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ECONOMIC DEPRESSION AS A FACTOR IN RURAL CRIME

Herbert A. Bloch

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The Great Depression ushered in with the momentous collapse of the stock-market in 1929 and from which, according to many economists, we have never fully recovered, may still provide us with a fruitful area of sociological and criminological research. As in the case of the recent war, a considerable time must elapse before an adequate appraisal can be made of its multitudinous effects upon the various phases of our social, economic and political life. Certainly, in the general and more precise effects which the depression, and its consequent widespread unemployment, had upon the composition and trend of crime and delinquency rates, the evidence has been far from conclusive.¹ Our general lack of information in this field has been matched by what appears to be an even more pronounced lack in the field of rural crime. As Marshall Clinard has pointed out,² very little emphasis has been made in our studies of crime and juvenile delinquency of the characteristically rural phases of the problem, with distinctive studies of the specifically rural offender. In fact, in our general handling and treatment of the problems of crime and delinquency, our perspectives, as in so many related fields, have been oriented primarily towards the urban offender.³

The rural community provides us with innumerable facets for limited types of controlled study not available in studies of the more complex, urban communities. Professor Chapin has indicated for some time the directions which "controlled" study and observation should assume, but his emphases have

¹ See, for example, Thorsten Sellin, *Research Memorandum on Crime in the Depression*, Social Science Research Council, N. Y., 1937, for a generalized and exhaustive analysis of the studies made of the effects of the depression upon crime.

² Cf. "Rural Criminal Offenders," *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. L, No. 1, July 1944, p. 38.

³ See, for example, the authoritative study by C. E. Shaw and H. D. McKay, "Social Factors in Juvenile Delinquency," *Report of the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement*, Vol. II: *Report on the Causes of Crime*, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1931, pp. 383-93; William Healy and Augusta F. Bronner, *Delinquents and Criminals, Their Making and Unmaking*, New York, 1926; as well as many other well-known and procedure-instituting studies which have played significant roles in our general understanding and development of policy relative to criminological procedure. The nature of our source materials and data, as well as the areas of study, place a stress upon the urban-centered offender.

been, with considerable justification, upon highly specialized and limited areas of study.⁴ In view of the relatively stable characteristics of many rural communities, especially from the standpoints of population change, growth and composition, "controls" are, more or less, automatically established for various types of time-process studies.⁵

In the study herein described, the writer suggests that in the selection of certain types of rural communities for study, and eventual comparative study with others, the commendable objectives set forth by Dodd,⁶ in his projective technique, and by Chapin, in his *ex post facto* procedure, may be satisfied to a considerable degree and provide the basis for further refined and detailed study after initial comparative statistical surveys have been accomplished. In the present study, the county selected for appraisal of the effects of the "independent variable", the depression, seemed especially well-suited. St. Lawrence County, remote from the large urban centers in New York State and priding itself upon its localism and indigenous characteristics, has shown very little evidence of fundamental structural changes during the past twenty-five years. Recognized by the natives as the center of four well-defined northern counties in the state, it is universally referred to as the "North Country". The natives exhibit far less similarity to the other rural regions of the state than they do to the rural dwellers in certain parts of Vermont and New Hampshire.⁷ An index of the high stability of the area can be seen in the fact that population growth has

⁴ F. Stuart Chapin, "Design for Social Experiments," *American Sociological Review*, III, Dec. 1938, pp. 786-800. See particularly his more recent volume based upon the studies proceeding from this earlier paper, *Experimental Designs in Sociological Research*, N. Y., 1947, especially Chapter IV concerning those materials that specifically apply to delinquency and criminological research.

Cf. Helen F. Christiansen, *The Relation of School Progress to Subsequent Economic Adjustment of Students Attending Four St. Paul High Schools*, 1926, M.A. Thesis, University of Minnesota, 1938; also, Nathan G. Mandel, *A Controlled Analysis of the Relationship of Boy Scout Tenure and Participation to Community Adjustment*, M. A. Thesis, University of Minnesota, 1938.

⁵ Recent developments in research methodology, as evidenced in the "ex post facto" design for experimental sociology, so-called, presented by Ernest Greenwood in his recent monograph, *Experimental Sociology* (N. Y., 1945), indicate the great difficulty experienced in the use of the controlled comparative method, especially from the standpoint of retaining samples of sufficient size after "point by point" control factors have been established. The writer, in attempting similar studies, can confirm the difficulty encountered in criminological and other types of studies whenever the attempt is made to establish samples of proper size for validation and verification in setting up comparable "control" groups of statistical significance. The rate of diminution in size, with the selection of each separate control factor, becomes more precipitate and acute, the shrinkage in size of a sample of 2127 to 290 being reported in one case, a decrease of 86.4%, after only 6 control factors had been set up. (Greenwood, op. cit., pp. 3-6.)

⁶ Cf. Stuart Dodd, *A Controlled Experiment on Rural Hygiene in Syria*, Oxford Press, 1934.

⁷ A considerable portion of the early settlement during the early and middle decades of the 19th Century, in fact, came from Vermont.

been extremely slight, an increase of less than 0.2 of 1 per cent being recorded in the period between the decennial censuses of 1930 and 1940. The total increase in population from 1930, when the census figures revealed 90,960 residents in the county, to 1940, with a recorded residence of 91,098 inhabitants, is only 138 persons. In addition to this very slight increase, the general shifting of the age-composition and normal population structure has not been remarkable. There are no large cities and there has been very little introduction of industry. With the exception of a fairly large aluminum production plant in Massena, established during the first decade of the century, the county still remains what it was originally, an area of relatively prosperous dairy farms covering one of the more fertile segments along the St. Lawrence valley. It is significant to note that the largest incorporated community showed a population of 11,328 at the time of the 1940 census. Only three communities have populations falling between 5,000 and 10,000, and neither these, nor the largest community mentioned, have shown an appreciable change, increase or decrease, during the past thirty years. Even during the enormous spurt in aluminum production during the recent war, the size of the major industrial community did not change very considerably, by virtue of the fact that the industry drew commuting workers from other parts of the county and adjacent counties.⁸ It should be noted, as well, that the general composition of the community has not altered to any great degree, no appreciable influx of either French-Canadian or of residents from other parts of the state having been observed.

Since the county has undergone negligible change, any modification noted in the statistical composition of offenders appearing before the local courts after the depression would appear to suggest changes induced primarily from that source. For the purposes of the study, therefore, the cases of 159 offenders appearing before the County Court during the period of 1927-1929 were carefully examined and compared with the same selected factors for 356 offenders appearing before the same court during the period 1938-1941, inclusive.

⁸ Recently, the Chamber of Commerce of the largest community was rather chagrined to discover that despite the growth of the sole local major industry during the war and its present continuance, the actual population figures in the given community had merely changed from the 1930 figure of 11,328 to the recently reported 1947 figure of 12,602, an increase of 1,274, instead of an increase of twice the size which had been anticipated. The reasons, of course, are that county inhabitants have, for the most part, not changed their local places of residence in order to work at the plant, and secondly, that a sufficient labor reserve had been on hand since 1920 to satisfy the personnel requirements of the projected growth of the plant thus far.

Age-Differentials Between the Two Periods Studied

In examining the differences in average ages of the two periods, it is noted that the average age of all offenders declines from 29.7 years during the period, 1927-29, to 28.2 years, a differential of 1.5 years, for the second period studied. A testing of the data in both cases yields a critical ratio of 1.53 sigma so that the difference can hardly be considered conclusively significant. *However, an examination of the separate age-categories does establish the fact that the differences in concentration of age-classifications for the two periods begins to be well-defined.* In view of the fact that the shifting in concentration appears primarily in the central categories, it appears that the extreme classifications of the very youthful and elderly offenders have not been drastically affected during the course of change between the two periods.

The three age-categories of the middle groups, i.e., the 21-29 year age group, the 30-39 year group and the 40-49 year classification, show significant increase and decrease, however. One of the most significant changes occurs in the 21-29 year age-group, which yields an increment of 8.6 per cent over the earlier figure and a relative increase of 28.4 per cent during the same period. That this may be taken as an absolute and valid increase in the number of offenders within this age-grouping since the pre-depression period may be seen in the fact that a critical ratio of 3.3 sigma is produced by the difference. The two succeeding classes show corresponding significant changes, the 30-39 year old group declining by 8.2 per cent, a relative decrease of 31.4 per cent, with a critical ratio of the difference in percentages of 4.0 sigma. Almost as high a critical ratio is revealed in the decline in percentage of the 40-49 year age group from the earlier period, an absolute percentage decrease of 5.5 per cent being noted, with a relative decrease of 38.2 per cent. The significance of this last change in percentage difference is clearly shown in the high critical ratio obtained, 3.7.

Certainly, one of the immediate effects of the depression upon changes in characteristics of offenders would appear to lie in the growing trend towards concentration in the crucial 21-29 year old age-grouping. Not only does this group comprise 38.9 per cent of the total number of offenders appearing before the courts during the depression period, but the growth in percentage as contrasted with the former period constitutes a significant one. This seems to be further borne out when the extreme age-groupings are compared. For example, although the 16-20 year old offenders have also increased, the increase is *not* sig-

nificant (critical ratio: 1.17 sigma). The older age-groups, those 50 years of age and over, from the standpoint of their relationship to the total age-composition for both periods, as well as revealing any appreciable increase during the course of the depression years, indicate negligible changes on both counts.

Sex Differences

The percentage changes in the sexual composition of offenders are extremely slight, a relative decrease of .7 of 1 per cent being noted for males and a corresponding trivial increase being recorded for females. It would appear in this connection that the depression did little in modifying the sex ratio in its relationship to crime in this area.

Residential Communities

1.) An analysis of the size of the residential communities from which offenders came during the two periods indicates some interesting changes and suggests the beginning of a configured pattern in the effects brought about by the depression. It will be noted that a precipitate decrease takes place in the percentage of offenders coming from the nearby larger centers of populations of 25,000 or more, a decrease of almost 500%. Despite the trends noted elsewhere towards rural migration during the depression period, such migrations did not perceptibly affect the remote rural regions which could not offer much in the way of employment or public welfare advantages because of stringency in control and meagre relief allotments.

2.) It will be noted, as well, that there is virtually no change in the case of offenders who come from communities falling within the classification of 2500 or less. *A conspicuous change does occur, however, in the directly succeeding classification, in those communities whose populations fall between 2500-5000*, which comprise the basic service-communities of the area. In fact, aside from the marked change cited previously concerning the larger centers, it is this classification which appears to bear the brunt of what changes have actually been produced. An increase in percentage of offenders coming from the predominantly rural shopping and trading centers, an increase of 5.4 per cent, indicates a significant difference which may be accepted on the 2 per cent level of confidence.

3.) It should be noted, however, that for the genuinely rural areas, those communities whose populations fall below 2,500, there is virtually no difference in percentage increase or de-

crease. Their contribution to the rate of offenses tends to remain stationary.

A sampling of cases of those offenders whose residence of origin falls within the 2500-5000 range appears to indicate the reasons for an increase in this category and which suggests, as well, a relationship to the rise previously noted in the 20-29 year age-group of offenders. These communities are essentially primary-service communities, revolving around the marketing and processing of milk-products, the staple production commodity of this area, and the general servicing agencies catering to the farm trade, such as garages, farm implement distributors, grain and feed establishments and the like are concentrated here. This age-category in such communities, as might be expected, is among the first to feel the impact of the depression or any other profound social or economic upheaval. Farm youth, although denied the occasional cash and extra funds accruing to them by virtue of their contributory labor on the parental farm or family-holding, are in no large measure economically undermined. The small-town youth, however, may rapidly become a burden to his family at home and at the same time, by the very adventitious factor of his location in village and town communities where normal recreational outlets and habitual leisure patterns are disturbed, appears to be directly affected. Moreover, such areas provide a greater opportunity for differential associations in various types of group activities, including the common outlet for ganging associations unrelieved by directed and organized recreational patterns, producing thereby greater incentive and a broader marginal area for illegal activities.

4.) Of considerable interest, as well, are the changes in composition of offenders coming from the relatively larger communities and urban areas, those falling above 25,000 in size. In the category of communities 25,000-50,000 particularly, for example, the decrease in the incidence of offenders appears to be significant, indicating an absolute percentage decrease of 6.8 per cent. This fact is particularly striking in view of the general mobility trends noted during the depression. According to migratory trends compiled by the Bureau of the Census and the Department of Commerce, the concentration of this movement fell upon the urban fringe and rural dependencies of large metropolitan centers, or took the form of migrations back to the family homestead and areas of residential origin, for purposes of temporary security in the face of the economic storm.⁹ The general pat-

⁹The Bureau of the Census records an estimated movement of approximately 32,000,000 individuals in the period 1920-1929, directly preceding the depression, a phenomenal figure.

terns of mobility, however, did not appear to focus upon remote rural districts, especially in view of the lack of employment opportunities in such areas and the traditional resistance towards such outsiders entertained by the now-replaced town overseers of the poor, zealous guardians of the public purse. In short, it was not likely that individuals would migrate from the larger communities unless there was a genuine place for them to return to, primarily in the form of the parental residence or the residence of relatives and friends. Those who did return for the purpose of finding such a sanctuary were not likely to commit criminal offenses.

Education

The study reveals an interesting difference in the educational backgrounds of the two groups studied. Most striking is the appreciable decrease in percentage of the number of offenders whose records indicate little or no education, a decline being noted from 10.7 per cent in the pre-depression period to 3.1 per cent during the depression period. The shift in educational background seems to fall primarily upon those whose records indicate some high school training, a change being observed of no recorded cases for the first period surveyed to 13.7 per cent recorded as having high school training during the second period. It should be remarked, as well, that the percentage of those claiming just elementary school background declines proportionately, a fact which points even more auspiciously to the general increase in the high school and college categories.

This finding would tend to support the tentative conclusions adduced from the age-grouping in residential area compositions, viz., *that the disorganizing process attendant upon economic depressions impinges primarily upon selected groups in such stable rural areas.* A greater percentage of the high school trained group tends to cluster in those vocational areas and employments which are most directly subject to economic change. In such rural areas as herein described, the normal provisions of suitable work relief and related projects found in urban and conurbated areas were either delayed, or for the greater part, insufficiently developed, affording no leverage against those disorganizing processes conducive to minor and major lawlessness.

A sampling of individual cases has appeared to reveal the fact that the post-delinquent and the youthful offender group, falling in the category between 20-30 years of age, and coming from the established small business, primary-service communities, coincided to a considerable degree with the statistical category revealing a rather large high school ratio.

Religion

Students of crime statistics have long been familiar with the pitfalls involved in making quantitative interpretations of religious affiliations of criminal offenders. Nevertheless, a statistical analysis of the fluctuations in claimed religious affiliation of offenders in this study both before and after the depression, sheds an interesting light upon the major hypothesis presented. The change in percentage affiliations of membership in the several churches of the area indicates a substantial decrease from 32.8 per cent to 20.7 per cent for those who claim membership in the Methodist Church. This difference is made up by proportional increases of those who claim membership in the predominantly "town churches".

As in many other areas of the United States, the major strength of the Methodist Church is concentrated in its membership in the "open-country" and farm areas. If rural youth is less susceptible to the economic pressures conducive to crime during depression, this fact would tend to be borne out by church membership figures associated with such rural districts. Conversely, if the general tendency towards law breaking is more pronounced among youth in the primary-service villages and townships, such percentage increases should be noted in the claim towards membership in the predominantly town churches. This supposition appears to have ample foundation in the facts concerning religious membership revealed by the study.

Parent Mortality

The commonly held assumption that broken families contribute heavily in the development of criminal careers, although seemingly borne out by an examination of the data, nevertheless indicates as well, that in rural areas this factor tends to diminish in importance during the stress and strain of depression.

It is significant to note that the percentage of offenders claiming *both* parents dead declines precipitately from 23.9 per cent in the 1927-1929 period to 15.4 per cent in the later period, an absolute decrease of 8.5 per cent. The categories for one parent living, on the other hand, manifest a rise of 3.0 per cent, while for those offenders with both parents living, an increase over the earlier period of 7.1 per cent is revealed. Of special import, thus, is the statistically significant increase noted for the categories claiming both parents living or one parent living, both differences producing acceptably high critical ratios.

The primary controls exercised by the unbroken family manifest perceptible weakening under the disorganizing impact of a period marked by rapidly declining prices. Further confirmation for this inference is established by a survey of the facts concerning the increase in the number of offenders with both parents living, revealing the relatively high percentage of this latter group who come from the township areas rather than the open-country districts.

Marital Status of Offenders

An investigation of the changed marital status composition of offenders both before and during the depression produces primarily a marked decline of 6.0 per cent in the classification admitting marital status. Such a statistically significant difference appears to coincide essentially with the general decline in the marriage rate observable during the depression. Accompanying such a decline is a proportional increase in the number of single offenders. Investigation of the places of residence, educational status and other related factors of those falling within the two specified classifications, suggests that the postponement of marriage during the depression primarily affected the high school-trained, town dweller. This at least poses the hypothesis as to whether such postponements in rural areas, created by adverse economic conditions, does not play a contributory role in inducing anti-social attitudes.

Vocation and Employment of Offenders

Notable in the changes brought about by the depression in the composition of the occupational status of the offender group at the time of appearance before the local court is the acute drop in the percentages of those in skilled professions, a decrease of 12.7 per cent, with corresponding increases in those coming from the unskilled category (4.4 per cent) and a more than doubling of those who were attending school. In view of the widespread falling off of skilled and white collar employments at the time, this fact is not too difficult to apprehend. Not only were there fewer skilled employments from which potential law-breakers may have been recruited, but the correlative trend in the observed age-compositions would suggest that those who ordinarily might be entering skilled crafts, other than farming, were never able to achieve that status.

In addition, a sampling of individual records indicates that many offenders who might have previously been classified as skilled or semi-skilled were recorded as unskilled at the time

of their apprehension. Many offenders tended to acknowledge their status as unskilled, particularly in view of the fact that for many of them employment had been sporadic, casual, or in the form of odd jobs. Thus, it was frequently the last job held which was used as a matter of record.

The increase in the category of those attending school was in keeping with the general tendency towards prolonged schooling during this period, although breakdown of the data reveals that this was more typical of the town population than of the farm population. With the farm population, the invariable routine of chores and barnyard duties, regardless of the depression, may have served as a restraint in the promotion of legal offenses.

Previous Convictions

The general pattern of recidivism appears not to have changed appreciably, on the face of things, until one begins to break down this general pattern into categories revealing the number of previous offenses, and then an interesting new perspective is discerned. The single offender becomes conspicuously less important, falling off by 11.3 per cent while the double offender appears to occupy the same relative position during both periods. The confirmed recidivists, however, those with three or more offenses, show a sharp up-turn as evidenced by an increase of over 9 per cent, a difference rendered statistically significant by a high critical ratio. Why should the depression affect so strikingly the habitual offender in rural areas? Off hand, it might have been more readily expected that the greater volume of increase should have occurred among the first offenders, those who had never had official records of previous apprehension or conviction. An examination of the offenses of the recidivist group, however, discloses that misdemeanors, disorderly conduct, petty larceny, and a considerable proportion of parole violations bulk largely in the prior records of most of the recidivists. In short, the least adjusted of the offender group would naturally tend to capitulate more readily to the stresses induced by economic conditions, a fact which is probably more true in rural areas than in urban environments in view of the types of barriers to adjustment imposed by economic adversity in rural areas. In this latter respect, it is instructive to observe the increase in such offenses in rural areas as abandonment, riot and forgery. Forgery, described by Marshall Clinard in the previously cited article and which has become a common rural offense, especially from the standpoint of the small amounts involved, is highly suggestive of the limitations

upon expenditures for recreation and marginal items imposed by the depression.

Types and Distribution of Offenses

In an examination of the comparative changes in percentages of the types of offenses for which offenders were arraigned before the county court during the two periods, a rather remarkable difference may be ascertained in the decline of offenses classified as Petty Larceny. This is all the more striking in view of the total number of categories of offenses for which individuals were arraigned before the county court, a careful investigation of the records indicating no less than twenty-eight different categories. Thus, it was found that this significant decrease in the category of Petty Larceny, a decrease of 20.2 per cent, was offset by smaller, but likewise significant increases in the categories of certain major crimes, such as Burglary (first, second and third degrees), which produced an increase of 5.8 per cent; Sexual Offenses; Forgery, which showed a rise of 4.1 per cent; and Abandonment, with an increased ratio of 3.6 per cent.

These differences are suggestive. With the exception of sexual offenses, whose rise is comparable to increases noted elsewhere in other rural and urban areas during the depression, the nature of the remaining offenses indicates a degree of premeditation which is hardly characteristic of the types of occasion promoting previously high categories of offenses, such as Petty Larceny. In short, the rise of the so-called "planned" crimes against property, which seem to denote an increased habitual offender class, is suggested as well by the previously observed increased incidence of recidivism and the development of a criminal class from those whose attitudes had become or were becoming distinctively anti-social. Certainly, in this rural area, the depression was beginning to produce an increased habitual offender class, drawn largely from the small, primary-service communities.

To support this possibility, an analysis of the cases falling within the major property crimes category appears to confirm this point of view. Offenders brought before the court on charges of burglary, robbery and forgery were either habitual offenders or those who, during the depression, because of adverse family and economic conditions, were prone to develop the offender's mentality. In both cases, the higher percentages came from the township areas, rather than from the essentially rural and farm areas. In this respect, therefore, economic de-

pression in rural areas contributes to destroying any possible ameliorative community influence for the rising habitual offender and apparently, at the same time, stimulates the occasion for the more serious type of property offense for the beginning offender.

Collaboration.

In the matter of commission of offenses with collaborators, no appreciable difference is seen in the two periods, a decline of 2.5 per cent being noted for the depression period. This difference is definitely not statistically significant but of some interest, nevertheless, because of its suggestiveness. If such a decline were general and could be shown to represent a valid statistical difference, it might denote a change in the character of offenses provided by the predominantly rural areas. Collaboration in crime appears to be a necessary condition in the performance of certain criminal activities. For example, the well-known professional association of the pickpocket with the "fanner" and the "buzzer" and the teamwork of the professional holdup man are compelled by the nature of the occupational practice itself. A growing tendency towards non-collaborative offenses in rural areas suggests a different kind of criminal practice. The rise in rural forgery, for example, would appear to support such a supposition. Such offenses are primarily solitary offenses and it may very well be that with confirmation through other studies, the rural areas may be developing a distinctive pattern of offenses and offender class.

Conclusion

Upon the assumption, confirmed by a careful analysis of the structural characteristics of the community in question, that the predominant socio-economic and cultural factors remained relatively stable, an interesting opportunity was afforded to measure precisely the effects of economic decline in a rural area. There is no reason to believe that this rural area was atypical but, on the contrary, bore ready resemblance to innumerable other areas not directly within the orbit of major industrial and commercial centers. As such, results of this carefully selected study of factors appears to confirm within narrow focus, the broader hypothesis which the criminologist von Hentig has advanced in relation to economic conditions and crime causation.¹⁰ This view, largely brought out by von Hentig's studies of the effects of the post-war depression in Germany after the first

¹⁰ *Crime: Causes and Conditions*, Hans von Hentig, N. Y., 1947, pp. 14-28; and pp. 223-225.

World War relative to the increase of property offenses, suggests that under appropriate conditions, economic adversity will tend to induce criminal behavior among those sections of the populace and for those individuals for whom economic crisis may successfully lower the threshold of what he terms "temptation". Although as expressed by von Hentig the view may appear to many American criminologists as extreme, the underlying point appears well taken. "Human beings are not made to resist thunderbolts," he says. Further . . . "We must acknowledge similar configurations of our cultural life when extreme want, extreme provocation, or extreme frustration wrings an unlawful act from an otherwise law-abiding individual. . . . Most of our criminals are milieu-made. They are law-abiding while the sun shines, while economic life goes on undisturbed, and their ability of adjustment is not taxed excessively. When social storms are brewing, depressions set in, prices tumble, and the army of unemployed swells, the average law-abiding individual yields to extreme pressure and becomes a law-breaker."¹¹

In the case of this rural area, the statistical findings seem to bear this out. Above the yield of the normal number of law-breakers which such an area ordinarily produces, the increased increment of offenders induced by the circumstances of the depression falls largely among those for whom "the threshold of temptation" is lowered in direct ratio to their being affected by economic adversity. Ecologically, the closer the propinquity to the farm and the small village community itself, the less likely is the possibility of the hazards producing certain major and minor offenses to arise. Where the incidence of increased lawlessness is most likely to fall is upon the relatively better educated, lower middle class, white-collar youth in the intermediate primary-service, shopping and trading-center communities. In addition, the nature of the offenses would appear to reflect the peculiar character and circumstances attendant upon this type of environment. Finally, the belated development in such communities of the several types of controls which the larger centers ordinarily devise during such periods of economic exigency, and which are obviated in the extremely small rural communities because of the more or less steadily maintained primary controls, encourages the development of an habitual offender class among a percentage of such offenders who might ordinarily have been curbed after the first offense.

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 11.