

WHOSE LAW & ORDER?

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Edited by
Mike Tomlinson
Tony Varley
Ciaran McCullagh

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1.

Are They Always Right? Investigation and Proof in a Citizen Anti-Heroin Movement

Don Bennett

Introduction

Up out of a sea-misted Dun Laoghaire side-street emerges a solitary figure muffled in a long olive great-coat. He has spent his night tracking the movements of a number of men and women. He has gathered reports from regular contacts who constantly watch for these persons. He has made spot checks on known haunts of his targets, who are suspected heroin dealers. In the morning 'Long-coat' will be joined by a statuesque blonde woman for the surveillance of certain local public places. This is a dangerous pursuit. But though the two are experienced detectives, they are not paid private investigators. Nor have they any connection with the Garda Síochána.¹

Across Dublin in Dolphin's Barn near the snooker hall a young man detaches himself from a group of long-term heroin addicts, crosses South Circular Road and walks towards the large corporation complex of Dolphin House. Two local men follow him. They watch him call to a flat in Dolphin House, return to the group outside the snooker hall and distribute something among the addicts. The resident of the flat has already been reported to the observers as a heroin pusher in O'Connell Street. At another time one of these observers, in his own car, will follow the car of a local resident wherever the trail takes him, noting all contacts made by the man he is shadowing. The other will drive his own car to various locations looking for certain vehicle licence numbers and recording the movements of those registrations. Neither of these men have any connection with the Garda Síochána. Their expenses are paid entirely from their own pockets.

North of the Liffey, three street traders scatter their scantily-

laden prams outside a cafe. Over their teacups they will observe who comes and goes into the pub opposite. Tomorrow the same three women will have tea in a different cafe, for the purpose of observing the activities and identities of fellow customers.

These investigators are members of the Concerned Parents Against Drugs (CPAD) movement, a private citizen organisation which operates against the heroin racket throughout the Dublin metropolitan area. The movement, which began in the summer of 1983, continues vigorous, expanding, and highly organised, in the late nineteen-eighties. Local public meetings about heroin pushing, evictions from their homes of alleged drug pushers, pressure by Concerned Parents on government ministers and local authorities to take action against the heroin trade, and court cases against Concerned Parents activists have, one or the other of them, been weekly events during 1987 and 1988.

Concerned Parents is an extensive movement, involved in education about drugs, other preventative measures to eliminate or reduce initial heroin addiction, detoxification and aftercare services for addicts, as well as the harassment and eviction from homes of alleged heroin pushers and their facilitators. This article, however, deals only with one aspect of the movement: assessing the investigation work through which evidence is gathered on the identity and guilt of pushers prior to sanctions being taken against them How does the process operate? Does it safeguard the rights of all involved? Could innocent persons be evicted from their homes for misguided reasons, emotional reasons alone or as a result of a vendetta unrelated to heroin selling. What kinds of evidence do the Concerned Parents have? Are they always right?

The kind of justice embodied by a movement such as the Concerned Parents has been described as popular justice. This is dispute resolution and crime control carried out by citizens rather than officials, and by workers rather than professionals. But the term popular justice can also, in the hands of some writers, distinguish a genuine social movement. Sociologically, the kind of popular justice about to be described raises fundamental issues. The nature of contemporary urban community and its possibilities for the future is the first of these. The structure of Western political thought and ideology, or part of it, and with that, the nature of social order and social control themselves, are the second and third fundamental issues—precisely as they relate to one another. To some of these matters we can return after the evidence has been presented.² To begin with, a few introductory words about the structure of the Concerned Parents movement are necessary.

Concerned Parents: Structure of the Movement

A general point about the Concerned Parents needs to be made. It is not an anti-drugs movement but an anti-heroin movement. This aspect needs to be made clear. Heroin has been seen to be the life-and-death problem in Dublin in the eighties. Alcohol, hashish and other substances are not at issue although some local groups may also take a dim view of certain other drugs. Only 'crack' is exceptional and opposed as totally as heroin.

The brains of the CPAD is its Central Committee, meeting weekly throughout the year and made up of two representatives from each organised local area which is affiliated.³ An Executive Committee, sometimes meeting separately, performs the specialised tasks common to most organisations. Executive Committee deliberation also, however, furthers the daily work against the heroin trade, as of course do the local committees and local members—the main element of the movement. Wherever even two Concerned Parents are gathered together, locally or centrally, the investigation goes on.

Despite the appearance of centralisation suggested by the existence of central and executive committees, it is a mistake to think of the Concerned Parents movement as one directed by a guiding coterie. Only in part is such the case. Each local area maintains its own ethos and has its own criteria for attacking its problems. 'Different strokes for different folks' is an expression often used to make this point by members. An Annual General Meeting of all members of affiliated groups also supercedes Central Committee prerogative. When, however, attention is especially directed, as in the present article, to investigatory and detection work, the role of the Central Committee is indeed great. The watchful street-traders already mentioned, for example, are peering over their teacups at the behest of the Central Committee, rather than as an outgrowth of the work of the North Inner City group to which they belong locally.

Most significant among the localities of CPAD organisation and action are the following areas, estates, or complexes: Ballyfermot/Clondalkin; Dolphin House/Dolphin's Barn; Dun Laoghaire/Sallynoggin/Bray; Finglas South, Inchicore/St. Michael's; Cathedral View; the North Inner City and Hardwicke Street; St. Teresa's Gardens; and eight separate areas of Tallaght. Procedures used to establish guilt of drug pushing appear to differ greatly from one of these areas to another. Proof is obviously simplest when no attempt is made by the pusher to conceal the activity. Some three hundred addicts bought heroin daily in St. Teresa's Gardens in early 1983. The situation was the same just

north of O'Connell Street in the flats around North Frederick Street. Much of this trade was carried on openly. Even the first approaches by the newly-organised Concerned Parents groups in May and June of that year did not drive the trade into concealment. The pushers were unruffled. They saw no reason to bother concealing what they did. But in other parts of the city and later into the eighties, the heroin dealer is extremely difficult to ferret out. When one moves from St. Teresa's Gardens and Dolphin House of 1983 to Clondalkin, Ballymun, and O'Connell Street of 1988, investigation procedures have become complex, laborious and difficult.

But whatever about local variations, when we turn to the entirety of CPAD detection we find that all localities will use whatever means are necessary from among the myriad detection methods included under the following five general headings.⁴

Parental Reports and *Prima Facie* Evidence

Everything depends, in CPAD work, on the residents of the problem localities. Without mass support and door-to-door co-operation—as every CPAD activist knows—there is nothing. Everything depends on people being concerned as parents and neighbours. And among the most concerned of parents are the parents of heroin addicts. In Dun Laoghaire, the mother of two addicted sons secured their debarment from her home as a part of the Concerned Parents movement there. In Bray, the mother of an addict headed the local CPAD. Many suffering parents of addicts have come forward to identify their own as addicts or pushers, either in order to seek detoxification help or to have daughters or sons warned that they must reform or suffer ostracism, debarment, or eviction. Parents of addicts have come forward both as initiators of local groups, and during the thick of CPAD pressure.

Addict families have provided also some of the best evidence against pushers. When an addict is living at home, the source of his/her heroin supplies may sooner or later become known to family members. A telephone order can as easily identify a pusher as can personal contact. The contribution of sisters and brothers, fathers and mothers, must be emphasised first in the consideration of the Concerned Parents information network.

Equally at the foundation of things is the community at large. The transfer and sale of heroin has tangible signs, just as does the usage of heroin. And the ears and eyes of the community are numberless. What do they hear, what do they see, what indeed do they smell?

The act of self-injection is an indication not alone of the presence of heroin addicts, but also of the presence of heroin sellers. Addicts often take their fix near the place where they have obtained the drug, because the need is great. Therefore the discovery of injection syringes lying about in quiet corners, and the witnessing of persons injecting themselves, may be regarded as among the first of the signs of possible pushing activities. By the same logic, the presence of persons visibly well stoned can be an indicator of a place of supply. The regular appearance in the same location of persons who are obviously high on drugs produces the probability that they are inducing the high in that location. This indicator is, in itself, not necessarily an indicator of heroin pushing, for two reasons. First, the drug in question could be a different drug. Second, certain houses of flats are on offer to addicts for 'shooting up'—for a fee or for free. One former dealer in Dun Laoghaire actually ceased selling heroin in order to go into the business of opening his house to addicts for a wash and an injection, at £5 a visit. In all cases of CPAD intervention, the presence of stoned individuals involves, or at least includes, heroin rather than other drugs as a cause of the drugged effect. This is certain because additional evidence of the heroin trade has been found in every case.

Congregated groups of known addicts provide another such clue. The purpose of such congregations is so often the collection of heroin that a maxim of Concerned Parents' investigative work has come to be: 'where you find four, five, or six addicts there is going to be a drop'. Such congregations have put CPAD on the track of numerous dealers.

Patterned activity of certain sorts yields further indicators. Taxis arriving extraordinarily frequently and a steady stream of strange young callers at a particular place can suggest that heroin may be available there. Addicts often employ taxis in travelling for a purchase. Many such journeys are made at hours of the night unusual enough to have drawn attention to heroin dealers, as in the North Inner City and in Dolphin House. Strange young callers arrived constantly at a house off York Road in Dun Laoghaire for a period, observed by neighbours, of seven or eight months. These callers often queued in numbers outside the house. Eventually it became obvious that no great attempt was being made to conceal extensive heroin sales from two houses in this cul-de-sac.

The regular arrival of the same vehicle at a location is another indicator which in conjunction with other clues, has led CPAD to pushers. Dominick Street residents in Dun Laoghaire gradually became aware that the regular appearance of a green van correlated with the congregation of addicts in the vicinity of the

van's parking place. Sales from this van were witnessed.

Direct witnessing of heroin sale is the ultimate proof. Eyewitness evidence is therefore the goal of CPAD investigative work, but even more importantly, finding eye-witnesses among the community. Sales from the green van just mentioned had been seen by a shop assistant, and by other Dominick Street residents, early on in its nefarious career. But although the Gardai has been informed this remained private information for some time, none realising what others had also seen, none making it part of community knowledge. Transformation of this private knowledge into community knowledge awaited the organisation of a citizen action group.

Heroin sales have often been witnessed by members of the public. Heroin is 'sold openly just like sweets to the kids around here', a woman from Cathedral View Walk, off Kevin Street, told news reporters. 'Every day heroin was being handed out to addicts from all over Dublin' (*Irish Independent*, 24 October, 1985). Near Dolphin House a young boy witnessed a sale and watched the buyer bury what he had purchased. Nine packs of heroin and syringes were dug up. The work of the Concerned Parents Against Drugs movement has been to encourage this woman, this boy, and others like them, to speak out about what they have seen. To that effort and related fundamentals we now turn.

Basic Procedures and Public Meetings

Formation of a local CPAD group sets in motion a series of general procedures common to most of the affiliated neighbourhoods. The most fundamental is to alert people to keep their eyes open and watch. Second is to create a receiving-place for reports. In the North Inner City on Wednesday mornings at a regular venue, individuals could report what they had seen or heard, or their suspicions. The Dun Laoghaire group meets and is contactable in a certain coffee shop every morning. The North Inner City also originated the strategic distribution of leaflets alerting people to the heroin problem, urging vigilance, and providing blank spaces for information and names. Filled-up leaflets could be submitted on Wednesday morning. Restaurants, snooker halls, shopping malls and flats where dealing occurs are identified this way—as well as individuals, vehicles, and more.

All of this organising, and the vast amount of organising yet to be mentioned, is done in each area by a core group of activists. The core is usually known as the local committee. The committee prints the North Inner City leaflets and it is the committee which met on Wednesdays to receive submissions. Most contacts are

made, however, at the home of committee members. Basic procedures common to all core committees are the organisation of patrols and the convening of public meetings.

Citizen patrols function to observe, to watch what goes on in the neighbourhood. Organising patrols in and around Dolphin House was the very first action taken when residents mobilised against heroin. Night-time patrols can observe public places which are not observable from doors, windows, and main concourses. In certain neighbourhoods general patrols also function to discourage addicts and suspected pushers away from the area. Clearly, this second function spoils to a certain extent the first: the patrols cannot observe the transaction after they have chased away the parties. The contradiction is justified, necessitated in these neighbourhoods, particularly for the protection of elderly residents who are the victims of break-ins by addicts searching for the wherewithal to make a purchase. Addicts sometimes attempt to cover the cost of a fix near the place where the heroin is on sale. To this, the neighbour on patrol cannot turn a blind eye.

Twelve Concerned Parents from the Liberties fidgeted in the dock in February 1986 charged with watching and besetting one of their neighbours in Cathedral View in the Liberties. They testified that they had initiated patrols of Cathedral View fifteen months before any action was taken against the family, in order to watch for evidence of heroin trading, and that patrols had continued for the entirety of the fifteen months. In Dun Laoghaire CPAD patrols have been made continuously since the middle of 1984.

Effective as these citizen patrols have been, and effective as some of the CPAD investigative work yet to be mentioned has been, the single greatest institution of the Concerned Parents movement remains the public meeting. The local church hall usually serves as both the information centre and decision-making court. To the mass public meeting most reports are brought, information exchanged, accusations made, and all sanctions decided upon. The public meeting is the ultimate receiver of any information gained by core group detective work. The public statement of information about heroin pushing is the keystone of the public meeting. And the heart of it all is the homemaker, mother, and neighbour raising a voice and naming a criminal and his or her crime in front of hundreds of people including often that very criminal—an intimidating setting.

Hesitance, caution and fear hold many of the hundreds who attend Concerned Parents public meetings. Only a greater fear than the fear of public speaking or the fear of the criminal can drive most of us in such a situation. This greater fear is the fear of a junkie daughter or a junkie son. And so slowly, people have come

forth. Names are the most difficult words to speak. For months, in a series of weekly public meetings, certain matters or allegations may have been murmured about vaguely, with no one having the courage to be the first to name a name. Finally, at a moment when the tension is anguishing, a woman will blurt: 'everyone knows who's doin' it; there's four o' them in it'. Assent all around; and somewhere a whispered name. Repeated ever so slightly more loudly by someone else. Then shouted—by someone pretending to clarify (merely) what has already been spoken by another. Then pandemonium. Details follow in a flood, as the neighbourhood pours out what has been seen. 'They knock on my door', testifies the next-door neighbour, 'looking for the stuff. The most significant eye-witness evidence and proof of the citizen movement against heroin in Dublin is secured this way. Most significant for two reasons. These details are, first, the witness of the thousands of eyes and ears which are at all moments everywhere in the community: everywhere where no few core activists could stretch themselves. Second, the movement would be no movement at all if it were limited to committee activists. So far it has been a mass movement. The job of the committee is to perform all of the further investigation which is needed to verify the possible guilt of accused persons—having been given their lead and impetus by the community.

Anyone who is named as a pusher at a meeting or to a committee : is invited to come to a subsequent public meeting to give a reply.' While some have failed to attend, most accused persons have done so. Strikingly, many Dublin heroin dealers have not only attended meetings, but publicly confessed. Innocent persons, or apparently innocent persons, have often, on the other hand, been accused of serious crime at these public meetings. Once the flow of testimony has begun in a locality, a great deal of what then occurs is actually made up of confessions or the defence of innocence. One Central Committee member has stated this succinctly:

'Every Wednesday ... the Concerned Parents would meet in St. Andrews Hall, South Circular Road, to discuss the drugs situation and hear allegations against suspected pushers or drugs abusers. Most of these allegations were dealt with quickly by people establishing that the allegations were false or admitting to them and giving commitments to desist'.
(Green, no date.)

The innocent are cleared, and the pushers confess. It sounds ideal. Discovering whether the innocent are all cleared is part of our purpose here. Certainly a few individuals have 'cleared*' their names more on the basis of a hard luck story or of the reputation

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(for one thing or another) of their family, rather than with regard to the facts of the allegations. The confessions, for their part, are also less than ideal as it is difficult to know which party gains more from the confessions—the Concerned Parents or the pushers.

Confessing, the local resident heroin distributor gives an undertaking to desist. What is being asked in many cases is that pushers quit. So they simply agree to. The easiest way to take off the heat is to confess and agree to quit. Other pushers, in contrast, have admitted the occupation in public in defiance, with an undertaking, not to desist, but to continue! In Fatima Mansions, in St. Teresa's Gardens and in Dun Laoghaire pushers brazenly admitted dealing and publicly refused to abandon so lucrative a practice. One went so far as to boast of, if not advertise, the pure quality of his smack. Other persons have incriminated themselves unwittingly at these gatherings. In the totality of Dublin area CPAD public meetings, a significant number of individuals have confessed to or implicated themselves in drug pushing. Public confessions have been heard as many as two dozen times city-wide—including a few repeat players who had revelations to make at more than one time or place. Other pushers, however, remain unnamed and unaccused at these meetings. The power of a very few families to intimidate has kept their names frozen on the lips of eyewitnesses to their heroin dealings.

Much takes place at these meetings which is beyond this article's focus on information and proof. Attendees are occasionally reminded from the floor of general principles, for example, that no information given to CPAD is passed to the police. Information is disseminated, plans agreed, and morale raised. Above all the public meeting is the forum to which evidence against alleged pushers is brought. In some sense the purpose of all **CEAEU**-investigative work is to put the facts before this great jury and immense democratic judgehead, where each and all are jury members, where the judge is the community. To comment further on this process would, however, be out of place here where the focus is on evidence. The public meetings produce evidence. 'People have to give us the hard facts to begin with', states a Dun Laoghaire CPAD leader. But another Central Committee member admits, at least about his own locale, Dolphin House, that 'it's because people don't stand up that I have to do so much detective work'. We turn now to the intensive work of 'Long-coat' and the other investigators with whom we began the article.

Intensive Investigation

The size of the core **committee.in** a local CPAD organisation varies. When heroin-related problems are very severe, the size of a »-

local cadre may be as many as fifteen to twenty, as in the North Inner City at the peak of the problem there. During periods when all heroin pushers and pushing have been driven from an area, the number of committee activists can drop to four or five. Two of these will be members of the Central Committee. The whole community feeds information to their local committee, which, using that initial information, then goes out for more.

Observation is primary. In its many forms, observation is the most time-consuming CPAD work. Local residents have, let us say, reported that heroin transactions may be taking place in a certain public place. Labour exchanges, fast food restaurants, patches of open ground, public toilets, and shopping malls are favoured locations. The 'stake-out' is the most likely tactic to be employed by committee members for these venues. Clandestine, unobtrusive observation of the venue over a substantial span of time, will usually produce eye-witnessed transactions as well as many related details. Tiny tape recorders are used by Concerned Parents in the Dun Laoghaire area for noting most unobtrusively what is seen.

Similar observation is performed for the Concerned Parents by numerous persons with public occupations. Stationary jobs such as car park attendant, shop assistant, news-stand vendor, road worker, security man, ticket-taker or waitress make excellent observation posts. Any such persons may be CPAD informants. If stationary occupations are excellent for the purpose, mobile ones are in some ways even better. What the postman sees features classically in the detective novel. Add to that salesmen, binmen, and delivery women and men of all kinds. It is no accident that the current chairman of the Central Committee is a milkman. It is because he had seen so much of the heroin racket and its attendant suffering while on his rounds that he began to seek out others in Ballybrack to form an anti-drugs campaign.

Taximen are perhaps best placed of all because of their regular use by addicts travelling to drops or places of purchase. CPAD taxi drivers sometimes elicit information—of heroin alone we speak—from fares. In order to protect their identity, and their cover, many of the at-work informants report to committee members at night or in another clandestine manner.

'Long-coat's' unrelenting patrols in the Dun Laoghaire nights are also generally observational. He and his frequent companion observe suspected venues. But 'Long-coat' is well known to the heroin underworld. His particular presence does not go unnoticed by pushers. The purposes of 'Long-coat's' patrols are numerous. One of them is the main work of CPAD investigative work: the observation, not of places but of individuals. In the whole of such

surveillance, nightly patrols by a known Central Committee member do not play a large part. Yet that patrol has interest in relation to targeted individuals to which we shall return.

Suspected heroin dealers receive individual attention from CPAD. Although the larger pushers may occasionally 'have a tail put on them', they will mainly be watched at their homes, relatives homes, and drinking places. Unceasing chimney smoke from those homes can be one more indicator supporting the suspicion that heroin is being dealt there. Throwing heroin into the fire in the event of a Drugs Squad raid is much safer than throwing it out of the window. If the Gardai are not also watching the windows, the Concerned Parents may be regularly watching them. The open fire is also quicker than flushing the substances down the toilet. A suspected 'drugs house' which trails chimney smoke every 'hot' afternoon will rivet CPAD attention. Thus we have, as indicated earlier, not only what is seen and heard by the community, but what is smelled.

A stake-out on a suspected house or flat sometimes goes on around the clock for days and even weeks. Most conveniently, and most often, this is done from a neighbouring house or flat using binoculars and, when available, photography, video, or film. Vehicles are an alternative blind. Obviously this is shiftwork. The co-operating neighbours whose flat or house is being used may help with certain of the round-the-clock shifts. Often, however, their role is the life-sustaining one of tea and sandwiches for the watchers. Leaving the watching to the committee is not necessarily laziness or a lack of involvement by others. Rather, a higher ethic of its own is often present. Committee members have, the view is, undertaken a commitment that they will witness personally, on behalf of the entire community, heroin dealings—if such there be—by the suspected individuals. The ethic became so strong in Dun Laoghaire that the entire committee of nine had to see an individual in action before they collectively reported it to the community.

This investigative work is labour-intensive indeed. In the North Inner City ten to twenty committee members devoted some two weeks to surveillance and information-gathering on each suspected person at the height of the problem there. Since then even more time is devoted to each suspect. Cathedral View CPAD patrolled and watched their Kevin Street neighbourhood for fifteen months before taking action. On 22 September 1986, a young Ballyfermot committee member watched the house of a suspect on Buckingham Street for eight consecutive hours[^] Certain individuals have been under investigation by CPAD for years, with proof of jj kind which is conclusive enough to bring to the

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community still pending.

What is seen? It may be well to interrupt this account of the procedures of eye-witnessing heroin dealing to specify exactly what is witnessed. In the words of a Dun Laoghaire committee member:

'We watched them dealing. Taking the money on the chapel wall, (then) going down to the toilets on Marine Road. The heroin was stashed in the toilets . . . Stand at the bottom of Patrick Street; watch them; and they're taking the money at the chapel wall. Kids are going over and the stuff is being given to them in the toilets'.

Any of the following may be witnessed: packets are handed to an addict, who shortly injects himself or herself; a package is handed to a middle person who then distributes to addicts; money is paid by addicts to someone who then visits a third person who in turn makes delivery to the buyer; a handsomely dressed man stops his expensive car near a dust bin, and drops in a package . . . every Wednesday afternoon between two o'clock and half past; the local addict-pusher carefully collects; someone is seen leaving a package for collection and the intercepted package is found to contain heroin.

While eyewitness evidence constitutes the most conclusive proof, and is therefore the culmination of the investigative process, watching and following suspected individuals is in another way always only a new beginning, for one of the popular conceptions of the heroin racket has had a good deal of accuracy. Thus far, whenever a big pusher has been removed from the scene, someone has been ready to step into the shoes. In local neighbourhoods this has not been the case. Both heroin dealings and the popularity of heroin use among teenagers have been brought to a complete halt in some of the Concerned Parents' local areas. But the truth is that CPAD does not confine itself to its organised localities. There are no boundaries to the Concerned Parents', the current chairman of the Central Committee frankly states; 'we go for the pushers wherever they are', echoes the former chairperson. Local committees find it necessary to travel afield to deal with those who are selling in the local area but living elsewhere. Concerned Parents investigating trafficking in Bray found themselves in Enniskerry at the end of the trail of clues. The pusher was convinced at a meeting in Loughlinstown that he should stop. The committee members were not in fact from Bray, but from Dun Laoghaire and Ballybrack.

What CPAD wants is the day when it is all over: the day when no one fills the pushers' shoes because the detoxed addicts have

thorough rehabilitation, the young are no longer interested in heroin and the pushers have been disposed of by the law or the community. To this end, every stake-out and every tail is a potential new beginning as new suspects are added to the Concerned Parents' field of knowledge by virtue of contact or dealings with pushers. Thus the end of the pursuit of one individual or family leads to the beginning of the pursuit of three or four others, and takes CPAD beyond its community boundaries. This city-wide effort has become the main *raison d'être* of the Central Committee.

The identity of most of the heroin dealers, large and small, along the east coast of Ireland is a very badly kept secret. Journalists who write for Magill magazine know who they are, as their excellent work has demonstrated; the CPAD know who they are; and the Garda Síochána know who they are. The Concerned Parents keep them under surveillance. On occasions, over a period of time, the registration numbers of all vehicles arriving at the residence of one or another of these persons will be recorded by CPAD and ownership ascertained. These vehicles may then be looked for and watched elsewhere. Couriers are used by the bigger pushers for distribution around the city. As these couriers become known to CPAD the couriers may be followed wherever they go in order to see whom else they contact. Both couriers and the big dealers can further be observed in potential importation activities, coming and going at airports and ferryports.

The constantly widening net of CPAD intelligence is exchanged by Central Committee members, often through Central Committee meetings. Until 1986, information thus gained was largely held in the heads of local members, or on scraps of torn paper. Little documentation of this kind was kept on file—although the Central Committee's proceedings are carefully recorded. Only in the summer of 1986 was the decision taken to create permanent files on suspected persons. Evictions and arrests took place so rapidly in the months following, however, that by early 1988 the effective creation and use of such files remained pending.

Photographs are an important part of this central intelligence system. Clearly, if every Concerned Parent knows what every big pusher looks like from her or his photograph, the latter are moving in a goldfish bowl. Photographs are regularly exchanged at meetings. Some unspoken reluctance appears, however, about making photos part of permanent files.

The Central Committee largely takes charge of O'Connell Street, Westmoreland Street, Dame Street and other areas without enough residential basis to support a local committee. Central

Committee informants have, for example, seen both heroin sales and heroin injections in a restaurant in O'Connell Street. After a period of non-co-operation, the management of this restaurant admitted that it was a venue for heroin sales and began working with the Central Committee to put an end to it.

Special Methods

On a few occasions individuals are called in to Central Committee meetings to defend themselves against allegations. Some persons have themselves requested such an interview because they believe themselves to be under suspicion by the Concerned Parents and associate the danger they are thereby in with the Central rather than their local committee. CPAD does not interrogate. Normally interviews with, and warnings to, suspected pushers are conducted at local level.

Harrassment, on the other hand, is one of CPAD's methods, a method not unrelated to the detection methods with which we are exclusively concerned in this paper. Here we return to one of the interesting purposes of 'Long-coat's' night patrols. Although 'Long-coat's' is indeed the eagle eye for whatever he can see unobserved, paradoxically he at the same time wants the pushers to see him watching them. In many cases CPAD will have clear evidence on a pusher, yet not the kind of evidence which will secure community action if brought to public meetings. Normally the investigation goes on in an attempt to uncover other kinds of proof. If, however, heroin use is severe in an area, if pushing is drawing addicts who are stealing from the elderly and endangering young children by dropping syringes they have used, then Concerned Parents will harrass the pushers and, if necessary, the addicts. Moreover, harrassment is regarded by many committee members as a worthwhile tactic in itself. This view holds that when the pushers are harrassed and running they are more apt to make mistakes. Nervous mistakes make them easier targets for both CPAD detection and for the Garda Drugs Squad.

A section of the Garda Drugs Squad was known as the Mockies at one time because they became mock addicts in order to induce direct sales to themselves. CPAD has used the same tactic in St. Teresa's Gardens, in Ballymun, and elsewhere, with the same success, to obtain absolute proof that certain people are selling heroin. Plants are also used. A once evicted pusher from St. Teresa's Gardens was purposely allowed rehousing by the Dolphin House tenants association so that the local CPAD committee could conveniently watch his links with a larger supplier.

CPAD has even found a way to conduct searches in private dwellings. Parents, or relatives of a pusher, will sometimes be unaware of his or her activity. When informed of it by their neighbours they may be incredulous, horrified, or act protectively to their own. Sometimes however, they will conduct a search of their home for, or with, their concerned neighbours. The forty packs discovered by a bewildered father in St. Teresa's Gardens is only one of a number of quantities of heroin uncovered in this way.

Addict, Pusher and Garda Testimony

Little has been said, thus far, about information provided by heroin addicts. Addicts are a mine of information for CPAD. Everyone knows that nothing told to CPAD will be relayed to the Gardai. This fact permits addicts to speak rather freely, just as it also 'opens up' the general population, at least in working class areas. Addicts often tell Concerned Parents where a drop will be made, making possible a stake-out and the identification of couriers, vehicles, and method of drop. Addicts also sometimes name their supplier. Addict testimony is, on the other hand, seldom brought before the community as evidence against anyone. One reason for this is that heroin addicts are generally held in mistrust by those in their locality who know them. More importantly, CPAD is seriously concerned for the welfare and safety of all addicts. On South Circular Road one calm night, a local addict poured out to myself and two local committee members a wealth of names, places and procedures. 'We can't use Michael's evidence', I was told immediately afterwards, 'It would only come back on him'.⁵

In a packed hall in Bray a pusher, who is also a heroin addict, named four larger dealers as his source of supply. Pushers have also accused one another in Dolphin House. It has several times been mooted by Central Committee members that naming of their supplier should be a required condition in the disposal of the cases of proven pushers to whom any leniency is being shown, as well as for addicts to whom detoxification and rehabilitation help is being extended. This has not been adopted as policy. Many consider such a demand unenforceable. 'Pushed into a corner, where they must come up with a name', summarises one long-time activist; pushers 'will name someone whether inside (gaol), dead, or away: somewhere where there is no comeback on them'. Listeners in the Central Committee nodded agreement. Nevertheless on two separate occasions in 1987 Dun Laoghaire pushers, under pressure from CPAD, identified larger cross-town suppliers.

Official and Garda evidence is also important to CPAD. Arrest

by the Drugs Squad, and a charge of possession of heroin with intent to supply, is regarded as the strongest of evidence. In the formal legal system those so arrested remain innocent until formally convicted. However, when the individual involved has already been under investigation by the CPAD, their viewpoint is different. In many cases CPAD evidence will be all but conclusive when an arrest occurs. Official charges become final proof for CPAD investigation. Informally, also, individual Gardai have confirmed to CPAD activists that Garda evidence on certain persons exists.

Are they always right?

We have looked at the range of methods used by CPAD to investigate the activities and to establish the guilt of heroin pushers. We must now return to our original question. Are the CPAD always right? Could they evict or harass an innocent party? It needs to be noted that this is a very specific and limited question, as it excludes from consideration a range of other issues which could and should be raised about the Concerned Parents movement. However, these must be pursued elsewhere. Yet even this very specific question has enormous wider significance. Major areas of sociological inquiry and theory are, as indicated at the outset, directly involved in the Irish episodes empirically analysed here. These are: social control, public safety, and social order in advanced urban societies and the structure of Western political discourse and ideology, as that discourse relates to social control. Popu!p^T justice is one theme of current interest through which these fundamental questions can be aired.

Unfortunately, however, there exist in the literature not one but many different uses of the term popular justice. Along one axis, for example usage at one extreme restricts popular justice or 'informal justice' to local courts of a great variety of kinds (Ietswaart, 1982; Tirucheluum, 1978). This concept is of little interest here. At the other extreme popular justice never includes courts because the bureaucratic formality of courts defines the polar opposite of that which can be said to be 'popular'. Courts represent not only 'the intervention of an authority which necessarily stands above and is foreign to the contending forces' (Foucault, 1972: 27), but constitute 'an institution standing between the people and its enemies' (1972: 2), 'typical of a state apparatus*' (1972: 1). Along another axis, polemic restricts popular justice to local participation under a higher tutelage, a mere extension of the capitalist or socialist state (Abel, 1982). Writers at the opposite extreme regard independence from state or police

tutelage as the necessary definition for their concept of popular justice (Iadicola. 1986; Gardiner. 1986).

What is lacking in the debate over popular and informal justice is applied attention to the decisive question of whether real instances of popular justice have established the guilt of their targets through systematic empirical proof, or arbitrarily and emotionally. As this study shows the Dublin Concerned Parents, during their first four years, established proof flawlessly. They were, without any possibility of doubt, never wrong. Every case proceeded upon was completely proven. This performance lends support to the non-state and anti-court models of popular justice, and thereby to the attractiveness of the theories of Foucault and Iadicola. What can be further concluded here concerns social control *on* the one hand and its ideological trappings on the other.

Social control is, sociologically, what Concerned Parents do. That much is categorically unquestionable. Their activities are a plain instance of what is sometimes termed *natural order* in the sociology of law and anthropology (Diamond, 19/1; Black, 1976). The sociological tradition has held, moreover, that it is the myriad organisational, local, cultural, and group controls which are the essence of social control. Government, governmental laws, and governmental police are a part of social control, but a subsidiary part (Black, 1984; Davis, 1975; Robinson, 1985; Toucault. 1977). Yet, in current debate on crime control, citizen groups of this sort are often looked upon negatively. Both Garda and government officials in Ireland have been antagonistic to Concerned Parents. Specific criticisms are that Concerned Parents are not properly trained for police work, that the activity is dangerous for the Concerned Parents themselves, and that the latter are not legally or officially sanctioned to bring anyone to any kind of justice at all. All of which is perfectly true. Coupled with these criticisms, however, is the allegation that Dublin is not a safer place as a result of the Concerned Parents groups, but rather a more insecure city. The term *vigilante* is applied to CPAD with the intention of labelling them uncontrolled, dangerous, and arbitrary. All of us are concerned for the safety of every person in her and his own home and neighbourhood from self-appointed messiahs, factions, fanatics, and statue-breakers. Allegations and innuendo against the reliability and certainty of CPAD investigation and proof procedures have been made, however, without any adequate assessment of these processes.

Here, fortunately, we have been able to contribute that missing assessment by the systematic elaboration of CPAD methods. It has not been possible to present all of the investigative tactics of CPAD. The effectiveness of certain tactics would be lost were they

revealed because they depend on secrecy. Indeed, publication of certain channels of CPAD information could jeopardise the jobs of the informants. Considerations of space prevents elaboration of other methods. Enough has been said, however, for the case to rest.

CPAD investigation has certain obvious advantages over the corresponding police work. In Dublin co-operation from the community and information thereby supplied goes overwhelmingly to CPAD, not to the Garda Síochána. Concerned Parents are also more numerous than the Gardai in the areas they have organised, when one includes in the count all persons actively involved in the efforts. The Gardai, of course, have more full time personnel, more funding, more technology, more training, and the incentive of pensionable posts, as well as the potential for incarceration and interrogation. Concerned Parents' disadvantages include the fact that it is actually illegal for them to be in possession of drugs which they may, or may want to, discover or seize for evidence. No full comparison between official and citizen policing can be undertaken here; the above contrasts are made for the purpose of highlighting the advantageous position from which Concerned Parents, in certain respects, work. It is not on their advantages that we must here judge them, however, but on their methods.

'Unless we have absolute proof; 'we have to cover ourselves'; 'it might be a guy with a grudge against his boss'; 'you've got to be one hundred percent sure'. Statements like these are constantly made by CPAD activists, who are all acutely aware of the hazards should they ever err, hazards to themselves personally and legally, to any victim of a mistake, and also to their whole anti-heroin campaign, and therefore ultimately to the children they are battling to protect.

Dangers to the perfect objectivity and certainty of CPAD proofs comes from various quarters. The chairperson of the Bray group J received a personal threat, to be carried out if CPAD did not march on a certain named address. No march of course took place. 'People come to me every day', admits one central figure, 'saying this one's a pusher, that one's a pusher'. While no report is ignored, the road from such complaints to action and sanction is as long and exhaustive as we have in detail seen it to be.

Are they always right? Thus far they have always been right. But what has been emphasised here is less the historical record of the CPAD than its methods. The methods are systematic and exhaustive. No mistake is possible using these methods. The Concerned Parents are always right because their procedures, as explained, result in a requirement of absolute proof before any

sanction can be activated. And they are successful in obtaining investigative proof because, as the research details presented herein indicate, their techniques are fully adequate for that goal.

Conclusion

The world of social science will perhaps be unable to accept the implications of this finding. By the embedded assumptions of the social sciences the Concerned Parents should not be achieving what we have clearly and unquestionably seen them accomplishing. International drugs traffickers are not supposed to be catchable by milkmen, homemakers, unemployed labourers and waitresses. Crime control, and social control generally, are possible according to the general orthodoxy—despite textbook homage to informal controls and natural order—only via the vast apparatus and vast technology of the state. This can be seen in that the vigilante, with all of the ideological and linguistic loading this term carries, occupies all of the discursive space outside that apparatus. What does not occur officially becomes condemned as 'taking the law into their own hands'. These images and notions lie near the core of contemporary political ideology. Naturally one cannot predict with absolute certainty that citizen controls which work faultlessly in Dublin will work equally flawlessly and unobjectionably everywhere. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the investigative work, community organisation, and social control work of the Concerned Parents in Dublin seem to reveal large unrealities in world political ideology. What political illusion is more dangerous than that which pretends that only government and its agents can present us with the gift of order?T

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Footnotes

1. The police in the Republic of Ireland are called the Garda Síochána or the Gardai.
2. It is not possible to encompass all aspects of the Concerned Parents movement here. Discussion of the investigative work and of the other significant dimensions of the movement will be more fully elaborated in a forthcoming book by the present author.
3. The CPAD organisation of certain local areas are not affiliated to the Central Committee. These few groups are not included in the present study. Unaffiliated groups are most likely to differ from affiliated groups by virtue of the subordination of the former to the work of the Garda Síochána.
4. The research for this study is being pursued under the uniquely favourable circumstance of admission to both Executive and Central Committee meetings. Never before has any person other

- than an official representative of an affiliated CPAD committee been given entry to or information about these meetings—other than to give brief testimony or evidence to the Central Committee. The research findings presented below were gathered first hand while all aspects of CPAD work were being both planned and carried out.
5. The name of this person is not Michael.

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