

Race, Nationality and Crime

By NATHANIEL WEYL

The hypothesis which I should like to explore in these pages is that the criminality of races and subraces tends to vary inversely with their intelligence.

This thesis would seem *a priori* plausible on two grounds. The first is that a variety of studies have shown that the average I.Q.s of criminals and prison inmates are significantly lower than those of the populations from which they are drawn. The second is that most crimes seem to be committed by people who are deficient in such positive psychic qualities as foresight and self-control.

The hypothesis would not, however, apply to all types of crime. Such offenses as embezzlement, forgery, fraud, and even operating numbers games, are differentially attractive to people of above-average intelligence. These mentally exacting felonies yield a small proportion of total arrests, convictions, and sentences. Those who engage in them are not typical criminals.

Due presumably to the prevalence of egalitarian attitudes on race among American social scientists, most texts on criminology play down or ignore the vital relationship between criminality and intelligence. For example, the 1970 edition of *The Sociology of Crime and Delinquency* by Marvin E. Wolfgang, Leonard Savitz and Norman Johnston, a volume of 676 oversize pages, containing contributions by about 50 specialists and comprising well over a third of a million words, contains psychological, sociological and pseudo-mathematical analyses that are sometimes technically so sophisticated as to be virtually useless, but never deals with the variable of intelligence.¹ The closest this volume comes to a discussion of I.Q. is an assertion by Guy B. Johnson, one of the Gunnar Myrdal staff of left-wing sociologists, that is such an interesting combination of ignorance and dogmatism, that it is worth quoting in full.²

“We readily grant the *possibility* that the Negro differs from the white man in temperament or psyche,” Johnson writes, “but we *assume* that by *no stretch of the imagination* can such a factor be a primary determinant of the amount or nature of crime.”

¹ Marvin E. Wolfgang, Leonard Savitz and Norman Johnstone, *The Sociology of Crime and Delinquency*, John Wiley and Sons Inc., New York, 2nd edition, 1970.

² Marvin E. Wolfgang, Leonard Savitz and Norman Johnston, “*The Negro and Crime*,” *op. cit.*, p. 419. Emphasis supplied.

EVIDENCE FROM PRE-WAR EUROPE

Interesting data on the relationship between race, nationality and crime in Europe before the Second World War are contained in Willem Adriaan Bongers' *Race and Crime*, published in Holland in 1939 under the title, *Ras en Misdaad*, and reissued in the United States thirty years later.³ Dr Bongers was Professor of Sociology at the University of Amsterdam and the leading criminologist of the Netherlands. His book was written primarily to refute Nazi race theories and his political convictions are revealed by the fact that he took his own life in May 1940 when the Nazi armies were overrunning France and the Lowlands. Dr Bongers' preferences are for environmentalist explanations of crime. The objective manner in which he presents data on racial differences in criminality are a tribute to his intellectual integrity.

Professor Bongers presents statistics on criminal convictions of Jews, as compared with non-Jews, per 100,000 inhabitants over 14 years old for Germany (1882-1891, 1892-1901, 1909-1910, 1915 and 1916), Austria (1885-1900), Hungary (1904, 1906-1909), Poland (1924-1925) and the Netherlands (1901-1909, 1910-1915, 1919 and 1931-1933). The German data for 1909-1910 are probably as representative as any for the pre-First World War period. They show that Jews committed proportionately two and a half times as many frauds and forgeries as Gentiles. Their conviction rate for "insult" was about 40 per cent higher and they participated about equally with non-Jews in proportion to population in embezzlement and receiving stolen goods. The Jewish rate for theft, however, was 71.1 per 100,000 as against 178.3 for all other components of the population. Their conviction rate was about 40 per cent of the Gentile rate for felonious assault, about half that rate for rape, less than a third for murder and about a fifth for malicious mischief.⁴

This is in accordance with the hypothesis here advanced. In terms of such criteria as Nobel awards for science, representation in the American creative élite, I.Q. scores, educational level and economic status, Jews rank considerably higher than any other national-linguistic or racial group. The considerably lower rates for crimes of violence, which presuppose defective self-control, and for crimes against property, which suggest lack of forethought and inability to earn a living by lawful employment, would be expected. The much higher Jewish crime rates in fraud, forgery and swindling are also unfortunately compatible with above-average intelligence. The higher level of Jewish conviction for insult perhaps reflects a

³ Willem Adriaan Bongers, *Race and Crime*, Patterson-Smith, Montclair, New Jersey, 1969.

⁴ Willem Adriaan Bongers, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

tendency towards exhibitionism which is not, to the best of my knowledge, correlated either positively or negatively with intelligence.

Netherlands crime statistics are subdivided among Catholics, Protestants and Jews. In convictions for all crimes per 100,000 population older than 10 years, Catholics consistently lead. Thus, in 1901-1909, the Catholic rate was 54.8, the Protestant 40.0 and the Jewish 25.5. By 1931-1933, convictions for crime had increased about five-fold and the formerly law-abiding Jewish community had moved into second place. These figures were: Catholic 302, Jewish 299, Protestant 259. Professor Bonger's explanation for this marked rise in Jewish criminality is that "when the economic crisis in the Netherlands struck them harder than other groups, their economic criminality increased more rapidly than did that of the others."⁵ This theory is somewhat vitiated by the fact that Jewish convictions for crimes of violence also increased markedly between 1901-1909 and 1931-1933.

The higher crime rates among Catholics than Protestants would be expected on the basis of the theory that the intelligence of Catholic populations has been weakened over the centuries by the impact of clerical celibacy on the gene pool.

Bonger gives interesting comparisons of murder and non-negligent manslaughter rates per million inhabitants for various European countries during the 1880s and during the 1927-1932 period. In the earlier period, Italy led with 70 homicides per million, followed by Spain with 65 and Hungary with 56. The lowest ranking countries were those of Northwest Europe: Netherlands 3.1, Germany 3.4, England 3.9, Scotland 4.4.

In the later period, the highest murder rates were in Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia. Italy and Hungary occupied middle ground. Statistics were not given for Spain. The least homicidal nations were England and Wales, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, Belgium and Ireland in that order.

Whether the apparent shift of the homicidal center from the Mediterranean to the Slavic world during the 40-year period was due to improved crime reporting or to more substantial causal factors is an open question.

In both tabulations, we have essentially an inverse correlation with the geography of intelligence. In a 1963 study, Dr Stefan T. Possony and I attempted to show that creativity and intellect tended to decline progressively as one moves either southward or eastward from Northwest Europe.⁶

⁵ Willem Adriaan Bonger, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁶ Nathaniel Weyl and Stefan T. Possony, *The Geography of Intellect*, Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1963.

Bonger's data show higher crime rates in Catholic than in comparable Protestant countries. In the two periods, the rates for the Netherlands were 3 and 5, those for Belgium were 9 and 7. Similarly, Irish homicide rates were substantially above those of England and Scotland.

The very high homicide rates reported for the Baltic States in the 1927-31 period deserve attention. In this context, it may be significant that Latvians were represented 11 times more than their numbers would warrant in the pre-war membership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union⁷ and were heavily overrepresented in the upper echelons of the Soviet secret police. Nationals of the Baltic states seem to have played a similarly prominent rôle as guard and executioners in the Nazi extermination camps. Reportedly, their rate of mental breakdown under these conditions was markedly lower than that of the Germans they replaced. In Finland, which is racially related to some of the Baltic peoples, V. Verkko found that manslaughter and non-negligent homicide rates were twice to three times as high in the Finnish-speaking as in the Swedish-speaking regions. This distinguished Finnish sociologist added that the murder rate in Finland is about 20 times as high as in the other Scandinavian countries.⁸ Whether the propensity of Finns and Estonians to commit murders and "rude crimes of passion" is related to their Ugro-Finnish ethnic origin or can be explained solely on the basis of their excessive alcoholism is an intriguing question.*

Bonger cites Massachusetts data for 1910 on convictions of assault by country of birth per million inhabitants. Mexicans led, followed by Austria, Italy and Poland. The lowest rates for crimes of violence were found in Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, England and Wales, Germany and France in that order.

Commitments to Massachusetts prisons in 1914-22 for murder, manslaughter and criminal assault were 192 per 100,000 for people born in Italy, but only 24 for native-born Americans of American parentage and also for native-born Americans of Italian parentage.⁹ Bonger inferred from this that the excessive Italian homicide rates were caused by the adverse Italian *milieu* and not by race. Were this true, the Mafia would long since have disappeared!

⁷ Salo. W. Baron, *The Russian Jew Under Tsars and Soviets*, New York, 1964, p. 204.

⁸ V. Verkko, *Verbrechen wider das Leben under Körperverletzungs-verbrechen*, Helsinki, 1937. Cited by Willem Adriaan Bonger, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.

* The Finns and Balts are largely racially *East Baltic*, and it is more likely due to this racial affinity than a historic linguistic origin of the Finns that this phenomenon is due.—EDITOR.

⁹ Willem Adriaan Bonger, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

What Dr Bonger overlooked was that the great majority of the persons of Italian birth in the United States in 1914-1922 came from Sicily and other parts of southern Italy. The native-born of Italian parentage, however, represented an earlier immigration stream and were primarily of north Italian origin. Perhaps the great Italian-Jewish pioneer in criminology, Cesare Lombroso, was nearer the mark when he observed that Sicilian highway robbers are concentrated in an area of heavy Berber settlement.*

Professor Bonger readily conceded that the Mediterranean peoples are more prone to crimes of violence than either the Nordics or the Alpines. A detailed analysis of crime statistics by different regions of Germany and the Netherlands suggested, but not conclusively, that Alpines have a tendency to commit more crimes of violence than Nordics.

Interestingly enough, the factual findings of Dr Bonger confirm the view that Jews and Nordics are probably less inclined to crimes of violence than the other racial groups of Europe; that criminality tends to rise as one proceeds eastward or southward on the Continent; that Catholic peoples have higher crimes rates than Protestant, and that there appears to be a general tendency for crime rates to correlate inversely with intelligence. This last generalization admits of many exceptions. Thus, the Finns and Esthonians seem to combine a strong propensity to commit crimes of violence with good intelligence. The Jewish tendency towards such financial crimes as fraud, forgery and embezzlement has already been noted.

The low crime rates among Nordics may correlate with Dr Richard Lynn's findings, published recently in *THE MANKIND QUARTERLY*, that Nordics are less subject to anxiety than other Western racial groups.

CRIME AND THE AMERICAN NEGRO

"The principal thing," Lombroso¹⁰ wrote almost 70 years ago, "is always . . . the stifling of the primitive, wild instincts. Even if he (the Negro) is dressed in the European way and has accepted the customs of modern culture, all too often there remains in him the lack of respect for the life of his fellow men, the disregard for life which all wild people have in common. To them, a murder appears as an ordinary occurrence, even a glorious occurrence when it is inspired by feelings of vengeance. This mentality is furthered in the Negro by his scorn of his white fellow-citizens and by bestial sexual impulses."

* The Mafia belong to western Sicily, and it was this part which was under Islamic (Berber) rule.—EDITOR.

¹⁰ Cesare Lombroso, *Neue Verbrecher-Studien*, Halle, 1907. p. 15. Translated by Willem Adriaan Bonger, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.

This statement would have been regarded as an absurdity by all educated Westerners 20 years ago. Today, in the lurid light of the Black Panthers and the degeneration of American cities into jungles that are also infernos, one is not so sure.

Certainly, ever since his emancipation from slavery, the American Negro has accounted for a disproportionate share of the crimes committed in the United States. In 1969, the FBI reported that 62 per cent of the persons arrested for murder, 50 per cent of those arrested for forcible rape, 56 per cent of those arrested for major crimes of violence and 34 per cent of those arrested for major crimes against property were Negroes.¹¹ Since Negroes comprise only 11 per cent of the American population, the Black arrest rate for murder and other major crimes of violence was more than five times the national average, that for forcible rape over four times the average, and that for major crimes against property over three times the average.

During the generation between the Second World War and 1970, the United States embarked on the most ambitious and massive program which any nation has ever undertaken on behalf of its racial minorities. A pertinent question—one seldom asked—is whether this vast uplift and eleemosynary operation has been accompanied by a decrease or an increase in the Negro's proportionate contribution to crime. If the sociological theories which impute Negro criminality to oppression, discrimination and indignity are valid, a decline in the Negro crime rate should have occurred. If, on the contrary, Negro crime rates during this period rose even more rapidly than the 70 per cent. increase in all serious crimes, then this would seem a *prima facie* refutation of all theories tying Negro crime to white oppression.

The facts are that during the quarter of a century since the end of the Second World War Negro crime has risen considerably more rapidly than crimes by Whites.

In 1945, 45 per cent of those arrested for murder were Negroes. By 1969, the black percentage had risen to 62 per cent. During this same period, the Negro share of arrests for major crimes of violence increased from 43 per cent to 56 per cent of the total.

The most obvious characteristic which Negroes and criminals have in common is below-average intelligence. The American Negro has an average I.Q. approximately one standard deviation below the white average. Four times as many Blacks as Whites fail the armed services mental tests. *While approximately two-thirds of the American white population ranks as average,*

¹¹ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports—1969*, Washington, 1970, pp. 118-119. The major violent crimes are murder, forcible rape, aggravated assault, and robbery. The major crimes against property are burglary, larceny and auto theft.

superior or very superior in these mental-test scores, only about a fifth of the Negroes fall into these categories. In other words, based on armed forces examinations, about four-fifths of the American Negro population is mentally subnormal or massively retarded. Moreover, the great educational and economic advances of the Negro in past decades have not changed this picture to his advantage. In fact, there is some evidence that a further decline in Negro intelligence may be occurring and that the I.Q. gap between Whites and Blacks widened significantly between 1950 and 1967.¹²

Despite the fact that the evidence on this point has been expunged from most modern criminology texts, the relationship between crime and intelligence has been known for decades. In general, there is a high negative correlation between the two variables.

The evidence on these points is massive. Here only a few samples can be summarized. In 1939, Frankel made a study of a thousand convicted murderers committed to the state prison at Tranton. The median mental age of 233 native-born Whites tested was 12.7 years; that of the 244 Negroes tested was 10.6 years.¹³ A similar investigation of state prison inmates at Joliet, Illinois, between 1920 and 1927 by Tulchin revealed equally massive mental inferiority. However, superior ratings were earned by 19.8 per cent of the White inmates, 6.1 per cent of the Northern-born Blacks and 0.9 per cent of the Southern-born Blacks. When white and Negro felons of the same educational background were compared, the Negroes ranked significantly lower in test scores.¹⁴ Stanford-Binet I.Q.s of white and Negro prisoners in the Western Penitentiary of Pennsylvania yielded an average of 81 for the Whites and 65 for the Blacks.¹⁵ Applying the conventional Terman classifications, one could conclude that the average White convict was dull, but not feeble-minded, whereas the average Black inmate was a moron.¹⁶

In 1948, Malamud made a study of white and black penitentiary inmates. Again the Negro prisoners were about 10 points

¹² Arthur E. Jensen, "How Much Can We Boost IQ and Scholastic Achievement?" *Harvard Education Review*, Vol. 39, No. 1, Winter 1969, p. 95; Nathaniel Weyl, Letter to the Editor, *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, Vol. 13, No. 1, Autumn 1969, pp. 122-124.

¹³ Emil Frankel, "One Thousand Murderers," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol. 29, 1939, pp. 672-688.

¹⁴ Simon H. Tulchin, *Intelligence and Crime*, Chicago, 1939.

¹⁵ Jess Spierer, *Negro Crime*, Comparative Psychology Monographs, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1940. All these studies are ably summarized by Audrey M. Shuey, *The Testing of Negro Intelligence*, Social Science Press, New York, 1966, second edition, pp. 438-456.

¹⁶ Leona E. Tyler, *The Psychology of Human Differences*, New York, 1966, second edition, p. 367.

below the Whites in I.Q. The disciplinary cases and problem prisoners tended to be more intelligent than those who made a docile adjustment to incarceration.¹⁷ Finally, Roebuck in 1963 published an analysis of 400 Negro inmates of the reformatory in Lorton, Virginia, by type of crime. The median I.Q. for violators of the numbers laws, that is to say, operators of clandestine gambling enterprises, was 105, or above the national White average. The median I.Q. of all other offenders was 86.¹⁸

In short, the preponderance of evidence shows that the criminal of both races is a person of much lower than average intelligence. (The exception to this rule is those who commit crimes requiring a high degree of organizing skill, business ability or capacity for deception. Some of these activities — operating numbers games, for instance—are deemed crimes merely because of the prejudices of legislators. In essence, they are no different from other business enterprises.)

Secondly, the Negro criminal is on average of markedly lower intelligence than the white criminal.

Third, the frequency distribution of Negro mental test scores is massively lower than the corresponding White frequency distribution.

If criminal activity is concentrated among people with below-average intelligence and, if the American Negro population is characterized by this condition, then it would seem that the "riddle" of excessive Black criminality can be solved without reference to elaborate environmentalist theories.

In more general terms, criminality seems to be greatest among those races, peoples and classes who are least intelligent and least creative. It is least among the bright and gifted peoples. One of the causes of the frightening and continuous rise in the American crime rate may be the tendency to seek to dissuade potential criminals from anti-social conduct by reason, persuasion and appeasement in cases where their intelligence levels are so low that the threat of retribution is the only efficacious deterrent.

¹⁷ Harold A. Malamud, "A Study of Negro and White Discipline Cases in the Western State Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, Part I, *Journal of Clinical Psychopathology*, Vol. 9, 1948, pp. 108-127.

¹⁸ Julian B. Roebuck, "The Negro Numbers Man as a Criminal Type: the Construction and Application of a Typology," *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science*, Vol. 54, 1963, pp. 48-60.

Brain, Race and the “Fundamental Dilemma”

By F. J. IRSIGLER

The complexity of the central nervous system is so great, and its rôle in mediation and co-ordination so literally central, that it is the limiting factor as regards both development and evolution of behavior. That means in individual development that a central nervous system of sufficient complexity for co-ordination of any given level of behavior must already be developed and functional when the behavior begins. In evolutionary terms, one of the implications is that learning can not be wholly substituted for prior organization of the central nervous system or, if you like, for the instinctual elements of behavior, because learning is possible only if a sufficiently complex central nervous system *already* exists. In embryology it appears, indeed, that the development of the central nervous system is highly specific from the start. Its architecture is determined altogether by heredity, plus whatever nonspecific modifications may result from extrinsic environmental variations. The structure is not visibly modified by the training effect of its own operations (Sperry).

G. G. Simpson in *Behaviour and Evolution* (1958).

In a recent paper entitled “An Empirical Consideration of Differences Between the Bantu and the European”¹ R. Gayre of Gayre writes: “Whether we can locate some of the marked characteristics in the linguistic field, and the well-developed powers of expression of the Negroids to a greater average development of the temporal lobes, remains to be seen. But somewhere in his brain must be the seal of this marked difference between white and black.”

In support of this “empirical conclusion” (as he calls it), Gayre points to the musical and linguistic abilities of the Negroes, “since speech and hearing are located in those [temporal] lobes.”

This raises a number of important questions which I propose to discuss without trying, however, to give a full and final answer.

What is involved here are those areas of the human brain which phylogenetically as well as ontogenetically are the latest to develop, that is, they belong to the most recent parts of the central organ, constituting, themselves, a considerable part of the areas which, after P. Flechsig (1920), used to be called “association areas.”

MORPHOKINESIS AND THE “BASAL NEOCORTEX”

It has since long been known that, during the ontogeny of the human brain, different parts grow at different rates. Owing to this

¹ THE MANKIND QUARTERLY, Vol. XIII, No. 1, July-September 1972, 1972, p. 19.