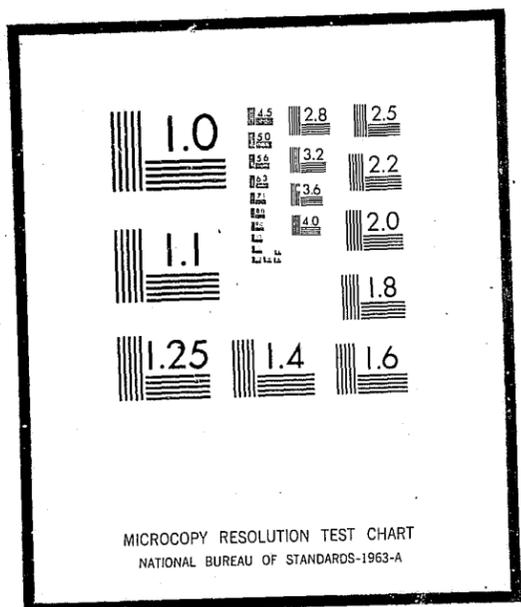


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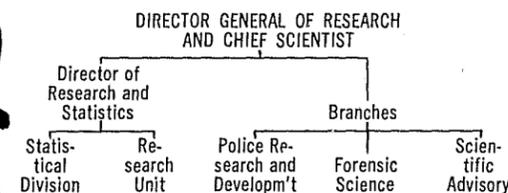
IN GREAT BRITAIN

By DANIEL L. SKOLER

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LATE INFORMATION

Since this article went to press, a reorganization of Home Office research cognizance has been effected which may respond to the need for linkages between police and conventional criminological research and between physical and social science research discussed here. The Chief Scientific Advisor has been given a new title, with jurisdiction as follows:



◆ In 1967, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice provided the nation with some hard facts about its criminal administration systems. One of these was the critical importance of research to improvement of law enforcement capabilities:

There is virtually no subject connected with crime or criminal justice into which further research is unnecessary. . . . It would obviously be futile to catalog all the kinds of research that are needed. We do not even know all the questions that need to be asked. But we do know many of them and we also know that planning and organizing the search for knowledge is a matter of highest importance.¹

This came as no surprise to progressive law enforcement administrators nor was it unattended by previous effort, however limited, among advanced law enforcement systems to meet the research challenge. Among the most impressive of such efforts have been the centrally directed research programs of the British Home Office. With our own federal government now in process of initiating the national law enforcement research and development program mandated by the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, the English experience merits special attention.

Operating on modest budgets unknown to the American research community and enjoying the ad-

1. *Challenge of Crime in a Free Society*, pp. 273-274 (Govt. Printing Off. 1967).

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vantages of the central control and policy authority exercised by the Home Office over the nation's police and criminal administration activity, the British effort has been conducted through two major instrumentalities: (1) the *Home Office Police Research and Development Branch* concerned with all matters related to the police service and (2) the *Home Office Research Unit* concerned with problems of correctional and court administration and general studies of crime and criminal behavior.

It is the work of the Police Research and Development Branch (the "Branch" or "PRDB") that will constitute the major focus of this article. However, reference will also be made to the Research Unit effort, both to provide a total picture of British criminal justice research activity and the basis for some comparisons and observations as to scope and jurisdiction.

THE POLICE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BRANCH

The Police Research and Development Branch (originally known as the Police Research and Planning Branch) was organized in 1963. It is now entering its sixth year of operation with a full time professional staff of about 45 and an operating budget of about \$600,000.

Under the authority of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, the Home Office unit has been responsible since 1856 for insuring that all aspects of municipal police work are of adequately high standards. The Branch is headed by a senior police official working with an operating deputy of scientific background. The staff includes about 10 other police professionals, mostly high ranking officers on temporary leave from their departments to serve with the Branch. They work with some 35 scientific and research personnel of varying grades of seniority ranging from "principal scientific officers" to "assistant experimental officers."

The current "R&D" portfolio of the branch numbers some 50 to 60 separate projects organized under eight major research categories: equipment, theoretical, command and control, uniform patrol, traffic, C.I.D., information utilization, and manpower. Joint responsibility for each major project is shared between a senior police professional and a scientific officer and the collaboration and agreement of both is necessary for project formulation and execution. (It is even customary for these individuals to share office space.)

Funding is divided about equally between in-house (intramural) research and outside (extramural) research conducted by private firms, agencies, or universities. The latter receives close supervision and monitoring by the Branch and is well integrated with total research activities in the given program areas. This level of expenditure seems, and is, quite modest by American standards. Nevertheless, the ratio of outlay to total police expenditures (\$.6 million against the current \$700 million annual cost of the police service for England and Wales)² is as high as any R&D investment our own federal government has

seen fit to extend for police improvement (\$3-\$4 million for the last few years against nearly \$4 billion in total police service expenditures).³ What the PRDB has done with these resources seems extraordinary, ranging over a surprisingly broad range of police concerns. These cover basic questions and studies relevant to police service improvement (re-assessment and redefinition of police manpower requirements by functional study and analysis, review of methods of crime detection for allocation of C.I.D. resources) and direct research on specific improvement measures (programmed training instruction, police usage of helicopters, testing of new devices such as personal radios, patrol car teleprinter systems and alarm devices, scene-of-crime fingerprint identification, experimentation with closed circuit television, review of effectiveness of traffic safety patrol cover, and development of automated information systems for police).⁴

The Branch has played a central role in some of the most basic change and innovation now underway in the British police system. Illustration may be found in three important programs:

1. Introduction in 1966 of the new "unit beat policing" system in which resident police officers with defined beats team up with 24-hour mobile patrol and assigned C.I.D. and collator resources to produce the "country policeman" or "community officer" backed by modern communication, information, investigative, and mobile police facilities. Described by the current Chief Inspector of Constabulary as probably representing "the biggest change in fundamental police operational methods since 1829," unit beat policing, or variants thereof, will cover more than 60 percent of the British population by the middle of 1969. PRDB was instrumental in formulating basic designs and formats for unit beat policing, has undertaken considerable consultation and training with individual forces to communicate the concept, its requirements and its adaptation to local conditions, and has been continually engaged in evaluation studies and experimental work (e.g. extension of the unit beat system to rural policing).

2. Development of regional crime squads, drawn from the combined C.I.D. resources of city and county departments in six regions covering all of England and Wales, as an instrument for unrestricted investigative activities across traditional administrative boundaries against major criminals, organized crime and other situations requiring special mobility and communications capacity for effective investigative response. Here too the Branch contributed to the "architecture" of the program, has conducted a thorough descriptive study and evaluation of problems and successes since its initiation in 1965, and will be an important factor in future evaluation and program improvement.

2. Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of the Constabulary for the Year 1967, p. 2 (H.M. Stationery Office 1968) (250 million pounds for year ending March 31, 1968).

3. Institute for Defense Analyses, *A National Program of Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice*, p. 64 (1968) (\$4.1 million in active federally sponsored police research during June 1-30, 1968).

4. For a more detailed summary of the PRDB research programs, see Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, supra n. 2, at pp. 78-83.

3. Consolidation of local British police departments, in a major reorganization program launched in 1966, will result in reduction of the number of separate forces from more than 100 to less than 40 by mid-1969. Inputs by PRDB on its "assessment of police establishments" manpower study, its re-examination of the C.I.D. function, cooperative efforts with the Metropolitan Police Joint A.D.P. unit to develop interfacing computer-assisted national, regional, and local information systems and files accessible to all local forces, and many other "increased efficiency" studies and experiments will provide much of the grist for placing the newer, fewer, larger county and municipal forces on the soundest, most efficient and cost-effective operational footing.

The apparent diverse character of the PRDB effort can be misleading. Program design and conceptualization evidences the fine touch of the Branch's "operations research" orientation.⁵ Annual programs are well classified and laid out, with detailed cost and manpower estimates for each project. Five-year projections ("forward looks") lay bare research time frames and estimated future financial commitments for current projects. Virtually all research has been conceptually integrated around a basic program mission "to examine in detail and redefine manpower requirements." Attempting to set measurable management objectives, monitor performance and define standards for each major function of the police service (uniform patrol cover, traffic patrolling, criminal investigation, and support services), PRDB seeks to enhance rational decision-making at two levels—reallocation of manpower between the elements of a particular police force, and national policy formulation on overall manpower needs and distribution of police manpower between specific functions. All projects, including equipment development and new technological innovations, are conceived as contributing to this basic process of establishing measurable yardsticks for all elements of police operations, defining optimal standards of performance, and thereby permitting reallocation of manpower for better accomplishment of defined missions.

Recognizing the importance of communicating information to users and sponsors of research and its critical role in assuring that research is actually used as an improvement tool, the Branch has begun to intensify efforts in this area. In January, 1967, publication was commenced of a quarterly *Police Research Bulletin* which is today distributed to all forces in the British Isles. In addition to contributions from PRDB staff and contractors, several local forces have contributed articles which provide a healthy focus on research and development in the life of operating police establishments. Members of the Branch regularly appear at the command and senior officer courses of the Police College at Bramshill (and its Scottish counterpart) to explain the organization's work or provide instruction on a variety of technical subjects. Lectures are given as well as courses organized by chief officers in the police districts, each of which has a senior officer appointed as liaison with

the Branch. Coupled with frequent visits by the senior police officers currently assigned to the Branch, these techniques have materially strengthened contact with, and understanding on the part of, user police agencies.

Mention should be made of auxiliary research resources which contribute significantly to the total police research program. Forensic research, for example, is one aspect of the R&D picture not directly administered by the Branch. This is in the hands of the Central Research Establishment of the Home Office Forensic Sciences Service which became operational in early 1967. Operating with a professional staff of 20, it is already engaged in a broad program of forensic science research which includes assessment of the age of blood stains, research in blood groupings, analysis of dried paint films, and testing of blood alcohol measurement levels. Additionally, at the British Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston basic research is being conducted in trace analysis, using neutron activation techniques for hair comparisons and glass particle identification. This work is integrated with related operational research inputs by the Central Research Establishment. Other resources include a separate R&D branch in the establishment of the London Metropolitan Police (5 to 10 man staff) which conducts a program oriented to operational needs of the London Police but has occasional opportunity to collaborate with PRDB; the computer and ADP facilities of the Home Office and Metropolitan Police which have been used for data retrieval and analysis on various PRDB research projects (e.g., recruitment survey, regional crime squad assessment, helicopter utilization); the overall Home Office Scientific Advisory Council which offers advice on fruitful areas for research and for technical and equipment development, and the Home Office Chief Scientific Advisor who reviews Home Office research and whose office has been generally close to the PRDB program and provides special guidance in the areas of forensic and prison security technology.

University involvement in Branch projects has been less than with the research in corrections, delinquency and criminology conducted by the Home Office Research unit. As indicated, about half of current PRDB expenditures are for outside work with universities and with research and analysis firms. It is estimated that university research or evaluation is involved and financially supported in more than 10 projects in the PRDB portfolio, frequently calling for direct collaboration between the university and a local police force engaged in Branch-sponsored test or demonstration efforts.⁶

5. This is reflected in the Branch's unpublished internal program documents, i.e., Progress Report and Proposed Programme of Research for 1969-70 (June 1968), Monograph entitled "Assessment of Police Establishments" (August 1968) and Project Manpower Distribution Chart for 1969-70.

6. Illustrative are an operations research project being conducted by Lancaster University relating to beat and traffic controls and C.I.D. operations of the Lancashire Constabulary and involvement of personnel of the Universities of Aston and Birmingham in an experimental program to develop a computer-assisted command and control system for disposition of and communication with mobile forces.

It should be noted that the PRDB serves all the British Isles, despite a separate Home Office and police service for Scotland. In his most recent annual report Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland pointed with approval to the Branch's work, its effect on the Scottish police service (e.g., introduction of unit beat policing), and those few research projects involving participation by Scottish units (e.g., the helicopter experiments).⁷ From both a human resource and cost effectiveness perspective, the arrangement would seem wiser than creation of parallel and separate R&D programs for the Scottish police.

CRIME AND CORRECTIONS— THE HOME OFFICE RESEARCH UNIT

It is interesting, and perhaps something of a limitation, that the PRDB draws its technical staff resources exclusively from the "hard" sciences and systems disciplines (operations research, systems analysis, mathematics, engineering, computer sciences). Lawyers, criminologists, psychologists, or sociologists are not included in these ranks, notwithstanding the human, social, and behavioral factors which bear on the performance, quality, and methods of the police service. It is to the Home Office Research Unit that one must look for legal, behavioral and criminological research. Because of the Unit's major focus on the correction of offenders and social and deviant behavior, this general division of resources is perhaps a proper one.

Operating with a professional staff of about 35 and with a total operating budget not much larger than the PRDB (about \$800,000), the Research Unit divides its attention, in nearly equal proportions, between research in adult crime and corrections and in juvenile delinquency. It reports through a separate chain of Home Office command to a different Deputy Under-Secretary of State. Thus, in addition to its functional separation from the PRDB in conducting no police research, there is also no overall integration of command between the two research programs.

A review of the Unit's most currently available research lists (October, 1967) indicates about 60 active projects in various stages from planning to report preparation and these about equally divided between internal (intramural) and external (extramural) projects. A description of some of the external efforts indicates the Research Unit's wide range of criminal justice concerns as well as the important place of universities, as contrasted with research firms, in its outside contract studies.

The noted Institute of Criminology of the University of Cambridge was reported as involved in six efforts. These included a long-term family development study with reference to delinquent behavior patterns in a sample of some 400 schoolboys; an evaluative study of training programs in a medium security borstal (an institution for delinquent boys

7. Report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland for the Year 1967, pp. 12-13 (July 1968).

above the juvenile court age of over 16); a comparative study of the parole system (including observation and empirical studies in the United States); a study of sentencing practices by magistrate's courts for motor vehicle offenders; a study of the enforcement of criminal fines imposed by magistrate's courts; and a study and experiment in "situational" crime classification.

At the same time, an analysis of unemployment and juvenile delinquency was being completed at the University of Leeds. The University of Manchester was examining juvenile supervision schemes compared with "cautioning," a detached group work program to reduce delinquency, and controlled action research projects on delinquency prevention (the latter receiving private support as well). The University of London was engaged in a comparative study of the effects of different sentences for young offenders (prison, borstal, or detention center commitment) and its Institute of Psychiatry was conducting a study of special problems involved in the imprisonment of women. The London School of Economics was working on research in theft by juvenile and the sentencing policies, following an earlier study, of the Criminal Division of the Court of Appeals.

In addition, a number of Research Unit external projects were involved with general mental health, child welfare, and behavioral relevancy associated with crime control, if at all, in the area of basic or long-term prevention. These included, for example, a national study of child adoption (National Bureau for Cooperation in Child Care); treatment of disturbed children or defective delinquents subject to court orders (i.e., under hospital detention or guardianships) under the British 1959 mental health legislation (University of Oxford); and the handling by local children's departments of delinquency and problem child legislation (University of Wales).

The two main operating departments in the British correctional system—the Prison Department (all institutional care of offenders aged 17 and over)⁸ and the Probation and After-Care Department (all probation, parole and other supervisory schemes, including court probation for juveniles below age 17) are well served by Research Unit program efforts.

In probation and aftercare, the principal research effort has been the large scale national study of probation initiated in 1962 to evaluate the results of probation supervision in more complete fashion than ever before. The major orientation of the project has been on differences in outcome for various types of probationers dealt with in different ways. Several supporting studies have been undertaken to supplement this long-term effort. Analysis and reporting on the extensive data collection to date is now under way.⁹

For the Prison Department, internal research projects

8. Juvenile institutions and treatment programs other than court probation appear to be under the jurisdiction of the Home Office Children's Department.

9. For a more detailed summary of the national probation research project and other probation-related research, see Home Office Report on the Work of the Probation and After-Care Department—1962-1965, ch. 8 at pp. 72-79 (Oct. 1966).

ects have included comparison of offenders on first and second sentences, review of borstal prediction methods, study of employment of women prisoners, analysis of reconstructions of various types of offenders, and study of reports of rehabilitation after release from hostels or direct from prison.¹⁰

One key official in Home Office corrections has characterized the past work of the Research Unit during its 11 years since initiation in 1957 as largely descriptive and evaluative, primarily because so little was known of the actual operations and outcomes of correctional programs and practices. He pointed to a new trend, described as salutary and particularly valuable to British correctional administrators, toward action research and experimental demonstrations designed to test and validate new approaches and techniques in prison, probation and aftercare (parole) programs. An example would be the new experiment to demonstrate and assess the role and value of social casework services in a prison setting. This is now being conducted by a Research Unit project group (half Home Office staff, half local practitioners) in the Birmingham Prison.

It is the writer's impression that a good deal more independent research, either by universities or the correctional agencies themselves and not part of the formal Research Unit program, has been conducted in the correctional and criminological area than in the police field.¹¹ There the PRDB seems to exercise supervision and a decisional voice in virtually all significant police research. This may derive from past home office policy encouraging criminological research in universities but also, perhaps, from traditional academic attraction to the former kind of research as opposed to police field operations and perhaps a stronger research orientation among correctional practitioners than in the police field, at least until recently. Another factor in non-police criminal justice research is the advent of the Social Science Research Council, a quasi-governmental body established two years ago, which has financed some criminological research.

It is not clear that any formal dissemination or user technology effort comparable to that of the PRDB is being currently conducted by the Research Unit, nor does any regular published report of its activities appear to be available. There is also no journal focusing on its research interests in the fashion of the quarterly *Police Research Bulletin* although the Unit's publication list for completed project efforts has been steadily growing. It now numbers, for example, more than a dozen monographs in the series on *Studies in Causes of Delinquency and the Treatment of Offenders* in addition to numerous reports published in journals.

10. Home Office Report on the Work of the Prison Department—1966, Appendix 5 at pp. 49-51 (Oct. 1967).

11. The Prison Department report, *supra* n. 8, for example, lists research studies conducted by the prison service itself which do not appear to be part of the Research Unit Program.

SOME OBSERVATIONS AND COMPARISON WITH AMERICAN TRENDS

The centrally-directed British research programs present a remarkable picture of commitment and accomplishment in a field where research, except perhaps for traditional criminological inquiry, has been fragmented and largely non-existent. With modest funds by current day R&D standards, but perhaps appropriate for an economy where resources for such programs are scarce and a field of inquiry where effective research techniques and avenues remain to be validated, an amazing range of inquiry has been undertaken. It encompasses virtually all major questions or targets which American law enforcement authorities are thinking of writing about.¹²

The Police Research and Development Branch and the Home Office Research Unit programs offer interesting comparisons, with each other and in regard to the now commencing national R&D program authorized under the Omnibus Safe Streets and Crime Control Act of 1968.¹³ The PRDB program is particularly impressive in its orientation toward operating police problems—including cost considerations, its sophisticated operations research approach and the enviable role it has played in its short history as an instrument for far-reaching innovation programmed not merely for discrete experimentation but for system-wide adoption in the British police service. Its practice of joining talent and responsibility in the scientist and the law enforcement administrator, who in most cases will return to police operations after his R&D sojourn, is exemplary. So too is its catholic thrust, ranging from reexamination of basic police roles to improved equipment aids. This posture serves to maintain a necessary identification and commitment from police practice and yet nourishes the practitioner's acceptance of and quest for research knowledge.¹⁴ It is to be hoped these positive elements can be captured quickly by the new national research program being established to serve our larger and more affluent yet less adhesive American law enforcement system. Certainly much can be learned from the British start—of successes, failures, and problems which complicates work in this difficult research field.

The Research Unit program appears to be in process of transition. One direction, already mentioned and made possible by the groundwork of past years suggests an increased action research emphasis. This seems necessary in work of this kind and perhaps particularly so for the "behavior modification" mission that lies at the heart of corrections and much of crime and delinquency prevention.

12. See *Crime Commission Report*, *supra* n. 1, at ch. 5 and Table of Recommendations.

13. Part D, Public Law 90-351, 82 Stat. 197 (June 19, 1968).

14. One problem to be confronted in a research approach which incorporates a broad number of interests and project efforts is the need to apply sufficient resources to each project to assure that research objectives can be achieved. In some cases, a smaller number of efforts more adequately staffed and funded may produce more research gain than a more attractive but too thinly spread portfolio. See Institute for Defense Analyses report, *supra* n. 3, pp. 68-70.

Already rich in social science resources, having nurtured a strong and apparently successful academic alliance and interest, it would seem that introduction of a larger measure of systems science and operations research capability could make a contribution to its efforts.

The two British research programs present perhaps the greatest contrast to that of our new National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice in their rather sharp disciplinary division of function. Both recommendations of the President's Crime Commission and the statutory scope of the new Institute adhere to a comprehensive, all-systems approach to criminal justice problem-solving. The National Institute is committed to improvement in all aspects of criminal administration and its research leadership must carry the weight of this mission.¹⁵ This means that interface between police, courts, and corrections will receive special attention and that research problem identification will cut across and perhaps rise above traditional disciplinary classifications. This is already reflected in the National Institute's divisional "research center" structure featuring divisions not of police, courts, or corrections but of "crime prevention and rehabilitation," "detection, apprehension and prosecution," "criminal justice management and systems," "national criminal justice statistics," and "user requirements and standards." Whether this functional organization will prove more theoretical than operational or whether departure from strong disciplinary commitment will, at this stage of sophistication, in fact constitute a more rewarding mode of research organization remains to be seen. Whatever the case, this is an area in which the British programs would seem obliged to build some bridges.

Three years of experimental federal aid under the Law Enforcement Assistance Act of 1965, a substantial portion of which involved research and development support, has revealed the importance of a strong, nationally coordinated and directed criminal justice research program,¹⁶ this even with the wealth of research resources in our universities, professional organizations, and state and local systems.¹⁷ The showing made by the British programs thus far, both in intramural and extramural involvement, stands as a beacon and challenge. May the cause of law enforcement research prosper on both sides of the Atlantic as we move forward. ☆

15. "Law enforcement" is defined under P.L. 90-351 to encompass all activities pertaining to crime prevention or reduction and enforcement of the criminal law—police, prosecution, courts, correction, citizen action, etc. (Section 601a). The National Institute's authority is to conduct research, demonstrations, or special projects pertaining to law enforcement, as thus defined, new methods for prevention and control of crime and the detection and apprehension of criminals (Section 401 and 402).

16. For analyses of the needs of nationally directed research programs in criminal justice for the United States, see Institute for Defense Analyses report, *supra* n. 3; also Blumstein, *Outline of a Future Research and Development Program* and Skoler, *Two Years of Law Enforcement Assistance and the Road Ahead*, from Cohen (Editor) *LAW ENFORCEMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY II*, Illinois Institute of Technology Research Institute, pp. 51 and 57 (1968).

17. General criminal justice research centers, supported largely with private foundation funds, are now operating at the University of Chicago, the University of California at Davis, Georgetown University in Washington, the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, and Harvard University in Cambridge. In addition, there are a few independent research centers of comprehensive scope affiliated with state government (The Institute for the Study of Crime and Delinquency in California) or national professional associations (Research Center of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency).

END