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**Prisoners  
in State  
and Federal  
Institutions  
on December 31, 1978**

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## Advance Report

A record 307,384 persons were held under the jurisdiction of Federal and State correctional authorities on December 31, 1978. The yearend count, fourth in a row to reach an all-time high, was about 3 percent higher than the number reported 12 months earlier.<sup>1</sup> This increase was little more than half that of 1977 and markedly lower than the 10-percent rise in both 1975 and 1976.<sup>2</sup> A drop of nearly 2,300 in the number of prisoners within Federal jurisdiction, stemming from sharply fewer court commitments and more paroles, was the primary cause for the 1978 slowdown. In contrast, the number of prisoners under jurisdiction of the States rose by about 10,600, in spite of court orders in many States barring overcrowding in their facilities and, more recently, restraints on "warehousing" prisoners in local jails.

The overwhelming majority of prisoners held at the end of 1978 were serving sentences of more than a year, whereas 4 percent were serving shorter sentences or were unsentenced.<sup>3</sup> Prisoners under Federal jurisdiction numbered 29,803 on the last day of 1978, down by 7 percent from the 1977 yearend total and chiefly reflecting a reduction in the number of inmates serving a maximum sentence of more than a year, as the number of persons serving a shorter sentence or held without sentence changed only nominally. In contrast, the number of State inmates was up 4 percent; for those with a sentence of more than a year the increase was 5 percent, whereas 16 percent fewer inmates were serving shorter sentences or were unsentenced.

There were 12,736 women prisoners, representing 4 percent of the total, under the control of Federal and State correctional authorities on December 31, 1978. Consistent with the pattern of the last several years, the rise in the female portion of the prisoner population was higher than that for males--5 versus 3 percent.

Regionally, there was a 7-percent inmate population increase in the West, where all but two States (New Mexico and Oregon) showed gains. The other

increases amounted to 5 percent in the Northeast and about 3 percent each in the South and North Central region. A year earlier, the South had the largest percentage increase and the West the smallest.<sup>4</sup>

A third of the States experienced a decrease in their inmate population during 1978. The largest absolute decline was in North Carolina (937), principally among prisoners with a sentence of a year or less or with no sentence. The second largest decline occurred in Alabama (574), one of several States in which restraints were imposed during the course of the year upon the use of local jails to house State inmates.

Although two-thirds of the States recorded net gains in prisoners during 1978, five accounted for more than half of the increase: Texas (2,439), California (1,704), Florida (1,123), Michigan (1,120), and New York (1,089). Except for a large reduction in the number of persons committed for civil narcotics violations, California's net increase would have been significantly larger.

Prisoners housed in jails because of overcrowding in the State systems decreased from 7,048 at the beginning of 1978 to 6,476 at the end, although the number of States using local facilities increased from 10 to 12. Ten of these 12, with 5,232 such inmates--Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New York, South Carolina, and Tennessee--considered them to be under the jurisdiction of State correctional authorities. The remaining 1,244 inmates, not included in the overall prisoner total, were held in two States--New Jersey and Virginia--that did not claim jurisdiction over them.

Additional details from the 1978 count of inmates under the jurisdiction of State and Federal correctional authorities will be contained in a final report to be published this year. Data in this report were collected through the National Prisoner Statistics program for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration by the Bureau of the Census.

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<sup>1</sup>The 1978 count provided by each reporting entity (the Federal Bureau of Prisons, the 50 States, and the District of Columbia) represents the number of persons under the jurisdiction of its correctional system rather than, as in 1977 and earlier years, those under its custody. In order to attain comparability with 1978, certain figures previously provided for 1977 have been revised to reflect this change in scope. All data are preliminary and subject to revision.

<sup>2</sup>Yearend figures for 1977 and 1978 appear on the accompanying table; those for 1976 and 1975, in Pris-

oners on State and Federal Institutions on December 31, 1976, NPS Bulletin No. SD-NPS-PSF-4, February 1978.

<sup>3</sup>Examples of unsentenced inmates are those held for safekeeping, those undergoing presentencing evaluation, narcotics addicts under civil (i.e., non-criminal) commitment, and, in the seven jurisdictions operating a combined jail-prison system, those held awaiting trial or sentencing.

<sup>4</sup>States included within each region are listed in the accompanying table.

## Prisoners in custody on December 31, 1976,<sup>a</sup> and December 31, 1977, by region and State

Region and State	Maximum length of sentence								
	Total			More than a year			Year or less (and unsentenced)		
	1978	1977	Percent change	1978	1977	Percent change	1978	1977	Percent change
United States	307,384	299,086	+2.8	294,580	284,461	+3.6	12,804	14,625	-12.5
Male	294,648	286,939	+2.7	282,869	273,367	+3.5	11,779	13,572	-13.2
Female	12,736	12,147	+4.8	11,711	11,094	+5.6	1,025	1,053	-2.7
Federal institutions	29,803	32,088	-7.1	26,391	28,650	-7.9	3,412	3,438	-0.8
State institutions	277,581	266,998	+4.0	268,189	255,811	+4.8	9,392	11,187	-16.0
Northeast	42,750	40,833	+4.7	40,425	38,341	+5.4	2,325	2,492	-6.7
Maine	710	666	+6.6	577	655	-11.9	133	11	+1,109.1
New Hampshire	283	239	+18.4	283	219	+29.2	0	20	-100.0
Vermont <sup>1</sup>	464	416	+11.5	337	279	+20.8	127	137	-7.3
Massachusetts <sup>2</sup>	2,822	2,825	-0.1	2,811	2,789	+0.8	11	36	-69.4
Rhode Island <sup>1</sup>	664	686	-3.2	524	524	+0.0	140	162	-13.6
Connecticut <sup>1</sup>	3,489	2,965	+17.7	2,163	1,647	+31.3	1,326	1,318	+0.6
New York <sup>2</sup>	20,458	19,369	+5.6	20,458	19,369	+5.6	0	0	...
New Jersey <sup>3</sup>	5,869	6,017	-2.5	5,419	5,386	+0.6	450	631	-28.7
Pennsylvania	7,991	7,650	+4.5	7,853	7,473	+5.1	138	177	-22.0
North Central	61,332	59,269	+3.5	60,246	58,265	+3.4	1,086	1,004	+8.2
Ohio	13,357	12,846	+4.0	13,357	12,846	+4.0	0	0	...
Indiana	4,955	4,633	+7.0	4,350	4,250	+2.4	605	383	+58.0
Illinois	10,732	10,982	-2.3	10,430	10,668	-2.2	302	314	+3.8
Michigan <sup>2</sup>	14,944	13,824	+8.1	14,944	13,824	+8.1	0	0	...
Wisconsin	3,433	3,347	+2.6	3,433	3,347	+2.6	0	0	...
Minnesota	1,877	1,755	+7.0	1,877	1,755	+7.0	0	0	...
Iowa	2,068	2,125	-2.7	2,035	2,030	+0.2	33	95	-65.3
Missouri	5,637	5,302	+6.3	5,637	5,302	+6.3	0	0	...
North Dakota	179	216	-17.1	169	194	-12.9	10	22	-54.5
South Dakota	533	565	-5.7	506	519	-2.5	27	46	-41.3
Nebraska	1,326	1,425	-6.9	1,219	1,284	-5.1	107	141	-24.1
Kansas	2,291	2,249	+1.9	2,289	2,246	+1.9	2	3	-33.3
South	131,632	127,793	+3.0	128,108	123,050	+4.1	3,524	4,743	-25.7
Delaware <sup>1</sup>	1,325	1,230	+7.7	1,005	820	+22.6	320	410	-22.0
Maryland <sup>2</sup>	7,952	8,148	-2.4	7,952	8,148	-2.4	0	0	...
District of Columbia <sup>1</sup>	2,701	2,804	-3.7	2,535	2,237	+13.3	166	567	-70.7
Virginia <sup>3</sup>	8,344	7,838	+6.5	7,882	7,322	+7.6	462	516	-10.5
West Virginia	1,193	1,250	-4.6	1,193	1,250	-4.6	0	0	...
North Carolina	13,252	14,189	-6.6	12,647	12,769	-1.0	605	1,420	-57.4
South Carolina <sup>2</sup>	7,396	7,306	+1.2	6,990	6,769	+3.3	406	537	-24.4

Georgia	11,358	11,658	-2.6	10,874	11,243	-3.3	484	415	+16.6
Florida <sup>2</sup>	20,766	19,643	+5.7	20,573	19,447	+5.8	193	196	-1.5
Kentucky	3,390	3,661	-7.4	3,390	3,660	-7.4	0	1	-100.0
Tennessee <sup>2</sup>	5,835	5,501	+6.1	5,835	5,480	+6.5	0	21	-100.0
Alabama <sup>2</sup>	5,524	6,098	-9.4	5,376	6,096	-11.8	148	2	+7,300.0
Mississippi <sup>2</sup>	2,977	2,335	+27.5	2,679	2,103	+27.4	298	232	+28.4
Arkansas	2,605	2,466	+5.6	2,529	2,386	+6.0	76	80	-5.0
Louisiana <sup>2</sup>	7,409	6,731	+10.1	7,409	6,731	+10.1	0	0	...
Oklahoma	4,186	3,955	+5.8	3,820	3,609	+5.8	366	346	+5.8
Texas	25,419	22,980	+10.6	25,419	22,980	+10.6	0	0	...
West	41,867	39,103	+7.1	39,410	36,155	+9.0	2,457	2,948	-16.7
Montana	674	621	+8.5	672	617	+8.9	2	4	-50.0
Idaho	830	769	+7.9	830	752	+10.4	0	17	-100.0
Wyoming	436	400	+9.0	436	400	+9.0	0	0	...
Colorado	2,479	2,317	+7.0	2,467	2,311	+6.8	12	6	+100.0
New Mexico	1,593	1,613	-1.2	1,393	1,489	-6.4	200	124	+61.3
Arizona	3,456	3,229	+7.0	3,450	3,229	+6.8	6	0	Y
Utah	911	889	+2.5	908	824	+10.2	3	65	-95.4
Nevada	1,357	1,187	+14.3	1,357	1,184	+14.6	0	3	-100.0
Washington	4,477	4,282	+4.6	4,477	4,272	+4.8	0	10	-100.0
Oregon	2,891	2,935	-1.5	2,885	2,924	-1.3	6	11	-45.5
California	21,327	19,623	+8.7	19,552	17,338	+12.8	1,775	2,285	-22.3
Alaska <sup>1</sup>	712	686	+3.8	490	419	+16.9	222	267	-16.9
Hawaii <sup>1</sup>	724	552	+31.2	493	396	+24.5	231	156	+48.1

NOTE: For Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania, 1978 figures that distinguish between prisoners sentenced to more than a year and those with a shorter or no sentence are estimates. For Florida and Maryland in both 1977 and 1978 and for Maine in 1977, figures on the number of inmates sentenced to more than a year include prisoners with a shorter or no sentence; the proportion of such prisoners was estimated to be less than 1 percent in Florida, 10 percent in Maine, and approximately 6 percent in Maryland.

Y Not definable.

... Not applicable.

<sup>1</sup>Both 1977 and 1978 figures include jail and prison inmates, as jails and prisons form a combined system within the jurisdiction. In both years, figures for all District of Columbia facilities except two--the D.C. Jail and the D.C. Detention Center--include inmates with a maximum sentence of a year or less or with no sentence.

<sup>2</sup>Figures for 1978 include inmates held in local jails because of overcrowding in State institutions. Such inmates are considered by those States to be subject to the jurisdiction of State correctional authorities. The number of inmates held in local jails as of yearend 1978 was as follows: Alabama (1,342), Florida (59), Louisiana (1,190), Maryland (380), Massachusetts (110), Michigan (44), Mississippi (1,000), New York (269), South Carolina (724), and Tennessee (114). All of these States except New York and Tennessee also held such inmates at yearend 1977.

<sup>3</sup>Prisoners detained locally to relieve overcrowding at the State level are excluded because they are considered not to be subject to the jurisdiction of State correctional authorities. At yearend 1978 there were 70 such prisoners in New Jersey and 1,174 in Virginia. Both States also had prisoners of this type in 1977.



**END**