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**CRIMINOLOGICA .  
RESEARCH TRENDS  
IN LATIN AMERICA**

**Prepared by:  
Franco FERRACUTI  
and  
Roberto BERGALLI**



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# Criminological research trends in Latin America\*

## THE PROBLEM OF RESEARCH IN CRIMINOLOGY

The problems of criminological research are of great importance in both developed and developing societies. Criminology in general has advanced to a sufficient level of maturity for methodological questions relevant to research to be the order of the day throughout the world. In a survey of existing criminological research, the analysis of trends and needs is of paramount importance.<sup>1</sup>

The type of criminological investigation with which this paper is concerned is focused on the specific problems of the Latin American area. Broad considerations relating to over-all theoretical issues<sup>2</sup> have been kept in reserve in order to facilitate evaluation, particularly of "demonstration projects" and "action research".<sup>3</sup>

In the present paper, the task is to indicate those trends which can be gleaned from the available literature concerning some of the key problems of research in criminology in the Latin American area. There was particular interest in ascertaining which of the disciplines relevant to criminological research might be said to dominate the Latin American research scene.<sup>4</sup> In general terms, a predominantly sociological criminology has developed in Anglo-Saxon countries, as well as in some centrally planned economies; a predominantly biological criminology, in the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy; and a juridical criminology in many others.<sup>5</sup> Africa and Asia do not possess autonomous schools; their criminological researches to date have been tributaries of trends transplanted from European and North American schools, with limited exceptions, for example, those carried out by Boehringer and Houchon in Africa,<sup>6</sup> and by various investigators in Japan.

\* Summary of the paper prepared by the United Nations Social Defence Research Institute (UNSDRI), Rome, Italy.

<sup>1</sup> E. Lloyd Ohlin and G. O. W. Mueller, "Some speculative investments in American criminology and their chances of return", New York: Ford Foundation, 1969 (mimeographed); F. Ferracuti and M. E. Wolfgang, *Il Comportamento Violento* (Milan, Giuffrè, 1966); Hermann Mannheim, *Comparative Criminology*, vol. I (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1965), p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> L. Radzinowicz, *Ideology and Crime* (London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1966).

<sup>3</sup> G. Fairweather, *Methods for Experimental Social Innovation* (New York, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1967).

<sup>4</sup> G. Vassalli, "Criminologia e giustizia penale", *Quaderni di Criminologia Clinica*, No. 1 (1959), pp. 26-87.

<sup>5</sup> L. Radzinowicz, *In Search of Criminology* (London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1961).

<sup>6</sup> G. H. Boehringer, "Some preliminary thoughts on a socialist penology", 1966 (mimeographed); G. Houchon, "Les mécanismes criminogènes dans une société urbaine africaine", *Revue internationale de criminologie et police technique*, 21, 4 (1967); G. Houchon, "Les statistiques pénitentiaires congolaises", *Revue juridique du Congo*, vol. XLII, 4 (1966); A. De Boeck and G. Houchon, "Prolégomènes à une statistique criminelle congolaise", in Mouton & Cia., ed., *Cahiers économiques et sociaux*, vol. VI (Kinshasa, Paris Press, 1968).

Furthermore, it was important to determine the extent to which research in Latin America had pursued what some regard as an illusory goal, i.e., the "single-cause" explanation in criminality.<sup>7</sup> The single-cause explanation has lost impetus as statistical techniques of research have sharpened<sup>8</sup> and as programmes of social action have broadened into the sociology of deviance and social pathology.<sup>9</sup>

No methodological specificity exists in criminology. The methodologies vary according to the goal that the specific research sets for itself, and they feed from various behavioural disciplines in their social and biological realities.<sup>10</sup> The object of research is, in general, defined in strictly juridical terms; and although many criminological schools have tried to substitute sociological definitions for juridical normative definitions,<sup>11</sup> the latter still prevail. The criminal entity thus has no correspondent in biological reality, and its social similarity is linked with the acceptance and the immanence of a normative system. The transposition of differential characteristics of a population whose biological identification is non-existent and whose social identification is only normative is at least dubious.

One way out of such a dilemma was suggested by a series of meetings on interdisciplinary team methods sponsored by the National Training Laboratories.<sup>12</sup> What was described as a "fusion" approach, in which discipline loyalties are discarded and researchers subscribe to an over-all theoretical system, was favoured.

<sup>7</sup> Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, *Ventures in Criminology* (London, Tavistock Publications, 1964); and William P. McDonald, "The concept of crime", *Issues in Criminology*, vol. 3, No. 2 (1968).

<sup>8</sup> Leslie T. Wilkins, "The concept of cause in criminology", *Issues in Criminology*, vol. 3, No. 2 (1968); R. W. Burnham, "Further thoughts on the concept of cause", *Issues in Criminology*, vol. 3, No. 2 (1968); M. E. Wolfgang, "Mathematical methods in criminology", *International Social Science Journal* (UNESCO), vol. 18, No. 2 (1966).

<sup>9</sup> M. B. Clinard, *Sociology of Deviant Behavior*, 3rd ed. (New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1968); Albert K. Cohen, *Deviance and Control* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966); F. S. Feldman and F. S. Scherz, *Family Social Welfare: Helping Troubled Families* (New York, Atherton Press, 1967); R. C. Marin, *A Family Centred Treatment Research and Demonstration Project in Puerto Rico with Dependent Multiproblem Families*, progress report on project No. 139 (Rio Piedras, University of Puerto Rico, School of Social Work, 1964).

<sup>10</sup> Vassalli, op. cit.; Paul W. Tappan, *Crime, Justice and Correction* (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960).

<sup>11</sup> Thorston Sellin, *Culture, Conflict and Crime*, bulletin No. 41 (New York, Social Science Research Council, 1938), pp. 17-32; E. H. Sutherland and D. R. Cressey, *Principles of Criminology*, 6th ed. (Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Co., 1960).

<sup>12</sup> Ferracuti and Wolfgang, op. cit.; M. Barron Luszki, *Interdisciplinary Team Research Methods and Problems*, Research Training Series, No. 3 (New York, National Training Laboratories, 1958).

In the fusion approach, each team member must expand and accept the injection of concepts, theories and findings of others into his own set of ideas so that meaningful integration can be achieved.

As the fusion approach diminishes interdisciplinary schisms in criminological research, so the variety and ingenuity of current cross-cultural studies presage breakthroughs that will facilitate genuine transferability of ideas in the future.<sup>13</sup> Further cause for optimism is the gradual abandonment of the rigid distinction between applied and theoretical studies,<sup>14</sup> in favour of "problem-oriented"<sup>15</sup> research, in which the social scholar formulates viable alternative decisions.<sup>16</sup>

Difficulties of criminological research include "hidden criminality";<sup>17</sup> the variability of the definitions in relation to the general juridical structures of a country; the unavailability of valid social indicators,<sup>18</sup> particularly in developing countries; and the scarce predictability of general criminological phenomenologies, because of the number and range of the social factors which enter the predictive matrix.

#### BACKGROUND FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH IN LATIN AMERICA

In many Latin American countries, elements of the colonial past are still preserved in the social structure and frequently, many different structures coexist in the same country.<sup>19</sup> This is illustrated by the differences

<sup>13</sup> For discussions of comparative criminology, see Sheldon Glueck, in *Proceedings of the Fourth International Criminological Congress*, The Hague, 1960, pp. 534-537; and Mannheim, op. cit. Recent studies include Thorston Sellin and Marvin E. Wolfgang, *The Measurement of Delinquency* (New York, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1964); and that being conducted at New York University by Gerhard O. W. Mueller. A seminar on comparative studies was held at Montreal in 1969; among the works to be published is a bibliography on comparative research in criminology.

<sup>14</sup> United States House of Representatives, Research and Technical Programs Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations, *The Use of Social Research in Federal Domestic Programs; Vol. 1: Federally Financed Social Research, Expenditures, Status and Objectives; Vol. 2: The Adequacy and Usefulness of Federally Financed Research on Major National Social Problems; Vol. 4: Current Issues on the Administration of Federal Social Research* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1967).

<sup>15</sup> Radzinowicz, *Ideology and Crime*; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Studies on "Main Trends of Research in the Science of Man", Report of the Director-General, Paris, 23 September 1966 (14 C 14 C/19); Harry Gold and Frank R. Scarpitti, eds., *Combating Social Problems: Techniques of Intervention* (New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967).

<sup>16</sup> Leslie J. Wilkins, *Social Deviance* (London, Tavistock Publications, 1964).

<sup>17</sup> P. H. McClintock, "Criminological and penological aspects of the dark figure of crime and criminality", paper submitted to the Sixth European Conference of Directors of Criminological Research Institutes, Strasbourg, November 1968.

<sup>18</sup> R. A. Bauer, ed., *Social Indicators* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1967); E. Sheldon and W. E. Moore, eds., *Indicators of Social Change: Concept of Measurements* (New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1968); "The contents and measurements of development", *Research Notes: A Review of Recent and Current Studies Conducted at the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development* (Geneva, June 1968).

<sup>19</sup> For a review of social change in Latin America, see J. M. Echavarría, "A sociologist's view", *Social Aspects of Economic Development in Latin America*, part I, vol. 2 (Paris, UNESCO, 1963), p. 30; Francisco Houtart, *El cambio social en América Latina* (Freiburg, FERES; Brussels, CRSR,

between the developmental level in urban sections and that in rural areas.

In the matter of social distinctions, the inheritance from colonial times is quite apparent, particularly in the Andean countries and in some countries of Central America, where a very small upper class is contrasted with a very large lower one, and where the latter is employed at levels of deprivation. In many countries, a middle class is still in the process of formation. Only the countries of the southern cone of Latin America offer a social panorama of three social classes with significant upward mobility. These countries have large urban concentrations and are characterized by constant internal migration and, in general, by greater economic development. Urbanization, social mobility and migration are, of course, phenomena that must be studied, because of their links with criminal behaviour.

In Latin America, as in many other developing areas, the process of economic development has been accompanied by social changes, whose differences of rhythm and intensity have created a number of problems. In Venezuela, the rapid growth of the oil industry has caused increasing unevenness in incomes and living conditions between city and country. In Brazil, principally in the State of São Paulo, large industrial concerns operate in strong contrast to the rural and economically under-developed northern areas. Rural migrants find precarious employment in the city, often in marginal activities.

Those who migrate from rural areas to the city are deprived of stable employment from the beginning. They are introduced into the suburbs of an unstable, badly integrated population, poorly prepared for employment and living in marginal conditions. Such migrants flow into the "belts" of deviant groups known as "poblaciones callampas", "ranchos", "villas miserias" etc.

By way of caution, the following observation should be made:

"The venerable conflict-burdened image of the city needs to be considerably modified. Cities are no longer necessarily the foci, the arenas of the originators of drastic social change and revolution. . . . The classic notion of a sharp urban-rural dichotomy is also no longer necessarily valid. . . . Social disorganization in the course of urban expansion need not take the same form, nor be as severe in developing countries as in the West."<sup>20</sup>

By way of example, the same author cites the cases of Africa, Asia and Latin America, where many migrants move to the town and back to the village at frequent intervals, observing that the rural migrant who comes to the city has not necessarily ". . . fallen out of his world. He is not totally a stranger, bereft of familiar ties: his urban milieu may well be rather similar to his previous habitat." Opportunity to study this hypothesis exists in the Latin American context.

1964); *Report on the World Social Situation* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.IV.9).

<sup>20</sup> Ruth Glass, "Conflict in cities", in Anthony De Reuck and Julie Knight, eds., *Conflict in Society*, CIBA Foundation Symposium (London, Little, Brown and Co., 1966).

## SURVEY OF EXISTING RESEARCH IN LATIN AMERICA .

A list was drawn up of the institutes and/or centres of sociological and criminological investigation, both public and private, in Latin America, which undertake research in the field of criminology and in related disciplines.

Eighty-six organizations in twenty countries were selected for the survey. The organizations were then sent a questionnaire, which covered such topics as projects completed in the past five years, research in progress, and administrative structure of the institutes and their financial resources.

Slightly more than one-fourth of the organizations replied. Of these, 25 per cent reported that they did not carry out relevant investigations in the field or had no financial resources for research in criminology. Highlights of the positive replies to the questionnaire are given below.

In Argentina, research is being conducted by several organizations. The Centre for Criminological Studies of Mendoza, which was created under a provincial law and is financed by the government of Mendoza, has a research budget equivalent to \$U.S. 30,000 *per annum*. The most recent research projects of the Centre have been carried out in co-operation with the Provincial Penitentiary, the Prisoners' Aid and the Provincial Ministry of Social Welfare. A study on the prison population of this province and on programmes for their readaptation is currently under way, as is a study on problems concerning the institutional adjustment of prisoners in the institutions of Mendoza.

The federally supported Classification Institute of the Federal Service of Penal Institutions is devoted to research on bio-criminology.

The Criminological Research and Teaching Institute of La Plata, Province of Buenos Aires, is provincially supported. Its staff consists mainly of social workers specialized in criminology, whose recent studies include the reintegration of the offender in society; the incidence of socio-economic, family, work and endogenous factors in primary adult offenders; and the relationship between school "drop-outs" and juvenile delinquency. The last-named study was suggested to the Institute by the Juvenile Courts of the Province of Buenos Aires. As a consequence, a number of guiding principles have been established to orient the educational policy of the province, in order to encourage the use of primary schools as a preventive measure against juvenile delinquency. The subjects of all these studies are prisoners in correctional institutes in the Province of Buenos Aires.

The Federal Service for Juveniles has undertaken a research project whose aim is the assessment of the reasons that female minors engage in prostitution. The sources of the research data are personal files, repeated interviews, psychometric and projective test results, and reports from social workers. Minors from various institutes in the Federal Service for Juveniles are the subjects.

Other responding Argentine institutes or research centres reportedly do not carry out criminological research, but do undertake studies concerning criminal law and criminal law procedure. Among the organizations engaged in such research are the Institute of

Criminal Law and Criminology of the Faculty of Juridical and Social Sciences, National University of La Plata; and the Institute of Penal Sciences and Criminology of the Faculty of Juridical and Social Sciences, National University of the Litoral (Santa Fé). The latter institute reported that in 1968, it organized a National Meeting on Criminal Law and Criminology, during which there were discussions of subjects related to criminology: criminological training of criminal court judges; criminogenic factors in contemporary life; conditional sentence (probation); conditional liberty (parole) and the moral personality of convicts.

In Brazil, the Latin American Institute of Criminology, São Paulo, has completed three research projects and has one in progress. The first of the completed studies concerns juvenile delinquency in São Paulo. Data were collected for those areas in which minors from eight to thirteen years of age committed most of their delinquent acts. The sample included 300 minors arrested in 1964 and 1965, in the State of São Paulo. A structured schedule was used to investigate the trial records at the Court of Justice for Minors. This research activity was conducted by the Institute for Social and Economic Studies. The preliminary study for the second project, research on abortion, an analysis of social, economic and cultural data of patients in the Hospital of the University of São Paulo, has been completed. The third completed project is a study of prostitutes detained in the Avenida Tiradentes Centre. Examination was made of their psychological and sociological attributes, and of the disintegrating factors that were present in their families. This work was carried out with the co-operation of the Brazilian Institute of Studies and Inquiries into Gastroenterology, and of the National Mental Health Service.

The research project currently in progress concerns the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents. This is a study of the criminological careers of 100 minors who were in the Temporary Home of São Paulo in 1958. The results of this research will be used as a basis for a future study on adult criminality. It is being carried out on behalf of the Secretariat of Justice of São Paulo.

For Colombia, information was received from the Bureau for Socio-Juridical Research, Colombian Ministry of Justice; and from the Institute of Criminology, Universidad Externado de Colombia.

The Bureau supplied copies of an annual catalogue which has been published since 1961. Juridical studies on Colombian problems predominated, but some criminological, biological and sociological studies were listed. In addition, information was given on a current research project on crime in Colombia. This is a broadly conceived comparative statistical examination of legislation and judicial systems for the period 1955-1964.

The Institute provided information on two research projects: a questionnaire survey of the causes and the dynamics of prostitution in Bogotá, emphasizing that the "violencia" phenomenon was at its origin; and a study on the problem of "street boys" in Bogotá, a sociological analysis of juvenile delinquency.

From Chile, replies were received from the Institute of Criminology, Prison Service, and from the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences.

The Institute of Criminology has worked intensively in clinical criminology and on treatment programmes. The work of the Institute shows that it has permitted a wide application of non-institutional treatment measures. Small descriptive studies have been completed in such areas as criminological characteristics of juvenile delinquents, bibliographical analyses, and some prediction tables of criminal behaviour. The activity of the Institute is described as being limited by lack of financial resources and personnel. The Latin American Faculty reported on a study of lower-class urban families in transition and juvenile delinquency in Santiago, and on an attitude survey regarding the delinquent and the criminal marginal populations.

In Ecuador, the Institute of Criminology of the Central University has carried out research on the population of the Municipal Prison of Quito and the Penitentiary of García Moreno. This study on criminogenic factors has a permanent character, having been initiated when the Institute was created in 1936. Because of lack of financial resources, complete statistical studies have not been undertaken, the subjects being studied along clinical lines.

Mexico reported on a continuing study on economic crimes connected with the introduction of a new type of crime in the Mexican Penal Law. Conducted by the Institute for Social and Economic Research, A.C., the research is based on the purely economic viewpoint that the establishment of economic crimes is contrary to the liberty of commerce as guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States of Mexico and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

From Venezuela, three replies were received. The first came from the Institute of Penal and Criminological Sciences of the Central University of Venezuela. The Institute began publication of its *Anuario del Instituto* in 1968 and has also issued a series of monographs and translations on criminological topics. An Institute study on deviant conduct of juveniles led to the draft of a new code for minors. A study on crimes against the national economy, a theoretical bibliographical research with an estimate of the losses which these crimes cause to the country, culminated in a draft bill to control and prevent this type of crime. A study of drugs sold in pharmacies at Caracas, and their evaluation by a group of physicians, was undertaken to: (a) determine the dangers attached to the various products; and (b) evaluate the discrepancies between legislative norms and practice in the important area of consumer protection. Another project, a theoretical study on adaptation of criminological theories to the socio-economic and cultural *milieu* of a developing country, was undertaken to establish terms of reference for criminological action in such a country. A study on the Caracas municipal police, which emphasizes the causes and effects of problems of interaction between the police and the public, was designed to arrive at the diagnostic identification of problem areas and ways of potential reform, and to provide training in different forms and phases of research. The Institute emphasizes social and behavioural research and has introduced a strong social planning emphasis in its

projected research programmes. There are, of course, budgetary limitations.

The Institute of Penal and Criminological Research of the Faculty of Law of the University of Carabobo, Valencia, reported on five research studies in progress. In the first study, an analysis of the psychopathological characteristics of the Venezuelan delinquent, 4,000 inmates were examined in the Observation Centre of the Penitentiary of Valencia. The second study aims to ascertain the motives in the crime of rape, considered in its social, psychological, or psychopathological aspect, through the examination of a group of sixty-six cases. The third study, which relates to the irregular situation of juveniles in the State of Carabobo, is a research project on the causes and effects of the problem, as well as on new procedures for its solution. The fourth project, known as "Tocuyito research" is a study of the causes of antisocial behaviour engaged in by the population of the Tocuyito Penitentiary. The fifth study concerns causal factors in antisocial behaviour of abandoned children.

The Venezuelan Council for the Child, an official agency of the Venezuelan Government, reported that the intellectual and emotional aspects of deviant behaviour of juveniles had been assessed in two studies. Two other research projects are in progress: (a) an evaluation of the programme of supervised freedom, which is a study of the measures that can be applied in the re-education of juveniles; and (b) a study on the family and the abandonment of minors, which will permit planning of future social action in Venezuela, based on a critique of the related existing legislation.

#### ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH TRENDS AND NEEDS

Analysis of the replies to the questionnaire has been supplemented by a search through the relevant literature, including bibliographical material, international documents and scientific journals. The following emergent trends were traced.

In Latin America, there exist very few national and no international criminological research institutes. The absence of any international facility impedes the incorporation of available data into the mainstream of world-wide research. When the Latin American investigator does expand his work beyond his national setting, he directs his attention not towards another Latin American country, but towards Europe or the United States of America.<sup>21</sup> In Latin American libraries, with few exceptions, European and North American works predominate. The Latin American researcher thus appears to be moving towards a position of dependency and cultural isolation.

Although there is, in general, an absence of comparative investigations which would permit Latin American social scientists to gain a better knowledge of the Latin American reality, the situation may be changing. One opinion is that Latin America is gradually becoming the "promised land" because the sociologist is asked not only to account for and explain crisis, but to

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, P. David, *Sociología Criminal Juvenil* (Buenos Aires, Depalma, 1968); and V. J. Irurzun, *Ensayo sobre la Sociología de la Conducta Desviada* (Buenos Aires, Troquel, 1966).

deal with it.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, in Latin America, the social sciences are not merely tolerated; they are reportedly welcomed.

Criminologists, however, are not yet welcomed as contributors to the planning process. The latest national development plans of Latin American countries available for consultation do not take into account any of the criminological problems. It seems that the inclusion of social planning in economic planning, as required by modern development planning techniques, has not reached the level of acceptance evident in other areas, not even in those aspects concerning the "prevention of social pathology", which are so costly to developing nations. Regrettably, attention must be drawn again to the harmful repetition of measures designed to increase repressive policies, based on the erroneous belief that they offer a solution towards the control of criminality, and the consequent waste of large sums which could be more usefully directed towards research and preventive efforts.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOCIAL DEFENCE RESEARCH IN LATIN AMERICA

A principal recommendation—that autonomous research agencies should be created to encourage more and better criminological research—has already been made by one author.<sup>23</sup> Concepts of administrative and political autonomy are not too strong in many countries of Latin America. Problems of administrative autonomy are especially serious in universities modelled after the European continental system. Research proposals and research funds must pass through many levels of control, any of which are capable of delaying or vetoing a research programme.

The wide field of general prevention, within the area of social development, must move from a thorough knowledge of social, economic and political structures in such a way that any measure for the control of crime can be applied at the correct chronological and institutional point. It can be observed that in many Latin American countries dynamic, organic institutional change does not take place. Some social groups, motivated by particular interests, have not emphasized several factors conducive to crime prevention. An example of this is unplanned industrialization, which contributes to unco-ordinated urbanization. In connexion with a recent theoretical model of study of political instability,<sup>24</sup> it should be mentioned that a similar pattern may be operative in many Latin American countries. This model should be tested in the region. It must not be forgotten that the concentration of the population in large centres does not in itself constitute a problem. In a wider sense, "urbanization" is a simultaneous process of concentration of population contributing to the transformation or "moderniza-

tion" of pre-existing urban models,<sup>25</sup> which has a long history in Latin America.

The transformation taking place in Latin America is extremely rapid and is destroying the existing order of relatively large countries, which are characterized by recent and rapid industrial growth, abundant reserves of rural population and sharp contrasts between internal regions. In this connexion, mention should be made of a study offering an economic theory of disturbances, using a mathematical approach.<sup>26</sup> Industrialization has come to countries that were entirely rural, without an established plan and without governmental preparation, following only the private interests of the investors. As a consequence, conflicts and social division have developed, which, for lack of appropriate preventive action, have contributed to the increase of delinquency, and imply a global process of social transformation of customs, beliefs and values. A direct relationship seems to exist between the process of unplanned industrialization and an increase of delinquency.<sup>27</sup>

These social phenomena, and the related changes in levels and types of criminality, provide an important field for investigation, which is available to, and thus far utilized only in part by, Latin American criminologists.

Adequate preventive measures require rapid, complete, organic international information. Criminological research efforts and their results must be presented adequately and quickly to all other interested researchers and to the potential users of the data. Although various international organizations attempt to co-ordinate information obtained in social defence investigations, full co-ordination is far from being achieved on a world-wide scale. The Council of Europe, through its Division of Crime Problems, has undertaken the task of the gathering and exchange of relevant information in Europe. Efforts of this type do not yet exist in Latin America. Some national publications have recently tried, however, to make available the results of research carried out in the region. Among these publications are: *Archivos de Criminología, Neuro-Psiquiatría y Disciplinas Conexas*, published by the Institute of Criminology (Faculty of Jurisprudence), Chair of Clinical Psychiatry (Faculty of Medical Sciences), and the Psychological Society of Ecuador; *Revista Brasileira de Criminología e Dereito Penale*, the Institute of Criminology of the University of the State of Guanabara, Brazil; *Relación Criminológica*, the Institute of Penal and Criminological Research, Faculty of Law, University of Carabobo, Valencia, Venezuela; the publications of the Institute of Penal and Criminological Sciences, Faculty of Law,

<sup>22</sup> Jean Labbens, "The role of the sociologist and the growth of sociology in Latin America", *International Social Science Journal* (Paris, UNESCO), vol. XXI, No. 3, 1969.

<sup>23</sup> Robert E. Mitchell, "Barriers to survey research in Asia and Latin America", *The American Behavioural Scientist*, vol. IX, No. 3 (November 1965).

<sup>24</sup> Douglas Dwy, "Dimensions of social conflict in Latin America", *The American Behavioural Scientist*, vol. II, No. 4 (March/April 1968).

<sup>25</sup> Marshall B. Clinard, *Slums and Community Development: Experiments in Self-Help* (New York, The Free Press; London, Macmillan Limited, 1966); A. Quijano, "Urbanización y tendencias de cambio en la sociedad rural en Latinoamérica", paper submitted to the Seminar on Urbanization as a Field of Investigation in Social Sciences, Interdisciplinary Committee of Urban Development, Catholic University of Chile, April 1967.

<sup>26</sup> A. and R. Quiroz Cuarón, "An economic theory of disturbances", Mexico: 1969 (mimeographed).

<sup>27</sup> H. Solís Quiroga, "Industrialización y delincuencia", *Criminalia*, year XXX, 31, III, No. 3 (1964), p. 204. This paper was originally submitted to the twentieth International Congress of Sociology, Córdoba, Argentina, September 1963.

Central University of Venezuela; *Revista de Derecho Penal y Criminología*, Buenos Aires; *Revista del Centro de Estudios Criminológicos* — José Ingenieros, Córdoba, Argentina; *Revista del Centro de Estudios Criminológicos de Mendoza* (Argentina); *Criminalia*, the Mexican Academy of Penal Sciences.

The supra-national organizations with responsibilities in the region have not effectively approached criminological problems with a transnational and interdisciplinary outlook. However, the co-ordination and planning of regional action, with the aim of studying the criminological problems that affect the social development of Latin America, should now begin.

#### PREVIOUS EFFORTS TO UNIFY LATIN AMERICAN CRIMINOLOGICAL RESEARCH

On various occasions, calls have been made for the unification of the scattered efforts of Latin American criminologists.<sup>28</sup> José Ingenieros attempted to transpose European concepts to Latin America, when scientific criminology began. Despite the fact that he had the ideological force to give rise to a school, his pioneer efforts and those of his pupils did not evolve.

The Latin American Seminar on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, organized by the United Nations in collaboration with the Government of Brazil, was held at Rio de Janeiro, in April 1953.<sup>29</sup> Recommendations relating to the treatment of prisoners, to the recruitment and training of penitentiary personnel and to open institutions, were adopted. Less progress has been observed in other fields to which some of the recommendations of the Seminar were directed. Few changes have been made, apart from action concerning the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency, undertaken by such agencies as the Venezuelan Council for the Child, the Interministerial Commission for the Protection of Minors (Chile), and the Federal Service for Juveniles (Argentina), which were encouraged in their efforts by that Seminar. During the meeting of the Latin American Working Group of Experts on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders—convened by the United Nations and hosted by the Government of Venezuela at La Guaira in 1963—intensified research efforts were also advocated.<sup>30</sup> The research projects recommended at that meeting were closely related to each of the special themes considered at the meeting and, consequently, no call was made for integrated interdisciplinary and comparative research. Of particular importance is the fact that all the documents presented at that meeting gave priority to integral planning of activities aimed at the protection of children and social assistance, which are already carried out in some countries through programmes for the prevention and control of juvenile delinquency.

<sup>28</sup> See Israel Drapkin, "Criminological research in Latin America", *International Review of Criminal Policy*, No. 23 (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 65.IV.4), p. 25.

<sup>29</sup> *Latin American Seminar on Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders, 1953* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 54.IV.3).

<sup>30</sup> "Reunión de Trabajo de un Grupo de Expertos Latinoamericanos sobre la Prevención del Delito y Tratamiento del Delincuente". La Guaira, Venezuela, 9-18 September 1963 (ST/TAO/SER.C/68).

Any discussion of efforts by Latin American countries to co-ordinate their criminological investigations should include the Interregional Meeting on Research in Criminology, convened in 1965 by the United Nations in collaboration with the Governments of Denmark, Norway and Sweden.<sup>31</sup> At that meeting, participants from Argentina, Brazil and Chile discussed some of the research projects that were under way in their respective countries. This permitted an interchange of ideas and provided a most desirable opportunity for Latin American criminologists to discuss with colleagues from other regions the best techniques to be utilized in social defence research.

The countries in the Latin American region, through the agencies engaged in criminological investigation, have repeatedly expressed the intention to join their efforts in an integrated approach to the prevention and control of crime. Up to now, this concerted action has been advocated by some supra-national organizations. The time has come for the development of national efforts. A beginning was made when the Centre for Criminological Studies, Mendoza, Argentina, organized the International Seminar on Criminology, held from 22 to 28 June 1969. In the course of the Seminar, the Creation of a Latin American Association for Criminological Research was proposed and accepted.

#### SOCIAL DEFENCE AND SOCIAL PLANNING

One of the major developments in the period since the Second World War has been the recognition by many governmental, non-governmental and international bodies of the compelling need for including in the process of planning for national development, social elements in close conjunction with economic and physical elements of planning. In view of the Latin American social reality, with its self-evident developmental priorities, the areas of integration of social defence research with social planning seem worthy of particular consideration. Experience in many countries bears witness to the fact that economic planning alone appears to be inadequate for orderly progress. The gains brought about by economic planning and the material improvements that physical planning may achieve can be drastically offset by losses, gaps and discontinuities in social development brought about by imbalances between social planning, on one side, and physical and economic planning, on the other.

The fact that social, economic and physical planning must move together and must be considered complementary instruments of the over-all process of national development, does not emerge only from these negative considerations. Positive elements are also involved in the fact that planning must be considered a global process involving many aspects of human behaviour and of societal and governmental organizations. The "welfare effect" of economic development and the "productivity effect" of social development<sup>32</sup> are well-

<sup>31</sup> "Report of the Interregional Meeting on Research in Criminology: Denmark, Norway, Sweden", 18 July-7 August 1965 (ST/TAO/SER.C/87).

<sup>32</sup> United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, *Social and Economic Factors in Development: Introductory Considerations on Their Meaning, Measurement and Interdependence*, report No. 3, prepared by Jan Drewnowski (Geneva, February 1966).

known expressions of the close correlation that exists between the rather arbitrary and academic fractionalizations of the planning process. Social planning for national development fits naturally within the broader area of social development, but must in turn reconcile its goals and expectations with economic and physical planning.<sup>33</sup> Social defence planning, however, has specific characteristics of its own, which warrant some elucidation.

Social defence, as part of the more general social texture of a country, must obviously be part of social planning.<sup>34</sup> Social planning, because of its subject matter, involves not only planning for "hard" realities, but modifying the social values system of a given society to fit revised social goals. In the case of social defence, the values involved are not limited to social realities, but are also expressed in legal norms, which crystallize the ethical minimum that a society deems necessary for its orderly existence. Close interaction and communication take place between social values systems and legal structures. This is a two-way process, through which changing values modify legal norms and are in turn modified by changes in legislation. Because of the formality and the complexity of the legal structure, however, the changes are slow and wide gaps can open between public values and statutory laws. These gaps represent serious handicaps to the maximum utilization of public resources and hamper, or make ineffective, the legislative tools.

While in economic and physical planning the cost-benefit approach can be applied to alternative goals, in the field of social defence relatively little has been done in the way of quantification or in cost-effectiveness studies. It is generally agreed that special difficulties face the social defence field in this regard. Nevertheless, as these techniques are increasingly being employed in other social fields to good advantage, the social defence field should devote more attention to this area of research.

In any case, even limiting social defence efforts to the better utilization of existing machinery, to the narrowing of gaps between public opinion and legal structures, or to expanding the information basis available to legislators for their decisions, can increase the impact of social planning. The integration of social defence into social planning will sharpen the tools of prevention and remedial work for different sociopathological phenomenologies and this, in turn, will reduce the waste of human lives, as well as financial losses. The close links between social defence and the legislative process make generalizations impossible, as norms and procedures differ from country to country, and this difference alters drastically the tools and resources open to the social planner. Broad trends exist, of course, and some transferability is possible, but this can only follow

<sup>33</sup> Millard Hansen, ed., *Social Change and Public Policy*, report on a seminar at the University of Puerto Rico, 20-24 February 1967 (Río Piedras, Social Science Research Centre, 1968); F. Ferracuti, "Juvenile delinquency and social change in Puerto Rico", *International Understanding*, vol. 3 (autumn, 1966); Council of Europe, Social Committee, *Social Aspects of Regional Development in Urban Areas* (Strasbourg, 1967).

<sup>34</sup> United Nations, "Some approaches to planning for social defence", working paper No. 1 prepared for the *Ad Hoc Meeting of Experts on Social Defence Policies in Relation to Development*, United Nations Social Defence Research Institute, Rome, June, 1969.

careful comparative scrutiny of the legislations involved. This scrutiny has been carried out thus far within the narrow framework of comparative criminal law. Its expansion to include comparative scrutiny of the effectiveness of social defence tools within the frame of reference of social planning might constitute a profitable course for future work. In Latin America, this task should be made comparatively easy by the relative uniformity of language and of legal philosophy.

#### THE NEED FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTION-ORIENTED RESEARCH

In social defence, disciplinary boundaries have eased, and this has fostered interdisciplinary work and constant mutual interchange between different methodologies and disciplinary philosophies. The largely academic and theoretical discussions about the definition of the field and the validity of theoretical constructs have given way to a more pragmatic approach to the search for viable solutions to specific, often serious and urgent social problems. Descriptive analytical accounts of the state of crime have replaced discussion about legal philosophies. Applied research and problem-oriented research efforts have taken the place of academic debates. These alterations are not starkly evident in most developing countries, and particularly not in Latin America. International and regional action is required to reorient research policies towards more profitable areas.

The need for practical results and for short-term returns from limited manpower and financial resource investments is particularly obvious in developing countries. The failure of broad and optimistic programmes in some countries should sharpen interest in demonstration projects and action programmes aimed at field-testing of the major policy implications of recent sociological and criminological thinking. A demonstration project on the efficiency of half-way houses for recidivists stands more chance of long-range usefulness than a programme aimed to eradicate all the slums of a large metropolitan area. Consideration of key issues, such as the criminological implications of addictions, studies of the role of victims and studies of the sentencing process, is also recommended.<sup>35</sup> Recent developments in multivariate analysis should forestall reliance on a piecemeal approach and should help the social defence practitioner to systematize contributing variables, thus facilitating the development and improvement of effective policies and techniques.<sup>36</sup>

Another obvious research area is that concerning the improvement of international and comparative criminal statistics. A better assessment of rates of delinquency, which equates, eliminates or bypasses the strictures of legal definitions, is required, as is a better approach to the handling of the problem of unreported and unrecorded criminality. Many efforts are under way in this field, particularly in more developed countries.<sup>37</sup> The developing countries of Latin America could share in the benefit of these efforts in the process of setting up or improving their criminal statistics services.

<sup>35</sup> D. Szabo, ed., *Criminology in Action* (Montreal, University of Montreal Press, 1968).

<sup>36</sup> M. Wolfgang, "Mathematical methods in criminology".

<sup>37</sup> Council of Europe, *Fourth European Conference of Directors of Criminological Research Institutes*, Strasbourg, 22-29 November 1966, vol. II (DPC/CDIR (67)4).

Research on such topics as the police image, police discretionary practices or the deployment of police forces for preventive programmes would help the planner budget appropriately for optimum utilization of police forces. In some countries, police activities have been extended to a variety of odd services, such as assistance to dependent persons, tax collection and handling of intoxicated persons, which have little or nothing to do with the prevention and control of criminal behaviour. There must be a clear recognition of the social service elements *versus* the criminal control elements of police action.<sup>38</sup>

Correctional systems throughout the world share the common characteristics of uncertainty of goals and dubiousness of techniques. New approaches are constantly being experimented with and are sometimes transferred without previous attention being paid to problems of validity and feasibility. Any research efforts aimed at improving the valuation of the existing techniques can bring about an improvement in the planning for correctional approaches to be considered part of the planning process.

In the field of manpower and training for social defence, a quantitative, common-sense technique can be advocated, involving the establishment of alternatives derived from careful sample field-studies and then run through simulated programming to enable the decision-maker to weigh crucial alternatives in terms of costs and returns.<sup>39</sup>

Before making any real progress in manpower allocation for social defence, a problem of obvious relevance to planners, one must be able to assess, both in model form and in specific cultural and formal settings, the crucial question of what these personnel are supposed to do. Many Latin American countries have repeatedly advocated improvement of their personnel situation, both in training and selection. This is an obvious area for priority action.

<sup>38</sup> United States of America, President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1967); *Task Force Report: Drunkenness* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1967); *Task Force Report: The Police* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1967).

<sup>39</sup> P. P. Lejins, "Data on crime and delinquency: Personnel in criminology and corrections", in D. Szabo, *Criminology in Action* (Montreal, University of Montreal Press, 1968), pp. 371-396.

Somewhat more generally, and more in the vein of academic criminology, the abundant existing literature on differential characteristics of criminals must be subjected to scrutiny in order to extract valid descriptive categories which can cut across national differences. The suitability of alternative theories of criminal behaviour to explain the criminality of different anti-social types must be verified to avoid over-indulging in cultural transplants of aetiological concepts not warranted by cultural realities. A limited comparative testing of these theories, particularly those most relevant to the developmental process, such as anomie, differential opportunity structure and subcultural affiliation, could be listed as a relative priority.

One general area for cross-cultural comparison of obvious interest for developing nations is that of the continuing slow transformation of the social concept of deviance, compared with static juridical definitions of criminal behaviour. The relationship between socially defined proscribed behaviour and behaviour legally identified as crime is constantly being challenged, by what amounts to an erosion and a modification of traditional juridical concepts by newly emerging scientific notions and by forces that appear in changing societies.<sup>40</sup> A cultural stock-taking of concepts of deviance, similar to the "area file" approach in other social sciences, for purposes of comparison with juridical definitions of antisocial behaviour, could set the basis for profitable inquiry by behavioural and juridical scholars, and could provide social defence experts with useful information about the direction in which social definitions of deviance are likely to change.

In concluding this cursory and incomplete survey of Latin American research trends in criminology and of the possible lines that such research could follow in future, the urgency of the development of co-ordinated area-wide efforts should be emphasized. The tempo of social change in Latin America will not permit much further delay in planning preventive action in the field of social defence.

<sup>40</sup> M. Wolfgang, "The viable future of criminology", in D. Szabo, ed., *Criminology in Action*, pp. 109-134; Leslie T. Wilkins, *Evaluation of Penal Measures* (New York, Random House, 1969); G. Mille y Mille, *Delitos contra la Economía Nacional* (Caracas, Institute of Penal and Criminological Sciences of the Central University of Venezuela, 1968); C. J. Rubianes, *Derecho Penal Económico* (Buenos Aires, Depalma, 1967).

