

1944

Prevention of Repeated Crime

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Recommended Citation

Ernst W. Puttkammer, *Prevention of Repeated Crime*, 11 *University of Chicago Law Review* 186 (1944).

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focused too much attention on the occurrences of the 1930's. After all, much of what employers and employer controlled public officials did before the National Labor Relations Board was firmly established by the Supreme Court in 1937 has become a thing of the past. It is possible, of course, that the author is apprehensive about the future of labor relations during the post-war period. He may fear the recurrence of an organized anti-union movement at that time and may seek to warn his readers by recalling the unfortunate excesses and more unfortunate consequences which such a movement then precipitated. At any rate, the book is sufficiently contemporary to give its readers plenty to think about and to make them consider the author's thesis seriously.

CHARLES O. GREGORY*

The Prevention of Repeated Crime. By John B. Waite. Chicago: Callaghan & Co.; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1943. Pp. xi, 221. \$3.00.

In appraising our social structure few facts stand out so clearly beyond the possibility of contradiction or even of doubt, as that of our complete, egregious failure in our efforts to prevent, or even to minimize, repeated criminal conduct by those who have once offended. Over and over we are given unneeded demonstrations of the certainty with which offenders come back again and again, with only brief intervals of liberty barely long enough to provide time to get into a new scrape, usually very similar to those of the past. Equally beyond dispute is the statement that such a state of affairs is the absolute opposite of what is desirable. Faced with these two facts the usual reaction of society has been to continue doing the same things as before, only more energetically so. Where severe punishment was imposed (though only a rare offender was convicted), even more severe penalties were set up (and in consequence even fewer were convicted). The conclusion drawn from failure was, and largely is, the need of relying with yet more fanatic zeal on the discredited means already being used. This, it was said, was the approach of the "realist," while he was a mere "theorist" who believed that several centuries of constant failure were enough to show that something was definitely wrong and that it was high time to try something else—something that at the worst could hardly fail any more thoroughly. This sort of "theory" is the starting point for Mr. Waite's book. It asks, what is wrong, and (in broadest outline only) what shall we do about it?

Anyone who has read the same author's *The Criminal Law in Action* will know how realistic his approach is and how fully all positions taken are backed by firsthand knowledge. These same characteristics are found in the present book and are what give it its authority. Turning now to a description of its contents, it opens with an analysis of why treatment (call it "punishment," if preferred) is imposed on a wrongdoer. If vengeance is our purpose (and it still very often is), there is little more to be said. Vengeance looks only to the past. As a purpose of punishment it is utterly sterile, because, by its own admission, the future does not concern it. And so today, whatever the reality may be, we are at least enough advanced in thinking to say that we punish to provide social protection. We look to the future and we seek to make that future more secure by taking protective measures today. This, we say, is why we punish. But here is where the problem becomes a double one. In part we hope, by the

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punishment, to prevent not only the criminal but others also from engaging in such conduct, by the example of the suffering imposed on the offender—deterrence, in short. In part we hope by rehabilitation measures to make a better citizen out of the offender himself—reformation. The extent to which deterrence really deters will always be a matter of controversy. Mr. Waite believes that we greatly overestimate its effectiveness. Space limitations render it impossible to examine this point more closely. He also believes that a genuine reformatory method is not without deterring effect, and he accordingly proceeds to a discussion of our efforts toward offender-rehabilitation—the only constructive approach, in his opinion. He then demonstrates—unfortunately all too convincingly—that our present methods, instead of being rehabilitative, range in the main from mildly harmful to seriously character-destroying. He terminates his book with an analysis of the extent to which existing statutes permit the taking of measures directed toward character-improvement and the extent to which they are in fact used. Here too the record is a sorry one. A very long appendix cites the authorities, state by state, supporting the general assertions of the text.

As Mr. Waite drives home point after point, there is no possible escaping their truth and logic. The more is the pity that they are so largely unrecognized. For every citizen who wishes to reach an intelligent, not merely an emotional, decision on how to cope with the repeater the book should be on the absolute “must” list.

E. W. PUTTKAMMER*

Criminal Careers in Retrospect. By Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck. New York: Commonwealth Fund, 1943. Pp. x, 380. \$3.50.

Of great importance to the advance of our criminal knowledge is the series of follow-up studies by the Gluecks of delinquents and criminals. This new volume carries the study of 500 criminal careers through a third five-year period after the expiration of their sentences to the Massachusetts Reformatory. More than 90 per cent of the 439 survivors of the original group of 510 young criminals were reached through personal interviews with the men and close relatives, employers, social workers, and friends. Records of welfare and law enforcement agencies were consulted for confirmatory and additional information.

The outstanding finding in this volume is evidence of some further improvement of the men during the third five-year period, but not nearly so much as in the second five-year period. Slight improvement is reported in their environmental circumstances, in their relations to their families, in use of leisure time, and in work habits despite their general worsened economic status due to the depression. In the third five-year period the proportion that committed new offenses is practically the same as in the second period, but the proportion of major offenses has decreased with an increase in minor offenses, such as arrests for drunkenness.

The authors find significant pre-reformatory differences in family and personal backgrounds of non-reformed and reformed offenders in fifteen factors as follows: other members of family delinquent; parents economically dependent; mothers worked outside home; families were clients of social agencies; homes broken by death, desertion, separation, or divorce of parents; parents incompatible; offenders mentally defective; offenders showed evidence of mental pathology; offenders truant from

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