

'You'll never walk alone': CCTV surveillance, order and neo-liberal rule in Liverpool city centre¹

ABSTRACT

This paper is concerned to chart the establishment and uses of CCTV within the location of Liverpool city centre. In doing this the paper seeks to contextualize CCTV within contemporary 'partnership' approaches to regeneration which are reshaping the material and discursive form of the city. Thus CCTV schemes along with other security initiatives are understood as social ordering strategies emanating from within locally powerful networks which are seeking to define and enact orderly regeneration projects. In focusing on the normative aspects of CCTV, the paper raises questions concerning the efficacy of understanding contemporary forms of 'social ordering practices' primarily in terms of technical rationalities while neglecting other, more material and ideological processes involved in the construction of social order.

KEYWORDS: CCTV; crime; regeneration; order; state

Liverpool's trades union leaders of 1991 crowing atop piles of stinking rubbish like cockerels on dung heaps, its welfare mentality growing upon the destruction of wealth producing jobs . . . poverty and crime nourished on the thin gruel of welfare, the whole mess financed by borrowing whose costs choke any tentative growth of industry or commerce, was the world's image and terrible reality of Britain in the 1970s. (Tebbit 1991: 23)

The city is reinventing itself and tuning in with the requirements of modern learning curves. Morphocity is now informed by a new and different set of values: openness, meritocracy, social diversity, plurality of skills, youth culture, transparency, vision, change, experimentation and cosmopolitanism. (Humphreys and MacDonald 1995: 50)

For many political and media commentators the views expressed by

Norman Tebbit identified the malaise that had gripped Liverpool since the 1970s: a political, economic and cultural backwater, a disorderly city at odds with the cutting edge of neo-liberal discourse and the maker of its own demise. In contrast the notion of 'Morphocity' emerges from a document that speaks of a 'new' Liverpool: a city in renaissance, forward looking, replete with the latest technologies of urban management which for some contemporary commentaries is expressive of an urban space that is creative, spontaneous and 'playful' (Christopherson 1994: 409). The contemporary regeneration of Liverpool encapsulates these two contrasting positions. There is currently a struggle to re-image the city and to invoke a sense of 'place' that coheres with broader strategies concerned with managing a range of problems which could potentially disqualify the city from its share in the national and international market place. Within these strategic problems of urban governance, debates about crime, insecurity and social anxiety are central to 'a very contemporary political struggle over notions of the public as well as private interest' (Taylor 1997: 70).

This paper analyses the development of Closed Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV) and their place within the construction of Liverpool as 'Morphocity'. In developing our argument we build on the work of a number of writers who have been particularly concerned with questions of the state and state power. What Foucault (1991: 103) identified as the 'the excessive value attributed to the problem of the state' has encouraged a shift in the analysis of power under 'neo-liberal' conditions towards multiple centres of government, autonomous forms of expertise and localized technologies and mechanisms of rule (Rose and Miller 1992; Barry et al. 1996). Thus contemporary forms of crime control and, more broadly social control, are understood as phenomena exercised and nurtured through neo-liberal rule within dense networks and alliances acting 'at a distance' from central and national 'public powers' (Rose 1996: 58).

We wish to challenge some of these assumptions. If, as Norris and Armstrong (1997: 8) argue, CCTV surveillance is to be understood critically, as 'a form of power with a number of dimensions' we will focus on how this power is to be understood, its sites of exercise and contextualization, and its role in both constructing and circumscribing the meaning of urban governance, 'order' and 'regeneration'. Thus in seeking to understand technologies of urban rule the paper draws attention to and argues for an analysis of the normative discourses that underpin techniques and strategies for the maintenance of order as articulated by those involved in initiating these strategies. The paper is divided into three sections. Section one discusses the interests that have shaped the consolidation of the camera network in the city; section two provides a broader theoretical consideration of the issues involved; finally section three offers some concluding thoughts on the future direction of crime control and the role of CCTV in the process of criminal justice.

PARTNERSHIP AND REVITALIZATION IN LIVERPOOL

Regenerating the City

Regeneration in Liverpool is built around retailing, consumption, commerce, leisure and tourism, culture and the arts (The City of Liverpool 1996). As in other cities it is underpinned by a partnership approach to governance that has consolidated the involvement of a 'new business elite', encouraged by European and central government funding criteria, in local economic and political development strategies (Bassett 1996). Established in 1992 the Liverpool City Centre Partnership (LCCP) is part of a network of local bodies loosely connected to local government which is concerned with the promotion and regeneration of the city. The LCCP has a team of seconded personnel who have an annual administration budget of £72,000. It is involved in various schemes orientated 'towards maximising the city centre's potential as a regional centre, and enhancing its attractiveness to all those who use it' (LCCP 1996: 5).

The Partnership makes decisions about, and acts as a catalyst and facilitator for, generating funds for city centre developments including transport, area ownership schemes, re-development projects, anti-litter campaigns, and street security. Much of this work is centred on an Action Group involving Merseytravel, the city's two universities, Liverpool Stores' Committee and the Chamber of Commerce. Outside interests are targeted by the Group as potential investors in local projects including CCTV (Coleman and Sim 1998: 30).

The LCCP was therefore established as a local initiative and was chaired by the (un-elected) City Centre Manager. Its work runs parallel with the government sponsored Merseyside Development Corporation and City Challenge, both of whom emphasize a partnership and more business-like approach to governing urban centres. 'Efficiency' is stressed through the neo-liberal strategy of 'flexible' institutional arrangements and fragmented service provision which address specific issues and problems rather than providing universally agreed services (Cochrane 1993: 95). Such entrepreneurial governance not only involves business but the application of management techniques espousing expert-technical 'solutions' which appear 'neutral' and provide a claim to legitimacy outside of the electoral process. The City Centre Manager in Liverpool is invariably described in the local press as 'city centre supremo' who in 'getting done what needs to be done' (Research Interview) is constructed as a dynamic destroyer of the 'red tape mentality' which is invariably associated with local democratic politics.

The Liverpool City Centre Plan published in 1993 (The City of Liverpool 1993: 4-6) outlines its vision for the city. It noted that 'competition is intense' and that the public and private sectors must work 'to a common purpose' to develop 'the strategies, policies and proposals needed to help create Liverpool as an international city'. The instigation of 'proper management' through harnessing public and private is the prescribed role

of the LCCP (op.cit.: 30). A distinctive city image has been marketed: 'Liverpool – A Maritime City', 'A Pool of Talent' and 'Local and Proud' are three examples of this marketing. The Albert Dock complex, which claims 5 million visitors a year, contains the city's bid for 'cultural differentiation', the Tate Gallery. In attracting 'capital and people of the right sort' local partnerships have planned and funded improved telecommunications, infrastructural support, tourist attractions and leisure services involving Beatles tours, cafe-bars and sports (Coleman and Sim 1998: 31). Private developments in retail and leisure are underpinned by Merseyside's Objective One funding status whereby £630 million has already been claimed from the European Community for investments in technology, exports, marketing and small businesses (*The Times* 5th March 1995). The attempts to expand the service based economy built on the initiatives above have been hailed as a success for the city and its people in creating investment and jobs. Tales of success have been trumpeted through the local press with headlines such as 'Mersey Partners Doing the Business' (*Liverpool Echo* 20 May 1998); 'Mersey fortunes in the hands of experts' (*Liverpool Echo* 12 September 1996) and 'Progress – Here and Now' (*Liverpool Echo* 11 September 1995). Such strategies of 'place marketing' attempt to positively promote aspects of the city's 'quality of life' – its health, heritage, culture, infrastructure, leisure and other amenities. Included in these promotional campaigns are the discourses of 'safety' and 'security' that seek to re-image locations as 'safe places to do business'. One such promotional document jointly produced by Merseyside Police and Business in the Community is titled *Merseyside: A Safe Place to do Business?* and addresses potential investors in an effort to counter negative images of the region and the city. It states

If Merseyside is to become a hotbed of industrial activity it is essential that we can effectively attract new businesses here. All forms of grant assistance to Merseyside are allowing companies to make considerable improvements to their premises, to not only make them more appealing but much more secure against crime. Most of our major town centres now have comprehensive CCTV systems and many businesses are participating in various schemes that upgrade their security. (Merseyside Police Community Strategy Department 1998: 1)

A survey (shown to one of the researchers) conducted through the Government Office indicated that decisions to invest in the city depended (in order of importance) on perceptions of crime, poor industrial relations and political instability. For urban managers these perceptions inform 'the client pool of our potential inward investment' (Research Interview) and the regeneration work they undertake. These developments have simultaneously been underpinned by the drive to create a safe, consumer orientated environment in the city centre, a drive which has been legitimated by a number of academic contributions towards the creation of 'safer city centres' (Oc and Tiesdell 1997). One survey has suggested that potential city centre users are deterred by fear of car crime, litter, vagrants/ beggars

and gangs of youths (in descending order of perceived seriousness). A majority preferred to consume and pursue leisure activities in enclosed malls containing CCTV and a visible private security presence. Therefore in order to reverse the move away from the city centres it has been argued that public and private interests will need to fund 'safe shopping strategies' (Beck and Willis 1995). It is against this background that CCTV cameras emerged and have become consolidated in Liverpool.

CCTV in Liverpool

Liverpool's camera network was launched in July 1994 with total capital funding of £396,000. Central government and the European Regional Development Fund contributed £100,000 and £158,000 respectively while £138,000 came from the private sector. Twenty high resolution pan, tilt and zoom cameras with full night-time capability were initially installed within an area of the two square miles which covered the central shopping and office districts. David McClean the then Home Office Minister for Crime Prevention highlighted the murder of local two-year-old James Bulger at the network's high-profile launch to illustrate the need for CCTV. National media coverage also focussed on the preventative capacity of CCTV in protecting children in public (Coleman and Sim 1998: 31).

Although the police contributed neither capital funding nor maintenance costs, monitor and audio links have subsequently been installed at Merseyside Police Headquarters and in the Police Shop located in the city's central shopping street. Cameras have been placed on police advice in 'recognised trouble spots and escape routes' (LCCP 1996: 1). By 1998 the network had 40 cameras and was monitored by a private security firm from a secret control room located in one of Liverpool's shopping malls. The system forms part of an extensive network which links the police, private security and in-house store security via a radio 'early warning' system which makes possible the monitoring of persons in both open public space and private shop space.

However, while official discourses highlight and amplify the particular risks which it is contended CCTV can manage, these discourses tell us very little about the deeper political struggles and the shifts in urban governance that informed the consolidation of the network. The trajectory of CCTV in Liverpool demonstrates the particularities of its emergence within specific elite partnerships whose powerful discursive interventions have been central to the development of a local social ordering strategy. Through the LCCP, the private sector has played a central role in constructing definitions of risk and danger in the city and who should be targeted to avoid these risks and dangers. Their hegemonic ascendance was fought for within the context of fiscal constraints on both local police and local government and in the spaces created by the developments towards entrepreneurial governance. Since the middle of the 1970s Merseyside Police has maintained one of the highest recorded crime rates and costs of

any police force in the UK (Brogden 1982). Today the force is the second most expensive in the country and takes 11 per cent of its income from local council tax which through the 1990s has been set at the highest national level (Merseyside Police Authority Annual Report 1998: 4). This situation, coupled with the perception that Liverpool has a particularly negative image, led to local businesses mobilizing and pushing for cameras in the city. Thus, 'the Bulger case served to focus attention but was not the prime cause in establishing CCTV – it's a much longer term thing than that' (Research Interview). Furthermore business perceptions of police 'ineffectiveness' and falling 'morale' underpinned the drive towards the network's development.

Within this context a 'siege mentality' developed among local retailers who felt let down by public authorities and who therefore identified advantages in a privately funded and managed security network

We were the leading advocate of CCTV. We had been pursuing the issue for 4 or 5 years before the establishment of the City Centre Partnership but when the Partnership was formed the number one priority of the City Manager was to establish a CCTV system which he did successfully . . . housed in the city centre and run predominantly by the private sector. (Research Interview)

Thus the cameras developed out of longer term struggles at the local level to managing the negative image of the city as a 'dangerous place' and in the need to counter the 'horrendous losses' from shop theft (Research Interview).

Private interests were lobbied to fund the scheme. Local interests were 'pretty sold on the idea' as 'they all had the same problems, previously outlined and there was a general move toward this' (ibid.). At the same time, the development of the system was not unproblematic. Collecting revenue for the network was a key problem for the LCCP who had 'to go cap in hand' to maintain funding. This was derided as 'no way to run a business' (Research Interview).

Tensions also existed between the police, who were 'at arms length with CCTV in the early years' (ibid.), and the LCCP. It was felt that the police should be more involved in managing and funding the system

One of the reasons I was unwilling to push forward with it was I and others felt very strongly that Merseyside Police should have accepted long term liabilities for the maintenance and management of the system. Okay, it's an expensive system . . . but realistically it [is] a policing tool. (Research Interview)

For other private agencies the 'arms length' approach of the police enhanced the system's credibility amongst the local population

We make the point – and I think it's very healthy – that this is a separate and independent body. I think the worst thing is if the police had

control of the system. I'm not saying anything improper would happen . . . but I think public perception and credibility is everything. Whilst we've got Mr and Mrs Bloggs on board, great. (Research Interview)

Despite these contradictions the system was quickly hailed as a success by all of those involved. Importantly the notion of 'success' was ubiquitously expressed in a context whereby 'it would be difficult to produce accurate and meaningful figures relating to the CCTV system' (LCCP 1996: 1). At the same time the system was deemed to be an effective tool in targeting those who had long been identified as problematic in the city centre: 'that is what is most effective about CCTV . . . It is effective when you know *who* you are looking for' (Research Interview, emphasis in the original). Thus while senior corporate managers could point to the 'reassurance' that the network gave to 'potential investors' (*Liverpool Echo* 13 June 1996), the secure, regenerated city was also based on a moral vision in which 'people feel happy to come and shop on a family basis . . . people are preoccupied with shopping and that's how it should be' (Research interview). The cameras' role was about generating 'an appropriate police response' and sending out a clear message to those targeted by the system so that 'known shoplifters and people who are banned cannot walk around the city centre with impunity' (*ibid.*). The police were also clear in their support

The system is like having 20 more officers on duty 24 hours a day, who make a note of everything, never take a holiday and are rarely off sick. (City Centre Commander, *The Times* 6 July 1994)

Thus the impetus behind the establishment of CCTV was complex involving the desire to reconstruct Liverpool's deviant image, the bolstering of consumer and business confidence and the concern to counter particular forms of crime. The cameras were therefore crucial to what Norris and Armstrong (1998: 10) have termed 'the social construction of suspicion' – a process that was increasingly left to emergent 'primary definers' from the private sector. This involved an instrumental drive that prioritized profit and loss underpinned by the construction of a preferred and particular moral order built on the politics of inclusionary respectability and exclusionary otherness.

CCTV cameras were and are pivotal to this process. In the next part of the paper, we want to situate the network in a broader theoretical context and to consider how a materialist perspective can help to explain CCTV as a strategy for what Nicola Lacey has called 'social ordering practices' (Lacey 1994: 28).

RE-THINKING CCTV: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Recent work in criminological and sociological theory appears to provide the explanatory framework necessary for understanding the changing

nature of crime control in advanced capitalist states and the place of CCTV within that control. In particular the work of writers such as Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose has been important in utilizing key themes in Foucault's analysis of governmentality for dissecting 'the rationalities and technologies that are currently emerging in the field of crime control' (Garland 1997: 173). These themes include: first, that the 'apparatus of a State have neither the unity nor functionality ascribed to them' (Rose 1996: 42-3); second, that the power of the state is a 'resultant not a cause, an outcome of the composition and assembling of actors, flows, buildings, relations of authority . . . towards the achievement of particular objectives by common means' (ibid.: 43); third, that sociological analysis must focus on 'governmentalities' defined as 'complex processes of negotiation' between 'loose and mobile networks that can bring persons, organisations and objectives into alignment' (Miller and Rose 1990: 1); fourth, that under neo-liberal conditions, public authorities 'seek to employ forms of expertise in order to govern society at a distance, without recourse to any direct forms of repression or intervention' (Barry et al. 1996: 14). Finally, the development of electronic communications and technologies while increasing the 'quantity and rapidity of the flow of information between spatially dispersed points' has done so without 'the need for an extensive system of surveillance controlled by the state' (ibid.).

While there is much that we would agree with in this literature, particularly the emphasis on the non-homogeneity of state structures and the contingency of state action, the assumption that the alignments which have materialized under neo-liberal conditions constitute 'action-at-a-distance' prioritizes the technical and instrumental over the ideological and normative aspects of local crime control policy. The governmentality literature also neglects the complex relationship between the local and the national in the formulation of crime control policy. We wish to illustrate these points by exploring four dimensions that have been central to the development of CCTV.

The New Networks of State Power

Partnership in Liverpool involves the re-working of established local elite interests. This process raises analytical questions around the nature of state formation and power particularly in relation to the individuals involved and the ideologies they bring to this involvement. Personal links between individuals in the state and civil society at local and national levels and the coincidence of interests on which these links have been built and reproduced have been central to a materialist analysis of the state since it assumed its modern form at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Miliband 1969; Corrigan 1977).

For our purposes the notion of 'the catalytic state' (Weiss 1997: 26) is useful in understanding how the state remains and retains an active power centre both in ideological terms and policy setting. The consolidation of

CCTV cameras in Liverpool illustrates how such links operate at local and national levels through a variety of agencies, partnerships, formal and informal networks and traditional state structures. The official aim of the Government Office for Merseyside which employs some 300 staff is to bring coherence to the regeneration programme and to strategically develop partnerships in the region. The Assistant Chief Constable attends meetings of the CBI in order to inform and reassure potential investors as to the effectiveness of policing strategies on levels of crime. Businesses, police and private security firms have agreed a strategy for 'Town Watch' personnel in the city. Initially pushed by the Stores' Committee, its most notable early supporter was Marks and Spencer who not only work closely with the Government Office but whose directors hold regular meetings with Home Office Ministers of State. Furthermore the role of 'Town Watch' has been agreed by the Association of Chief Police Officers. Its aims are: to trigger an 'appropriate' police response; check the validity of Big Issue sellers; encourage people not to drop litter; and offer help to tourists. The plan is to recruit from the long term unemployed and to train them in 'non-aggressive communication skills' (Research Interview). As one interviewee has expressed it

[Town Watch is] only part of the solution. Town Watch feeds in with an agreed strategy between city centre occupiers, it involves linking in with CCTV, it involves linking in with the police. It also involves a significant publicity campaign so people know why they are there – its got to be marketed right. (ibid.)

As was noted above, the Government Office is central to the co-ordination process. In Liverpool it utilizes a Superintendent seconded from the police and links the local with the national

I think it is a method for delivering on a local basis but the policies, the significant policies, are still set nationally by central government but it's left to local government and other organisations . . . to actually deliver things on the ground and to feed back to the central policy making machinery about what works, what doesn't and why. (Ibid.)

Thus crime control initiatives such as CCTV, the criteria for establishing such systems and their uses are decided centrally with local feedback mechanisms reporting back to the policy centre. Furthermore, the co-ordinating role of the Government Office not only establishes links between the centre and the local but provides a platform for established powerful actors – namely the police – at the local level. The work of such bodies is concerned with building a consensus among local elite agencies regarding the 'good governance' and strategic rule of a particular locality which for the police and other institutions means experimenting with new cross-agency roles. As one interviewee expressed it

The police organization wants to be involved in the regeneration process as partners and we want to see the place as a vibrant region which is

attractive to inward investors and supports a high quality of life for citizens and visitors. Having a police officer in here has been able to make a change in the bid approval process and help deliver policy objectives around quality of life and freedom from crime. It is actually a good thing for the police as an organisation as well as a good thing for the people of Merseyside. It's an example of good practice.

Ideologically, therefore, the 'old' and the 'new' managers of social control stand on the same discursive terrain. It is a terrain, which although it contains contradictions and contingencies, is none the less constructed around who and what is problematic for the social order of the city. The ideological distance in relation to the problematic other is therefore minimal, a key point which is neglected in the governmentality literature discussed earlier. This point is elaborated in the next section of the paper.

Defining Risk and the Objects of Power

The emphasis within the governmentality literature on *how* government is possible – its techniques and procedures – has downplayed questions of *why* forms of rule have been adopted – their normative and value laden underpinnings. Thus the formal and informal networks described above raise significant theoretical questions about 'government-at-a-distance'. Linked to these networks are the definitions of crime and insecurity articulated by those involved in groups such as the Stores' Committee which often cut across and blur tensions and contradictions between them and the organisations involved in the networks. During the course of our research, findings from observational data were accrued from regular attendance at one meeting point for public and private police – *Crime Alert*. It is here that the police, crime prevention and operational support, private security and store security meet on a monthly basis to discuss intelligence and the targeting of activities in the city centre. These meetings provide a central focus for local business, police and private security in defining risks, gaps in the network and policing objectives. Such closed forums it could be argued constitute the development of local 'security networks' within which the police are but one component in a broader reconfiguration of local governance. Such a network defines the role and use of CCTV in Liverpool. The activities targeted, the gathering of intelligence and its dissemination is focused on recurring categories: youth, 'known and potential' shoplifters, the homeless and licensed and unlicensed street traders. These problem categories and those involved in their primary definition reinforce and consolidate the discourses around who and what are problematic for social order.

Partnership has opened up political spaces for new 'primary definers' (Schlesinger and Tumber 1995: 17) to articulate a strategy for urban, social and political regeneration while simultaneously identifying those who pose a danger to that regeneration. It is within these spaces that notions of the

'public interest' are being recast around discourses of crime and insecurity. Ideologically, the individuals actively participating in this process operate as 'constructor, organiser "permanent persuader" and not just [as] simple orator[s]' (Gramsci 1971: 10). They not only legitimate new technologies such as CCTV but they also provide an ideological and political space where traditional state servants such as the police who have suffered a severe crisis of legitimacy can reassert their credibility by supporting a strategy which appears to be impacting on the crime rate (Coleman and Sim 1998: 40). There are therefore important continuities between those involved in the new networks and traditional state servants and the definitions of crime, risk and danger which underpin the operationalization of CCTV.

Women have been particularly targeted within this discourse. The aims and objectives of the Liverpool system make special reference to a safer environment being created for women and children (LCCP 1996). However, the notion that CCTV promotes women's safety in public spaces is problematic. Indeed, the cameras may reinforce the masculinization of those spaces (Brown 1997). Furthermore, the needs of women conflict with official discourses surrounding security and insecurity built as they often are on alternative definitions of reality relating to adequate toilet provision, crèche facilities and transportation (Creed 1994). Feminist research continues to maintain that the risk of violence towards women and the actuality of that violence, remain in the private sphere (Mooney 1997). Thus the masculine definition of risk and insecurity continues to dominate debates around crime prevention (Walklate 1997). More broadly, the interests behind CCTV operationalize particular conceptions of order and danger in the city and marginalize alternative definitions of danger and insecurity which do not fit easily within a traditional crime prevention framework. These other definitions which would also challenge the notion of the city centre as a 'safe' place include: sexual and racial harassment on the streets and in workplaces, homophobic violence, insecurities generated by homelessness, city centre pollution and local white-collar crime such as fraud and income tax evasion (Coleman and Sim 1998: 35).

Militarization and Authoritarianism

In a recent collection which exemplifies the theoretical and political underpinnings of the 'government-at-a-distance' literature the editors argued that 'public authorities seek to employ forms of expertise in order to govern society at a distance without recourse to direct forms of repression or intervention' (Barry et al. 1996: 14). The appearance of CCTV seems to provide a clear example of the authors' arguments. They have been taken up by other authors who have maintained that CCTV is underpinned by 'chains of enrolment' and loose coalitions at the local level which is indicative of a 'new penology' concerned with managing 'risk' (McCahill 1997: 53-7). However in making these arguments these authors

ignore a central development in relation to the state, namely the intensification in the militaristic and authoritarian capabilities that state servants have at their disposal and the range of practices initiated towards the 'policing of social boundaries' that characterize 'the militarization of street life' (Davis 1990: 223). In the UK the intensification in the coercive capabilities of the state across a range of criminal justice areas has been profound in the last two decades and has fallen disproportionately on the powerless to the further detriment of the policing of the powerful (Hillyard and Percy-Smith 1988; Scraton et al. 1991; Ryan and Sim 1995). We do not wish to enter into the full complexities of the debate about the nature of the UK state here. However, as Nicos Poulantzas and Bob Jessop have argued, discourse theory in general and Foucault's work in particular is theoretically and politically compromised by its failure to deal with the materiality of violence and coercion in securing compliance (Poulantzas 1978; Jessop 1990). Thus in Liverpool (and in the UK in general) the network of cameras reinforce and are reinforced by a heavily militarized police force which is not only taking to the streets but in doing so is militarizing city spaces under the watchful gaze of those who operate the network. In the city, 72 police officers are trained and regularly deployed in armed response techniques, the local prison is now one of the biggest in Europe, a new private prison has been opened, there is the possibility that a third institution will open in the near future and there is an increasing emphasis on intelligence gathering to the point where *Crime Alert* which meets every month and which consists of local business people and undercover police discuss who should be targeted and kept under surveillance. In and around the city centre the police are initiating 'zero tolerance' strategies in an 'all out war on street crimes' financed by £30 million from the Home Office 'Crime Hotspot' fund (*Liverpool Echo* 13 November 1998). Furthermore, a senior police officer and council officials visited New York in 1998 to observe the experiments in 'quality of life policing' in Liverpool's twin city (*Liverpool Echo* 30 September 1998). Other initiatives include 'Operation Tranquility' which is committed to 'keeping unruly youngsters off the streets' (*Liverpool Echo* 17 October 1997). These and other examples point to a dialectical relationship between the 'old' style of policing with its emphasis on responding quickly and coercively to designated deviants and trouble-spots and the new technologies of surveillance which CCTV represents. The deployment of militarized police officers to targeted hot spots and the racialized use of stop and search powers (Statewatch 1999) provide indications of continuities of state control practices and of the need to analyse CCTV not as a benign alternative to such practices but in dialectical inter-relation to them. The cameras can be understood as part of a social ordering strategy which although not always coherent designates who can legitimately use public space, where and when. Thus governmentality theorists have ignored the centrality of coercive aspects of power directed at dissenters from neo-liberal rule (Frankel 1997; Stenson 1997).

CCTV, The New Governance and Securing Consent

Some have argued that surveillance technologies and electronic communications can be understood not simply as instruments of state surveillance but rather as technologies of freedom (Barry 1996: 138). Within this discourse CCTV cameras can be understood as helping to create public spaces for 'free', 'responsible', consumer-oriented individuals who independently choose their autonomous role in the life of the city. Thus CCTV is constructed around the idea of 'empowerment' and 'freedom', particularly the 'freedom and safety to shop' (Home Office 1994: 9).

Central to these processes is the desire to promote consumer confidence and participation in the city centre. This in turn is built on very specific ideas about the legitimate use of the city centre and the *moral* order which underpins it. Thus one interviewee has described the camera system as

a people's system . . . it is very important that we get over the feeling they are in a safe city and that hopefully generates and sustains the pedestrian flow of traffic . . . people feel happy to come and shop on a family basis. *It affects everybody where there is criminal activity in town centres.* (Research Interview, emphasis added)

The deployment of such discursive representations pertaining to the uses of the city centre form part of a larger orchestration concerned to construct a consensualized ideal of a benign authoritative power over territory. In Liverpool, co-ordinating agencies such as the Government Office underpinned by 'advanced liberal strategies of rule' have brought together police, developers, regeneration managers, businesses and elected officials. However, in scrutinizing the work of these networks it is important to critically analyse their role in securing legitimacy and consent from the wider populace – in 'convincing local peoples as to the benevolence of entrepreneurial strategies' (Hall and Hubbard 1996: 162). Included here are an abundance of 'place marketing' strategies through local and national media that seek to promote generalized images of 'crime' whilst at the same time promising a 'safer city for all' and thereby, and in conjunction with the other processes we have mentioned, serve to promote particular interests in city centre regeneration. Partnership in Liverpool has realigned agencies of governance and put to the fore issues of leadership and strategic direction.

'Partnership' involves constructing alliances that contribute towards 'the focusing of minds', the 'negotiation of sensible terms of reference' and the 'commitment of resources to agreed packages' (Research Interview). These processes are re-drawing notions of the public and private interest. The attempts to build a 'collective will' are not without their contradictions but neither do such strategies involve a collective 'free for all' where every opinion carries equal weight in the construction of the consensus around the 'proper' use of city spaces. As one interviewee pointed out

One of the biggest problems has been around consultation in Liverpool

and the transparency of the process itself. The temptation is when you are setting something up you go and talk to somebody who you know will respond to your need. You take the easy way around. (Research Interview)

As we have indicated the local media play a crucial role in the regeneration process as a whole and in its representation of Liverpool regarding issues around crime, safety and policing. As well as supporting and sponsoring local regeneration projects the local press in particular has been involved in the re-negotiation of protocols with Merseyside Police regarding policing in the city and levels of crime. One interviewee described these negotiations as 'about building trust with the media' after a series of 'damaging articles for Liverpool'. These stories

were basically along the lines of 'crime is out of hand and the police are unable to cope with it'. At the end of the day it is as much in the interest of the Echo's Editor as it is in the interest of Merseyside Police that we repopulate, have prosperity and vibrancy. I mean he'll sell more newspapers if there are more people living here, working and with money to spend. (Research Interview)

While forging an alliance between key players in the locality has not been unproblematic in reality this alliance has been central to the construction of a consensual world-view and the powerful definitions of the 'public interest' and the 'collective will' that underpin it. The process of coalition-building has therefore increasingly endeavoured to link the notions of 'good business practice' with the proactive management of crime and its incidence.

Thus the security network is not simply to be understood as a mechanism of crime prevention technology but as an important alliance of interests that have emerged in the gaps left by a series of legitimization deficits around policing and in urban governance generally. The security network works at constructing a consensus through generating images and categories of dangerousness which target the economically marginalized, the homeless and petty thieves as groups who consistently appear 'unable to learn the lesson that neo-liberalism now expects of its subjects' (Pratt 1997: 181). It is therefore in the regenerated city with its not so subtle lessons for proper conduct in public space – its re-emphasis on spectacle, consumption and 'leisure' – that neo-liberal governance has successfully sustained economic polarization as well as assumed a greater role in managing its 'fall out' through the deployment of authoritative categories that define the unconstituted other.

3. CONCLUSION

At the present historical moment CCTV cameras remain effectively unchallenged in the repertoire of responses to crime in Liverpool and nationally.

The advent of New Labour (NL) into government in May 1997 has seen little critique of the discourses of success which surround the camera network. The Home Secretary, while not blindly pursuing the retributive path of his predecessor (Downes 1998) is none the less showing few signs of deviating from the reductionist explanations of criminal conduct which dominate government, state and popular thinking about crime (Brownlee 1998; Sim 1999). The government's unswerving embrace of new technology across the social landscape and its support for private sector involvement in partnership with the public sector is likely to provide further opportunities for camera networks to flourish. NL's focus on a range of contemporary folk-devils particularly the young as exemplified in the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act (Sim *op. cit.*) will generate an intensification of surveillance strategies in civil and political society via the rejuvenated nuclear family, the idealized community, the state welfare system and in the institutions of the criminal justice system. CCTV can therefore be seen as part of a surveillance continuum which while not homogenous and cut through with contingencies and contradictions is none the less a key ideological and political player in the construction and reproduction of particular categories of crime and visions of social order. The continuum with its gaze turned almost continuously downwards can be contrasted with the lack of upward surveillance of the powerful whose often socially detrimental and harmful activities remain effectively beyond scrutiny and regulation. Those at the centre of this downward gaze can be understood as the contemporary equivalents of Foucault's leper whose identification and targeting reinforces 'the constant division between the normal and the abnormal' (Foucault 1979: 199–200).

Thus the surveillance continuum along with the coercive apparatus at the state's disposal are being refined within neo-liberal strategies of rule. Unless subjected to serious sociological and political scrutiny then it is likely that CCTV cameras will remain central to sustaining the divisive colonization inherent in advanced capitalist societies which the contemporary equivalents of the leper unconsciously help to reproduce.

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NOTES

1. The funding for this research was provided by the Research Strategy and Funding Committee, Liverpool John Moores University. The data were gathered through conducting semi-structured inter-

views with 28 of the key individuals involved in the establishment of the CCTV network in Liverpool as well as attending 8 meetings of those involved in *Crime Alert* (from which field notes were taken). Interviewees were

selected using snowball or network sampling. This was necessary given the 'invisibility' of much partnership work and the difficulties in identifying local nodal points and local actors (particularly from the private sector). Of those interviewed two were from the City Council; eight from local businesses; two developers; three police officers; eight private security and five from quangos. The data from interviews were analysed thematically around the meaning attributed to 'orderly' regeneration, problems perceived to hinder this process and the rationalization for security technologies. All the interviewees have been guaranteed anonymity.

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