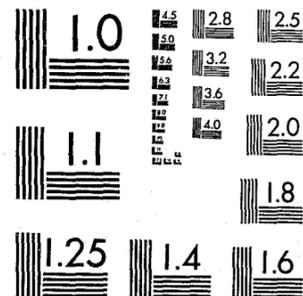


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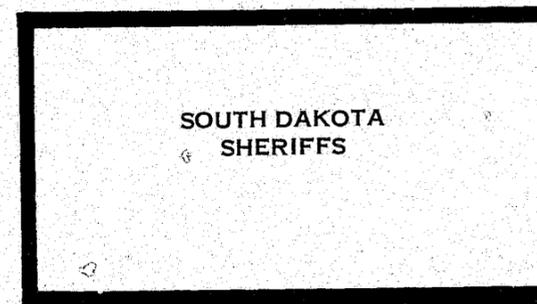
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SOUTH DAKOTA  
STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER

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REPORT  
TO  
✓ SOUTH DAKOTA  
SHERIFFS

SOUTH DAKOTA  
STATISTICAL ANALYSIS CENTER

NCJRS

AUG 18 1981

DECEMBER, 1976

ACQUISITIONS

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Diane Beecher was the principal investigator for this report.

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CRIME RATES

Crime Up

The volume of serious crime in South Dakota rose 3% from 1974 to 1975. This was smaller than the nationwide increase of 10%. It was also less than the 9% increase experienced by the North Central states and the 8% increase in rural areas across the nation.

Counties across the state can be compared by looking at the sheriff's crime rate. Each crime rate is based on the total number of murders, forcible rapes, aggravated assaults, robberies, burglaries, larcenies, and auto thefts known to the sheriff. The FBI uses these crimes as a standardized measure of serious crime because they occur frequently and are likely to be reported.

All of the counties in the state have been ordered from high to low according to their 1975 crime rate and are listed on the next page. Beside each county is its actual crime rate and its position among the other counties in terms of population, population density, and land area. The sheriff's expenditure per capita and his staff size were also used to rank the counties.

A rough idea of some of the problems or the advantages a county might have can be obtained by examining its place on each variable, relative to the other counties. As an example, Turner county ranks 49th on crime rate, with only 711 serious crimes per 100,000 people. The sheriff's staff size and the amount of money he had to spend relative to the county population are correspondingly low. However, the combination of a fairly large population with a small land area means that the population density, and perhaps aspects of his workload other than serious crime, is rather high.

TABLE 1  
COUNTIES RANKED<sup>1</sup> BY CRIME RATE AND BY OTHER VARIABLES

County	Sheriff's 1975 Crime Rate <sup>2</sup>	Rankings				
		Population (1975)	Population Density	Land Area	Sheriff's Expenditure Per Capita <sup>3</sup>	Sheriff's Staff Size <sup>4</sup>
1. Pennington	5309	2	7	28	21	1
2. Stanley	2760	57	43	36	14	37
3. Union	2411	19	8	61	-	37
4. Yankton	2272	8	3	59	47	23
5. Faulk <sup>5</sup>	1948	50	32	44	7	12
6. Beadle	1795	5	10	37	-	23
7. Minnehaha	1705	1	1	48	52	2
8. Hughes	1649	13	42	16	15	8
9. Walworth	1566	27	14	51	37	23
10. Butte	1377	25	31	31	23	51
11. Lake	1333	17	41	21	32	37
12. Lyman	1275	47	60	4	46	23
13. Davison	1263	10	2	63	39	12
14. Miner	1262	46	20	20	19	51
16. Douglas	1250	44	16	62	30	51
16. Potter <sup>5</sup>	1250	45	28	46	11	23
17. McPherson	1250	43	54	12	53	61
18. Gregory	1250	31	52	8	28	51
19. Charles Mix	1250	18	17	41	17	37
20. Deuel	1246	35	18	54	35	51
21. Lincoln	1244	15	37	18	49	37
22. Spink	1241	20	22	35	25	12
23. Bon Homme	1241	26	13	57	48	51
24. Meade	1239	7	55	1	42	23
25. Clay	1239	14	4	64	43	37
26. Tripp/Todd	1238	12	26	26	-	37
27. Dewey	1238	32	36	30	54	61
28. Roberts	1237	16	15	40	41	8
29. Custer <sup>5</sup>	1236	40	34	34	1	4
31. Edmunds	1232	37	27	39	31	37
31. Hand	1232	39	57	5	36	23
32. Lawrence	1232	11	39	15	9	15
34. Campbell	1231	58	33	50	18	37
34. Hyde	1231	59	59	11	-	23
34. Ziebach	1231	56	46	32	-	61
36. McCook <sup>5</sup>	1229	30	47	19	3	8
37. Jerauld	1219	54	53	22	-	61
38. Brule	1217	33	21	47	16	23
39. Moody <sup>5</sup>	1213	28	12	58	6	6
40. Jones	1211	64	62	9	4	37
41. Sanborn	1206	51	23	56	13	51
42. Bennett <sup>5</sup>	1029	52	35	38	2	15
43. Day	1000	24	19	42	22	37
44. Sully	1000	61	38	43	10	51
45. Mallette	826	60	61	6	24	37
46. Perkins	822	42	44	27	38	23
47. Kingsbury	757	29	50	13	-	37
48. Brookings	736	4	6	49	50	23
49. Turner	711	23	11	55	45	51
50. Clark	679	34	24	45	51	51
51. Jackson/ Washabaugh	613	53	58	10	26	51
52. Hanson	595	49	51	24	29	51
53. Hamlin	553	38	49	23	44	51
54. Grant	474	22	45	17	34	12
55. Marshall <sup>5</sup>	418	36	36	7	5	6
56. Codington	312	6	5	53	-	23
57. Haakon	296	55	63	3	-	61
58. Corson	294	41	40	29	40	37
59. Aurora	293	48	25	52	20	51
60. Fall River/ Shannon	204	9	29	25	27	23
61. Brown	203	3	9	33	33	3
62. Harding	118	62	64	2	8	61
63. Hutchinson	111	21	48	14	55	51
64. Buffalo	111	63	30	60	12	61

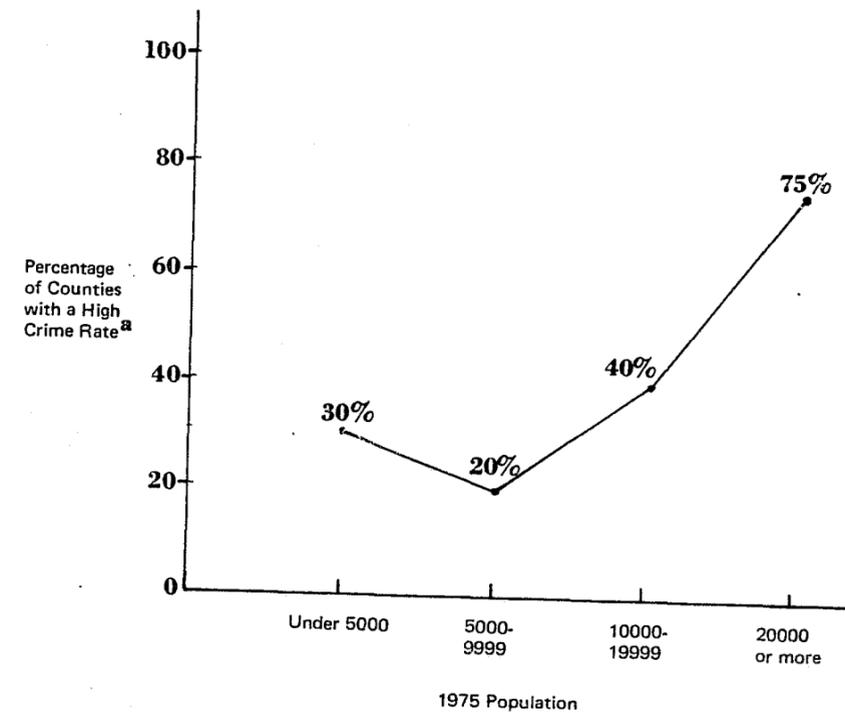
1. The highest value (e.g., most population) was given a rank of 1. For each set of ties, the middle rank was used for all tied counties.
2. The crime rate is the number of murders and non-negligent manslaughters, forcible rapes, aggravated assaults, robberies, burglaries, larcenies, and auto thefts per 100,000 people for 1975. Many of the rates have been estimated by the FBI.
3. Where possible, expenditure figures for 1975 were used. Otherwise, the money spent per person was calculated using the 1975 budget. Several counties did not supply either kind of figure.
4. Staff size includes all part-time and full-time personnel except for clerical workers.
5. County has total countywide law enforcement.

Many crime rates were estimated by the FBI because of problems with crime reports or lack of reporting. This is the best crime data currently available for 1975. A more accurate comparison of counties with regard to their crime rates is possible only as the reporting of crime data improves.

Factors Associated With Higher Crime Rates<sup>1</sup>

The more populous counties tended to have higher crime rates (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1  
SHERIFF'S CRIME RATE  
AND COUNTY POPULATION



<sup>a</sup> A high crime rate is defined as 1000 or more serious crimes per 100,000 people. The percent figure shown is the proportion having a high crime rate in 1974 as compared to the counties having a low or moderate crime rate. Estimated rates were excluded.

1. Since there were fewer estimated crime rates in 1974 than in 1975, 1974 data was used in the analyses and estimated data was excluded. All percentages in this and other sections are based on the counties or agencies on which data was available.

It does seem reasonable then that population be used as one basis for resource allocation (e.g., determination of the sheriff's salary). But the relationship was not perfect--several counties with fewer than 10,000 people had high crime rates. Some of these counties have a relatively high population density. Where there are more people per square mile, one is also likely to find a moderate to high crime rate.

The sheriff's crime rate is usually less than that of the largest town in his county, but large towns have a definite influence on sheriffs' activities. In addition to the higher crime rates for sheriffs in less rural counties, there are probably more civil actions and higher rates of less serious crimes. When the crime rate for the county as a whole was high, sheriffs did tend to have a larger staff to use in coping with the additional workload.

A majority of the sheriffs' offices surveyed by the Statistical Analysis Center stated that one or more types of crimes were increasing in their jurisdictions. Eight of the ten counties supplying figures on the number of complaints for 1972 and 1974 experienced an increase across those two years. Burglary and larceny were often mentioned as on the increase. However, a number of other crimes such as juvenile offenses and crimes related to drugs and alcohol were also said to be occurring more often. These are not included in calculating the crime rate. Thus the crime rate does not measure all of the heavy demands imposed upon the sheriff. The sheriff with a low level of serious crime would not necessarily have a low level of other kinds of demands.

## EXPENDITURES BY SHERIFFS' OFFICES

### Expenditure Data

Expenditure data is a primary indicator of the resources a sheriff has to work with. Two thirds of the sheriffs' offices surveyed reported having a problem with the amount of money they had to spend.

County expenditures for 1975 are listed on the next page. Next to each figure is the amount expended per person in the county, the expenditure per capita. Expenditures per capita ranged from \$2.41 per person to \$28.07 per person. Additional funds for law enforcement in the county would of course be available through police department budgets.

Counties with higher total expenditures tended to have higher crime rates and a higher than average number of complaints and investigations. Yet when crime rates for the county as a whole (sheriffs and police) were higher, sheriffs reported more problems with their budget, their workload, equipment, and staff turnover.

The counties with the highest crime rates tended to have the lowest expenditures per capita (Figure 2). That is, more populous counties with higher crime rates do tend to have more money, but less money per person in the county.

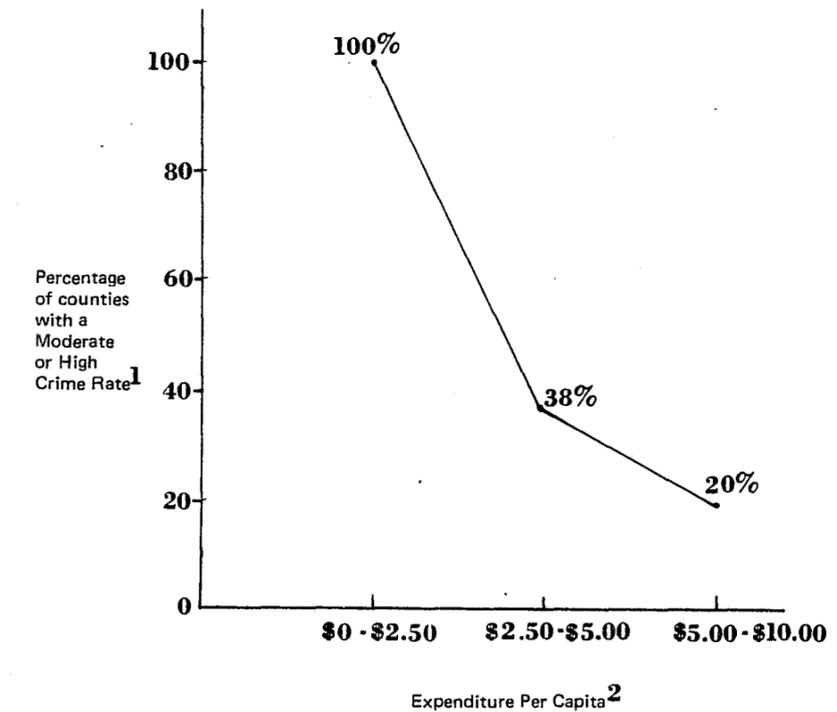
Civil papers and other non-crime duties, as well as crime rate, can create a heavy workload. Consequently, work generated for the sheriffs by cities should be considered along with the sheriff's crime rate and other demands on his agency in proposing budget/resource changes.

TABLE 2  
SHERIFFS' EXPENDITURES AND EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA<sup>1</sup>

County	1975 Expenditure	1975 Expenditure Per Capita	County	1975 Expenditure	1975 Expenditure Per Capita
Aurora	\$27500	\$6.88	Hyde	\$ -	\$ -
Beadle	-	-	Jackson/ Washabaugh	18775	5.90
Bennett	78800	23.64	Jerauld	-	-
Bon Homme	2790	3.54	Jones	26400	16.09
Brookings	74796	3.32	Kingsbury	-	-
Brown	19450	5.14	Lake	56922	5.35
Brule	42115	7.28	Lawrence	192500	11.50
Buffalo	15300	8.37	Lincoln	42250	3.38
Butte	50175	5.99	Lyman	16100	3.94
Campbell	17400	6.95	McCook	116025	16.72
Charles Mix	75700	7.23	McPherson	13525	2.92
Clark	18360	3.18	Marshall	88690	15.68
Clay	53306	3.97	Meade	77754	4.25
Codington	-	-	Mellette	14300	5.98
Corson	22500	4.49	Miner	28500	6.92
Custer	149000	28.07	Minnehaha	302068	3.02
Davison	85430	4.80	Moody	117271	15.44
Day	53500	6.31	Pennington	443321	6.58
Deuel	28910	5.03	Perkins	23400	4.92
Dewey	16505	2.77	Potter	35439	8.41
Douglas	24299	5.40	Roberts	52740	4.47
Edmunds	30080	5.37	Sanborn	28217	8.24
Fall River/ Shannon	104000	5.84	Spink	59338	5.96
Faulk	52000	14.40	Stanley	19500	7.69
Grant	49000	5.05	Sully	22322	10.24
Gregory	37240	5.75	Tripp/ Todd	-	-
Haakon	-	-	Turner	37090	3.96
Hamlin	21650	3.96	Union	-	-
Hand	26580	4.96	Walworth	38465	4.90
Hanson	20860	5.72	Yankton	68800	3.83
Harding	23800	12.66	Ziebach	-	-
Hughes	103633	7.66			
Hutchinson	23500	2.41			

1. When an expenditure figure for 1975 was not available, the budget for that year was used if possible. Figures were obtained from sheriffs or county auditors. Because of the different methods of accounting in use at the time of the survey, the figures are not totally comparable.

FIGURE 2  
COUNTY CRIME RATE AND  
SHERIFF'S EXPENDITURE PER CAPITA



<sup>1</sup> 500 or more serious crimes per 100,000 people, 1974, for sheriffs and police.

<sup>2</sup> Expenditure per capita, 1973. (One county with an unusually high expenditure level and a high crime rate was deleted.)

The counties with the lowest and with the highest expenditures per capita tended to report more problems with their budgets. The budgets of agencies with lower expenditures per capita might be increased in order to devote more money to crime-related activities. This solution might be appropriate for some of the high-expenditure counties too. Agencies with countywide law enforcement all reported budget problems and fairly high expenditures per capita. Since there are no police budgets to provide more money per capita in these counties, the per capita figures represent the entire amount available for law enforcement. In other counties with high expenditures per capita, nonmonetary solutions to budget problems could be explored.

### Comparisons within Population Categories

A sheriff's total expenditure can be compared to that of other counties of a similar population size (and thus, perhaps, making similar demands upon the sheriff's office). In Table 3, populations have been divided into 4 categories. Under each one, the counties in that population range have been listed according to their 1975 expenditure level, in decreasing order. For example, of those counties with a population between 5,000 and 10,000, the sheriff's office in Grant county had a higher total expenditure than the sheriff's office in Brule county. Also, the counties with 1975 crime rates above the average for counties in the state have been marked by an asterisk (\*).

One can see from the table that (1) average expenditures for the different population categories rise dramatically as population increases, (2) the percentage of counties in each category with a higher crime rate rises as population increases, (3) within a population category, those counties with higher crime rates do not always receive more money than those with lower levels of serious crime, and (4) sheriffs with responsibility for the entire county, under countywide law enforcement (Bennett, Faulk, Potter, Custer, Moody, McCook, Marshall), have the highest expenditures within their population categories. This is not so for counties with less than total county wide law enforcement (Davison-excluding Mitchell, Caly-excluding Vermillion, Beadle-excluding Huron, and Jackson county, which contracts with Kadoka, excluding some smaller towns.)

TABLE 3  
COUNTIES RANKED BY SHERIFFS' EXPENDITURES AND  
LISTED WITHIN POPULATION CATEGORIES<sup>1</sup>

Population			
Under 5,000	5,000 to 10,000	10,000 to 20,000	Over 20,000
Bennett Faulk* <sup>2</sup> Potter* Miner* Sanborn Aurora Jones Douglas* Harding Perkins Sully Hanson Stanley* Jackson/ Washabaugh Campbell Lyman* Buffalo Mellette McPherson*	Custer* Moody McCook Marshall Spink* Day Butte* Grant Brule Walworth* Gregory* Turner Edmunds* Deuel* Bon Homme* Hand* Hutchinson Corson Hamlin Dewey*	Lawrence* Fall River/ Shannon Hughes* Davison* Meade* Charles Mix* Yankton* Lake* Clay* Roberts* Lincoln*	Pennington* Minnehaha* Brown Brookings
Average Total Expenditure			
\$23,758	\$51,777	\$83,003	\$253,671

\* An asterisk indicates those counties which had an above average crime rate compared to the other counties in the state in 1975.

1. Only counties for which 1975 expenditure (or budget) figures were available are listed in the table. In each column the counties are listed in decreasing order with regard to their expenditures, with the county having the highest total expenditure on top.

2. Underlined counties are those with total countywide law enforcement.

## PROBLEM AREAS

Common Problems

Many sheriffs are dissatisfied with the amount of work their staffs have to handle and the money offered for that work. Of the sheriffs' offices surveyed, 40% classified workload as a major problem and another 28% considered it a minor problem. Fully 45% reported a major problem with salaries, and 25% a minor problem.

It follows that sheriffs' offices would feel some strains on their budgets. A majority did report a problem in this area. Problems with budgets and workload could in turn limit the training and equipment the staff could receive: 51% of those surveyed had some kind of problem with training, 55% with equipment. Despite the deficiencies seen in salaries and training, 63% of the sheriffs' offices surveyed viewed their staff qualifications as adequate.

Common Problems and Crime Rates

Problems with workload, training, qualifications, salaries, and budget (Table 4) were examined closely. These areas were chosen for several reasons. First, they are basic aspects of an agency's staff and operations. Each sheriff's office is in the best position to judge whether or not there are inadequacies in these areas. Second, one might expect the resources available to and the demands upon an agency to be tied to characteristics of its county such as population. Third, these are areas in which action can be taken--additional staff can be hired, training can be improved, and so forth.

TABLE 4  
PROBLEMS IN SHERIFFS' OFFICES

<u>Area</u>	<u>Agencies with No Problem</u>	<u>Agencies with a Minor Problem</u>	<u>Agencies with a Major Problem</u>
Workload	32%	28%	40%
Training Staff	48%	38%	13%
Qualifications	63%	23%	13%
Salaries	30%	25%	45%
Budget	34%	37%	29%

Crime rates were related to three of these problem areas: workload, salaries, and budget. Sheriffs who had a higher crime rate in 1974 reported more problems with staff salaries and with their budgets than did those with lower crime rates. When the combined crime rate (sheriff and police) was taken into consideration, higher crime rates were associated with more workload problems.

Workload problems may have been more strongly related to the combined crime rates than to the sheriff's crime rate alone because of the workload demands in counties with cities having high crime rates. The extra preventive patrol and the extra civil work occurring in these counties may be substantial. Sheriffs in the more "urban" counties did tend to report spending more time on prevention and deterrence than on investigation. Further, sheriffs in the higher density areas were more likely than those in the lower density areas to report spending most of their time on some activity other than prevention, investigation, or apprehension. Such activities include record-keeping, jail monitoring, and dispatch services.

Apparently those counties with higher crime rates are not in need of more qualified deputies to combat crime but rather more and better paid deputies. It is not possible to determine from this data whether heavy workloads and other problems contribute to higher crime

rates or result from higher crime rates. No variable other than crime rate was consistently related to perceived problems.

Workload and Expertise

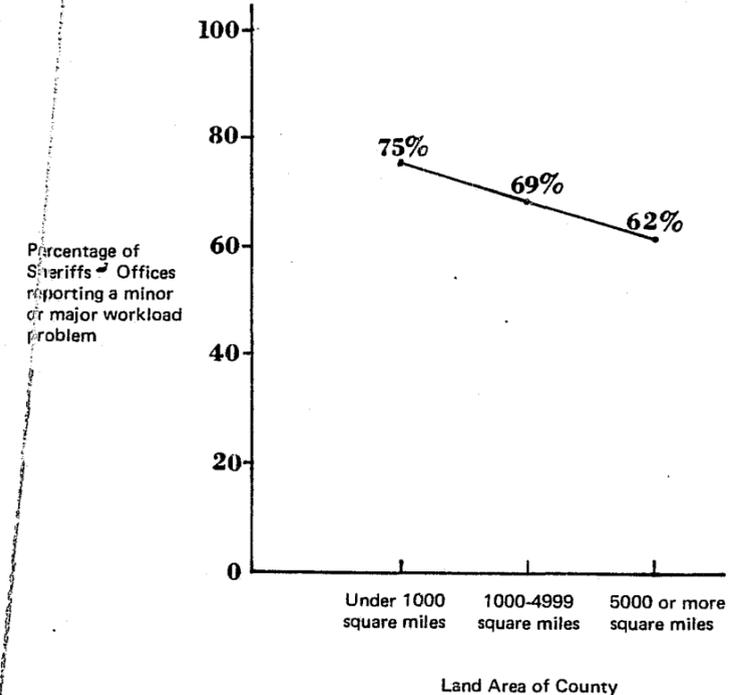
As land area decreased and as the percent of urban population in the county increased, a higher percent of counties reported workload problems. This is consistent with the fact that crime rates increase with population density--the smaller more urbanized parts of the state have more crime and a heavier workload. These relationships are diagrammed in the figures on the next page.

The counties utilizing the most man hours per month still cited more workload problems than did the other counties. Although these agencies could be understaffed, part of the problem may be in expertise. A solid majority of those sheriffs having a workload problem also reported a minor or a major problem with staff training. Almost half of those with a workload problem were not satisfied with the qualifications of their staff. Sheriffs who had a problem with staff qualifications were also likely to have a problem with training.

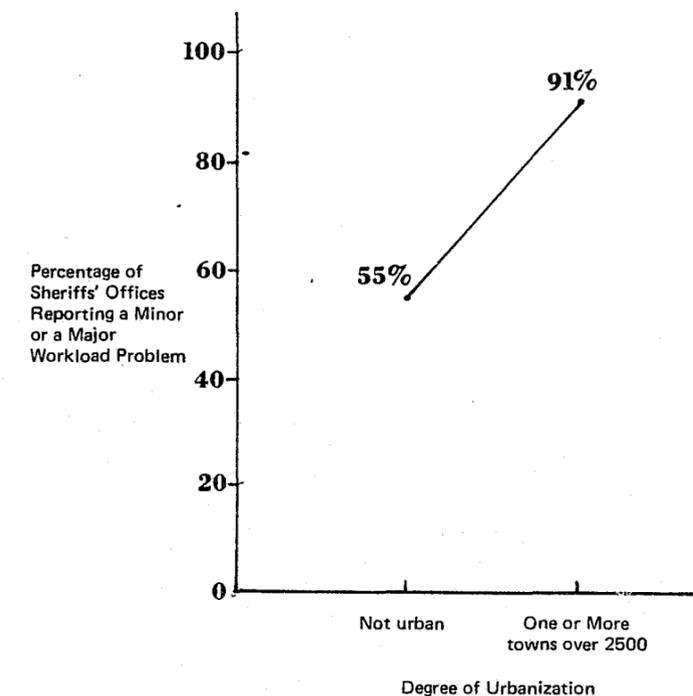
The sheriff's experience (number of years in law enforcement) was related to problems with training and qualifications: agencies with less experienced sheriffs tended to report more problems. This could be due to a number of different reasons. For one, experience may enable the sheriff to make better choices and to provide more training himself. Or, since less experienced sheriffs tend to be younger and to have had more formal education, they may be more critical of the background and training of their staffs.

Training needs may be indirectly related to the crime rate. Both crime rate and problems with training increased among the counties as the number of people per square mile increased. The nature of those training needs could not be determined from the information

**FIGURE 3  
LAND AREA AND WORKLOAD PROBLEMS**



**FIGURE 4  
WORKLOAD PROBLEMS IN RURAL AND URBAN COUNTIES**



gathered in the survey.

Money: Salaries

"Low salaries" is a complaint heard often from criminal justice agencies. Most of the sheriffs having difficulties with their overall budget pinpointed salaries as a minor or major problem. Several agencies regarded salaries as a problem but were satisfied with the rest of their budget.<sup>1</sup>

Within the field of law enforcement, salary levels are highest for the larger departments. Yet it was the large departments and the counties with fairly large towns, as well as those with high crime rates, that tended to report more salary problems. People in these agencies may compare their salaries to the salaries that people in other professions in those towns command. Also, the staff may work harder while on duty when the crime rate is higher and so feel more underpaid than do those who deal with a lower crime rate.

About 25% of the deputy salaries fell into each of the following categories: under \$6000, \$6000-\$7499, \$7500-\$7999, \$8000 or more.<sup>2</sup> Larger departments were more apt to offer better salaries, whether "large" was defined by staff size (Figure 5) or indicated by the more urban nature of a county (Figure 7), but they were also more apt to regard their salary levels as a major problem (Figure 6 and 8). For example, only 36% of the "urban" departments had an average deputy salary under \$7500 per year, but 68% of these departments

1. See the section of this report on expenditure for more information on budgets and budget problems.
2. An average salary was calculated for the deputies in each agency. All but 6 of the sheriffs' offices surveyed had at least one deputy. Over half of the agencies had deputies whose average educational level included some college work. Over half had deputies averaging at least 3 years of experience, with their job or with other positions in law enforcement.

FIGURE 5  
DEPUTY SALARIES IN  
AGENCIES OF VARIOUS SIZES

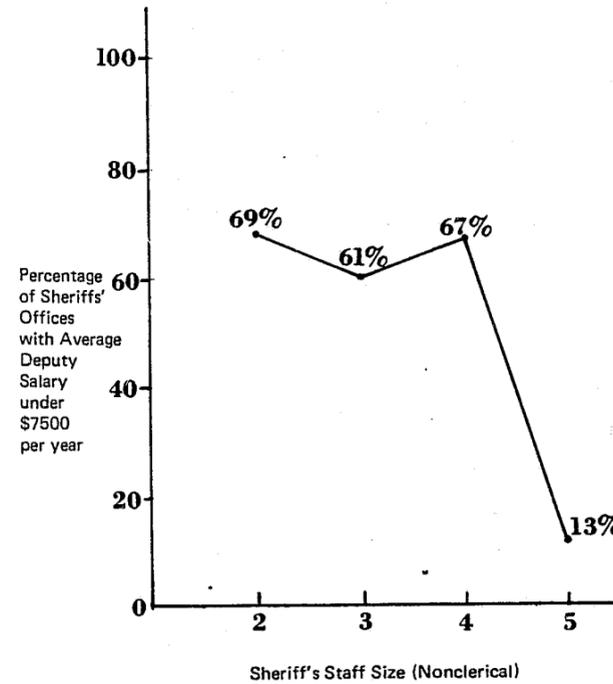


FIGURE 6  
DEPUTY SALARIES IN  
RURAL AND URBAN COUNTIES

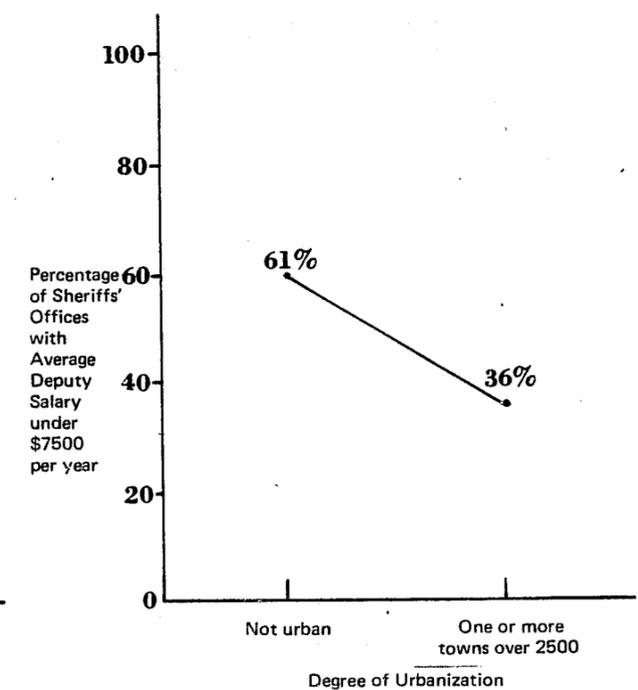


FIGURE 7  
MAJOR SALARY PROBLEMS  
IN AGENCIES OF VARIOUS SIZES

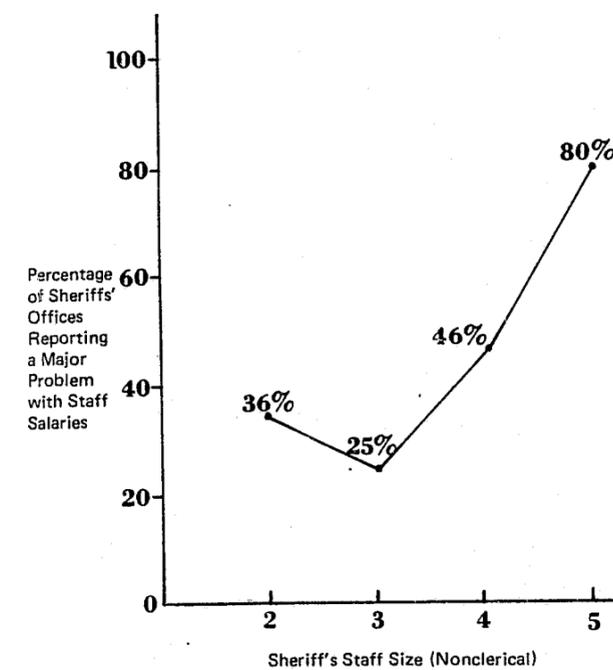
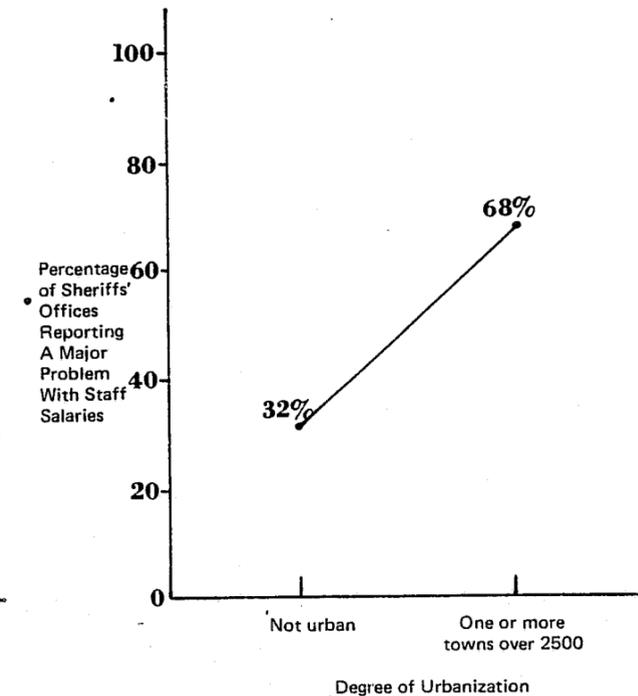


FIGURE 8  
MAJOR SALARY PROBLEMS IN  
RURAL AND URBAN COUNTIES



reported having a major problem with salaries.

Younger, more educated deputies are likely to receive more pay and to work in the larger departments. Agencies with higher deputy salaries did tend to report fewer problems with staff qualifications; salary would be an important factor in recruiting for the larger departments. Still, the increased pay is often not seen as sufficient.

Several of the least populated counties, those with fewer than 5 people per square mile, also reported problems with salaries. At least 9 of the counties with that population density had an average salary for deputies under \$6000. Salaries for part-time deputies were included in the averages; however, the salaries for full-time deputies in a number of these counties were still quite low. Although the sheriffs' salaries are set by statute, the salaries of their staffs are under the control of county commissioners and could be brought into line with those in other agencies.

The middle level of pay for dispatchers, jailors, and clerical workers was \$4750, \$3600, and \$5082, respectively, per year. Because each one of these types of employees was found in fewer than 25% of the counties and because pay was generally low, data on these staff members was not examined further.

#### Rare Problems

Most sheriffs' offices (78%) were comfortable with their status in the community. Those who felt that their status in the community should be improved might have felt that way because of a very basic issue, crime. The 13 agencies defining their status in the community as a problem tended to have higher crime rates in 1975 than the agencies which said they had no problem in this area. However,

the agencies with a status problem were not more likely than the others to mention a need for more programs or activities, such as crime prevention programs or increased patrolling in rural areas.

A few sheriffs' offices have had difficulties with other criminal justice agencies (e.g., the highway patrol) or with agencies having frequent contact with them (e.g., their District Planning Agency). The low percentages of sheriffs' offices reporting problems with other agencies could have been due to a genuine lack of conflicts. On the other hand, sheriffs could have been reluctant to be openly critical of other agencies. Also, some tension between sheriffs and police might be expected as part of the normal working relationship. Only very unusual difficulties might have been reported as a "problem".

#### Effects of Problems

Turnover. A medium or high rate of staff turnover was reported by 13 sheriff's offices (22%). Most explained this as essentially due to poor wages and/or poor working conditions. Those with a higher rate of turnover did tend to report more problems with salaries.

Though there was no difference between the low turnover and the higher turnover counties with regard to actual salary level for deputies, there was a difference with regard to crime rate. As the crime rate rose, more sheriffs reported a medium or high rate of staff turnover and more dissatisfaction with salaries. Also, those having a problem with their status in the community were more likely to have a medium or high rate of turnover than were those without such a problem.

Low status and high crime could create an unfavorable atmosphere, frustrate staff members, and lead to more turnover. This in turn, could leave a less experienced staff, one less able to

deal with events occurring in the community. The crime rate and other problems might then increase as a result of the turnover. Since problems with staff qualifications and training were not rated as more severe where there was high turnover, staff capabilities do not seem to drop appreciably when turnover rate rises.

Agency operations. Problems with workload can occur when an agency is providing services that it would prefer to see taken care of by some other agency: almost half (45%) of the sheriffs' offices mentioned one or more tasks that they would prefer not to handle. Most of the complaints were about civil processes (22%) and delinquent tax collection (19%), which are assigned to the sheriff by statute. Time spent on these activities can interfere with other jobs the sheriff would like to do. Almost 3/4 of the agencies handling objectionable tasks listed activities they would like to take on. Most common was a desire to increase patrol in rural areas and at night.

Budgetary problems are also likely to have a widespread influence on the operations of an agency. Sheriffs' offices having minor or major problems with their budgets were apt to have problems with staff salaries, staff training, equipment, their facility, and their status in the community as well.

## OPINIONS ON REGIONAL CONSOLIDATION

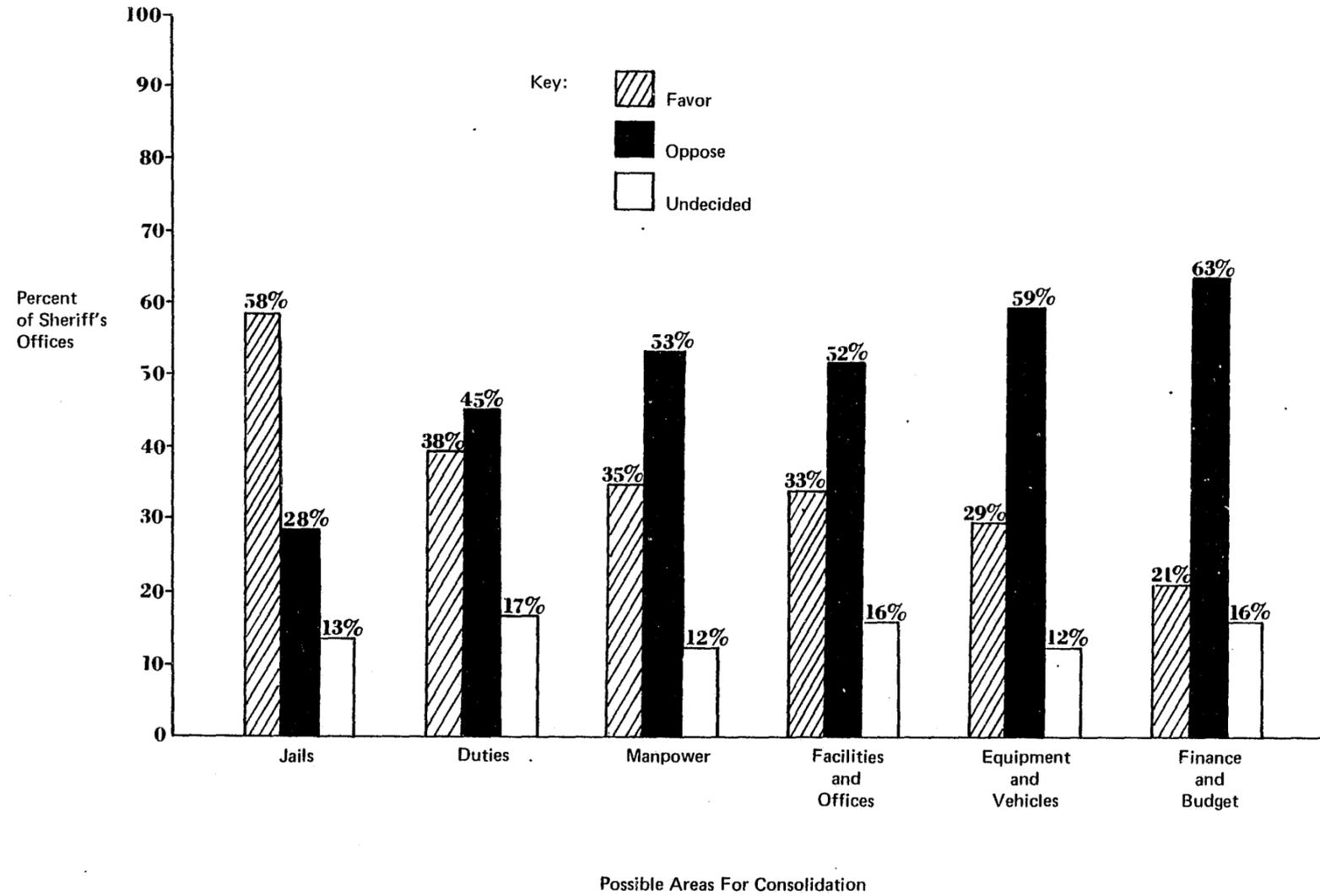
### General Opposition

In every area surveyed except for jails, the balance of opinion was in opposition to regional consolidation. More than half of the sheriffs' offices opposed consolidation of equipment and consolidation of finances. About half of the sheriffs' offices were opposed to consolidation of manpower and to consolidation of offices and facilities, while only a third or so favored regional consolidation in these areas. Jail consolidation was favored by almost 2 to 1. The exact percentages are presented in graphic form in Figure 9, on the following page.

The "region" in regional consolidation could range from a couple of nearby towns to several counties. The size of the region was not specified in the questionnaire, partly because different solutions might be recommended in different parts of the state. There were indications that many sheriffs' offices may have been favoring or opposing countywide consolidation and would not have answered in the same way if the question asked about multi-county combinations.

Those people who did favor consolidation in an area were also apt to favor consolidation in other, similar areas. That is, 72% of those in favor of combining offices and facilities with those of other agencies also thought it would be a good idea to go beyond that and share equipment and vehicles. Of those favoring consolidation of duties such as dispatch and records, 85% endorsed the more general concept of manpower consolidation. Everyone who wanted to combine finances also favored jail consolidation, but 63% of those in favor of jails consolidation preferred to keep their finances and budget separate or were undecided about what the best arrangement would be.

FIGURE 9  
REGIONAL CONSOLIDATION OPINIONS



### Reasons behind Opinions

Jails. Those agencies in favor of regional jail consolidation did not have any one set of characteristics in common, at least among the factors measured. As compared to agencies opposing or undecided about regional jails, they had no worse conditions in their jails, no more population, no less money to spend. Neither were they different in terms of crime rate, county population, or land area.

Some of the opposition to the concept of regional jails may be due to particular ideas about the function of jails in the criminal justice system. A few sheriffs questioned the economic sense of regional jails, especially for short-term prisoners. Also, many seem to feel that rehabilitation programs belong in the penitentiary but not in jails; more sheriffs cited needs for improvements in their jails' physical facilities than for additional personnel or more highly trained personnel. If a regional jail system is to be established the specific purposes such jails might serve and the types of "regions" possible must be clarified.

Opposition to consolidation. The medium-size and large counties were the ones more likely to be in opposition to consolidation of equipment and vehicles, while those with a small land area were more likely to favor it. The agencies with more ground to cover may be more concerned about having access to their equipment at all times and having their vehicles available to go anywhere in the county.

Opposition to regional consolidation in the various areas proposed did not depend on crime rate, department size, population characteristics, or expenditure level. Neither was a problem in a specific area, such as budget, connected to support for consolidation

in a related area, such as finance. However, there was some tendency for agencies having problems with their facility or their equipment or their budget to support consolidation in at least one area. It should be noted that the area in which consolidation was favored was not necessarily the same as the one with the problem.

The general absence of relationships that could explain regional consolidation opinions probably stems from a number of reasons. There may be explanations that were not even touched upon by the survey. It is a controversial topic, and the same person may favor consolidation in some areas while opposing it in others. Some sheriffs may have answered the question on the basis of whether regional consolidation is a good or bad idea in and of itself, while some may have responded on the basis of whether they thought regionalization in each of the areas should be attempted in their counties. Others have countywide law enforcement and spoke from experience. There is undoubtedly disagreement as to whether consolidation is an appropriate solution for particular problems.

**END**