

News stories about young people

Article 1

Our citizens should not live in fear

Those who criticise the new criminal justice measures, such as ASBOs, fail to understand that the most important freedom is that of harm from others

Tony Blair The Observer Sunday December 11, 2005

In advance of the publication of new proposals on anti-social behaviour and organised crime, we will once again, as a government, be under attack for eroding essential civil liberties. It is right to set this argument within a more coherent intellectual and political framework. It is not just about tough versus soft but about whose civil liberties come first. Britain, by 1997, had undergone rapid cultural and social change in recent decades. Much of this was necessary and good. Rigid class divisions and old-fashioned prejudices were holding Britain back. But some social change had damaging and unforeseen consequences.

Family ties were weakened. Communities were more fractured, sometimes as a result of desirable objectives like social mobility or diversity, sometimes as the consequence of mass unemployment and failed economic policies. Civil institutions such as the church declined in importance. At the start of the 20th century, communities shared a strong moral code. By the end of the century this was no longer as true.

As society changed, so did the nature of crime. There was an explosion in crime and, in particular, violence fuelled by drug abuse. There were far more guns in circulation and far less reluctance to use them. We saw the growth of new crimes such as people trafficking, computer fraud and mobile phone theft. Organised crime became a major international operation.

But while the world had moved on, the criminal justice system was stuck. By 1997, it was failing every reasonable test that could be applied. Crime had doubled. Trials were ineffective, witness protection was poor and the courts were very inefficient. There were huge delays, for example, between young criminals being charged and coming to court. We thus inherited a system which was increasingly unable to deal with the problems it faced. Anti-social behaviour was becoming a very serious problem on some estates but the courts were too cumbersome a process to deal with it expeditiously. The system was failing.

The choice was stark; either we accepted that nothing could be done, that we would allow the rights of victims routinely to be trampled on, or we granted new powers to local authorities and the police. This was, and is, the rationale for all the so-called summary powers that we have introduced.

These powers have a strong philosophical justification, from within the Labour tradition. Social democratic thought was always the application of morality to political philosophy. One of the basic insights of the left, one of its distinguishing features, is to caution against too excessive an individualism. People must live together and one of the basic tasks of government is to facilitate this living together, to ensure that the many can live without fear of the few.

That was why it was important that rights were coupled once again with responsibilities. As Tawney once put it: 'what we have been witnessing ... is the breakdown of society on the basis of rights divorced from obligations'.

On the left, by the 1980s, we had bent our argument too far in the opposite direction. We had come to be associated with the belief that the causes of crime are entirely structural. In defiance of our own traditions of thought we had eliminated individual responsibility from the account. We had lost sight, too, of the fact that it was those who depended most on a Labour Government to improve their lives who suffered most from crime and anti-social behaviour and were most insistent that we do more to help them. This, of course, did not mean we could ignore the divisions in our country. Instead of record unemployment, we now have record numbers of people in work. Sustained investment in schools is improving education for all. The New Deal has helped one million

youngsters off the scrapheap and into work. Sure Start and the New Deal for Communities are making huge differences to the most deprived neighbourhoods. However, it wasn't just a question of matching legal rights with legal responsibilities. It was about changing the legal processes by which such rights and responsibilities are determined. Traditional court processes and laws simply could not and did not protect people against the random violence and low-level disorder that affected their lives. Yes, you could, with Herculean application, remove the drug dealer living in the street. But the reality was, because of the Herculean effort required, it wasn't done. Now, by giving more so-called summary powers, it can be.

We have provided new tools including Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, acceptable behaviour contracts and dispersal orders and will enable them to take tough action against the pubs and clubs fostering drunken violence.

Police have further tools such as fixed penalty notices and penalty notices to tackle disorder. Where these new powers are being used effectively they are making a big difference and restoring public confidence that the criminal justice system is supporting the law-abiding majority.

These measures are already starting to work. Tomorrow I will unveil some new research that shows the progress that we have made. We will continue by providing a uniformed presence in every community through neighbourhood policing. The 'Respect' action plan which will be published in January will set out in more detail the new suite of powers and policies to go further and faster to tackle the problems. We will continue to review powers available for the Serious Crime Agency to ensure maximum disruption for those engaged in organised criminality. There will be a stronger focus on re-offending with sentence plans for offenders. We will have renewed focus on the most persistent drug users.

Our critics, who usually do not live in the communities most affected by crime and anti-social behaviour, often describe these measures as overly punitive and a threat to basic legal principles. We are criticised for introducing rough justice and removing courts from the sentencing process. In fact, we are very sensitive to the need to preserve accountability. Authority always has to be exercised with due restraint. We will ensure that good appeals processes are always built into new structures. The powers we have extended to the authorities can, and do, come under legal challenge.

But this is not a debate between those who value liberty and those who do not. It is an argument about the types of liberties that need to be protected given the changing nature of the crimes that violate them. And it is an attempt to protect the most fundamental liberty of all - freedom from harm by others.

Critics of our response need to face the following question squarely. If the criminal justice system was failing people, as it clearly was, what ought to be done about it? To do nothing is one option. But surely it is to do better by the British people to devise relevant powers, limited by the right of appeal, to ensure that communities do not have to live with unacceptable levels of fear and intimidation. The basic liberties of the law-abiding citizen should come first.

Article 2

Fight against jobs to target children

- Blair aims at parents of under-10s
- Powers to be taken from courts

Gaby Hinsliff, political editor The Observer Sunday December 11, 2005

Tony Blair today launches a new war on jobbery with a crackdown on inadequate parents, aimed at tackling even the tiniest tearaways too young to face prosecution.

Parents of anti-social under-10s who cannot be taken to court, or of older children who have not yet offended but are deemed at risk, will face orders compelling them to attend behavioural classes or comply with standards in a dramatic widening of the concept of anti-social behaviour.

The Prime Minister, who argues today in The Observer that traditional courts are 'too cumbersome' to tackle low-level intimidation and violence, will unveil research showing where tough approaches are used even in their currently limited form they have reduced both fear of anti-social behaviour and incidents of criminal damage.

Downing Street's plans to intensify the war on anti-social behaviour could also see Charles Clarke, the Home Secretary, lose overall responsibility for the so-called 'respect' agenda, when Blair completes the unfinished Cabinet reshuffle triggered by David Blunkett's resignation.

Hazel Blears, now Home Office minister for anti-social behaviour, is tipped for promotion to the Cabinet Office taking her current responsibilities with her. That would enable Blears and the 'respect tsar' Louise Casey to work directly to Blair, cutting out the Home Office - where officials are more cautious about his radical ideas.

The government's 'respect' plan, due in January, is expected to define anti-social behaviour as much more than just crime, stressing the need to tackle the root causes of problem behaviour even before laws get broken.

It will also reflect warnings from senior police officers about primary school-aged 'teeny tearaways', who are already involved in petty criminal behaviour but cannot be punished because of their age. Children cannot be prosecuted until they are 10.

Currently court parenting orders - which require parents of troublesome children to attend parenting lessons, ensure children attend school and obey curfews, on pain of a fine or jail sentence against the parents - only target the parents of older teens who have Asbos or have broken the law.

Ministers will argue however that the risk signs of future trouble are evident in much younger children and so their parents should be tackled early. Schools and other organisations will get new powers to seek the orders.

'We will see [the agenda] deepened to tackle and prevent problems as early as possible, broadening it across the country and across a wider range of behaviours,' said a government source. 'We are by no means complacent. People still experience much too much anti-social behaviour in many parts of the country.'

Critics last night warned the plans risked stigmatising families. 'I really would struggle to know how you could make the definition of anti-social behaviour broader than it already is, which is behaviour likely to cause alarm, harassment or distress,' said Shami Chakrabarti of the civil rights group Liberty. 'Going for younger children before they have actually done anything is positively chilling.'

However, writing in the The Observer today, Blair argues that family ties have weakened and communities fractured over the past decades, allowing a new kind of disorder to flourish that the courts have failed to tackle: 'Traditional court processes and laws simply could not and did not protect people against the random violence and low-level disorder that affected their lives.'

And he denies that the increasing use of so-called summary powers - allowing police to act without invoking the courts - would infringe civil liberties: 'We are very sensitive to the need to preserve accountability.'

Police on trains to halt the thugs
Dan Martin

Police are to travel on buses and trains to stop drunken troublemakers. Uniformed and plain-clothes officers will patrol public transport services during the campaign to stop violent **yobs** after complaints from passengers and transport staff. Chief Constable Matt Baggott said: "This is about how we can better protect the thousands of people who travel by public transport every day in Leicestershire. "They have to face problems of anti-social behaviour, particularly on late-night services." A deal has been signed with bus and train operators which will allow on-duty officers to travel free when they present their warrant cards. The campaign was launched yesterday at the KinchBus depot in Loughborough.

Mr Baggott said he also hoped it would stamp out drug-taking on buses and trains. He said: "The presence of police officers on buses and trains will, we hope, make people think again before they commit a criminal offence. "We are not saying there will now be a police officer on every bus and train - there simply are not enough of us for that. "But we hope that by travelling on public transport we can make people feel safer and get to know the communities we police better."

Nick Deacon, duty supervisor of county coach firm CentreBus, said: "There is not a huge problem with crime on our buses but we do get incidents such as minor drug-taking, vandalism and anti-social behaviour. These are things almost all of our passengers do not want to see when they travel. We only have one member of staff, the driver, on each of our buses and it can be difficult for them to deal with a situation on the vehicle if they are driving. The police will be welcome back-up."

Arriva spokesman Keith Myatt said: "We are pleased to be working in partnership with Leicestershire Constabulary and welcome this initiative for offering free transport to our officers in the county." us passenger Grant Walker, 23, from Loughborough, said: "I've got the bus out of the town centre at night at the weekends and seen it packed with drunks in a bad mood. It can be a nasty atmosphere. You're bound to feel safer if there are police on board." Other companies involved in the campaign are Central Trains, Midland Mainline, FirstBus, and Trent Barton. The scheme will begin on December 19.

The Star (Sheffield) December 9, 2005

Police to tackle 100-strong youth gang in town centre

Police are mounting an operation in Dronfield to combat gangs of up to 100 yobs causing mayhem in the town centre.

The gang is plaguing the civic centre area where they are frightening residents and disrupting trade in the supermarket. Dronfield Town Council clerk Roy Hunt told the council about the antisocial behaviour in the civic centre and nearby shops and the difficulty of contacting police. Mr Hunt said the first incident occurred when 100 youths were fighting in the civic centre and, despite four phone calls to police, they could not get a response.

The second big incident was when the yobs went into the Somerfields supermarket at the centre.

He said the manager was concerned because the gang was affecting trade in the store by frightening customers but again they could not get a response from police.

Mr Hunt said: "There is considerable concern about the lack of response from the police." Coun Kathy Marr said women staff at Somerfields were frightened to leave work at 10pm in case they were confronted by the yobs whom they suspected might have taken drugs. Sgt Phil Bentley told the council that because of concern about the gangs they had mounted an operation called Operation Haines to deal with them.

He said there had been some arrests and they had paid attention to the supermarket and the surrounding area.

Mr Hunt added: "Local residents have requested a more positive approach from the local police to help alleviate these problems which will get worse if strong action is not taken."

**Wakefield Express
December 9, 2005**

Radio set to take on town jobs

A NEW initiative to crackdown on pub crime in Ossett has been welcomed by pubs and businesses.

Yobs are being warned to stay away when the new Pubwatch radio link is launched in the next few weeks. The scheme will use a hand-held radio system to link town centre pubs and businesses and alert them to troublemakers and thieves. The long-awaited CCTV link is also due to go live in the town centre in the next two weeks and was welcomed by Ossett and Horbury Pubwatch chairman Richard Smith as a step forward in the constant fight against crime.

Mr Smith, co-ordinator of the scheme and owner of Manhattan's Bar, said: "I support any system that helps to stop yob behaviour in the town and helps to combat crime and it's great that it's being introduced in time for Christmas.

"At a recent Pubwatch meeting 30 landlords supported the introduction of hand-held radios, which shows how determined we are to stop theft and root out the yob element." The radios will be supplied by Newcastle firm APEX and will cost only £8-£9 each week to hire. Mr Smith added: "This is a small price to pay for a safe business. This system should also reassure the public that they can shop in safety and use town centre pubs without fear of attack." He said he hoped the new system would lower the incidences of assault and stop those intent on causing trouble. He added: "From my point of view the benefits of these radios would be immense. It would mean we could contact other pubs and warn them that troublemakers are on their way, enabling them to then decide how to deal with them. None of us will tolerate anti-social behaviour. "This scheme coupled with CCTV will make the town a much safer environment and give everyone a more stress-free Christmas. "APEX has agreed to give town centre businesses a no-obligation, one-month's free trial with the radios, which I hope will demonstrate how beneficial they are. "These have been used elsewhere in the district, including Wakefield city centre, Feather-stone and South Elmsall, and they have proved to be effective in reducing crime in those areas and hopefully they can do the same for Ossett." CCTV operations manager for Wakefield, Darren Pollington, said cameras and all other crime watch initiatives would make Ossett a safer place.

He added: "Cameras along with pubwatch radios, neighbourhood patrollers, police community support officers and the police will help to make Ossett a much safer place for everyone. I think this is a great scheme."

The Guardian November 30, 2005 Pg. 31

Comment & Debate: Let's get tough on crime.

First, stop locking people up: Lashed by the media, our judges' mania for prison is creating an ever larger criminal underclass in every community

Simon Jenkins

When is someone going to get tough on crime? I mean really tough. Ridiculous, scandalous, a shambles, was the tabloid reaction yesterday to the new sentencing guidelines on mugging from the lord chief justice, Lord Phillips. The tabloids are right. The guidelines are shocking. Why can't these judges just get tough?

I love the language of criminal outrage. It fixes a stereotype and feeds it intravenously into the political bloodstream. Weak ministers, especially in the Home Office, live in holy terror of it. Downing Street press officers quake under its lash. I regard myself as tough on crime, particularly violent, alcoholic and drug-related youth crime. I want it stopped. I long for some politician to come along to get a grip on it. The nocturnal horror on Britain's streets is so shameful that the gloves must come off. At each new outrage I scream for toughness.

But what is tough? Yesterday's guidelines supersede those of Lord Phillips's predecessor, Lord Woolf, issued in 2002. Woolf, regarded by the tabloids as a soft judge, was desperate to be seen as cracking down on an epidemic of mobile-phone robbers. He said they should all go to prison, even if no weapon or personal injury was involved. Woolf was a good chief justice but susceptible to media terrorisation. Though the 2002 guideline was widely ignored by magistrates and judges, imprisonment soared under his regime. At 75,000 it broke all known records. There are twice as many Britons in jail as 25 years ago, 50% above the proportionate rate in France and Germany. Britain imprisons more children than any country in Europe and more women than ever in the country's history. It is close to barbaric.

Guidelines do not "work" in any meaningful sense since most courts rightly pay more attention to the individual criminal than the guideline. Bloodthirsty pronouncements on mugging and murder are chiefly of interest to the media and politics. Minor mugging offences are getting to be daily occurrences in most city streets. The only deterrent would be the beat police officer of fond memory. The punishment of imprisonment removes any hope of restorative justice or rehabilitation. It ruins a young life and costs the state £37,000 a year. Today, for all the guidelines, street violence and robbery continue, with iPods replacing mobiles. In a nutshell, the policy was stupid.

Phillips is sensibly rescinding the Woolf guidance for first-time muggers using "minimal force"; that is where no weapons and no injury are involved. They should not automatically be sent to prison. The sentence should be a community service order (CSO). For all their weaknesses, CSOs have a reoffending rate well below that of ex-prisoners.

Yet as if sharing Woolf's fear of tabloids, Phillips has felt obliged to extend the tariff for muggings involving a weapon or an injury. Here the starting sentence would be three years, or, in the event of major injury, seven years. Meanwhile, for adults even a minimal-force robbery should lead to prison. Nine out of 10 convicted British robbers go to jail.

Most British sentencing is not getting tough on crime but going soft in the head on crime. CSOs are the tough option because they involve the criminal justice system having to do some work (as might Asbos, if only they were properly run). Obsessive imprisonment, the British juridical disease, is the result of judges not standing up to politicians and the press. Any fool can throw thousands of young people into jail and send the bill to the taxpayer. Any fool can then release them - jail-hardened, brutalised and now unemployable - back into the community, where three-quarters reoffend. How is that curing crime?

On the radio last week, the deputy chief justice - the admirably named Sir Igor Judge - remarked bitterly that Britain had the most draconian sentencing in Europe, yet he and his fellow judges were thought a bunch of wimps. Since Tony Blair came to power, Britain has shot to the top of the European imprisonment league. British judges are now busily creating a large, criminalised underclass of prisoners and their families in every community. Judges were doing their bit, Sir Igor seemed to protest, so why should they get so much stick? It was all most unfair.

The reason is that the language of crime is all wrong. The easy, soft, do-nothing prison option may appease public opinion. But we do not cure hospital diseases by sacking

nurses, or congestion by slashing tyres, or illiteracy by banning books. Getting tough on crime means finding out what causes it and trying to redress that. The thirst for revenge that oozes from all fixed sentencing guidelines is medieval. Everything I have read on crime policy suggests that public protection demands the incarceration of at most a quarter of the present prison population. Britons can't be inherently worse-behaved than everyone else in Europe. It is the law that is deficient.

Crime's most immediate causes are precisely those on which Britain is notoriously soft: drink and drugs. Together they are said to account for over two-thirds of all violent crimes. Yet the government indulges alcohol abuse with mild regulation and ever lower taxes. It indulges drug abuse with an unregulated open market and no taxes at all. Prices of drink and drugs have tumbled under Labour. Small wonder that they are the fuel of urban crime and the bane of every city centre. This softness leaves young people open to every temptation. It then adds idiocy to injury. Rather than get tough with drunks and addicts by finding out where policy has gone wrong and seeking to rectify it, the government passes ever more laws to lock them up.

Judges may not be able to exert much influence on this government's softness on crime. But they should not compound it by joining the conspiracy to imprison. I cannot see the point of sentencing guidelines. They are a sop to "postcode lottery" centralism and a gift to parliament and the tabloids. Let local magistrates and judges fit sentences to criminals. That surely is their unique job. Delegating punishment to London delegates it to politics and to the media frenzy. This I am sure is why Britain imprisons so many.

The less said about national sentencing, the less will be the hysteria. The less the hysteria, the more the common sense. The more the common sense, the tougher we can all be on crime.

The Express August 9, 2005 Pg. 6

BRING BACK THE CANE TO TACKLE YOBS

Mark Reynolds

CANING should immediately be reinstated in schools to stamp out spiralling job culture.

This is the overwhelming conclusion of most parents and education pressure groups, according to new research. Two-thirds of parents who were questioned said they would favour a return to caning, with only a third believing it was now outdated. Only last month figures revealed that the number of teachers suffering major injuries in assaults by pupils has doubled as the menace of Yob Britain spreads to the classroom.

In a wide-ranging survey conducted by ParentMail - a webbased school-to-home communications service - parents made it clear that the abolition of corporal punishment had been a real mistake. Caning was banned from the country's state schools in 1986 and from private schools seven years ago. But the survey, to which nearly 1,700 parents responded, found that 20.8 per cent wanted corporal punishment back in schools, 44.4 per cent thought it should be an option, and 34.7 per cent said "No" to caning. Paul Hughes, managing director of ParentMail, said: "I think the Government and the education system are a bit out of step with the average man in the street." He added: "I wouldn't go as far as to say that hitting kids is a good idea but the discipline issue has been allowed to slide and has become almost demonised." Others backing the call included the Campaign for Real Education which argued that corporal punishment would give hard-working youngsters a better chance of learning without interference from disruptive pupils. Chairman Nick Seaton said: "We have always supported it as an option for headteachers and governors and it should never have been banned in the first place. "What it hopefully can achieve is to teach some of these violent and very disruptive youngsters that they have got to behave themselves and let the rest of the class get on

with learning." But teachers held mixed views over the proposal. Retired teacher David Temple, 60, said: "On the whole I am in favour of corporal punishment as the ultimate sanction. Successive governments have undermined the authority of the teaching profession to the point where pupils have the upper hand. "Corporal punishment could serve as a deterrent to the outlandish youths who have got worse and worse over the years. I am, quite frankly, glad to be out of the teaching profession." Headteacher Cliff Knight said he was not surprised at the call but held reservations. "Parents want corporal punishment used for other people's children, " he said. "But if it was used on their children I think they would be very angry." Margaret Morrissey, of the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations, said: "We can understand where parents are coming from in wanting to bring back corporal punishment as the problem these days is that children have no fear.

"But we would have to say 'No' to this proposal because people can go too far and in 2005 there must be another way." The call was also rejected by teaching unions who argued that it would not help to restore discipline in schools.

A spokeswoman for the National Union of Teachers, which has 260,000 members, said: "We have long argued against corporal punishment and we don't want to see it brought back. Teachers don't want to assault their pupils in schools." The union also felt it would not help in reducing assaults on teachers by pupils.

The National Association of Head Teachers agreed. A spokesman said: "How can you ask a child to learn if you are physically threatening them? Caning is simply bullying in the extreme and would be counterproductive."

Daily Star January 26, 2005 Pgs. 8-9

THE LOST BOYS; ONE IN FOUR LADS SAY: 'WE ARE JUST YOBS'

MACER HALL, Political Editor

A staggering one in four teenage lads admit to being "serious or prolific" yobs, according to a terrifying Home Office report yesterday. A shock crime survey revealed that 510,000 kids aged 14 to 17 across the country are lawless louts. They have committed at least six crimes - including disorder, vandalism and shoplifting - in the last year. A hard core of teen crooks aged as young as 14 are behind burglary, robbery, joyriding, knife attacks and drug crime.

The teen crooks are fuelling a soaring violent-crime rate that has leapt by six per cent, the latest official survey reported. Ministers fear huge numbers of teenagers now have zero respect for law and order. Last night, Home Secretary Charles Clarke confessed that the youth crime figures were "appalling". The report means every secondary school classroom contains an average of four persistent tearaways - with many on the way to becoming career criminals. The Home Office survey revealed a total of 306,200 violent attacks - including stabbings, shootings and booze-fuelled fights - in England and Wales in the three months to the end of last September. Sex offences have rocketed by 22% to 17,000. Gun crime rose by 5% to 10,670 incidents - with the main rise in fake firearms offences. Senior police officers warn the crime epidemic is soaring. "There is more drunkenness and more alcohol related disorder on the streets, " said Scotland Yard Deputy Assistant Commissioner Steve House. "There is a problem and it looks like it is getting worse."

The figures exposed a dismal clear-up rate by police. Only 1% of crimes led to a suspect appearing in court. Angry Tories accused Tony Blair's Government of breeding "a whole new generation of criminals." Shadow Home Secretary David Davis blasted: "The Government have failed to crackdown on guns and drugs, which fuel violent crime. "At the same time they are planning to extend pub opening hours, which is likely to encourage further alcohol-fuelled violence." Youth workers were astounded by the new

figures and accused the Home Office of whipping up "panic". Steve Barrett, editor of youth workers' magazine Young People Now, said: "I suppose there's going to be an element of young people questioned bigging it up for the researchers. "A lot of these crimes are relatively minor offences such as fare dodging or being noisy in public. "There's no need for a moral panic about this." He added: "People tend to forget that young people often tend to be victims of crime as well."

Charles Clarke, who took over as Home Secretary only last month, vowed to finally tackle violence, which has risen steadily under Labour. "Violent crime is still the biggest challenge, " he admitted. He blamed booze-fuelled yobs for at least half of all violent attacks. "We are building a massive problem for the future if we don't really hammer alcohol-related crime, " he added. "Anybody who goes into our city streets on a Friday or Saturday night will see there is a serious problem that needs to be addressed." But Mr Clarke also celebrated a 6% fall in overall crime during the three months of the survey. Burglaries were slashed by 23% and car theft was down 17%, thanks to a series of local blitzes by police. Ministers claim the risk of being a victim of crime has hit a 20-year low. Home Office minister Hazel Blears said there were 1.4 million fewer victims of car crime, half a million fewer victims of violent crime and 600,000 fewer households burgled than 10 years ago. The Home Office is to launch a new anti-crime blitz targeting 100,000 serial offenders. Ms Blears added: "We are targeting the heart of people causing the most harm." She added: "What this survey confirms to us is that there is a core of people responsible for serious offending in this country."

LOUT OF ORDER. . .

THIS is the arrogant face of yob Britain. Schoolboy Louis Bibby, aged just 12, gives law and order the finger as he is locked away for breaching the terms of an Asbo. The tearaway from Leigh Park, Hants - who began offending when he was just eight - was sent to a detention centre for six months last year by a court.

THESE FIGURES ARE CRIMINAL

VIOLENT CRIME Up 6% - 306,200 offences Gun Crime Up 5% - 10,670 offences Sex Offences Up 22% - 17,000 crimes ROBBERY: Down 18% - 21,200 offences HOUSEBREAKING: Down 23% - 80,600 offences VEHICLE CRIME: Down 17% - 183,800 offences DRUG CRIME: Down 2% - 34,900 offences CRIMINAL DAMAGE: Unchanged - 277,800 offences OVERALL CRIME: Down 6% - 1,395,900 offences