

## CHAPTER FIVE: THE TEN PRINCIPLES OF REALISM

"WE HAVE TO DEAL, INDEED, WITH AN EXTENSIVE AND DEEPLY-ROOTED SOCIAL DISEASE, WHICH HAS DUG ITSELF INTO THE VERY BODY OF SOCIETY LIKE A KIND OF ULCER; AT TIMES EVEN THREATENING ITS VERY EXISTENCE, BUT ALWAYS HARMFUL IN THE HIGHEST DEGREE. COUNTLESS CRIMES ARE COMMITTED, AND MILLIONS OF CRIMINALS CONDEMNED, EVERY YEAR. ECONOMICALLY, THE DISADVANTAGES TO SOCIETY ARE VERY GREAT ... I THINK IT IS UNDENIABLE THAT CRIME IS A SOURCE OF STUPENDOUS WASTE OF MONEY TO SOCIETY. NEXT TO THE ECONOMIC, WE HAVE, MOREOVER, THE STILL MORE IMPORTANT MORAL DISADVANTAGES. IF CRIMINALITY IS CLOSELY BOUND UP WITH THE MORAL STANDARDS OF A PEOPLE, IN RETURN IT SENDS OUT DEMORALIZING INFLUENCES TOWARDS THE NORMAL SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION. AND WHEN ONE ADDS TO ALL THIS THE DAMAGE AND GRIEF SUFFERED BY THE VICTIMS OF THE CRIME, AND ALSO THE CONSTANT MENACE WHICH CRIMINALITY CONSTITUTES TO SOCIETY, THE TOTAL OBTAINED IS ALREADY A FORMIDABLE ONE. NEITHER OUGHT WE TO FORGET THE SUFFERING ON THE PART OF THE CRIMINAL HIMSELF, WHO - IN WHATEVER WAY ONE MAY WISH TO JUDGE HIM, IS AFTER ALL, A PART OF HUMANITY TOO.

THE REASONS FOR THE STUDY OF CRIMINOLOGY SHOULD THEREFORE BE CLEAR. ADMITTEDLY IT IS A SCIENCE WHICH IS WIDELY STUDIED FOR ITS OWN SAKE, JUST LIKE OTHER SCIENCES; CRIME AND CRIMINALS ARE NOT A BIT LESS INTERESTING THAN STARS OR MICROBES. THE ELEMENT OF *LA SCIENCE POUR LA SCIENCE* SHOULD BE PRESENT IN EVERY SCIENTIST, OTHERWISE HE WILL BE NO GOOD IN HIS PROFESSION; AND THIS APPLIES TO THE CRIMINOLOGIST TOO. BUT THIS POINT OF VIEW IS SECONDARY AS COMPARED WITH THE PRACTICAL ASPECT, JUST AS IN THE CASE OF MEDICAL SCIENCE. INDEED, COMPARISON WITH THE LATTER REPEATEDLY SUGGESTS ITSELF. CRIMINOLOGY OUGHT BEFORE ANYTHING TO SHOW HUMANITY THE WAY TO COMBAT, AND ESPECIALLY, PREVENT, CRIME. WHAT IS REQUIRED MORE THAN ANYTHING IS SOUND KNOWLEDGE, WHEREAS UP TO THE PRESENT WE HAVE HAD FAR TOO MUCH OF DOGMA AND DILETTANTISM." (WILLEM BONGER, 1935, PP.5-7).

### THE ROOTS OF REALISM

THE LAST TWENTY YEARS HAS WITNESSED A REMARKABLE INTENSIFICATION OF DEBATE IN CRIMINOLOGY. THE CORE PROBLEM WAS THE CONSISTENT RISE IN CRIME OCCURRING