

*Democratic Change and Crime Control
in Lithuania: Compiling New
Criminological Discourses*

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Introduction

Lithuania belongs to the so called post-communist part of the world and shares with its neighbors all spectrum of problems that characterize the transition from authoritarian state to new, probably, democratic one. This transition has its logic and its stages that hardly possible to bypass. Lithuania as many other countries of Central and East Europe has faced paradoxical problem: how to implement Western democratic ideas in society that still experiences strong influence of previous anti-democratic institutional structure. There were a lot of illusions about liberal and democratic prospects for future development in the beginning of 'velvet ('singing' in Lithuanian case) revolution'. However there was a deep gap between noble idealistic thinking and crude social and political reality. B. Ackermann, who in 1992 noted sensitiveness of Eastern Europeans to liberal democratic ideas, wrote that "it is one thing, (...), to affirm the enduring significance of freedom and the rule of law," and "quite another to translate these values into enduring political structured" (1; p. 67-68). Unfortunately, he was right. Recent elections in Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Poland and other East European countries showed that previous communist nomenclature was able to adapt itself to new political conditions and to restore its control under societies using more soft, civilized methods of

governing. Today European intellectuals prefer to speak rather of 'velvet restoration' (A. Michnic) as a state of affairs, than about desirable open and justice society.

The question about the necessity or the fortuity of the hesitation from 'revolution' to 'restoration' and *vice versa* is the open question for philosophical and historical speculations. Nevertheless, philosophical intuition is not only single way to evaluate readiness of the society to accept new ideas and new values that characterized ideal type of the civil society. There are enough possibilities to investigate this problem in more concrete way, using various political, economic and sociological indicators. Among them the attitude to crime and criminals in the society could be treated as one of the most important characteristic of this sort.

From sociological point of view, crime could be evaluated as the definition of social and moral order in negative terms. In other words, crime could be treated not only as deeds prohibited by law, but also as the indirect social evaluation of the model of behavior recognized as normal or abnormal, as good or bad, as acceptable or unacceptable. At the same time attitude to crime in the society is much broader than only negative attitude to person who commits crime; it also presupposes understanding of person's place and role in the society, methods and means that can be used preventing crime and keeping sufficient order in society.

In history one can find many examples showing how changes in the attitude to crime influenced social changes, and vice versa. Social impact of liberal doctrine of C. Bekaria, from one hand (see: 29; p. 6-14), and Bolshevism rhetoric of A. Vyshinskij (see: 34; p. 313) during famous process in Soviet Russia, from another, are two clear-cut and opposite examples of this kind. What was very important in their cases is that these kinds of the rhetoric were expressions not only of liberal or totalitarian ideologies, but of ideas that had found vast positive response in their societies and became paradigmatic for the next generations of lawyers and politicians.

One could expect that the turn of previous communist societies to the democracy, to the civil and peaceful regulation of the social life, should crucially influence criminal policy and crime rhetoric in these societies. Sociologists agree in their presupposition that language is not only a mean for communications, or just expression of the mode of functioning social institutions. They emphasize the big influence of language on the very process of creation of new social institutions. "Language is capable not only of constructing symbols that are highly abstracted from everyday experience, but also of 'bringing back' these symbols and presenting them as objectively real element of everyday life. In this manner, symbolism and symbolic language become essential constituents of the reality of everyday life and of the common-sense apprehension of this reality."(3; p. 55) There is a deep mutual relationship between language that we use in our social life, from one hand, and social institutions that we build or which influenced us in our everyday life - from another.

In our case, one could evaluate changes in the society, taking into consideration changes in crime policy, and consequently -- changes in the knowledge about crime expressed in

symbolic form. Of course it is not deterministic scheme. Rather we should speak about indirect evaluation that could be influenced by various social and cultural factors. Nevertheless this evaluation enables together with other methods of social analysis to estimate the difference between official statements about democratic orientation of particular country and real state of affairs.

The Report deals with evaluation and analyzing of various criminological discourses in Lithuania that became observable since 1988, when *singing revolution* started. The term *discourse* here is taken as linguistic organization of symbolic power. This definition of discourse is close to those of Foucault's with its emphasizing on "who does the speaking, the positions and viewpoint from which they speak, the institutions which prompt people to speak about it and which store and distort the things, they are said"(13; p. 11). Since the discourse is always connected with power's *strategies* and *tactics*, it is important to learn how political and social change influenced creation of criminological discourses and *vice versa* -- how various forms of symbolic powers influenced creation of new democratic institutions in the society.

Though there are a lot of publications concerning crime and social order, the role of symbolic power in society, problems of transition from totalitarian order to democratic system, as well as publications devoted directly to the Lithuanian problems (see: 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 13, 17, 18, 23, 29, 33, 36 and 37), unfortunately, the role of criminological discourses in the process of creating civil society, have never been investigated. Due to the fact that research deals with compiling new criminological discourses during transition period, it is impossible to put them into one particular methodological framework. There is only two things that are common to these new discourses -- their subject -- crime, and invisible power, that becomes visible in multiplicity of symbolic forms of discourses.

The main hypothesis of current research is that today in Lithuanian society exist at least three separate forms of knowledge about crime: professional, public, and political. The first type of criminological discourse is based on academic knowledge of criminologists and lawyers, the second one is build with the active involvement of independent mass media, and the last one is organized by politicians, who use crime rhetoric as a mean for political competitions. All these discourses create a complex network of symbolic power that according to the previous presupposition seriously influences implementations of democratic principles in Lithuanian society.

The structure of this Report looks like follow.

The main trends of crime and its impact on Lithuanian society are briefly analyzed in the chapter POLITICAL CHANGE AND CRIME IN LITHUANIA. Author used various statistical data, provided by the Ministry of Interior, the Department of Statistics, and other materials (see: 7, 23, 24,25, 26). In the next chapter -- THEORETICAL REFLECTION ON CRIME AND CRIMINALITY -- author describes specificity of forming contemporary professional criminological discourse of lawyers and criminologists. This part of report is based on the analysis of legal documents, as well as

on special literature devoted to the problem of the development of legal and criminological knowledge in Lithuania (see: 4, 6, 9, 12, 18, 21, 22, 27, 30, 35, 37). The following chapter - CRIME, GENERAL PUBLIC AND MASS MEDIA - is analyzing the role of mass media in the process of forming knowledge about crime among general public. Author presents original data about crime-related publications in main Lithuanian newspapers and analyzes the status and role of mass media in Lithuanian society (see: 2, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 25, 26, 32, 36, 38.) In the last chapter - POLITICAL RHETORIC ON CRIME - political criminological discourse is presented on the basis of the case study devoted to three Seimas sessions (1994) on crime problems. Combination of content analysis with historical approach allows to point on specific - *fight* and *control* - aspects of political rhetoric about crime in Lithuania (see also: 2, 5, 8, 12, 28, 31, 33, 37). The Report is closed by CONCLUSIONS that summarise presented views.

Materials for current research were collected working at Vilnius University, Institute of Political Science and Institute of Criminology of University of Oslo (1994), Faculty of Law of Warsaw University (1995), European Institute for Crime Control and Crime Prevention Affiliated with United Nations (1996). Some preliminary results of current research were presented at several International conferences: VIII (1994) and IX (1996) Seminars of Criminologists of Baltic States -- St. Petersburg (Russia), Tallinn (Estonia), 51st International Criminological Course (1995) -- Warsaw (Poland), 24th (1994) and 25th (1995) Conferences of European Group for Social Control and Deviance -- Komotini (Greece), Crossmaglen (Northern Ireland (GB)). Also materials of the results of research were used for lectures during Summer School *Baltos lankos* (1995) in Druskininkai (Lithuania) and in the framework of HESP Regional Study "Comparative Criminal Justice System: Poland, Lithuania, Russia" (1995/1996 academic year) -- Warsaw, Vilnius and Wales Universities.

I. Political Change and Crime in Lithuania

Political changes in Lithuania are, as in other post communist countries, a contradictory process. The building of new democratic institutions goes hand in hand with destructive processes in society. People, educated in the previous Soviet totalitarian system, have difficulty accepting new institutional form of open society. Moreover, due to a lack of experience these new democratic forms very often take distorted shapes. Economic crises, weakness of the political system, and people's apathy are only few examples of the difficulties of this transition period.

In this context crime should be understood not only as something that is prohibited and punished by law, as wrong deed of corrupted individual, but also as an indirect indicator of political, economic and political stability and security in the society, and its ability to control functioning of various social institutions and behavior of individuals. Moreover, having in mind that totalitarian and authoritarian tendencies begin, as a rule, with accusations of inability of democratic institutions to control crime, or to keep order strong, one could agree that crime, crime control, criminal and penal policy in question could also become a measure of the process of democratization of society. Probably all these above-mentioned factors can explain why crime problems so often become a subject of interest not only for lawyers and

academicians, but for politicians and general public as well.

During recent years crime become one of the most acute problem in Lithuania. Of course, it would be incorrect to see the direct connection between crime problem and political re-establishment of independent Lithuanian state in 1990. One can observe radical change in crime rate much earlier in 1989, when the number of registered crimes suddenly increased by 46% to compare with 1988. There are several hypotheses about this phenomenon. First explanation connects rising of registered crime with changes in crime registration policy during Gorbachev's era, with so called *glasnost'* in statistics. However, from another hand, one have to remember that it was time when Soviet regime lost its influence in Lithuania, when ideas of national rebirth and democratic reform, proclaimed by *Sajudis* got a wide support among Lithuanians. 1988-89 were years when Soviet governmental institutions and their control mechanism started to disintegrate, and new elements of future independent and democratic structure came to growth in the Lithuanian society. Revolutions, yet *velvet* or *singing*, have a little creative element; liberation's energy is creative only potentially, but in reality it is rather destructive. From this point of view, increase of crime rate in Lithuania could be explained as a result of destruction of previous totalitarian political structure and authoritarian methods of control.

Since 1990, crime trend has never achieved the previous result of 1989. Nevertheless, it was dangerous enough, that could be illustrated by following table:

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
1. Registered crimes	21337	31238	37056	44984	56615	60378	58634	60819
2. Investigated crimes	14423	14962	14203	15674	19368	22203	23847	25201
in %	75.7	52.2	42.2	37.4	35.5	36.8	40.8	40.0

Table 1. Crime rate in Lithuania 1988-1995

As one can see between 1990 and 1993 the number of registered crimes increased 1.6 times, and only in 1994 the offense rate was lesser by 2.9% than in the previous year. The small decrease in number of crimes in 1994 comparing with 1993 was broadly interpreted as "stabilization" of crime in Lithuania. However, crime statistics shows not only committed crimes -- but registration policy as well. In other words it shows at least two additional aspects: what kind of behavior is criminalized and what is effectiveness of the procedure of registration. Due to this fact registered crime statistics always should be checked by additional parameters.

Serious crime can be treated just as such additional parameter for checking general crime trend by several reasons. Firstly, they cannot be so easily "missed" or rejected during registration's procedure; secondly, they covered more or less stable group of crime (murder, rape, robbery, etc.); thirdly, they are closer to popular notion of crime and have great impact on the public image of crime situation in the society. Next table

presents serious crime (including murders) growth in Lithuania during last five years.

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
1. Serious crimes	2333	3301	4028	4549	5972	8210	9348	13214
2. Growth comparing with previous year (in %)		41.4	13.9	37.5	31.3	12.9	22.0	41.5

Table 2. Serious crime rate in Lithuania 1988-1995

The rate of serious crime (including murders) had strong tendency to grow, and in the same period of 1990-1994 has increased by 2.3 times. Noteworthy that correlation between serious crime rate and murder rate is 0.99 that in our case could be treated as additional argument for taking serious crime as measurement of general crime trend in Lithuania. At the same time, the comparison between general crime rate and serious crime rate give different picture that could be seen from following figure:

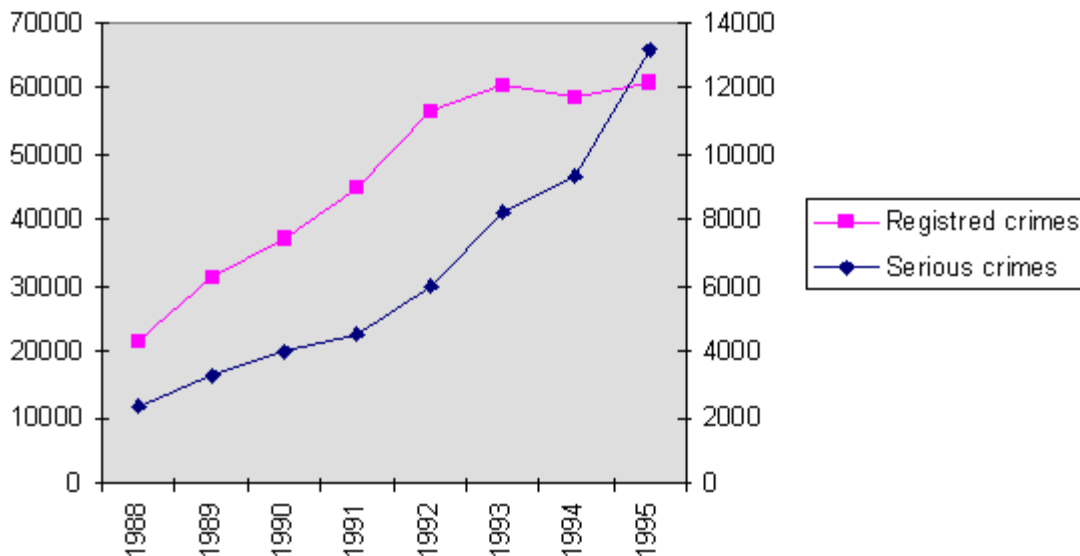


Figure 1. General and serious crime rate in Lithuania, 1990-1995

In this case correlation between general amount of crime trend and serious crime trend is 0.87 (0.99 -- for 1990-1992, 0.68 -- for 1992-1994, and --1 -- for "stable" 1993-1994). It is easy to draw a conclusion that since 1993, and especially in 1994 general statistical crime data become less reliable.

However, method of comparison of the rate of registered crime with the serious crime rate does not work for evaluation of reliability of crime data of 1995. The reason for that is the amendment to the Criminal Code made in 1995 that changes description of serious crime. This is the case when not the criminals, but rather legislators are "responsible" for increase of some sort of offenses.

Unfortunately, in contemporary criminological research in Lithuania there is lack of interest for the gathering of additional unofficial crime data, including victimological surveys. The importance of such data can be illustrated by the problem of corruption in Lithuanian governmental institutions. Concerning official data there were only 104 cases of bribery in 1994 and 64 -- in 1995. At the same time according to the independent sources "around 80% of foreign investors interviewed stated that they have been asked for bribes." (23; p. 29-30).

Not only quantitative parameters of crime had been subject of crucial change during last five years. Next table illustrates the structural changes in some types of the offenses.

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Premeditated murders	143	155	224	260	303	480	523	502
% to all crimes	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.8	0.9	0.8
Aggravated assault	171	268	319	342	346	344	353	299
% to all crimes	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5
Rape	124	173	196	189	191	196	165	200
% to all crimes	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Hooliganism	846	1070	1133	1190	1424	1444	1699	2565
% to all crimes	4.0	3.4	3.1	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.8	4.2
Larceny	9335	17341	23572	30486	41053	42291	38580	41619
% to all crimes	43.8	55.5	63.6	67.8	72.5	70.0	63.9	68.4

Table 3. The structural changes in murders, aggravated assault, rape, hooliganism and larceny in 1988-1995.

Comparing with 1988, in 1995 one can observe slightly negative change in the weight of aggravated assault and rape, the same minor but positive change in the weight of murders and hooliganism, and crucial (1.6 times!) increase of the weight of larceny. The last phenomenon as well as the changes in more general crime against property structure is waiting for detailed and profound explanation.

During the period of 1988-1995 there were also visible transformations both in the structure of offenders (repeat offenders, teenagers, etc.) and in the territorial diffusion of offenses in Lithuania Crime in Lithuania ceases to be only the problem of big industrial cities, but becomes dangerous indicator of the negative social processes in traditionally 'quite' rural and semi-rural regions. The next figure shows the trend in the level of crime in cities and rural areas:

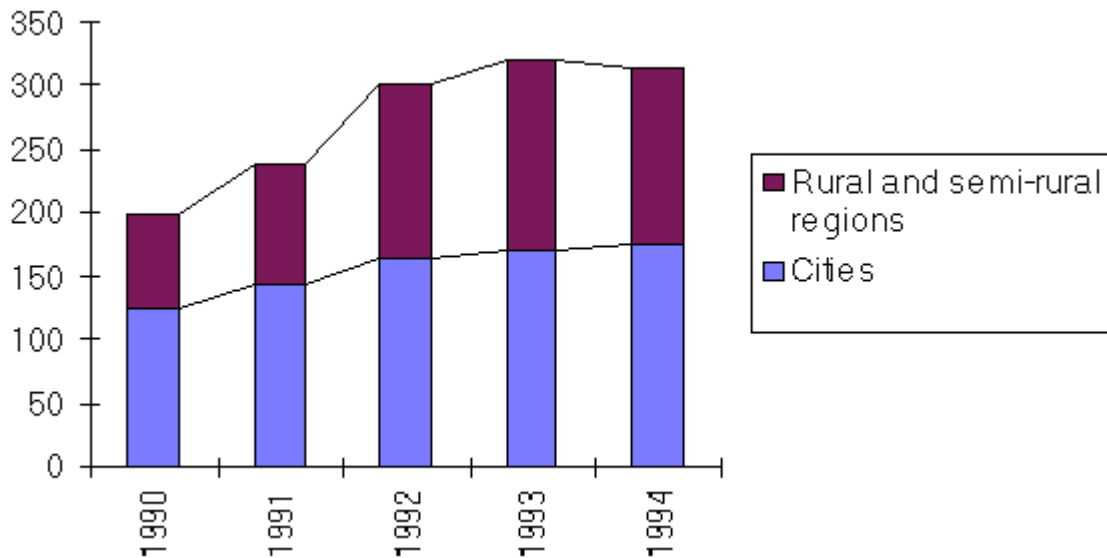


Figure 2. Crime in cities and rural and semi-rural regions.

At least two factors have to be mentioned especially among other possible explanations of such dramatic crime situation in Lithuania. Firstly, the radical change of political and social institutions, and, correspondingly, the transformation of the structure of values creates a basis for the state of anomie in the society. Unstable political situation, growing economic problems and lack of social control not only do the social life unpredictable, but make much easier to choose illegal type of behavior for members of the society (see: 17). Secondly, institutions directly responsible for maintenance of legal order -- police and courts -- physically are not able to stop or to reduce crime wave. Lack of resources and professional experience, insufficient legislative base, problem of legal education, etc. -- are only some factors that still prevent to organize effective work of above-mentioned institutions. As a result, the level of disclosed crime during last years changed slowly and insignificantly comparing with general crime trends.

The uncontrolled rise of crime seriously affects Lithuanian society. Violent crimes and crimes against property create the atmosphere of threat and instability. Mass media, that is specializing on the sensational aspects of crime, become partly responsible for the widening of the moral panic. People loose patience to wait for effective governmental steps that will solve crime problem and emotionally require fast and demonstrative actions against criminals. One should not be surprised that during last five years Lithuanians' attitude to democracy became very critical.

Following figure shows how radically change Lithuanians' attitude to development of the country (7; p. 15):

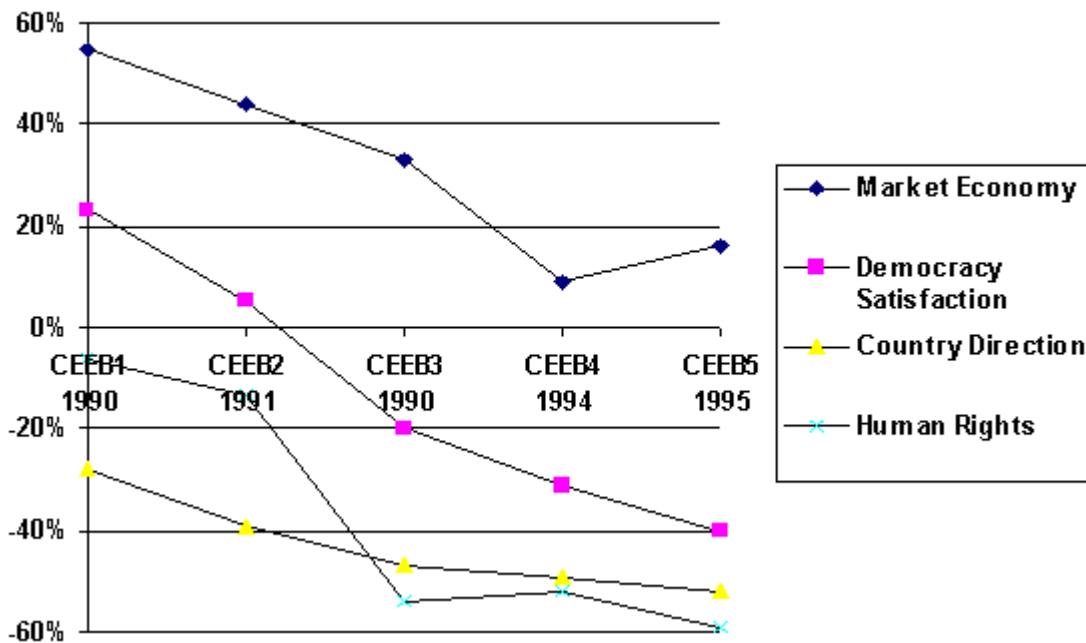


Figure 3. Lithuania: net replies % positive % negative responses.

Noteworthy that Lithuanian sociologists suggest that total dissatisfaction with protection of human rights in Lithuania expresses rather people's frustration about personal safety, than their concern about violation of human rights by governmental institutions.

Such social and moral situation creates conditions for various political speculations about crime issue. Lack of professional analysis of current situation, from one hand, and hard acquisitions of political opponents of inability to stop crime rise together with thoughtless promising to fight crime, from another, -- become usual elements of the political life in Lithuania. In such discourses, crime problem could be simplified and treated not as general social problem, but only as problem of police and other repressive institutions. Unfortunately, such tendencies hardly could help to create relevant programs of crime control and crime prevention and to stabilize or to improve crime situation in Lithuania.

Theoretical Reflection on Crime and Criminality

Of course such dramatic change in crime situation needs careful theoretical reflection that is a duty of people professionally investigating crime. In Lithuania, crime and criminology traditionally belongs to the legal field of knowledge. From legal point of view, crime primarily is evaluated as an act prohibited by law, and only afterwards as consequence flowed from negative social, economic, political and psychological factors. Such orientation should not be surprising having in mind that from the 19th century criminology was divided in two main paradigms: legal and sociological (see: 37; I). However in Lithuania domination of legal paradigm in the knowledge about crime has its specific historical roots connected with the Soviet past.

After occupation in 1940, Soviet authorities not only introduced in Lithuania Soviet governmental system, but Soviet legal tradition, and system of Soviet codes as well. Differently from the Western legal tradition, Soviet legal system emphasizes the priority of the political will of ruling class over the justice system, based on due process principles and procedures. Law, and especially criminal law, was only a political mean for realization of the communist ideology principles. According to H. Bermann, criminal law was "central to the Soviet legal system", it received "more attention in Soviet legal literature than any other branch of law", its principles were "basic to every other branch"(4; p. 368). Such attitude to criminal law, where punishment and examples are emphasized, perfectly expressed repressive and authoritarian character of Soviet political system.

The Criminal Code of Russian Federation of 1926 that was 'temporally' introduced on the territory of Lithuania in 1940, treated *crime* as "socially dangerous deeds" (30; I,1) where *dangerous deed* was described as "an action or an omission to act against Soviet system or rules of law, established by the Worker's and Peasant's authority in the period of transition to communist order."(30; III, 6) This description of crime, as well as ends of Criminal Code, satisfied the basic statements of ideology of Marxism-Leninism. According to this ideology, there was no social ground for crime in the 'new brave world'. Crime was something that initially belonged only to the class society and contradicted to the 'classless paradise'. It would be overpassed together with all 'bourgeois survival' in the socialist state.

This at first sight neutral statement had very gloomy consequences to the whole domestic policy in the former 'socialistic camp.' Famous Marxist thesis about class struggle was interpreted by authoritarian leaders of the communist states as the call to open war actions not only against 'unfriendly' capitalist world, but primary against their nations that had been divided in accordance to the labeling theory into the enemies and the rest. Quasi military methods found its correspondence in the war rhetoric that penetrated the professional and every-day languages of communist societies. In this context treatment of crime as negative heritage of previous class society, has been easily transformed in the persuasion that the last criminal would disappear with the last class enemy and that sacred duty of socialist society was *to fight* against criminals and criminality as negative, hostile social appearance.

In 1958 Supreme Soviet of USSR accepted the Fundamentals of the Criminal Legislation of the USSR and the Union Republic and several other new laws that "de-Stalinize the Soviet criminal justice system" (35; p. 335). Fundamentals were the basis for new Criminal Code of Russian Federation (1960) and Criminal Code of so-called Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic (1961). National specification of the latest was only formal; in its content it was similar to Russian model. In the Criminal Code of Lithuanian Soviet Socialists Republic (version of 1982), crime was described as "a socially dangerous act (an action or an omission to act) provided for by criminal law which firings the USSR social order, its political and economic systems, socialist property, the person, or the political, labor, property or other rights and freedoms of citizens, or any other socially dangerous act provided for by the criminal law which infringes the socialist legal order"

(22; 8). As one could notice, in the definition of crime new Criminal Code used enough ideological cliché like *defend social order of the USSR, socialist property, socialist legal order, etc.* However, at the same time, there were some new 'liberal'-oriented expressions like *citizen's property, their rights and freedoms.*

After re-establishment of political independence, Lithuania inherited previous Criminal Code with its description of crime. During the period of independence this description was revised only once -- in the same 1990. There were only two changes: 'USSR' was substituted by 'Republic of Lithuania' and 'socialist property' -- by 'property'. From the first sight, one easily could notice that such cosmetic change in description of key terms of Criminal Code means only continuation of previous legal tradition in the treatment of crime. However it does not mean that Criminal Code after re-establishment of independence remains the same. Following figure shows the trend of revisions and amendments made by new Lithuanian legislation to Criminal Code.

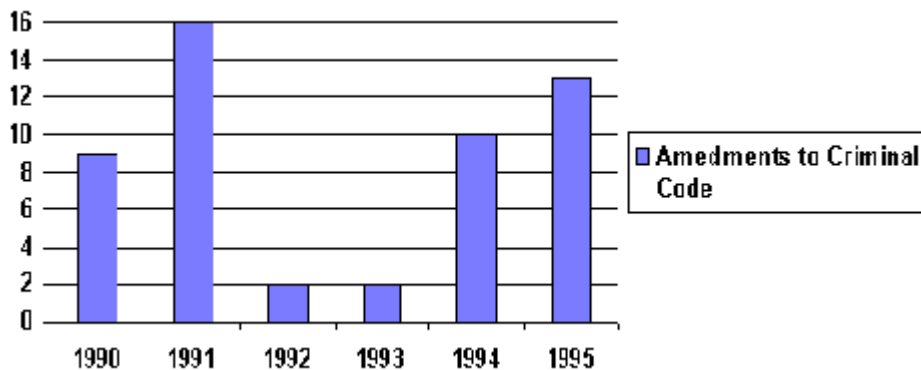


Figure 4. Number of Amendments to criminal code made by Lithuanian Seimas in 1990-1995

Most of new revisions of Lithuanian Criminal Code were made in order to get rid of previous repressive practice of Soviet law and to adopt criminal policy to international standards due process and human rights. Nevertheless, this process hardly could be completed in the framework of Soviet-based Criminal Code. Due to this fact as back as 1990 Lithuanian Parliament decided to prepare new Criminal Code, that would fit the principles of democratic state. According to the Chair of the Group for Preparation of Criminal Code of Republic of Lithuania V. Pesliakas, new Criminal Code should be based on the international conventions and recommendations in crime field, which are adopted by the United Nations and Council of Europe. At the same time it must be Lithuanian one, in a sense that it must work in the Lithuanian society as a part of criminal justice system responsible for maintaining crime control and prevention policy (see: 27; 2-3).

Criminology is not part of criminal law, though, as it was mentioned before, in previous Soviet tradition criminologists were eager to link their object of study with criminal law. Proper ends of criminological investigation were treated as an identification of "the causes of criminality and develops recommendations and methods for eradicating it" (6; p.323). Formally, such orientation of criminological research could provide a good

opportunity for collecting vast empirical data, analyzing social conditions of crime, creating governmental programs oriented to decreasing crime rate in the society.

However as in the case of criminal law studies, so criminological studies in the USSR were under the strong ideological and political control. There were several taboo, that every Soviet criminologist had to know: that there is only one true theory of crime, based on the Marxist principles, that crime is the consequence of economic, social and politic injustice of the class society, that development of socialist state automatically leads to reduce of crime rate, and so on. As a result of such ideological intervention, empirical data were falsified and put in a secret, new theoretical approaches to crime were forbidden, and Marxists explanatory scheme based on determinist understanding of the society became indisputable issue.

In such conditions, criminology could produce either ideological narration, or local and *politically correct* studies in the field that was very closed to the sociology of criminal law. Noteworthy, that Soviet criminology elaborates specific language, that served these functions. Such terms as *criminality*, *roots (causes) of criminality*, *fight against criminality*, *personality of the criminal*, etc., became normal jargon in Soviet criminological discourse. There were only a few efforts to understand what did really these terms mean, what were their social or legal references. Traditionally and uncritically criminology was treated as a science about *criminality*, but *criminality* had been treated either in legal terms as an *amount* of registered crimes, or in sociological terms as social *appearance*. At the same time it was easy to observe that while all these criminological terms semantically had no any scientific sense, pragmatically they served to the aggressive communist ideology providing it with quasi-scientific language (see: 37, 49-101).

Though there were some prominent (like J. Bluvsteinas) criminologists in Lithuania, there was neither in Soviet period, nor after re-establishment of the independence, any normal academic school of criminology. General criminological course was regularly thought only at the Law Faculty of Vilnius University and the Academy of Police. Situation started to change only recently, and as example one could point on the fact that last two academic years some criminological courses were lectured at the Department of Sociology of Vilnius University by CEP (Civic Education Project) lecturers.

In Soviet period main themes of Lithuanian criminological investigations came from criminological centers of Soviet Union. Today the field of criminological research became much broader. Researchers started to work with more or less reliable crime data. Problems of responds to crime become subject for open academic discussions and various theoretical approaches. Lithuanian criminologists could freely analyze national criminal policy, effectiveness of criminal justice system, including the penitentiary system.

Like in the case of criminal law studies, criminology tries to clean its area from ideological and political influence of the previous regime, to face the new ideas and methodologies. However, today criminology in Lithuania thematically still has many reminiscences from the past. They find their expressions in continuous usage of Soviet-

style criminological language, in the lack of contemporary research, in the closeness to the governmental institutions (see: 18, 23-29). The last factor could have very negative consequences for independent criminologists, especially in the situation of disastrous lack of resources for research. In this case, criminology could again become a political servant for new authorities. Fragmented character of professional criminological discourse -- is its another negative aspect.

All these factors create the situation, when professional knowledge of crime does not have big impact on the process of decision-making. Western democratic principles of criminal policy, crime control and prevention that are shared by majority of Lithuanian legal scientists and criminologists meet negative attitude from those who occupy higher governmental position. The existence of death penalty's sanction in Lithuanian Criminal Code (20, 105) and amendment to Criminal Procedure Code made in 1993 (so called 'law' of Preventive Detention) that were widely criticized and protested by leading Lithuanian criminologists and lawyers, are only two clear cut examples that show difficulties with introducing new democratic principles of criminal policy in contemporary Lithuania (see: 12, p. 77-80). Using expression of post-modernist sociology, it is possible to say that in Lithuania capital of criminological knowledge still does not influence very much network of power.

Crime, General Public and Mass Media

From the time of E. Durkheim it is well-known fact, that crime is a subject that excites emotional reaction in society. Lithuania is not exception from this rule, and it would be a mistake to suppose that Lithuanians do not notice above-mentioned dramatic rise of crime. However, what do they notice? What are the sources of their knowledge about crime, and how does this knowledge come to public? Let us start to answer on these questions from the short theoretical observation.

According to J. van Dijk, perception of crime by general public "can relate to the personal risk of victimization as well as the crime rate in the place of residence or the country" (11, p.12). Evaluation of crime rate by general public does not require professional criminological knowledge and as usual is reduced to the superficial formula "'more' or 'less' crime". This formula together with personal experience and other sources of information about crime incidents could impact person's emotional prediction 'to be victimized'.

Unfortunately, victimological surveys and related criminological investigations are new enough field of research in Lithuania. Due to this fact, one could use only preliminary and not strictly verified data concerning public reaction on crime. Nevertheless it is worthy to note that, according to the sociological research made by Lithuanian Ministry of Interior, in 1996 about 60% of respondents get information about crime from mass-media and only 7% -- had direct experience of crime incidents; 17% of respondents answered, that they know about crime from statistical data (26; p.37). This data differs from the data that had been published earlier by Lithuanian Department of Statistics. According to this survey, 84% of respondents got information about crime from

magazines and newspaper, 62% -- from radio and television, and 44% respondents referred to personal conversations (25, p. 33). Despite obvious difference in methods of these surveys, as well as -- incomparability of their results, one could conclude, that mass media is the main source providing general public with information about crime in Lithuania. In other words, one should expect big influence of mass media on the knowledge of general public about crime (popular criminological discourse). This expectation inevitably raises question about the role of mass media in Lithuania and especially -- in informing public about crime situation in society.

In previous Soviet time, mass media were under the strong communist party's control, and expressed only officially allowed views. Information about crime, as other negative facts, was limited until minimum as contradicting the official ideological prescription -- "tomorrow will be better than yesterday". The public access to criminal related information was strongly restricted, and only few could roughly evaluate the crime situation in the society. Only after 1988, together with the process of the destruction of the communist system, new independent and democratic mass media started openly inform people about acute political, social, historical issues, as well as about crime problems.

In 1992 this independent and democratic role of mass media was ensured in the new Constitution. Its articles proclaim: "<...>Freedom to express convictions, as well as to obtain and disseminate information, may not be restricted in any way other than as established by law, when it is necessary for the safeguard of the health, honor and dignity, private life, or morals of a person, or for the protection of constitutional order.<...>Censorship of mass media shall be prohibited. The State, political parties, political and public organizations, and other institutions or persons may not monopolize means of mass media." (20; 25, 44) Today mass media in Lithuania play important role in society. It became really *fourth power* that together with governmental institutions have strong impact on political and cultural process of the new democratic Lithuanian state.

There is no doubt about positive aspects of the involvement of mass media in discussions about crime problems in society. One could only agree with the statement that mass media "are in a position to investigate corruption, challenge the legitimacy of laws, institutions and authorities, and participate, or indeed act as a catalyst, in the movement toward a healthier society" (10; B., 67). Lithuanian journalists do a lot when informing society about crime situation, monitoring the work of law enforcement institutions, disclosing illegality on the higher governmental level and mobilizing public opinion against most corrupted officials. One does not have to be surprised that according to *Baltic Surveys* today in mass media together with Church is the most trusted institutions in society.

However mass media have not only one positive side, it could play negative role as well. From the one hand, mass media as a part of mass communication could be defined from its 'market' side as "*the institutionalized production and generalized diffusion of symbolic goods via the transmission and storage of information/communication* (36; p. 219). From another hand, mass media could play specific political role providing "*the most important*

belief context for the panoptical surveillance system" (16; p.74). It is separate question to what extent Lithuanian mass media are 'capitalist' or 'propagandist'. However, they cannot escape from general rule that correlation between commercial success and direct political engagement is rather negative than positive.

For example, among four main national newspapers two -- *Lietuvos rytas* and *Respublika* -- are more or less politically independent, other two -- *Lietuvos aidas* and *Diena* - are closely connected to two main competing political parties -- Conservatives and Labor Democrats. According to the *Baltic Surveys*, in May 1995 *Lietuvos rytas* had weekly readership of 44%, *Respublika* -- of 36%, *Lietuvos aidas* - of 13%, and *Diena* - of 8% among all respondents. In June 1996 these figures look as follows: for *Lietuvos rytas* -- 45%, *Respublika* -- 28%, *Lietuvos aidas* -- 12% and *Diena* -- 3%. One could easily note a big gap in demand between politically 'independent' and 'engaged' groups of newspapers.

However, the rules of free market are the same for all newspapers, and all of them have to seek for more effective methods for achievement of their pure commercial goals. From this point of view crime news could be enough convenient for the news business at least by two reasons: first, people like "to read about it, listen to it or view it", and second, crime news are "relatively easy to obtain" (14; p.2). Of course, Lithuanian journalists do not try to emphasize commercial aspects of crime news. They prefer to speak about mirroring the brutal society, about pure informational role of crime news, and about freedom to choose other source of information, if current one is too 'criminalized'. However, these statements are in contradictions to some facts.

First of all, it is interesting to observe trends in crime-related topics in Lithuanian mass media during last years. Let us take as an example two main Lithuanian newspapers -- *Respublika* and *Lietuvos aidas*. They have regular crime page in their issues, present crime themes intensively enough, and do it for a long time. Following figure shows trends in amount of crime-related publications between years of 1990 and 1995:

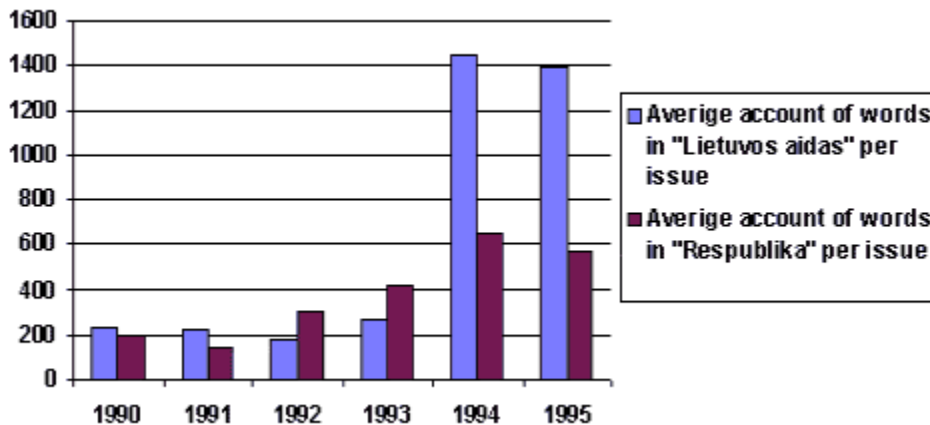


Figure 5. Amount of crime-related publications in *Respublika* and *Lietuvos aidas* in 1990-1995

As one could notice, for both newspapers the radical change in the journalistic attitude to crime falls on the period of 1993-94. It is hardly possible to state that this shift in publishing policy reflects only negative process in society. If it is true, journalists should have turned their attention to crime problems much earlier - in 1989 or 1991-1992, when Lithuania had experienced most dramatic crime growth, but not in 1994, when growth of crime was more or less stabilized comparing with previous time (see: Tables 1, 2).

Was the crime such an acute problem for public opinion, as Lithuanian mass media tried to present it to their readers, listeners and spectators? Preliminary analysis of some opinion polls data, received by *Baltic Surveys*, does not support this idea as well. Next figure presents the rating of the crime problem among other most important problems during 1991-1995:

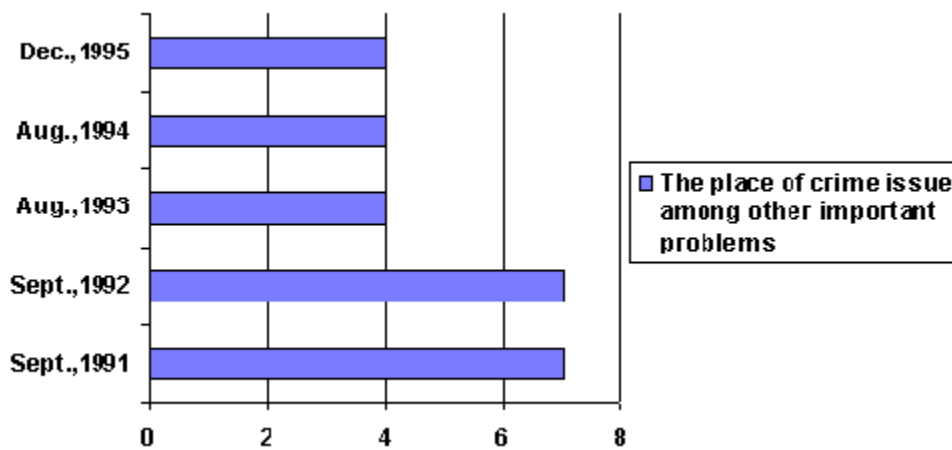


Figure 6. Rating of crime problem among other important problems in Lithuania

Of course, these data do not allow to establish detailed and well-balanced conclusions about the evaluation of crime in the society. Such conclusions should be based on more systematically organized data and methods. However some preliminary remarks could be done, and it is easy to state that in the period of 1991-1992, the general public expressed less concern about the crime situation in society than in 1993-1995. The difference between these two periods was based on the fact that population did not longer place on the top of most important problems of Lithuania such general political problems as independence, development of democracy, withdrawal of Soviet Army. At the same time, higher place of some acute social and economic problems left without change during both periods. In other words, change (increase) in the worry of general public about the crime goes hand in hand with change (decrease) in the attitude to general political problems, and is not able to substitute public concern about economic and social situation.

'Pure' informational role of crime news does not find support in its very structure and content as well. Indeed, 'attractive' titles of publications, rubrics and programs(1), detailed describing of crime incidents with mentioning the names of victims and offenders, putting crime reports on the first place of TV news blocks or front pages of newspapers and other methods of presenting crime in mass media, rather remind advertisement, than neutral and objective information about state of crime problem in

society. One higher official from the Lithuanian Ministry of Interior asserted: "...circulation of issue depends on crime news, advertisements -- on the circulation, and surviving of issue -- on advertisements. Paradoxically, but criminal world nourishes journalists" (see: 32). One, who had to deal with Lithuanian mass media, would find that this sharp statement is not very far from the truth.

Probably the terms like 'crime myth' and 'media as myth-maker' are relevant for description of current situation of the 'marketization' of crime news in Lithuanian society. Commercialized mass media do not need critical and academic investigation of crime, rather they are interested in manipulation of recipients attention and focusing it on issue that has attractive character. Public criminological discourse becomes a part of the discourse of entertainment. This process is rather natural than accidental, for "where science and empirical evidence have failed to provide answers to the public's crime concerns, mythology has stepped in to fill the knowledge void. Collectively, crime myths create our social reality of and justice. Finally, crime myths provide an outlet for emotionalism and channel emotion into account" (15; p.3).

Unfortunately, mythological 'reality' of crime does not play only compensational function. It 'problemizes' the crime, creates among the public enormous fear of crime as an absolute evil, that could be combated only by radical, extraordinary means. Lithuanian criminologists long ago noticed this simplificative character of public criminological discourse (e.g. see: 9; p. 195-197). J. Bluvsteinas suggested that popular criminological mentality, according to which the way to the better society goes through prison, had Soviet origin. He expressed his worries about possible impact of the Soviet-type mentality on the fate of reforms of criminal justice system in Lithuania in following words: "We are worried about *vox populi* (voice of people), because namely this *vox* required making the bolts completely fast. Legislators could not miss this fact" (quot. from 38; p.38).

Political Rhetoric on Crime

Though mass media does not mirror the crime situation and creates its own distorted image of social evil, it is, nevertheless, "mirroring and maintaining the power relations of a society" (19; p.125). Mass media, because of its high reliable status in the society, could, speaking in terms of P. Bourdieu, transfigure various forms of power into symbolic one, i.e. in the power "of words and slogans", that is "capable of maintaining or subverting the social order" (5; p. 170). This aspect of mass media does it extremely engaging in another group of possessors of power -- politicians, who are directly responsible for acceptance and realization of programs for crime control and prevention in society and who create their own political criminological discourse.

Like public criminological discourse, political one started to develop only after re-establishment of independence as a result of democratic change of Lithuanian political system. Though in previous Soviet Union crime always was a political subject (35; p. 157), nevertheless, it never had been *public* issue, and the line of responsibility for crime situation in the state hierarchy always run downwards, but never upwards.

This lack of understanding of *publicity* of crime issue among new Lithuanian political parties was very clearly expressed in the first versions of their political programs. Analysis of political programs of main Lithuanian parties, registered by Lithuanian Ministry of Justice during 1990-1993, shows that only one political organization - Lithuanian Social Democratic Party - had a special, one-sentenced reference to crime problem. In a well recognizable old Soviet fashion they proclaimed the "fight against criminality" as a "vital task" of the implementation of Lithuanian legal system (28; p.8) .

The same lack of attitude to crime problem during this period one could notice on the level of legislative activity in the governmental institutions. The following figure shows the number of Governmental resolutions concerning crime issue.

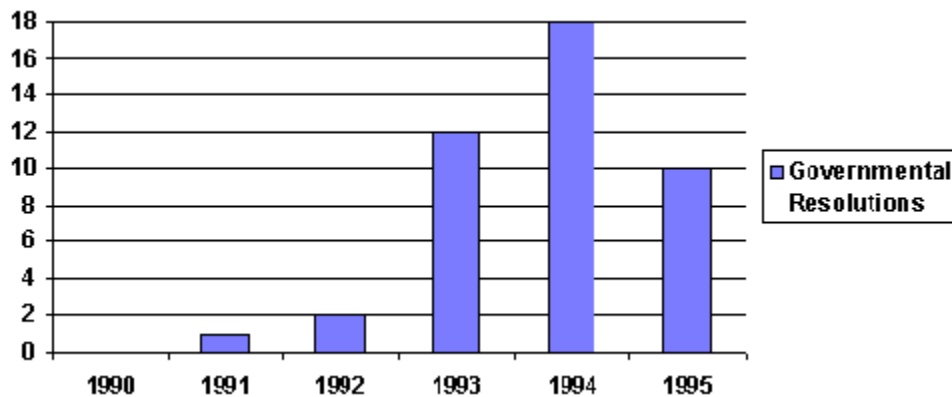


Figure 7. Number of Governmental crime-related Resolutions during 1990-1995.

Though not all Governmental resolutions proposed serious means oriented to reducing crime (part of them were formal, dealing only with organizational questions), nevertheless, it is obvious that until 1993 there were no serious practice to concentrate on crime problem on governmental level.

Comparing all these data with previous information about crime rate in society, one could notice the same negative correlation as in the case of mass media: shift to crime problem in society had to be started not in 1993, but immediately after re-establishment of independence. At the moment, when society really experienced radical change in crime situation, anyone -- neither politicians, nor mass media -- had paid serious attention to this problem.

As it was mentioned earlier, in 1992-1993 after Parliamentary and Presidential elections Lithuanian mass media and general public finally 'discovered' crime problem as extremely important and 'hot' issue. Politicians found themselves in the position when they were asked for responsibility, explanation and improvement of the crime situation in society. The gloomy fact was that politicians had not only be ready to propose their vision of national criminal policy, but also contact with the public that was not the same as in the period of singing revolution. Sociological investigations show that since 1993 Lithuanian society has definitely turned to more authoritarian socialist mentality (see: 2).

In such controversial context new kind of Lithuanian criminological discourse -- political one -- came to birth.

Of course, this discourse was not only new enough, but -- rough enough and without clear cut boundaries. From this point of view, three sessions of Seimas (Lithuanian Parliament) on May 18, May 26 and July 19, 1994, especially devoted to the crime problem in Lithuania, provide rare opportunity to investigate various rhetoric inside political criminological discourse. One could understand extraordinarity of this event, taking into consideration the fact that never before, nor after Lithuanian politicians discussed so fundamentally the problem of rising crime, the role of governmental institutions in preventing crime, the ways to help to reduce level of crime in the society.

These three sessions could be treated as a result of the public pressure on politicians (and first of all on ruling leftist majority) that had been successfully organized by mass media. Open public debates, acquisitions of the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party and other political and governmental institutions, of absence of anti-criminal policy, inefficiency and corruption -- became strong factors which hastened Seimas' discussion about crime in Lithuania. Ruling party decided to justify itself and its policy in the face of decreasing popularity. Opposition, as always in such cases, decided to take its chance and to win additional political points, showing to potential voters its preoccupation with urgent crime problems. General public at least got an opportunity to learn what leading Lithuanian politicians were thinking about growing crime. In other words, all participants of Lithuanian political life came to the agreement to open official political debates about crime issue in Lithuania.

ANALYSIS OF THREE SEIMAS SESSIONS ON CRIME PROBLEMS

SCENARIO AND RESEARCH METHODS

- A. Scenario. All discussions of crime situation in Lithuania could be divided into four parts:
- speeches of representatives of executive and judicial branches of political power:
 - President of the Republic of Lithuania (A. Brazauskas),
 - Minister of the Interior (R. Vaitekunas),
 - Prosecutor General (A. Paulauskas),
 - Chairman of Supreme Court (V. Losys),
 - Minister of Justice (J. Prapiestis);
 - questions of members of Seimas to representatives of executive and judicial branches of political power;
 - speeches of members of Seimas (37 representatives of ruling majority and opposition);
 - Resolution of Seimas (prepared by ruling majority and accepted by Seimas after short discussion).

First two events took place on May 18, 1994, third -- on May 26, 1994, and fourth -- on July 19, 1994. All sessions were broadcasted by Lithuanian National Radio and commented in main Lithuanian newspapers and TV news programs.

All speeches were recorded and published as official material in *Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo ketvirtoji sesija. No 133, 136, 155*. Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, 1994.

- B. Research Methods. As it was mentioned above, the main goal of current research is to evaluate the usage of 'fight'- and 'control'-rhetoric concerning crime issue in the political discourse of Lithuanian Government. This research intention is based on hypothesis that contemporary 'fight'-rhetoric inherits aggressive language of the previous communist ideology, and 'control'-rhetoric expresses the new liberal orientation to the Western democratic tradition. Dominance of the first type rhetoric could open doors to the previous semi-military form of the control of the society. Dominance of the second type rhetoric could be testified as very strong intention to choose Western type of social regulation as a model for the nation state building.

According to the next hypothesis of current research, the evaluation of speeches of politicians, as oriented to 'fight'- or 'control'-rhetoric, could be done by calculating and comparing frequencies of the usage of expressions containing words 'control', 'fight', and 'crime' ('criminality') and also some related words. If in the text under investigation the frequency of the usage of 'control'-oriented words is higher than the frequency of the usage of 'fight'-oriented words, such text should be named as belonging to the 'control'-rhetoric; in the opposite case, the text should be evaluated as belonging to the 'fight'-oriented rhetoric.

The investigation of the usage of 'fight' and 'control' rhetoric is based on the content analysis of the electronic version of records of Seimas' session of May 18, May 26 and the text of Resolution of Seimas on July 19, 1994. Preliminary analysis of these texts showed that they are not homogeneous, and that it is possible to point at least on three different discourses. First discourse belonged to the higher officials, who were asked by Seimas for presenting report about their activity concerning crime issue as representatives of executive and judicial institutions (President, Ministers of Interior and Justice, Chair of Supreme Court and Prosecutor General). Their speeches were presented during first session on May 18. Second discourse is created by members of Seimas, who had been listeners during first session (several of them put questions to speakers) and speakers during second session. At last, third discourse expresses common Seimas' point of view, because it is presented as the Resolution of Seimas, supported by ruling majority in Seimas (Labor Democratic Party) and accepted by Seimas after short discussions.

Since executive and judicial powers in Lithuania are mainly supported by ruling majority in Seimas, current research does not differentiate the rhetoric of their representatives. Texts of representatives of executive and judicial power are treated as a single block, expressed general official attitude to crime, realized in concrete policy. In opposite, the

discourse of members of Seimas could not be treated as expression of single political position, because it combines at least rhetoric of ruling party (Labor Democrats' Faction and its supporters), Left-Centrist opposition (Social Democrats' Faction and members of Centrist Party) and Right opposition (Sajudis', Laisve's, Charter of Citizens' Faction and members of small Rightist Parties).

These differences in political roles and positions in political area determined the separation of all textual material on five groups. They are:

- texts of representatives of Executive and Judicial branches of power (TEJ),
- texts of members of Seimas belonging to ruling majority (TPRO),
- texts of members of Seimas belonging to left-centrist opposition (TLCO),
- texts of members of Seimas belonging to rightist opposition (TRO),
- text of the Seimas' Resolution (TRE).

For 'control' or 'fight' evaluations of discussions and calculations of frequencies of appropriate words program "HAMLET" (Beta version)([2](#)) was used.

CALCULATIONS AND RESULTS

As it was mentioned above, current research had to deal primary with terms 'crime' ('criminality'), 'control' and 'fight' and related words. Related words consisted of following terms:

- words with the same roots,
- synonyms,
- words that were close by meaning or usage to these above-mentioned terms.

Preliminary context analysis of all five texts was done using the program KWIC, and five groups (vocabularies) of words related to 'crime', 'control' and 'fight' were set.

1. (TEJ)

Vocabulary:

gang (gauj*)([3](#)), control (kontrol*), corruption (korupc*), fight (kov*), crime (nusikal*), organization (organizavima), condition (padet*),

'Synonyms':

control -- prevention (prevenc*), corruption -- contraband (kontraban*), crime -- evil (blog*), organization -- job (darb*) and system (sistem*), condition -- process (proces*) and situation situac*).

2. (TPRO)

Vocabulary:

control (kontrol*), corruption (korupc*), fight (kov*), Mafia (mafij*), crime (nusikal*), condition (padet*),

'Synonyms':

control -- absence of control (nekontr*), fight -- lack of fight (nekov*), crime - appearance (reiskin*), condition -- situation (situac*) and structure (strukt).

3. (TLCO)

Vocabulary:

control (kontrol*), corruption (korupc*), fight (kov*), Mafia (mafij*), crime (nusikal*), condition (padet*),

'Synonyms':

control -- absence of control (nekontr*), fight -- lack of fight (nekov*), crime -- their (ju) and appearance (reiskin*), condition -- situation (situac*) and structure (strukt).

4. (TRO)

The same as in (TPRO).

5. (TRE)

Vocabulary:

control (kontrol*), corruption (korupc*), fight (kov*), crime (nusikal*),

'Synonyms': control -- prevention (prevenc*), corruption -- drugs (alkoh*), crime -- its (juo).

On the basis of these vocabularies, frequencies of the usage of words 'crime', 'control' and 'fight' were calculated in each corresponding text. As the pattern context for calculations, sentence, separated from other sentence by period "." was used.

The main results of calculations are the following(4):

(TEJ)

The frequency of the combination 'crime-control' in the texts is 15. The frequency of the combination 'crime-fight' in the texts is 16. However, the combinations of word 'control'

with other related words -- 'crime', 'organization' and 'situation' are met with frequency 32, and the frequency of the combination of 'fight' with 'crime', 'gang', 'organization' and 'situation' is only 23.

On the basis of these results, one could rather evaluate rhetoric of current text as 'control'-oriented, than 'fight'-oriented.

(TPRO)

The frequency of the combination 'crime-control' in the texts is 2. The frequency of the combination 'crime-fight' in the texts is 11. Again, the combinations of word 'control' with other related words -- 'crime', and 'condition' are met with the frequency 5, and the frequency of the combination of 'fight' with 'crime', 'Mafia', and 'condition' is 16.

In that case, one should evaluate this text as 'fight'-oriented.

(TLCO)

The frequency of the combination 'crime-control' in the texts is 3. The frequency of the combination 'crime-fight' in the texts is 13. There are no new combinations for 'control', except 'crime'. As to combinations of the word 'fight' with other related words -- 'crime', 'Mafia', 'corruption' and 'condition', they are met with frequency 28, and the frequency of the combination of 'fight' with 'crime', 'Mafia', and 'condition' is 16.

As in the previous case, this sort of the text should be recognized as 'fight'-oriented too.

(TRO)

The frequency of the combination 'crime-control' in these texts is 3. The frequency of the combination 'crime-fight' in the texts is 30. The combinations of word 'control' with 'crime', Mafia and 'condition' are met with the frequency 6, at the same time the frequency of combinations of 'fight' with 'crime', corruption', 'Mafia', and 'condition' is 41. The difference between two kinds of rhetoric in the text in question could be presented in sharper way, if one notes that 'control'-expression was used at least two times in negative sense, as an attempt 'to control, what is not subject of control' (MP Jarasiunas)

This text again is evaluated as 'fight'-oriented.

(TRE)

In this small text the frequency of the combination 'crime-control' is 1, and the frequency of the combination 'crime-fight' -- 6. Combinations of the word 'control' with 'crime', and 'corruption' are 2, and the frequency of the combination of the word 'fight' with 'crime', and 'corruption' is 6.

As in previous cases, this text should be evaluated as 'fight'-oriented.

Along with these results it would be helpful to compare the usage of 'control'- and 'fight'-rhetoric in investigated texts, using the corresponding standardized joint frequencies parameter:

$S_{ij} = F_{ij} / (F_i + F_j - F_{ij})$, where F_i -- the individual word frequencies, F_{ij} -- joint frequency for all possible pairs of words.

Results are presented in following figure:

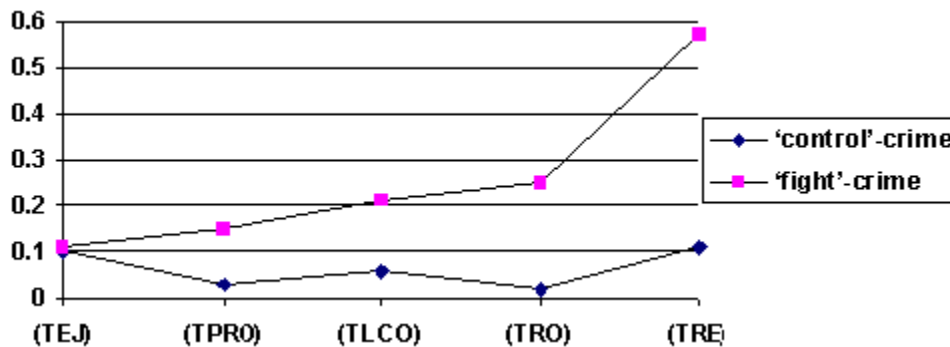


Figure 8. The distribution of Standardized Joint Frequencies Parameter in the five groups of texts.

On the basis of current results it is easy to notice the sharp difference between rhetoric produced by representatives of executive and judicial power, from one hand, and representatives of legislation -- from another. The first type of rhetoric is much closer to Western-style 'control'-rhetoric, the second one reminds old-fashioned exercises of former Soviet propaganda. Taken into account the fact that executive and judicial power play more important roles in Lithuanian society than the legislative branch, one could argue that at least on the level of political elite Lithuania is more oriented to the democratic model of criminal policy than to the restoration of the previous one.

However, this conclusion should not be treated as the final description of the current political situation on the governmental level. Firstly, though from a general, institutional point of view texts of representatives of executive and judicial powers were interpreted as homogeneous, there were visible differences among the texts of each representative. From this perspective 'control'-rhetoric of the Minister of Interior sharply stands out from the other texts, that are more oriented to the 'fight'-rhetoric.

Secondly, though generally, rhetoric of members of Seimas could be treated as Soviet-style 'fight'-rhetoric, one should consider that this type of rhetoric is often used in political competition in Western states. American conservative rhetoric ('fighting crime', 'combating crime') against liberal rhetoric regarding crime issues is only one example of this kind (see: 31). Indirectly, this aspect of political competition in Lithuanian Parliament can be presented, if one investigates more carefully differences among rhetoric belonging to different groups of factions of Seimas. Differently from representatives of

ruling party, who preferred to concentrate themselves mostly on the abstract 'fighting criminality' (not 'fighting crime!'), their opponents intended to combine 'fight'-rhetoric either with 'Mafia' (Left-Centrist Opposition) or with 'corruption' (Right Opposition). It is easy to understand that such type of rhetoric has accusatory intention and 'fight' is used here as mean that has to dramatize this accusation of ruling majority of corruption and relationship with Mafia's structure.

Thirdly, there is an open question about the role of Seimas in the forming of the real criminal policy in Lithuania. Formally, by the Lithuanian Constitution, Seimas has enough legislative means to change current policy of the Cabinet and influence Court. If in 1994 the last had more impact on the society than the Parliament, it does not mean that this situation could be endless(5). Potential threat of 'fight'-rhetoric that comes from legislature's discourse, could be realized into actual threat of concrete semi-military criminal policy that will come day after elections.

All these problems should be carefully considered. Current analysis can not be treated as complete without deeper analysis of the impact of mass-media and specialists (lawyers, criminologists, police officers, etc.) on the forming of crime rhetoric in the Lithuanian political discourse. Nevertheless, the author hopes that presented results bring a small spot of the light on the tendencies in current Lithuanian criminal policy, and together with other results could help to evaluate the prospects for democratization of Lithuanian society.

Conclusions

As it was shown in this study, the development of democratic principles in Lithuanian society is challenged with difficulties created by crime situation. From the one hand, crime growth is inevitable price for the transition from authoritarian state to democratic one, from planned economy to free market economy. From another hand, it is a measure of disorder of society, inability of governmental institutions to find proper means for crime control and prevention. These factors could seriously demoralize society, and create authoritarian tendency among population. In Lithuania crime growth goes hand in hand with public dissatisfaction in democratic system, country development, protection of human rights.

In this context it is extremely important to turn attention to various kinds of systems of knowledge about crime in society, to set their structure, to learn their influence on the development of democratic institution of crime control and prevention.

Three systems of knowledge about crime in Lithuania (criminological discourses) have different sources and play unlike roles in society. Professional criminological discourse of academicians and lawyers inherits previous Soviet tradition, but at the same time opens to the Western democratic influence. Its development faces troubles because of absence of elaborated educational network, lack of resources for independent research, weak demand of the professional criminological knowledge in the society.

Public criminological discourse, that is maintained by commercialized crime news, creates distorted image of crime situation in society. Mass media, despite its positive role in informing and monitoring crime situation, became one of the main producer of crime myths. It creates tight psychological atmosphere in Lithuanian society, when majority of population, being affected by fear of crime, requires fast and effective methods in 'combating criminality'.

Political criminological discourse has appeared only recently. In this discourse one could find at least two opposite rhetoric: first one -- oriented to control and preventive mechanisms of Western democratic societies, and second -- oriented to the previous war methods of combating crime. It is not easy to determine and localize strictly this rhetoric, because political area is a field of political competition, and opponents are eager to dramatize situation and way of its improvement. Nevertheless, exploitation of war rhetoric in society, which majority shares authoritarian socialist orientation, could seriously and negatively influence not only implementation of democratic principles in national criminal policy, but -- development of democratic institutions as well.

Discourse is enough flexible and subtle symbolic form of invisible power.

The same could be said about various kinds of criminological discourses in Lithuania. Of course, the process of their compiling should be carefully investigated. New elections of Seimas, from one hand, and strenghtening general political country's orientation to the West, from another hand, without doubt, could bring new light on strategy and tactics that are used in political criminological discourse, on its relationship with professional and public knowledge about crim Bibliography

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