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## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Law Enforcement Assistance Administration

National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service

## Census of Jails and Survey of Jail Inmates 1978

National Prisoner Statistics Bulletin No. SD-NPS-J-6P, February 1979

## **Preliminary Report**

More than 158,000 persons were being held in the Nation's locally operated jails as of February 1978, an increase of 12 percent over the 1972 total. The latest profile of jail inmates reflected the traditional, twofold function of a jail: a place for the temporary detention of the unconvicted and a confinement facility where many convicted persons--predominantly misdemeanants--serve out their sentences.1 About 6 of every 10 jail inmates had been convicted of a crime.2 In all, roughly three-fourths of such inmates had entered guilty pleas--many after plea bargainingrather than standing trial, and the remainder had been judged guilty. Compared with State and Federal prisons, jails held a much smaller percentage of inmates for violent crimes, but larger proportions for property and public order offenses.

Some 4 out of every 10 jail inmates stood accused but not convicted of a crime, and about one-fifth of this group did not have a lawyer at the time of the survey. Most of those who had counsel (82 percent) were being represented by court-appointed lawyers, public defenders, or legal aid attorneys. Four-fifths of all unconvicted inmates remained in jail even though bail had been set for them by the authorities.

Whites outnumbered blacks in the Nation's jails, but the proportion of blacks in jail far exceeded their 12-percent share of the U.S. population. Inmates belonging to other minority races accounted for some

2 percent of all jail inmates. As in 1972, the 1978 jail population consisted predominantly of males.

The vast majority of inmates were young men in their twenties. Three out of five had not completed high school, and 43 percent were jobless prior to being jailed. Not surprisingly, their reported average income was extremely low—a median of only \$3,255 during the year prior to arrest. One in four had a record of military service, most of them during the Vietnam era.

Sixteen percent of the inmates admitted to being regular heroin users, and another 10 percent had used heroin occasionally at some time during their lives.

Nearly half of the Nation's 3,493 jails, holding about 43 percent of the inmates, were in the South. For every 100,000 inhabitants in the Nation as a whole, there were 76 inmates held in locally operated jails; on a regional basis, the highest ratio was in the West, the lowest in the North Central States. 3 Among the 45 States having jails, Georgia, Nevada, Alabama, and Louisiana ranked highest in the ratio of inmates to population, but none of these States was among the top four in terms of the total jail population. California, Texas, New York, and Florida each held at least 10,000 persons in jail; California, with more than 26,000 inmates, held more than twice as many as each of the other three States.

in court (usually within 48 hours of arraignment) are excluded. Five States--Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Vermont-had integrated jail-prison systems and, therefore, were excluded in calculating the rate of inmates per 100,000 population at the regional and national levels. Alaska, which had 6 locally operated jails in addition to an integrated jail-prison system, was included in the calculation.

In this report, a jail consists of a confinement facility administered by a local law enforcement agency, intended for adults but sometimes also containing juveniles, which holds persons detained pending adjudication and/or persons committed after adjudication for sentences usually of a year or less. Temporary holding facilities, or lockups, that do not hold persons after being formally charged

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Information gathered from administrative records used in conducting the 1978 National Jail Census yielded another distribution, approximately 50 percent each for convicted and unconvicted, on the detention status of inmates. The nature of the difference will be discussed in future reports.

Data presented in this preliminary report came from the 1978 National Jail Census and the companion Survey of Inmates of Local Jails, both of which were conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration under the National Prisoner Statistics program. Compar-

ative data for 1972 were taken from the National Jail Census for 1972 and its accompanying Survey of Inmates of Local Jails. Detailed findings from the 1978 census and survey, as well as methodological information, will be presented in forthcoming reports. Data in this report are subject to revision.

Table 1. Selected demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of jail inmates, 1978

Characteristic	Number	Percent	Characteristic	Number	Percent			
Sex			Prearrest employment status					
Total	158,394	100	Total	158,394	100			
Male	148,839	94	Employed	89,526	57			
Female	9,555	6	Not employed	68,101	43			
Age	•		Not available	767	•••			
•			Prearrest annual income					
Total	158,394	100						
Under 30	110,166	70	Total	158,394	100			
30 and over	48,228	30	Under \$3,000	72,253	46			
Median	25.3		\$3,000-\$9,999	56,802	36			
			\$10,000 or over	21,393	13			
Race			Not available	7,947	5			
Total	158,394	100	Median	\$3,255				
White	89,418	57	Military service					
Black	65,104	41	MITTERLY SCIVICE					
Other	3,873	2	Total	158,394	100			
		_	Served	39,861	25			
Education			Never served	118,486	75			
Total	158,394	100	Not available	48	•••			
Less than 12 years	96,265	61	Heroin use					
12 years or more	61,943	39	neroth use					
Not available	187	•••	Total	158,394	100			
Median	10.2	•••	Regular heroin user	25,815	16			
	1012		Occasional heroin user	15,445	10			
			Never used heroin	115,441	73			
			Not available	1,693	1			

<sup>...</sup> Less than 0.5 percent. Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding.

Table 2. Selected offense-related characteristics of jail inmates, 1978

Characteristic	Number	Percent	ercent Characteristic		Percent		
Detention status			Legal representation of				
Total	158,394	100	unconvicted inmates				
Unconvicted	66,936	142	Total	CC 07C	100		
Convicted	91,411	<sup>1</sup> 58	With counsel	66,936 51.572	77		
Unknown	47		Own lawyer	9,125	14		
Offense			Provided with lawyer	42,183	63		
			Not available	264			
Total	158,394	100	Without counsel	14,443	22		
Violent	46,944	30	Not available	921	1		
Property	65,455	41	Makhad an an an an		_		
Drug	13,586	9	Method of conviction				
Public order	30,088	19	Total	91,411	100		
Other	2,320	1	Pleaded guilty	70,045	77		
Bail status of unconvicted			Original charge changed	26,952	30		
inmates			Original charge retained	41,899	46		
			Not known	1,193	1		
Total	66,936	100	Judged guilty	20,075	22		
Bail set	54,304	81	Not available	1,291	1		
Bail not set	11,607	17		1,001	•		
Not available	1,026	2					

 $<sup>\</sup>dots$  Less than 0.5 percent. Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding. <sup>1</sup>See text footnote two.

Table 3. Number of jails and jail inmates, by region and State and by inmate sex, legal status (adult or juvenile), and ratio to general population, 1978

										Rate per	
Region and State		All inmates			Adults				Juvenile	s	100,00
	Jails	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	popu- lation
inited States, total	3,493	158,394	148,839	9,555	156,783	147,506	9,277	1,611	1,333	278	76
lortheast	207	24,228	23,039	1,189	24,129	22,984	1,145	99	55	44	54
Maine	13	325	316	9	319	310	. 9	6	6	0	30
New Hampshire	11	370	347	23	362	340	22	8	7	1	43
Vermont*	• • •	• • •	• • •		• • •	•••				• • •	
Massachusetts	15	2,317	2,281	36	2,317	2,281	36	0	0	0	40
Rhode Island*	•••	• • •	***	• • •	• • •	• • •		• • •	• • •	• • •	• • •
Connecticut*	***			• • • •	•••	• • •	• • •	• • •		• • •	• • •
New York	72	10,936	10,302	634	10,852	10,261	591	84	41	43	61
New Jersey	28	3,873	3,648	225	3,873	3,648	225	0	0	0	53
Pennsylvania	68	6,407	6,145	262	6,406	6,144	262	1	1	0	54
North Central	1,042	28,452	26,687	1,765	27,937	26,256	1,681	515	431	84	49
Ohio	150	5,465	5,109	356	5,377	5,035	342	88	74	14	51
Indiana	90	2,453	2,334	119	2,301	2,200	101	152	134	18	46
Illinois	100	5,781	5,499	282	5,758	5,476	282	23	23	0	52
Michigan	93	5,729	5,282	447	5,708	5,262	446	21	20	1	63
Wisconsin	70	1,926	1,806	120	1,864	1,767	97	62	39	23	41
Minnesota	65	1,517	1,431	86	1,504	1,421	83	13	10	3	38
Iowa	91	664	611	53	654	603	51	10	8	2	23
Missouri	137	2,849	2,668	181	2,829	2,652	177	20	16	4	60
North Dakota	39	118	105	13	117	105	12	1	0	1	18
South Dakota	44	276	258	18	253	243	10	23	15	8	40
Nebraska	77	676	647	29	638	611	27	38	36	2	44
Kansas	86	998	937	61	934	881	53	64	56	8	43
South	1,678	67,444	63,992	3,452	66,775	63,420	3,355	669	572	97	58
Delaware*	• • •	• • •	• • •	• • •	• • •			• • •	• • •	• • •	• • •
Maryland	25	3,553	3,418	135	3,553	3,418	135	0	0	O	86
District of Columbia	2	1,407	1,,292	115	1,407	1,292	115	0	0	0	208
Virginia	92	4,232	4,059	173	4,077.	3,907	170	155	152	3	84
West Virginia	54	1,066	1,017	49	1,044	996	48	22	21	1	57
North Carolina	95	2,798	2,635	163	2,766	2,615	151	32	20	12	51
South Carolina	68	2,362	2,281	81	2,328	2,256	72	34	25	9	84
Georgia	223	8,278	7,933	345	8,269	7,925	344	9	8	1	165
Florida	112	10,305	9,615	690	10,263	9,576	687	42	39	3	122
Kentucky	111	2,149	2,024	125	2,089	1,968	121	60	56	4	62
Tennessee	111	4,553	4,330	223	4,492	4,287	205	61	43	18	106
Alabama	108	5,049	4,903	146	5,027	4,883	144	22	20	2	137
Mississippi	94	2,427	2,310	117	2,359	2,260	99	68	50	18	102
Arkansas	92	1,334	1,261	73	1,277	1,211	66	57	50	7	62
Louisiana	93	5,232	4,996	236	5,217	4,985	232	15	11	4	134
Oklahoma	102	1,704	1,550	154	1,676	1,529	147	28	21	7	61
Texas	296	10,995	10,368	627	10,931	10,312	619	64	56	8	36
lest	566	38,270	35,121	3,149	37,942	34,846	3,096	328	275	53	100
Montana	58	324	304	20	304	289	15	20	15	5	43
Idaho	45	539	508	31	498	477	21	41	31	10	62
Wyoming	31	268	243	25	244	230	14	24	13	11	66
Colorado	61	1,681	1,598	83	1,658	1,576	82	23	22	1	65
New Mexico	38	794	741	53	755	711	44	39	30	9	67
Arizona	39	2,501	2,163	338	2,484	2,150	334	17	13	4	108
Utah	24	676	643	33	675	642	33	1	1	0	53
Nevada	22	912	821	91	896	810	86	16	11	5	144
Washington	59	2,453	2,273	180	2,437	2,257	180	16	16	Ö	68
Oregon	48	1,872	1,750	122	1,855	1,737	118	17	13	4	78
California	135	26,206	24,036	2,170	26,093	23,927	2,166	113	109	4	120
Alaska*	6	44	41	3	43	40	3	1	.1	Ö	11
Hawaii*	•••	• • • •	•••						• • •		•••

<sup>\*</sup>Five States—Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Vermont—had integrated jail-prison systems and, therefore, were excluded in calculating the rate of inmates per 100,000 population at the regional and national levels. Alaska, which had 6 locally operated jails in addition to an integrated jail-prison system, was included in the calculation.

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