

who uses his home to store bodies or as a drug factory forfeits his right to privacy.”

In the sixties and seventies the focus of attention within the justice system was on law enforcement: raising the level of police professionalism, testing the validity of various patrol strategies, and so forth. Now the focus has changed to the prison system with its severe, often inhumane, and dangerous overcrowding. In a sense, the crime crisis has shifted off the streets and into the prisons for the same reasons that the crime rate has stabilized—demographics and policy.

The baby boomers who helped create the crime epidemic of the sixties and seventies are now jammed into the prisons of the eighties. “The shifting age mix that should generate a lower crime rate over the 1980s can be expected to generate larger prison populations,” writes Alfred Blumstein of Carnegie-Mellon University. This paradox emerges from the difference between peak crime and peak imprisonment ages. A criminal typically begins his career as a teenager but does not accumulate a serious enough conviction record to warrant prison (at least in the eyes of the courts) until he reaches his mid-20s.

Tougher criminal sanctions over the last eight years have also played a role in increasing prison populations. The sixties and early seventies were characterized by a relatively soft, sympathetic attitude toward criminal behavior; between 1960 and 1970 the prison population actually fell from 213,000 to 196,000. During the 1970s, however, it became apparent to even the most ardent liberal that the crime rate was of frightening proportions. Public outrage led to longer prison terms for more criminals. The prison population rose 40 percent between 1975 and 1979. At this writing it stands at around 400,000—approximately 25 percent above capacity. Another 100,000 or so people are languishing in local jails. Altogether, there are more inmates than police officers in America. A delicate balance always exists in correctional institutions between the staff and the inmates. Overcrowding shifts the balance in favor of the inmates—usually the most brutal and ruthless among them. A severely overcrowded institution is a managerial nightmare that can end in rioting, death, and destruction.

No Choice

Mr. Blumstein examines the options available to decision makers for resolving the overcrowding crisis. The obvious solution—building new facilities—is a costly proposition. Maximum security cells run between \$50,000 and \$75,000 a piece; and the annual upkeep for a single inmate is between \$10,000 and \$15,000. Mr. Blumstein favors various measures short of new construction, including alternatives to conventional incarceration, shorter sentences, the early release of prisoners, and rationing among magistrates the number of people who can be sent to prison. He argues that in much of the country the problem will resolve itself as prison populations stabilize in the 1990s.

But contrary to what Mr. Blumstein seems to believe, growth areas, such as the Sun Belt, that already have antiquated, deteriorating, overcrowded institutions really have no choice. Policy makers will need to persuade

their constituents to cough up the money needed for new construction. This is a difficult but not impossible task; the voters of California (where prisons are 40 percent above capacity) recently approved funding for a prison-building program.

Although *Crime and Public Policy* is directed explicitly at state and local officials, anyone having an interest in crime, criminals, and the justice system would benefit immensely from this readable volume. The 15 chapters, each of which can be read independently of the others, are concise (approximately 20 pages), usually lucid, and, for a book written by a group of academicians, remarkably free of social science jargon and obfuscation. And the index and footnotes are valuable guides to further research.

John T. Fennell

JOHN T. FENNEL, a free-lance writer who lives in Los Altos, California, is a former police sergeant.

Reich's Mark

The Next American Frontier, by Robert B. Reich (New York: Times Books).

Robert B. Reich is one of the leading intellectual spokesmen for the Democratic party these days. Indeed, two of its presidential candidates, Gary Hart and Walter Mondale, have appended their generous compliments to the book's jacket. So Mr. Reich must be taken seriously, if for no other reason than the strong possibility that his ideas could find their way into the speeches of the Democratic presidential nominee.

Mr. Reich, who teaches business and public policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, argues throughout his 12-chapter study that the United States must promote an integration of its “civic culture,” which embodies social welfare and participatory values, and its “business culture,” characterized by individual responsibility and freedom. He maintains that our traditions of economic individualism and distrust of government have for too long prevented us from recognizing that our civic and business cultures are integrally tied in with each other. In his words:

In countless ways Americans are called upon to choose between these two sets of central values—social justice or prosperity; government or free market; community or freedom . . . [But] this choice is falsely posed. In advanced industrial nations like the United States, drawing such sharp distinctions between government and market has long ceased to be useful. Government creates the market by defining the terms and boundaries for business activity, guided by public perceptions of governmental responsibility for the overall health of the economy. Business, meanwhile, is taking on tasks that once were the exclusive province of government, involving responsibility for the work communities that are coming to be many Ameri-

cans' more important social environment. The interwoven organizations of government, business, and labor together determine how America's resources are allocated and employed. Public and private spheres are becoming indistinguishable.

He argues that unless America recognizes the indistinguishable nature of the public and private spheres, we will lose in global competition to those countries—the European Economic Community, Japan, and advanced Third World nations—that imaginatively combine the two spheres in their international economic policies. Our real choice, insists Mr. Reich, “is between shielding America from a changing world economy and adapting to engage the new realities of international competition. Only adaptation can lead to renewed prosperity.”

Sharpening Our Competitive Edge

In his view, adaptation involves a move away from what he sees as an outmoded concept of production, the manufacture of high-volume, mass-production goods. We must scrap that emphasis and in its place adopt more specialized modes of production where the United States retains a competitive edge—in other words, we must move away from the manufacture of “basic” goods, such as autos, steel, and textiles, and toward more specialized, higher-valued products, such as specialty steel and chemicals, computer-controlled machine tools, and advanced automobile components.

This transition will not be easy, Mr. Reich acknowledges. But it must be carried out, given the reality that a growing number of other countries—Taiwan, Singapore, and South Korea, to name three—are currently able to outcompete the United States in the production of those basic goods.

To make the transition, however, Mr. Reich believes we must adopt the practices of the Europeans and the Japanese, who long ago recognized the vital link between their civic and business cultures. In practice, this means abandoning traditional hierarchic modes of management practice, substituting for them the more collaborative, group learning, and teamwork traditions of our competitors.

The book is well written, and Mr. Reich's emphasis on the domestic implications of America's international competitiveness is well placed. However, the book contains four major weaknesses.

First, it remains an open question whether the U.S. competitive position, both at home and abroad, has eroded to the extent that Mr. Reich maintains it has. According to a recent study by Robert Z. Lawrence, an economist at the Brookings Institution, American industry has more than held its own over the past decade. Mr. Lawrence maintains, in fact, that America is holding its own in the competitive race and that our manufacturing sector remains strong. If there is a competitive challenge facing the United States, it lies in developing a more realistic exchange policy. It has been the overvalued dollar that has caused our recent competitive difficulties. Perhaps we need to shift away from those basic sectors—autos, steel, and textiles—that form the heart of our industry, as Mr. Reich urges. But we first need to be

better informed about our competitive weaknesses and strengths.

Second, it is questionable whether the United States can make up for the loss of its basic industries by producing larger amounts of more specialized products, like precision castings, specialty steel, and luxury automobiles. Indeed, as can be seen by the frequent calls by domestic industry for protection against specialty steel imports, the international competition in the production and sale of high-value products is at least as intense as for the low-value lines.

Third, the author is too uncritical in his admiration of both the Japanese and the Europeans, particularly the latter. One need but recall that until recently, the pages of the *New York Times* were full of admiring pieces on the “German model” and what this country could learn from that efficiently run economy. Today, the Federal Republic is being forced to roll back many of the social welfare policies that Mr. Reich so unreservedly praises. The same goes for Sweden, another country that conforms to the author's vision of a modern economy. This isn't to slight the experiences of other countries. Labor-management relations in Japan and West Germany seem more harmonious and productive than ours, for example. But if recent European experience is any guide, a merging of civic and business virtues, as envisioned by Mr. Reich, could in the end do more to disrupt than heal the U.S. economy.

Finally, Mr. Reich's condemnation of modern business practices—running the gamut from how managers treat their employees to short-term strategies for boosting profits—tends to put too much of the responsibility for the nation's alleged economic decline on the shoulders of what the author derisively calls “paper entrepreneurs.” Some divestitures and some acquisitions (U.S. Steel's purchase of Marathon Oil, for one) are undoubtedly wasteful exercises. But Mr. Reich's charge that these practices result in substantial losses of investment remains debatable.

John M. Starrels

JOHN M. STARRELS is a Washington-based writer.

Short-Circuiting the First Amendment

Technologies of Freedom, by Ithiel de Sola Pool (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press).

The printing press media are largely unregulated, and the free flow of information is protected by the First Amendment. Telephone wires and the radio spectrum, however, are heavily regulated and not well protected by the courts. What would happen, then, if the electronic media supplanted print as the means of communication?

Two developments make this question more than hypothetical. One is the convergence of technologies. Text