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# Pro-active Prevention: An Efficient Police Tool?

## Preface

Our crime problem is getting out of hand! Most people belief in this statement, even in times, when the official crime rate is decreasing[1]. But is this really true? Fact is, that crime, urban crime and especially fear of crime is the most important issue of the nineties.

The demand for help or intervention by the police has risen and is still rising in every european society. The rise of the criminal offenses, registered by the police, is only partly responsible for this[2], but the readiness and/or capability of the citizens to settle conflicts by means of communication has decreased. Victims are less ready and capable of helping themselves. Official authorities are increasingly called in to clear and settle conflicts. Even the rise of registered offenses can be explained by this phenomenon - if we look e.g. at the U.S. of America, where the rate of offenses, registered by the police, was increasing (at least until 1992), while the victimization rates, measured by the annual victim survey, are decreasing[3]. "Crime waves"[4] are more constructed by the media than actually happening[5]. The crime wave is in the heads of the people, and the question is, why is this so, and who gets an advantage from this situation. The "Make Believe Crime War" and the consequences have ab-

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[1] Although the crime rate in the U.S. is decreasing, crime is first on the list of problems, the government should do more about it, a recent poll found. 61% of the people, surveyed in the beginning of 1997 say, the US are losing ground in crime, and they expect it to get worse. 68% predict the crime rate will be higher in 2000. While most Americans say they are satisfied with their own lives and optimistic about their children´s futures, they say the nation is losing ground on almost every front, and young people tend to be among the most pessimistic (PBS poll, January 1997; USA TODAY, Jan. 20, 1997, p. 1, 5 A. This paradoxon (my personal life is ok, the country is going to hell) and the fracture has existed before, but never been so wide. The belief that the nation´s problems are bad and getting worse - true or not - has consequences. Convinced that national problems never get better, people may be less likely to solve them. They´re more likely to focus on individual interests - working to ensure that their own children get a good education rather than improve public education for everyone´s children, for instance.

[2] Feltes, Th., Notrufe und Funkstreifeneinsätze als Meßinstrument polizeilichen Alltagshandelns. In: Die Polizei 1995, S.157 ff.

[3] The National Crime Survey in the U.S. reveals that crime rates have fallen over the past 20 years. Rates for violent crimes such as rape, robbery, and assault were lower than those reported 10 years ago. Even the murder rate, registered by the police, was 9.4 per 100.000 in 1973 and 9.3 in 1993; see Krisberg 1996, p. 39

[4] Fishman, M., Crime Waves as Ideology. In: Social Problems 25, 1977, pp. 531 ff.

[5] "We all have heard the message - young people nowadays are more vicious, more cold-blooded than ever before. It is alleged that very young adolescents are becoming the major crime threat in America. The facts contradict these myths. Juveniles represent a small and declining part of serious crime in America. During the last 10 years in which violent arrests were virtually unchanged, the juvenile share of these arrests increased by 0.3% - hardly a crime wave"; Krisberg 1996, 39; Jones, M., B. Krisberg, Images and Reality: Juvenile Crime, Youth Violence, and Public Policy. San Francisco (NCCD), 1994. What has increased is the number of children being murdered or committing suicide. The availability of handguns and assault weapons is behind this development, while the number of youths involved in violent conflicts is not increasing; Block, C., R. Block, Street Gang Crime in Chicago, Research in Brief, Washington (National Institute of Justice; U.S. Department of Justice), 1993. Children in America as in other countries face greater danger from adults (mostly at home) than from other teenagers.

solutely no empirical support, but they focus the public opinion to a "problem", which fits well into moral beliefs and liberates politicians from other problems and explanations, which are more difficult to be given to the public (e.g. unemployment, domestic violence). Furthermore, the criminal justice legislation is more related to economic conditions than to the actual crime rate, as a recent empirical study in the U.S. could show[6]. The level of poverty has a significant positive relationship for all crime categories, and changes in the unemployment rate are also positive related to murder, robbery, burglary, and larceny/theft, but not to (other) property crimes[7].

As a result of this, the recently discussed "decrease" in the metropolitan crimes rates in America (and especially the given reasons by hard-liners, that being tough on crime is the explanation for that[8]) has to be seen and discussed in this context. As I will show later on, the police is ill-advised to jump on this crime-wave train and to use this to claim more personnel and better technic.


## Reality? What Kind of Reality?

On the other hand, the police is less and lesser capable of accomplishing the task of keeping up order and settling conflicts adequately and for the benefit of the victims concerned. To view the social reaction against crime as a police monopoly is obviously untrue, as Jock Young pointed out some 10 years ago. Public opinion and informal social control have the central role, not only in defining what is crime, but also in maintaining social order[9].

Police officers are eager to help other people[10], but the police apparatus and political decisions complicate the officers´ job unnecessarily. Just to put a few more police officers on the street has no impact on both the crime rate and the clearance rate[11], which is determined by a lot of different factors, not to be influenced by the police itself. The number of police officers per 100.000 inhabitants seems to be a very important point both in the political and the internal police discussion. A ratio of 1:250 to 1:400 is mentioned very often, and federal states, cities or villages with lower ratio often complain. In reality, and if we ask, how many patrol police officers are "on the street" at a given moment in Germany, the number is between 1:10.000 and 1:20.000, depending on the size of the city. To ask for just one police officer more on the street will cost about one million German Marks, because you need all in all 14 officers, to fill the position[12]. Keeping in mind, that there is abundant evidence to the

[6] Barlow, D.E., M.H. Barlow, W. W. Johnson, The Political Economy of Criminal Justice Policy: A Time-Series Analysis of Economic Conditions, Crime, and Federal Criminal Justice Legislation, 1948-1987. In: Justice Quarterly 13, 2, 1996, pp 223 ff.

[7] Fowles, R., M. Merva, Wage Inequality and Criminal Activity: An Extreme Bounds Analysis for the United States, 1975-1990. In: Criminology 34, 2, 1996, pp. 163, 179

[8] See U. Schmid, Weniger Kriminalität in den US Grossstädten, NZZ 4./5. Mai 1996; A. Karmen, What´s driving New York´s crime rate down? In: Law Enforcement News, Vol. XXII, No. 456, Nov. 1996, p. 8 ff.

[9] Young, J., The Tasks Facing a Realist Criminology. In: Contemporary Crises 11, 1987, pp. 337 ff.

[10] For more than 80% of the police officers, this is the main reason for choosing this profession, see Feltes, Th., Einstellungen von Polizeibeamten zu gesellschafts- und kriminalpolitischen Problemen. In: Feltes, Th., E. Rebscher (Ed.), Polizei und Bevölkerung, Holzkirchen 1990, pp.198 ff., 213

[11] Williams, F.P., C.P. Wagoner, Making the Police Proactive. An Impossible Task for Improbable Reasons. In: V.E. Kappeler (ed.), The Police and Society, Prospect Heights 1995, pp. 365 ff.; Walker, S., Sense and Nonsense about Crime: A Policy Guide. 2nd Ed. Pacific Grove 1989

[12] Feltes, Th., Die Effektivität polizeilichen Handelns. In: Die Polizei 1990, pp. 301 ff.

effect that crime is not reduced nor apprehension increased by just adding police[13], the recent dispute in Germany, whether 30.000 new police officers are needed (as The Police Union is claiming), or 30.000 officers are not necessary to fulfill the tasks (as organizational analysis by private consultants suggest)[14] is more a political than a structural discussion.

The reasons for the believe, that police do not prevent crime include the following[15]:

1. Most police work is not devoted to crime[16].

2. Only large increases in police levels can produce enough police presence on the streets to actually deter crime, and such increases are not possible due to fiscal restrictions (see above).

3. The most common police strategies are poor crime-prevention strategies, because police mainly relies on car patrols and rapid response to emergency calls. Crime prevention is not a task, highly accepted and by the superiors and police managers[17].

The impact of police on crime is based on utilitarian theory and an old conventional wisdom since police exists. "It assumes that criminals are rational and balance th cost and benefits of alternative courses of action ... Additional police presence deters crime in this manner by making criminals believe arrests and subsequent sanctions are more likely"[18]. Bearing in mind, that dark-figure-relations and rates of dismissals are spoiling every rational calculation (the chance, to get arrested and sanctioned is somewhere between 1:2 and 1:200, depending on the kind of offense[19]), this theory seems to be outdated.

More police might eventually lead to more crime. If criminals are deterred by police, they may move to other communities and/or switch to less risky crime types and methods[20] and finally must commit more (lower level) crimes, to maintain their illegal income levels[21].

Police presence might even affect reported crime statistics, because citizens might report more often when police is available on the streets and/or acting community oriented. Recent work by Levitt however suggests that adding police has little impact on reporting and recording crimes[22].

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[13] See e.g. Bayley, D.H., Policing for the Future, New York 1994, p.1

[14] Zimmermann, H., 30.000 Polizisten zuviel oder zuwenig? In: CD Sicherheits-Management 6, 1995, pp 86 f.

[15] Taken from Marvell, Th.B., C.E. Moody, Specification Problems, Police Levels, and Crime Rates. In: Criminology 34, 4, 1996, p. 609 ff., 610

[16] As our own study could show, approx. 30% of all patrol car activities are devoted to crime; see Dreher, G., Th. Feltes, Notrufe und Funkstreifeneinsätze bei der Polizei. Holzkirchen 1996.

[17] One reason for this is, that crime prevention seems to be not measurable. But as studies could show, it is possible to establish measurement tools for policing systems

[18] Marvell/Moody, 1996, p. 609

[19] A recent victimization study (n=20.000 Germans) by a group of researchers in Baden-Württemberg showed dark-figure-relations (relation between offenses registered by the police and quoted in the survey) between 1:1.3 for personal theft, 1:5.6 for burglary, 1:15 for robbery and 1:20 for damaging cars (Forschungsgruppe Kommunale Kriminalprävention - Dölling/Feltes/Heinz/Hermann/Kury/Obergfell-Fuchs/Spieß, to be published in 1997).

[20] Cook, P., The Clearance Rate as a Measure of Criminal Justice System Effectiveness. In: Journal of Public Economies 11, 1979, p. 135 ff.

[21] Marvell/Moody 1996, p. 610

[22] Levitt,S.D., The relationship between crime reporting and police: Implications for the use of Uni-

More than 30 studies in the U.S. tried to find out, whether or not a causal relationship between police and crime exists. "The 36 studies gave little evidence that more police reduce crime, but they strongly suggest the opposite, that more crime leads to more police"[23]. By using the Granger causality test to determine whether causation exists between police levels and UCR crimes and to determine the causal direction, Marvell and Moody reanalyzed the data of those studies. The results are: Police levels and crime rates clearly affect each other. The impact of crime rates on police levels generally occurs through a two-year lag. Higher police levels reduce most types of crime, particularly at the city level[24]. The authors even calculate, that each additional officer at the city level results in 24 fewer crimes (-.02 homicides, .1 rapes, 1.8 robberies, 5.3 burglaries, 12.5 largencies, 4.5 auto thefts). "The per-officer savings to victims of UCR index crime are roughly $100.000 per additional officer, approximately twice the nationwide costs per officer"[25].

## Is professionalism an success?

What does "efficiency", "effectiveness" and "professionalism" for the police mean? The patrolman, the lowest man in the hierarchy - and usually the least well trained and educated - is in the key position of exercising the greatest amount of discretion on criminal or possibly criminal activities. He has "wide discretionary power concerning if, when, why, and how to intervene in private affairs"[26]- and this is also true for Germany, even with the "principle of legality", where the police has by law no discretionary power and no possibility to dismiss a criminal law case.

Professionalization means[27]:

- prolonged membership

- requirements for higher education

- specialized training

- controls over training

- controls over licensing

- developed rhetoric

- a shared perspective

- belief that work is worthy of high self-esteem

- autonomous command and control of the organization.

Nevertheless, a report for the U.S. Department of Justice pointed out: "The professional policing model has been ineffective in reducing crime, reducing citizens' fears, and satisfying victims that justice is being done. Indeed, recent research indicates that a majority of the population believes that the crime problem has become pro-

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form Crime Reports, unpublished paper, Harvard Society of Fellows, Cambridge 1995 (cited by Marvell/Moody 1996).

[23] Th.B. Marvell und C.E. Moody, Specification Problems, Police Levels, and Crime Rates. In: Criminology 34, 4, 1996, S. 609 ff., S. 613

[24] Marvell/Moody 1996, p. 640

[25] Marvell/Moody 1996, p. 633

[26] Manning, P.K., The Police. Mandate, Strategies, and Appearances. In: V.E. Kappeler, The Police and Society. Prospect Heights 1995, p. 114

[27] Alpert, G.P., R.G. Dunham, Policing Urban America. 2nd ed.,Prospect Heights 1988, p.88

gressively worse during the past decade (...). Similarly, citizens have lost confidence in the criminal justice system to protect them"[28]. Crime rates are affected by vast social, economic, and political forces. No matter how professional, police cannot solve the "root causes" of crime.


## Approaches: Try the Same, but Harder?

Until now, there have been two predominant, but unconnected approaches to controlling urban crime[29]. The most prevalent response has been to call for greater law and order, which means more police, tougher laws, stiffer jail sentences, and keeping people in jail longer. The assumption is, that crime and fear of crime result from too many criminals and insufficient criminal justice.

The second approach has been to focus on root causes of crime: systematic disadvantage, neglect, and discrimination.

There are differing views among researchers about whether police efforts can influence crime. In general terms, these views fall into two groups[30]. One group argues that police have little or no impact on the level of crime because they have no control over the forces that cause it. The second group argues that police can contribute to crime reduction, though often acknowledging that police can do little to affect the root causes of crime. In a series of studies, Sherman finds evidence in some cases for crime control effect (drunk-driving enforcement), in some cases not (burglary stings), and in some cases for a crime-producing effect (arresting spouse abusers)[31].

Fact is, that the police alone cannot maintain public order and cannot protect everybody from suffering a crime. In Stuttgart, three out of four patrol car activities in connection with bodily harms result in domestic violence, and everybody knows, that the police is far away from adequate dealing with those cases. The vast majority of the population living and working in major cities cannot be protected by means of isolation and/or insulation, and if we intend to do so, crime and delinquent behavior will migrate to the suburbs or the rural area[32].

There is no evidence to suggest that law and order approaches or fortress-building responses deal adequately with the problem of increasing public violence or increasing public fear on crime. The main studies on deterrence and incapacitation effects of sentencing are supporting the opposite view. "The paradox is that the law and order response kills the city it is purporting to save. It deepens the divisions and the fear of the ´other´ which are among the most harmful effects of fear of crime"[33]. Furthermore, it costs a lot of money[34], but contrary to the overall financial situation, no-

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[28] Alpert, G.P., M.H. Moore, Measuring Police Performance in the New Paradigm of Policing. In: Performance Measures for the Criminal Justice System, U.S. Department of Justice (NCJ) 1993, pp. 109 ff., 112

[29] Wekerle, G.R., C. Whitzman, Safe Cities. Guidelines for Planning, Design, and Management. New York etc. 1995, p.5

[30] See Sherman, L.W. Attacking Crime: Policing and Crime Control. In: Modern Policing , ed. by M. Tonry, N. Morris, Chicago 1992 (University of Chicago Press)

[31] For further explanations see Shelley, J.F., Criminology, 2nd. ed. Belmont etc. 1995, p.400

[32] This happened in many cities during the last years. While the inner city crime rate decreased, the suburban crime rate increased.

[33] Weckerle/Whitzman 1995, p.6

[34] For instance, the sentencing law aimed at recidivists enacted in California (the broadest version of "Three Strikes and you are out") will double the state´s prison population, requiring the taxpayers to fund a prison expansion equal to the entire amount of state funding for all public universities and col-

body really cares about those costs.

The "third alternative" to the law and order and fortress security approach is gaining more and more popularity in many countries. The "Safer Cities Approach" to urban crime encourages partnerships between police and community, governments and citizens, institutions and individuals. This approach focuses on prevention and the combination of social activities and a new philosophy of policing.

APPROACHES TO CONTROLLING URBAN CRIME

1.    LAW AND ORDER

Focus on:

. more police

. tougher laws

. stiffer sentencing

. urban boot camps

ASSUMES:    Crime and fear of crime results from too many criminals and lax criminal justice system

LEADS TO:    Police state, fortress mentality, private security solutions, withdrawal from city, "cocooning."

**2.    ROOT CAUSES**

Focus on:

. training and education

. job creation

. economic development

. youth socialization

ASSUMES:    Crime results from poverty, marginality, social breakdown.

LEADS TO:    Youth outreach work, focus on schools, long range community development work.

**3.    SAFE CITIES**

Focus on:

. partnership between government and citizens, especially marginalized groups

. prevention of criminal behavior through environmental design, community development, education

. combines social prevention and physical changes

. urban safety as a catalyst for change

ASSUMES:    Fear of crime is as important as crime itself; citizens are experts on urban violence.

LEADS TO:    Local level immediate solutions to improve safety in housing estates, transportation systems, city centers, parks. Long term solutions relating to youth crime, education, community development, and prevention of violence against women.

Source: Wekerle/Whitzman 1995, p.8

leges in California; Krisberg, B., Distorted by Fear: The Make Believe War on Crime. In: Social Justice 21, 3, 1996, p. 38

**Everyday Policing and Safer Cities: Contradiction or Solution?**

The situation in Germany and in other countries shows, that we do need the police in a lot of everyday situations, in which the citizens rely on the police. But the police is less and lesser able to cope with the very different and difficult task of policing a modern, complex society. Furthermore, the fear of crime is increasing (especially in Germany), even in a time with (nearly) stable official crime rates. The satisfaction with the police is still high, but is decreasing, as our most recent study could show[35]. Much fear of crime is independent of victimization. There are many things the police can do to deal with fear, but using rising rates of registered crimes without a solid explanation is a contradiction to this aim.

Safe (or safer) cities seems to be more and more an "conventional wisdom", chased by politicians and police leaders. Guidelines for planning, design and management of such "Safe Cities" are more and more delivered and discussed[36]. Crime prevention through environmental design, safer transportation, safer housing, safer parks and urban open space, safer urban cores, safer workplaces, and even safer campuses are in discussion and projects are designed - with only modest results[37]. The idea of "designing out crime"[38] looks fascinating, but may result in closed neighborhoods, designed by Walt Disney[39] and displacing crime and unsafe neighborhoods to the next lower social class available. Terms like "Defensible Space"[40] and "War on Crime" support the impression, that crime and public unsafety are the results of militaristic, armed conflicts to be solved by more and stronger weapons on the side of those, who are "the good ones". In a complex, modern world conflicts can not be handled by means of weapons and power alone. Whilst the real militaries are in a process of learning their lessons in war games from Vietnam over the Gulf War to Jugoslavia, more and more military leaders are relying on policing rather than weaponing such situations, those who are responsible for the local safety still trust in "more of the same", as Watzlawick called this phenomenon of trying the same, but harder instead of trying something new.

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[35] See Forschungsgruppe Kommunale Kriminalprävention in Baden-Württemberg (D. Dölling, Th. Feltes, W. Heinz, D. Hermann, H. Kury, J. Obergfell-Fuchs, G. Spieß), Opfererfahrungen, Kriminalitätsfurcht und Vorstellungen zur Delinquenzprävention. In: Kommunale Kriminalprävention, hrsg. von Th. Trenczek, H. Pfeiffer, Bonn 1996, S. 118 ff.; G. Dreher, Th. Feltes, Das Modell Baden-Württemberg. In: E. Kube, H. Schneider, J. Stock (Hrsg.), Vereint gegen Kriminalität, Lübeck u.a. 1996, S.137 ff.

[36] See e.g. Wekerle/Whitzman 1995

[37] E.g.: One neighborhood in Heidelberg, especially designed for communication and living-together by Alexander Mitscherlich in the 1960s, is now one of the social problem neighborhoods in this city.

[38] Geason, S., P. Wilson, Designing out Crime: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. Canberra (Australian Institute of Criminology) 1989

[39] In fact, the Walt Disney Cooperation is reported planning a village with special preventive measures and more than 8 Mio. people are reported to live behind "barbed wires" and walls in America; see also Shearing,C.D., Stenning,P.C., From the panopticon to Disney World: The development of discipline. In: Perspectives in Criminal Law, hrsg. von A.N.Doob und E.L.Greenspan, Toronto 1984.

[40] Newman, O., Defensible Space, New York 1972

## Targets and strategies of crime prevention[41]

Traditionally police forces have used task-oriented strategy i.e. the police reacts to individual incidents (calls for service) or uses data describing crime trends and the distribution of reported crimes (uniform crime statistics). Only partly, repeat victimization or victimization studies are used to monitor the past. Deterrence and control are considered the main preventive measures. As James Q. Wilson in a paper for the Study Group on Criminal Justice Performance Measures points out: There are no real measures of success; what is measurable about the level of public order, safety, and amenity in a given large city can only partially, if at all, be affected by police behavior. "Proxy measures almost always turn out to be process measures - response time, arrest rates, or clearance rates - that may or may not have any relationship to crime rates or levels of public order. In my view, the search for better measures of police performance is doomed to failure so long as it focuses on city-wide or even precinct-wide statistics. ... No matter how we improve the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) or the National Crime Victimization Surveys (NCVS), they will not tell us very much ... about what difference the police make in the lives of the citizens"[42].

Situational crime prevention (physical environment) is one of the latest strategy in police work. The aim is to make a local area a less attractive target to crimes. Comparative case analysis, and an in-depth local picture of the public order situation (not only the crime situation, as documented in the uniform crime statistics) is used to obtain an understanding of the pattern of crime in an area in order to find targets of likely victimization and to develop preventive measures. Thus, in developing criteria, mere listing of actions is not enough, we need to take also matters of tactics and strategies into account.

Social crime prevention (social environment) is the general term for different types of community oriented strategies in crime prevention. These crime prevention models are based on social support and assistance, as well as on strengthening the community's ability to prevent crime. Co-operating in networks of authorities, communities, and people gives the police several roles in crime prevention and creating a safe and pleasant environment.

## Community Policing: Policing the Community or More?

Community Crime Prevention and Community Policing are main reforms in crime prevention strategies, developed during the last years in North-America and Europe[43]. Both have implications for police management and the philosophy of policing. While the reform itself is targeted towards high volume crime where offenders are

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[41] For this chapter see Kiehelä, H., P. Raivola, Research Proposal: A comprehensive evaluation system for the police services, Helsinki 1995 (unpublished). The proposal is part of an grant application to the EU by a Research Consortium of British, Dutch, Finnish, Hungarian, Irish and German Police Colleges and Universities.

[42] Wilson, J.Q., The Problem of Defining Agency Success. In: Performance Measures for the Criminal Justice System, Discussion Papers from the BJS-Princeton Project, U.S. Department of Justice, NCJ, 1993, pp. 157 ff., p. 160

[43] See W. G. Skogan, Community Policing in the United States. In: J.-P. Brodeur (ed.), Comparisons in Policing: An International Perspective, Aldershot etc. 1995, p. 86 ff.; J.R. Greene, S.D. Mastrofski (eds.), Community Policing: Rhetoric or Reality?, New York 1988; S. Sadd, R.M. Grinc, Implementation Challenges in Community Policing: Innovative Neighborhood-Oriented Policing in Eight Cities. NIJ Research in Brief, 1996 (NCJ 157932); Communities: Mobilizing Against Crime. Making Partnerships Work. National Institute of Justice - Journal August 1996.

often juvenile, emphasizes police-community relations and local crime analysis and environmental analysis, the background philosophy is based on a distinct set of values within the police force and the understanding, that crime prevention is a task for all members of a community. Community policing is a comprehensive approach suggesting a multi-causal view of crime and a multidimensional approach to crime prevention.

There has been several attempts to define community policing[44]. Community policing is described as family of reforms[45]. It seems to be more fruitful to list important characteristics of community policing than to attempt a strict definition.

The following characteristics are considered as important:

- To solve problems, where they appear

  **L = local approach**

- To solve problems by creative means and with unconventional measures, when necessary

  **L = creative approach**

- To solve problems by analyzing the structural causes and not sticking on individual explanations. A view of all underlying factors and available means of creating safety, not just those related to traditional police work.

  **L = structural approach; problem oriented policing**

- To look at problems from a more general point of view and not only from a crime-fighting and repressive approach. Safety orientation means: Creating a safe community is considered more important than mere control of crimes or compliance to norma

  **L = `look and say´ method; multi-factor approach**

- To solve problems together with others; police must cooperate with all individuals, institutions and groups in an community (private security services included); police should deny responsibilities where others are more competent or have better resources for solving a given problem. A broad strategic cooperation with other authorities, communities and people is needed.

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[44] Dölling, D., Th. Feltes, Community Policing. Holzkirchen 1993; Trojanowicz, R.C., Community Policing: A Survey of Police Departments in the United States. National Center for Community Policing, Michigan State University, U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1995; Workshop on Evaluating Police Service Delivery. Report. Sponsored by Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada. Organized by International Centre for Comparative Criminology, University of Montréal, Montréal 1995; Chicago Community Policing Evaluation Consortium (Wesley Skogan u.a.), Community Policing in Chicago, Year Two: An Interim Report, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority Juni 1995

[45] Rosenbaum, D.P. (Ed.), The Challenge of Community Policing: Testing the Promises, Thousand Oaks, London, New Dehli 1994

**L = division of labor approach**

- To see police as a part of the community (pars pro toto)

    **L = cooperative approach**

- The police takes the initiative and is not captured by sheer reactive measures after crimes have been committed or calls for service are received.

    **L = proactive approach**

- To decentralize police organization

    **L = decentralized approach**

- To-be-named-characteristics ...

    **L = work-in-progress approach**

## Is Crime Control possible?

Recent studies and experiences in bigger cities in the US and Europe suggest, that crime **can** be controlled, by taking a holistic and strategic approach. Most crime reduction programs represent one-off attempts to reduce crime. The benefits tend to be eroded as time passes, enthusiasm wanes, and organizational constraints set in. This decline would be inexorable given a general but typically unstated assumption that crime is uncontrollable in the long term.

Between 1990 and 1995, the crime rate in New York decreased by 36% (all crimes), in Chicago by 16%, in Geneva by 22%, in Helsinki by 23%, in Zurich by 13%, in Stuttgart by 10%, in Stockholm by 9%, London by 2%, Kopenhagen by 5% (see table 1)

**Table 1:**

**Crime Rates in European Cities and Countries, 1990 to 1995**[46]

| City | Abs. number of offenses, diff. be-tween 1990 and 1995 in% | Crime rates (offenses per 100.000 inhabi-tants) difference in % | Differences for of-fenses/rates for the resp. countries |
|---|---|---|---|
| Helsinki | - 22,9%/ -26,6% | | Finland: -10,8%/-12,9% |
| Stockholm | - 9,3%/-11,9% | | Sweden: - 6,0%/-8,8%; |
| Kopenhagen | - 4,8%/-5,9% | | Denmark: + 2,2%/+0,7% |
| London | - 2,2%/-5,3% | | England/Wales: + 12,3%/+9,9% |
| Vienna | + 1,6%/- 5,3% | | Austria: + 6,3%/+0,9% |
| Ljubljana | + 1,9%/+ 8,0% | | Slowenia: - 0,5%/-0,1% |
| Paris | + 2,6%/-1,0% | | France: +4,9%/+2,4% |
| Budapest | + 16,9%/ + 22,2% | | Hungary: +47,2%/+109,9% |
| Oslo | +44,0%/+37,4% | | Norway: +9,8%/+7,3% |
| Ankara | + 60,2%/+41,5% | | Turkey: +33,0%/+16,5% |
| Prague | + 61,0%/+60,7% | | Tschechia: +73,2%/+73,6% |
| Bruxelles | - | | Belgium: +103,0%/k.A. |
| Zurich | -13% | | Geneva: -22% |
| Stuttgart | -10% | | Germany: not compa-rable |

[46] Source: Survey by the author, December 1996; for Zurich and Geneva: Eisner 1996 (FN 51)

The discussion whether the police is responsible especially for the decrease in New York is still going on. At a first glace, the performance measures look like they may correlate with murder rates, and thus it would appear that the New York Police deserves some of the credit for bringing down the city´s murder rate. "But the observed relationships are weak, not striking, and some of the data can be interpreted in a different light"[47]. Since the drop in murders is also taking place in many other cities, the discussion whether "strong" police performance (like the so-called "beer-and-piss-order" in N.Y.) must take place on a broader basis. As Al Blumstein[48] mentioned, the decrease may be more likely a result of local police work, local culture and regional factors than state-wide decision. As an other police chief pointed out: "Better departments produce better results"[49].

"We´re clearly seeing something in the big cities that represents a decline in some of the most serious crimes, and the smaller cities are lagging, in part, ... because of the lag in the arrival of the drug markets, which I think were a major factor in the growth of crime in the late ´80s. Drug markets arrived in the smaller cities 1 to 5 years later. This phenomenon (the decline of big-city crime rates) may be a maturation of drug markets, and the maturation will occur later in the smaller cities"[50]. The same explanation is given by Eisner for the decreasing crime rate in one of the European capitals, Zurich[51].

Whilst traditional approaches analyze the crime levels and patterns to initiate operations, the outputs are indeterminate because no systematic process control mechanisms are included. The alternative to the traditional crime control model is to assume that crime levels are controllable within a wide range, and to reflect that in strategy, such that increases in crime levels trigger action to return them to a specified target level. The analogy is with servo-mechanisms like thermostats, where departures from the desired temperature lead automatically to their removal. Where suitable information technology is available, statistical process control (SPC) methodology can be used.

Local police officers and citizens very often undertake small scale actions to reduce the incidence of crime. These initiatives often go unnoticed as successes even within a force. The reason for this is two-folded: First, local projects are hard to be copied by other communities and/or police districts, because the local situation differs and there is no structural intent to make such successful projects available for others. Second, "success" is often defined by the local forces themselves, and no scientific evaluation by an expert is provided. Both seems to be necessary to learn systematically from successful local crime prevention activities.

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[47] A. Karmen, What´s Driving New York´s Crime Rate Down? In: Law Enforcement News XXII, No. 456, Nov. 30, 1996, p.8 ff., 10

[48] See Measuring What Matters, Part One: Measuring of Crime, Fear, and Disorder, NIJ - Research in Action, Dec. 1996, p.12: "... I think Bill Bratton has caught everyone´s attention with is the basic theme that´s sweeping industry of continuous improvement. One can do (continuous improvement) in a variety of ways. One can hold one´s managers´ feet to the fire based on the outcome measure you´ve defined ...".

[49] Chief Robert Ford of the Port Orange Police Department. In: Measuring What Matters, Part One: Measuring of Crime, Fear, and Disorder, NIJ - Research in Action, Dec. 1996, p.14

[50] Blumstein ibid.

[51] Eisner, M., Rückgang von Kriminalität in der Städten. In: Neue Kriminalpolitik 3, 1996, S. 38 ff.. See also H. Hess, New York zieht die Lehren aus den zerbrochenen Fensterscheiben. In: KrimJ 1996, S. 179 ff.

## The effects of police training

Police today are more highly trained than ever before, and the quality of the training has probably never been higher. This is true for Germany and most of the other (western) european states, and for North-America. Nevertheless, the positive relationship between training and enforcement seems to be evident, but this effect is not studied very much. The benefits of the training for institutions are generally more assumed or served as an important legitimating function for headquarters, than empirically demonstrated[52], and empirical studies have focused on officers´ attitudes rather than actual behavior[53]. A recent study by Mastrofski and Ritti showed, that the impact of training depends on organization-level considerations[54]. Training has a significant positive effect in agencies that provide a supportive environment, but fails to have an effect in agencies that are otherwise indifferent or hostile to the intentions, the officers are trained for. The effect of the training therefor depends on the opportunities, afforded by the institution to apply it, on supervisors, who encourage the trained person and the intention, and on its relevance to the prospects for career advancement[55]. The supervisor philosophy "Go out there and don´t get into trouble" is not a good one, to encourage trained officers (it is not a good one anyway). What is necessary is the institutional and personal (by the supervisor) value, given to the intended activity. The supervisor must "live" what he or she wants to be happen[56].

## No time for crime prevention?

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[52] Scott, W.R., J.W. Meyer, The Rise of Training Programs in Firms and Agencies: An Institutional Perspective. In: Institutional Environments and Organizations: Structural Complexity and Individualism, ed. by W.R. Scott, J.W. Meyer and Ass., Thousand Oaks 1994, pp 228 ff., 232.

[53] Mastrofsky, S.D., The Prospects of Change in Police Patrol: A Decade in Review. In: American Journal of Police 9, 1990, p. 1 ff., p. 16

[54] Mastrofski, S.D., R.R. Ritti, Police Training and the Effects of Organizations on Drunk Driving Enforcement. In: Justice Quarterly 13, 2, 1996, pp. 291 ff.

[55] Mastrofski/Ritti 1996, p.296, 304.

[56] A good example gave the former chief of the Edmonton Police, Chris Braiden; see Braiden, C., Community-Based Policing: A Process for Change. In: Community Policing in Canada, hrsg. von James Chacko und Stephen E. Nancoo, Toronto 1993, S. 211 ff.; Braiden, C., Policing - From the Belly of the Whale. Manuscript, Chris Braiden Consulting Inc. o.J. (1994)

It is often complained, that answering calls for service and making arrests for other offenses may leave little time for officers to increase their preventive productivity. The mentioned study by Mastrofski and Ritti did not support this explanation (or excuse?). In this study, the departments with higher arrest rates for drunken drivers also are burdened with higher arrest rates for other offenses. Departments that tend to be busy are busy in any kind of activity, and departments, that tend to be "lazy" are lazy anyway[57]. In our study of calls for service in three cities in Baden-Württemberg, we found a high percentage of misuse and calls for information[58]. The proactive patrol car activities were very low. Crimes count for 7% to 19% of all calls for services, and for 19% to 39% of all patrol car activities. The rate for Stuttgart in a former study was 18,8%[59]. "According to this view, police spend most of their time attending to order-maintaining functions, such as finding lost children, substituting as ambulance drivers or interceding in quarrels of one sort or another. ... the police spend as little as 10 to 15 percent of their time on law enforcement"[60]. Research findings and practice make clear that citizens use the police for many purposes other than crime control and that things other than crime are principal concerns[61].

In our study, the arrest rate varies between 0,3% of all patrol car activities in Calw, 1,4% in Ravensburg/Weingarten and 7,4% in Freiburg[62]. In an average, a German police officer arrests seven offenders per year.

If we combine these results, time for crime prevention activities should be available, if the head of the department and/or the supervisor of a given turf insist in these activities and new strategies for handling non-emergency calls are established[63].


## Crackdown as a crime prevention strategy?

Previous research suggests that the effective application of police resources for enforcement and the use of publicity raises the perception of risk of detection in the offender. If police resources are applied in a phased way (using a 'crackdown approach' with specifically timed and targeted publicity, consultation and other techniques) the effects will, the evidence suggests, typically be prolonged after the resources are withdrawn (the residual deterrence effect)[64]. A movement to, say, 25 % below a given crime or public order level is to be achieved by a crackdown, and when the target 25 % level is reached, the crackdown is replaced by a consolidation

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[57] This is not a new explanation, because this pattern, at least with regard to arrests, has been observed e.g. by Wilson, J.Q., Varieties of Police Behavior: The Management of Law and Order in Eight Communities. Cambridge 1968 and Wilson, J.Q., B. Boland, The Effect of the Police on Crime. In: Law and Society Review 12, 1978, pp. 367 ff.

[58] misuse between 14% and 30%, information between 14% and 35%; Dreher, G., Th. Feltes, Notrufe und Funkstreifeneinsätze bei der Polizei. Holzkirchen 1996, p.45

[59] Feltes, Th., Polizeiliches Alltagshandeln: Ergebnisse einer Analyse von Notrufen und Funkstreifenwageneinsätzen. In: Die Polizei 6, 1995, pp. 157 ff.

[60] Manning 1995, pp. 97ff.

[61] Alpert, G., R. Dunham, Policing Urban America, Prospect Heights, 1992, 2f.

[62] Dreher/Feltes 1996, p. 52; for Stuttgart, a rate less than 1% was calculated by Feltes 1995, excluding shop lifting and using public transportation without paying.

[63] Some cities in the US offer special telephone numbers for such non-emergency calls; e.g. Baltimore with a 311-number and New York with a 888-677-LIFE-number for quality-of-life issues (see the report in Law Enforcement News XXII, No. 456, Nov. 1996, p.5

[64] Sherman, L.W., Police Crackdowns: Initial and Residual Deterrence. In: Tony, M., N. Morris, Crime and Justice: a Review of the Research. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1990; Wright, A., Short-term crackdowns and long-term objectives. In: Policing, 10, 4, 1994.

phase involving crime prevention work. As the level of crime moves a specified amount above the target level, a second crackdown takes place until the target 25 % reduction is re-established. The approach is thus a crackdown-consolidation cycle.

"If this effect is coupled with proven crime prevention/community safety measures in a phased cycle of crackdown-consolidation, the effect will be a sustainable program which will reduce the specified crime to the chosen target level. Because resources are used intensively over comparatively short periods, the pay-back is high"[65].

The key seems to be a timed or "phased" (as so called by Richards and Wright) approach, using measurement techniques which are as near to real-time as possible, so that iterative 'steering' of resources and outcomes can be achieved.

The crackdown-strategy seems to be especially useful for targeting drug-crime hot spots, gun-crime-areas and traffic control, as American[66] and German[67] experiences could show. By combining repressive and preventive strategies, and by supporting other, non-criminal solutions, a maximum effect of reducing both the registered crime rate and the public fear is possible.

The local displacement of crime from one area to the next or the sort-of-crime displacement from one offence to another (usually bigger one) has to be watched, but we have some evidence, that this displacement is usually less than 100%[68]. "Measuring what Matters"[69] means, to look first of all to the neighborhoods and to what the people really want. Thinking small and from the bottom up, and not in large scale measures could be a solution.

One may question whether the police may have any impact on crime and crime-related problems regardless their approach to policing[70]. Recent studies suggest a position between the two contrasting visions of police effectiveness in combating crime and disorder. If police are to affect crime and disorder problems, they must define focused crime prevention efforts that are as varied as the phenomena they seek to address[71].

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[65] Richards/Wright 1996

[66] Weisburd, D., L. Green, Policing Drug Hot Spots: The Jersey City Drug Market Analysis Experiment. In: Justice Quarterly 12, 4, 1995, S. 711 ff.; Sherman, L.W., D.P. Rogan, Effects of Gun Seizures on Gun Violence: "Hot Spots" Patrol in Kansas City. In: Justice Quarterly 12, 4, 1995, S. 673 ff.; one interesting result of this study is, that there is no effect of patrol police activities on calls for police service, calls about violence, property, or disorder crimes, total offense reports, nor property or violent offenses; for the public support of such a strategy see Shaw, J.W., Community Policing Against Guns: Public Opinion of the Kansas City Gun Experiment. In: Justice Quarterly 12, 4, 1995, S. 695 ff.; for negative effects of increased patrol activities see Sherman, L.W., Defiance, Deterrence, and Irrelevance. In: Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 30, 1993, S. 445 ff.

[67] For the drug-scene in Frankfurt see H.H. Körner, Staatsanwaltschaft und Drogenpolitik, unpublished paper, Frankfurt 1996; a combination of repressive, preventive and therapeutic (health-care-oriented) efforts resulted in a decrease in robbery and theft crimes in the City of Frankfurt. For traffic controls a mixed strategy; see Machemer,E., Runde,B., Wolf,U., Büttner,D., Tücke,M., Delegierte Belohnung und intensivierte Verkehrsüberwachung im Vergleich. Bundesanstalt für Straßenwesen (Berichte M 48), Bergisch Gladbach 1995; Tücke,M., Wolf,U., Reduzierung von Geschwindigkeiten im ländlichen Raum durch delegierte Belohnung und/oder intensivierte polizeiliche Überwachung. Forschungsberichte aus dem Fachbereich Psychologie der Universität Osnabrück, Nr. 109, Osnabrück 1996.

[68] Wilson 1993, p. 164

[69] Kelling, G., Measuring What Matters. In: The City Journal 1992, pp. 21 ff.

[70] see, e.g., Gottfredson,M.R., T.Hirschi, A General Theory of Crime, Stanford, CA, 1990 (Stanford University Press)

[71] Weisburg/Green 1995, p. 732

**Conclusion?**

Because of the changing nature of society, as well as the changing nature and increased amount of crime and/or public fear, the change of the police is both desirable and/or eminent. Within today´s fast-paced world, it is necessary to cope with the barrage of changes that confront police executives daily. The police must develop strategies to plan, direct and control change, and to built the necessity of change into their own philosophy.

Problem oriented policing, team policing, and finally community policing are terms, reflecting the changing of the philosophy of policing during the last years. Although this change might be for some outstanding visitors too slow, for the internal system of the police this is a tremendous challenge, because the main structures of leadership, the structure and the form of the organization have to be changed. This includes attitudinal, organizational, and subcultural changes. The keywords are participation, decentralization, motivation and working together with the community to solve problems of crime and related social ills.

The policeman´s view of his role and his occupational culture are very influential in determining the nature of policing. As Manning points out, the basic source of police trouble is the inability of the police to define a mandate that will minimize the consistent nature of their self-expectations and the expectations of those they serve[72].

The development into a more citizen-responsive force and oriented to a closer relationship with the community has to be real rather than superficial and therefor requires a significant change in philosophy, a reordering of priorities, and potentially massive restructuring of police organizations.

There must be a greater coordination of police and other agencies within the criminal-justice system in order to increase the benefits to the client and break down the isolation of the police. An organizational change in the policeman´s function could lead to a referral specialist, a "Special Generalist", who is specialized in and responsible for all general problems, brought to the attention of the police, a coordinator of family health, a source of records and information (for the client, not for the state), a family counselor. This "would begin to bridge the chasm between the police and many hostile segments within the public, a process that could be facilitated by the creation of a community-relations division within police departments"[73] - but better: by re-organizing the police force into a community oriented, decentralized and independent organization with participatory management.

Police must engage in community-based processes related to the production and maintenance of local human and social capital. The means by which these lofty goals are to be achieved are through the development of strong relationships with institutions and individuals in the community[74].


The way the police visualize their work and their methods has to be challenged. In the traditional strategy, policing is an reactive approach: the key unit of work is the "incident." Patrol officers respond to a specific incident, and it is the incident that becomes the focus of a criminal investigation. What we have recently learned, how-

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[72] Manning 1995, p. 120
[73] Manning 1995, p. 123
[74] Alpert/Moore 1993, p. 113

ever, is that a large proportion of incidents emerge from a relatively small number of situations and locations, and that it should be possible to reduce such "incidents" by tackling with the more general background of these situations and locations.

Changes in internal working relationships mean, that police agencies need to examine the potential strengths and weaknesses of decentralization of authority by seeking ways to guide discretion and police behavior generally through increasing reliance on values rather than rules and strict methods of accountability[75]. These ideas are central to the concepts of community policing, problem-solving policing and smarter policing.

Measures should also include - as Alpert and Dunham pointing out[76] -

C      police-related and inter-governmental activities that improve the social fabric of the community

C      projects with the assistance of private industry that improve informal and formal social control in the community

C      tackling the fear of crime

C      victimization and police service programs that help promote community spirit in those neighborhoods where none existed.

The one and only way to deal with the public concerns is to develop a tailored program for individual areas. In other words, do not assume that each community has the same concerns or problems or that each community should respond similarly to certain problems. An open system of policing will find tailored solutions for a small world (neighborhood) within a learning institution.

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[75] Alpert, G., W. Smith, Developing Police Policy: Evaluating the Control Principle. In: American Journal of Police, 1993; Alpert/Dunham 1993, p.117

[76] Alpert/Dunham 1993, p. 123