future crime.

At present, provision for systematic care of the released prisoner is entirely inadequate in this country. I have said the state does very little in this direction. To be sure, nearly all the states have a parole law on the Statute Books. And this, by the way, is one of the best examples of social planning in a generation. But unfortunately, the law is only partially utilized in most of the states. It is safe to say, that not more than half a dozen states, at present, release a majority of their prisoners under parole conditions. Some of these do not furnish anything like sufficient supervision. It is doubtful whether half of the states grant paroles to one-half of the outgoing inmates. If so, it is certain that their limited parole staffs can do little more than to check up on the failures, and return them to the institutions. For all the rest of the states, only a small per cent are paroled at all. And these more in form than in fact, since no adequate standards are required. A few states, to their discredit be it said, exercise what is called a "sunset parole." This consists in releasing men, without a sponsor, and with instructions to make one report from another state, and then consider themselves free, so long as they do not return—at their peril! This is an application of the Golden Rule with a vengeance, and a form of "dumping" that would awaken Russian envy. Meanwhile, the great majority of the annual output—over 40,000 prisoners, from the State and Federal prisons—are discharged outright. Even in this enlightened day, in the same old way, they are turned out with a hand-out of five or ten dollars, and with no responsibility on the part of the state as to their welfare.

If it were not for the heroic services of the voluntary Prisoners' Aid Societies throughout the country, the lot of all these men would be unhappy indeed. But at that, there are not more than a scanty dozen of these agencies. They are widely scattered, especially in the west, and with their limited resources are barely able to scratch the surface of the need. That their number should be greatly enlarged, and their work extended, there is no doubt. They are effective, not only in giving needed assistance to the thousands of discharged

prisoners, but as a welcome supplement to state parole departments, in furnishing necessary financial relief, and also sponsor service for the otherwise friendless. Corresponding to these organizations in this country, what are known as Patronage Societies are located in most cities and towns of Europe. They are maintained in part by public subsidy, and otherwise by voluntary gifts. Whether this method of mixing public and private philanthropy would meet the approval of our American traditions is a question. If not, then the number of these voluntary agencies should be multiplied, their support enormously increased, and their activities encouraged.

For the proper after-care of the prisoner has a technique and a policy of its own. For this service, only workers trained in an understanding of this special field should enter. Even many social workers, experienced in other kinds of relief work, do not understand the psychology of the prisoner. Full acquaintance with conditions in the prisons, as well as the causes of delinquency, are essential. It is a process of character training par excellence. It is the most neglected, or "missing link" in our program for crime deterrence. Thus far neither legislation nor supervision has consciously comprehended those of limited self-control, proving themselves a hazard to the social welfare. It is only by wise guidance that these first and accidental offenders may with safety be merged into the general population. Of themselves they are a liability. But with proper direction they may easily be transformed into assets for social security.

It behooves society to provide for this gigantic undertaking on a scale that is worthy of the task. All good citizens will watch the enterprise as the never-ending procession of prisoners emerge into industry, into communities, and into the personal contacts that are bound to be made if they are to live wholesome and successful lives. Experienced workers will be needed for this field. The growing spirit of cooperation on the part of officials, employers, and all intelligent observers is bound to bear fruit for the public safety and for the social welfare.

F. EMORY LYON.