

1952

Current Notes

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CURRENT NOTES

V. A. Leonard, *Editor*

Effect of Crime on Real Estate Values—A house, or any real estate property cannot be economically moved from the site where it was originally built causing its value to be absolutely at the mercy of its environment. If the neighborhood around the house is invaded by criminals, and if the proportion of assaults and robberies become abnormally high, then families with children and those who have the economic means to pay for homes in the suburbs or in more stable city areas will move away. The houses and apartments in neighborhoods where the incidence of crime is high will be occupied by transient groups, with lower incomes, or by families who are forced by economic necessity to live in a dangerous environment. Not only will the level of rents fall in these crime infested areas, but the depreciation on the buildings will increase as the result of the harder physical wear and tear imposed on the structures by a succession of tenants with lower standards of living. Families who attempt to remain will find that they will have to pay high rates for burglary insurance and they will have a constant feeling of insecurity even if they escape physical violence. A house may be physically attractive and have every modern convenience, but if placed in a setting where there is a constant fear of robbery, burglary or assault, its value will inevitably fall.

A New York speculator once bought a six story brick apartment house thirty years old, which was assessed for \$30,000 and which was free and clear of incumbrances for only \$2,500. He held it for six months and sold it for \$2,000. He found that the area in which the building was located and the building itself was occupied by criminals and that he would risk his life every time he tried to collect rents. At about the same time, which was before World War II, a New York bank had houses in good condition for sale at the full purchase price of \$1,500. The bank officials interviewed all prospective buyers to make sure they were fully aware of the character of the neighborhood around the houses. They refused to sell to any woman or family seeking a home for their own use because the neighborhood was so unsafe that the bank would not be a party to exposing an innocent buyer to the hazards of personal violence.—*First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Chicago.*

Course in Criminal Rehabilitation at George Washington University—An Institute of Correctional Administration, covering rehabilitation of law violators and techniques of correctional work, opened June 28 at George Washington University in Washington, D. C. Over 75 officials, representing law enforcement agencies of the area, and Army, Navy and Air Force personnel, registered for the nine-week course. Supervising the Institute was Howard B. Gill, in charge of correctional administration courses at the University of Wisconsin. Mr. Gill, in opening the Institute, called attention to the challenge presented all correctional workers by the recent experiments of the Department of Defense in retraining and rehabilitating which have returned to military service nearly 50,000 offenders in the past ten years. Brig. General Frederick Kimble, deputy director of the Secretary of the Air Force's Personnel Council, told the class it is the responsibility of civilians and military alike to return to society or to military service those men who have been confined for offenses. The Institute was conducted under the

auspices of the University's College of General Studies.—POLICE CHIEFS NEWS LETTER, July 1952.

Use of Chemical Tests for Intoxication in 1951—Chemical tests to determine the degree of intoxication in suspected drinking drivers were used within 42 states during 1951 by some enforcement agency or agencies. Fourteen states have legislation on chemical tests, but such tests were used as evidence in court in 28 other states that have no specific legislation setting forth blood alcohol standards. From these figures, it can readily be seen that chemical test legislation is not a "must" before this type of evidence can be used. Statutes that set out the blood alcohol levels, as recommended in the Uniform Vehicle Code, lessen the necessity for expert witnesses to interpret the results of a test in terms of the degree of impairment indicated by a certain blood alcohol concentration. The fourteen states that now have specific chemical test laws are listed below:

Arizona	New Jersey	South Dakota
Indiana	New York	Utah
Maine	North Dakota	Washington
Nebraska	Oregon	Wisconsin
New Hampshire	South Carolina	

The 242 cities that reported using tests during 1951 represent an increase of 45 percent over the 167 cities using tests during 1950. Even though these figures show a substantial increase, it must be remembered that these 242 cities represent only 18 percent of the 1,370 cities over 10,000 population in this country—A report of the Committee on Tests for Intoxication of the National Safety Council.

Philadelphia Crime Commission Recommends Abolition of Veterans' Preference in Personnel Selection—The Crime Commission of Philadelphia recommended recently that veterans' preference be abolished in the selection of police officers, except in cases where military experience warrants it. "The fact that any person served in the armed forces of his country is no criterion of good police work," the commission said. Then it added: "There is no inherent virtue in reporting to the draft board and doing one's duty." Veterans' preference is a provision of the state law. Under it, all veterans of the armed services who take civil service tests for policemen are automatically granted ten points. This is added to the score they make in the entrance examinations. The Crime Commission made its recommendations, along with other suggestions for improving the police recruiting and promotion program, in a report to Police Commissioner Biggins, Personnel Director Male, and Civil Service Chairman Lewis. The report was based on the recommendations of a special committee of the Crime Commission that investigated the matter for months. The members of the special committee were Dr. J. P. Shalloo, criminologist and University of Pennsylvania professor and Francis L. Van Dusen, co-chairmen of the commission; William A. Randall, of the Committee of Seventy; and Dr. E. Luther Cunningham, a Civil Service Commission member.

The Crime Commission said in its report that unless the military experience of a police candidate includes military investigation, intelligence or military police work that would contribute to his value as a policeman, veterans' preference should not apply. "While the subcommittee is sympathetic to young persons whose education and employment were disrupted," the report con-

tinued, "it is believed by this committee that such interruption is irrelevant and of no value in first appointment to the Philadelphia Police Department. . . . This subcommittee is keenly aware of the arguments favoring veterans' preference for first appointment, but it is also poignantly concerned with its assignment to outline what, to it, appears a reasonably high standard of personnel selection." The report, in rejecting arguments for veterans' preference, said: "Your subcommittee is fully conscious and aware of the implication politically of such a proposal." Among other recommendations was a reduction in the age limits of police recruits to a minimum of 20 years and a maximum of 28 years.—PENNSYLVANIA CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOCIATION BULLETIN, Vol. XIII, No. 2, Spring, 1952.

Compulsory Commitment for Drug Addicts—Parents, civic-minded individuals and public officials in a large number of states requested the Federal Bureau of Narcotics during 1951 to furnish suggestions and drafts of model laws to help curb drug addiction. There was an abundance of evidence that the general public wanted to strengthen not only the Federal laws but also the state laws dealing with the narcotic traffic. The Bureau of Narcotics in addition to suggesting and recommending more stringent penalties for violating the State narcotic laws also recommended that the States and larger cities adopt legislation to provide for the compulsory treatment of drug addicts. Since drug addicts are created primarily through association with other addicts, it is firmly believed that they should be quarantined the same as persons suffering from communicable diseases. If the States and larger cities should adopt legislation to provide for the compulsory treatment of drug addicts, it is the Bureau's opinion that a great step forward will have been taken towards conquering the narcotic problem. So far, no action by the States was discernible in this direction except a statement by New York authorities that a hospital would be set aside for addicts under 21 years of age.—TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS FOR THE YEAR 1951, FEDERAL BUREAU OF NARCOTICS, Washington, D. C.

Revision of Juvenile Court Standards—The juvenile court movement has been examined many times by competent bodies, both public and private. These studies have determined what is being accomplished by it currently. Evidence of this re-examination is in the fifth revision of the first standard law for juvenile courts by the National Probation and Parole Association, which sets forth eight standards for a progressive juvenile court:

1. Exclusive jurisdiction over children; jurisdiction over adults on children's cases.
2. A judge chosen for his sympathetic understanding of children and parents.
3. Private, friendly court hearings; informal, non-criminal procedure.
4. A sufficient number of professionally trained probation workers, both men and women.
5. Facilities for physical examinations and for psychiatric study of problem children.
6. A well-equipped detention home or selected boarding homes for temporary care of children.
7. An efficient record and statistical system; adequate clerical help.
8. Cooperation with other agencies; community support through interpretation to the public.

To these standards the revised act adds two more in amplification. These provide first for a full-time qualified judge for juvenile courts in counties with a population of 100,000 or more; and second, for a state-wide court established on a district basis as an alternate setup where geographical and other conditions justify it. Taken singly or together, these standards make up a suitable measuring rod to show how we stand country-wide in this matter. Applying the above criteria at least on the basis of partial surveys, enough is known now to permit the formulation of some provocative assertions. Five are presented here to stimulate thinking toward proving or disproving them.

1. Few courts aiding children would rate as excellent if evaluated by a scale constructed upon these standards.
2. Few courts can claim to have adequacy and competency of staff and resources.
3. More people hold the juvenile court in disrepute than recount its worth. This attitude has an adverse effect on the court's status and effort.
4. Weaknesses in the structure and function of the juvenile court are obvious and one senses quickly the impaired efficiency that results.
5. Many juvenile courts do a valiant job despite handicaps, disesteem and public neglect; they merit more civic support than they now receive.—Focus, July 1952.

Sex Offender Digest to Be Issued—To meet the demand for information on laws regarding sex offenses, a digest of recent legislation concerning prostitution, rape, abduction, seduction and sexual delinquency against children will be published soon by the American Social Hygiene Association, Dr. Walter Clarke, executive director, has announced. The handbook brings up to date a 600-page compilation of federal and state laws in this category published in 1942 by the association. Dr. Clarke said that widespread concern over sex delinquency among teen-age boys and girls as well as sexual psychopaths has accelerated the demand for social hygiene publications, particularly for an up-to-date digest of pertinent statutes. "As the courts and state legislature have been called on during the last few years to deal with an upsurge of sex offenses, we have noted an increase in the number of requests for the 1942 digest of laws and for a current supplement.—MICHIGAN POLICE JOURNAL, May 1952.

Is It Good or Bad?—Some 852 major crimes, including 167 murders, were served up as a dramatic dish to 1,000,000 children who tuned to Los Angeles television programs during one week, Frank Orme, editor of TV Magazine, a television trade publication, reports. Orme said six monitors recorded the 852 crimes televised on 124 programs which used crime for basic appeal. Children's programs contained 78 percent of the crime and 85 percent of TV's crime shows are on the air before 9:00 P.M., Orme said. Four suicides, an attempted mutilation, framed elections and an attempted rape in a crime western for children were included in the 852 figure.—MICHIGAN POLICE JOURNAL, June 1952.

Delinquency Control Institute Now in Its Fourteenth Session—The Delinquency Control Institute at the University of Southern California now has 17 students in its 14th class. Fifteen of these students, all attending on

scholarships, come from California police or sheriffs' departments, one from the field of nursery school education, and one from the Asheville, N. C., Police Department. The next class will meet in September, 1952, and scholarships are available to 20 officers. Complete information may be obtained from Dan G. Pursuit, Director of the Institute, 2518 University Avenue, Los Angeles 7. Financial support of the Institute, starting in the spring of this year and to continue for a period of three years, is received from the Automobile Club of Southern California, the Farmers Insurance Group, Hollywood Turf Club Association Charities, and an anonymous donor. Since the special training program for police juvenile officers began in October, 1946, there has been a total of 173 persons enrolled; 159 from California, 10 from other states or U. S. territories and four from other countries.—POLICE CHIEFS NEWS, June 1952.

Penology—The Philippine Colonist Family System—The Colonist Family System in the Iwahig Penal Colony, which is under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Prisons, Republic of the Philippines, has been in operation since 1910. Under provisions of the Philippine Penal Code, insular (Federal) prisoners in the Philippines who have been sentenced and are expected to serve in prison for at least four or more years, considering all good-conduct time and allowances to be earned while in prison, may be allowed to have direct members of their families (wife and children) join them in one of the penal farms in the Philippines under the administration of the Philippine Bureau of Prisons. Fianceses may also be allowed to be married with their prospective husbands who will serve time under the above-mentioned category. Upon application of the prisoner and with the recommendation of the warden concerned and the Director of Prisons and approval of the Secretary of Justice, the families are notified through the mayor of their towns or cities. Authority is given them to take any available transportation at government expense to join their husbands or prospective grooms. They are usually routed through the central prison for final arrangements in connection with transportation to the penal farm institution where they are to go. Upon their arrival at the penal farm, they report to the warden, who makes the necessary arrangements for their quarters. Usually an advance notice of their arrival is sent to the warden concerned, who in turn advises the husband or prospective groom of their expected arrival. Upon arrival, members of the colonists' families are registered. They are orientated concerning the prison rules and regulations being enforced in the particular colony or penal farm. The wife and children are given clothes allowance in kind twice a year and are given subsistence allowances for every member of the family, including the husband concerned. The families run their own kitchen and mess in their own homes.

The system of extending rehabilitation to an inmate's family was conceived and placed in operation in 1910. The main objective of such rehabilitation was social and educational. There may be no facilities or opportunities for children left behind, and if not taken care of by society, they grow through the adolescent and to adult stage without the advantage of a proper home and a school education. In the penal colony, the Department of Education maintains a complete elementary school, where both the children of the officers and employes of the institution and the children of the prisoners go to school together. The education of the children may be furthered by attending high school in the nearby locality. The government of the institution furnishes the transportation facilities, but the matriculation fees and all incidental school

expenses are borne by the parents.—*A Word From the Philippines* by Pedro S. Paje, Assistant to the Director of Prisons, Republic of the Philippines, THE PRISON JOURNAL, May-June, 1952.

Influence of Inflation on Prison Riots—James V. Bennett, Federal prison director, suggests that the recent outbreaks of violence in state prisons were caused partly by an economic pinch on prison finances—meaning less food for prisoners. “The appropriations are frequently behind the inflationary trend as reflected in diet costs,” he said. Bennett said also that there is the ever-present explosive tensions of confinement waiting to be triggered. Inmate outbreaks such as occurred in Michigan and New Jersey, he added, “are recognized as contagious” and Federal prisons have taken “precautionary measures.” The Federal prison head said he did not believe the uprisings were communist-inspired. He noted that most known communists are in Federal institutions, which have not been affected. Bennett, whose bureau operates only the Federal prisons, emphasized that he had no direct reports on the causes of the prison rioting.—MICHIGAN POLICE JOURNAL, May 1952.

The Geography of Sentence—One table of figures in the recent Federal Bureau of Prisons report indicates a remarkable disparity in different federal courts in the length of sentences for the same offense. The moral inescapably drawn from the figures is that what counts against the offender is not only *what* he does but also *where* he does it. For example, motor vehicle larceny is punished in Delaware by an average sentence of seven months and in New Jersey by an average sentence of 31.2 months. The average sentence for forgery is thirteen times heavier in the northern district of Indiana than in the eastern district of Wisconsin; for violation of the immigration laws, six times heavier in the western district of New York than in Vermont. Violation of the narcotics laws draws an average sentence of 15.9 months in the southern district of Texas but 50.6 months in the district court of Puerto Rico. For 205 commitments for violation of the liquor laws in the eastern district of Kentucky, the average sentence is 4.8 months; for 206 commitments for the same offense in the eastern district of Tennessee, the average sentence is 13.2 months. Application of probation as a form of disposition varies from 83.3 percent of all offenders before the court in the middle district of Pennsylvania to 4.5 percent in the New Mexico district court.—FOCUS, July 1952.
