SERIOUS
SCHOOL CRIME

A Review
of the Literature

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A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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I. INTRODUCTION

Public education is one of society's most commendable inventions. And while our own nation can be justly proud of its schools, it must be concerned as well that nothing stand in the way of their continued excellence. One such challenge is the evident rise in serious crime taking place in and around our schools. This increase has been widely observed and frequently described, but acknowledgment that there is a problem is only a first step toward its eradication. Present knowledge of what is happening, why it is happening, and how we might successfully intervene to control and prevent serious crime in our schools is sparse. But we nevertheless can use the information that is at hand to organize our efforts and resources so they will do the most good.

The intent of this survey of literature on school-related crime has been to assemble existing information into an overview of the incidence of more serious offenses, the circumstances that characterize them, their possible causes and antecedents, and the variety of countermeasures that have been applied to curtail them. This has not been an easy task. As will be seen, reporting has been fallible, analyses weak, and research almost nonexistent. Yet there is a valid need for prompt, constructive action to reverse the present trend in school crime--and this survey is aimed at facilitating forthcoming policy and program decisions to accomplish this goal.

The initial dilemma in reviewing school-crime literature was how to reduce the scope of the search to practical bounds. By design, this survey was intended to focus on <u>serious school crime</u> rather than on all offenses in the educational environment, and was directed specifically at <u>offenses occurring in the school setting</u> rather than on those which happened to be perpetrated by school-age offenders or which happened to have occurred on school grounds. These distinctions, of course, are not absolute. But they do attempt to emphasize a growing apprehension over the safety that exists in our schools and the well-being of our children and their teachers.

The following section of this survey deals with the incidence of serious crimes which occur in schools while classes are in session, on the pupils' way to and from school, during school sponsored events, or which substantially disrupt the schooling process. The crimes looked at include homicide, rape and related sex offenses, robbery, assault, burglary or larceny resulting in significant losses, and arson and vandalism to the extent that educational programs are materially disrupted. Confrontations, minor vandalism--although causing heavy losses in the aggregate--and classroom disturbances have been excluded although they certainly deserve further study.

Section III considers the growing rate of these offenses and their distribution in terms of offender characteristics, the locale, and the various school features and practices associated with high and low crime levels.

The hypothesized causes of serious school crime are discussed in Section IV. Here, too, some selectivity was applied to emphasize the distinction between school crime and youthful crime in general. Separating plausible causes along these lines was enormously difficult, however, because poverty, broken homes, social maladjustment, and other conditions seemingly contribute to both sets of offenses. So, as an alternative, an effort was made to emphasize those antecedents of juvenile crime which are uniquely associated with a child's educational development or which otherwise could be open to prevention or remediation by revised school policies and practices. How much of this burden the schools are equipped or willing to undertake is an open issue, one that normally entails many considerations reaching far beyond the classroom. Nevertheless, there is at least some reason to believe the school may be the villain as well as the victim.

Section V reviews reports of a wide variety of efforts to reduce the frequency, severity or consequences of school crime. Unfortunately, few of these interventions are thoroughly enough documented to provide an accurate picture of what was done or what results were achieved. Knowing the range of countermeasures that have been employed elsewhere may be of some practical value, however, and may stimulate the development of sorely needed, generalizable solutions.

Finally, Section VI considers the progress made thus far in understanding and combating school crime along with ways this progress might be accelerated. The first part of this section examines a number of pitfalls

that should be avoided in future research studies and intervention programs focused on school crime. The second part sketches out some appropriate next steps that could well contribute to a resolution of the school crime problem.

This introduction would be incomplete without calling attention to one additional aspect of serious school crime that is barely considered in available literature. As distressing as individual events are, their long-range consequences can be even more damaging. The climate of fear and distrust that almost invariably follows a serious school crime--even without reinforcement through such consequent measures as locked classroom doors or uniformed security officers--can result in as much or more damage to the educational process as the offense itself. And any diminution in the quality of education is likely to fuel the very alienation and frustration which may have precipitated the event in the first place. To the degree that good education acts as a social deterrent to delinquent and criminal acts, school crime may well impact on all children, and breed upon its own history.
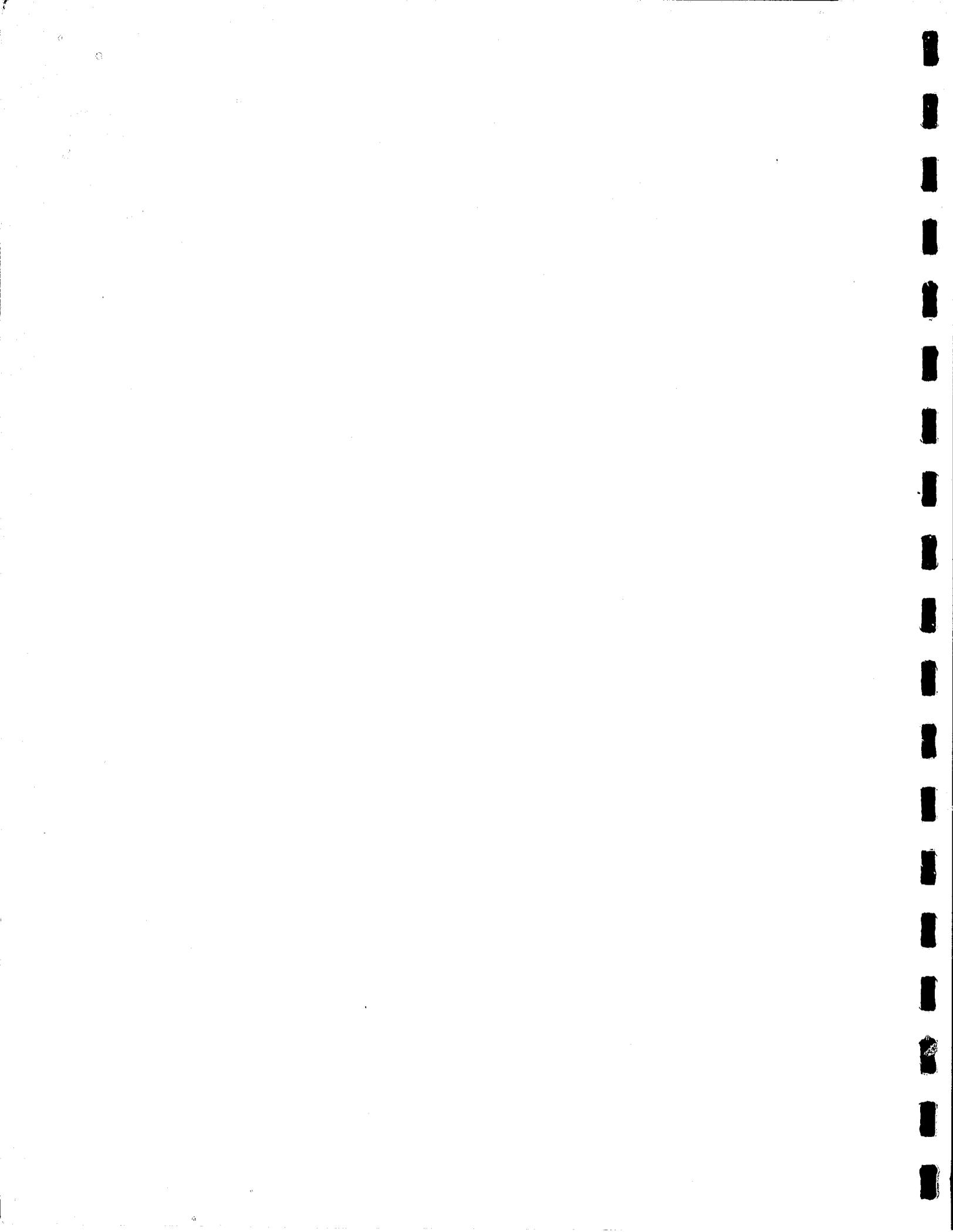
II. INCIDENCE OF SERIOUS SCHOOL CRIME

In order to understand the consequences of serious school crime, it is essential to have an idea of what is happening, whether trends in school crime rates are up or down, and which events are having the most impact. As almost always is the case, there is less information available than one would like and not all of the information that is at hand is even modestly consistent.

Part of the estimation difficulty, of course, is that serious crimes tend to be relatively rare events. Currently, some 45 million children are enrolled in our nation's public schools under the care and supervision of roughly 2.5 million teachers and other staff. Yet, even the most pessimistic reports suggest all school-associated serious crimes total under 530,000 events per year. To put this number in perspective, the Census Bureau (1976) reports school-age children incur approximately 16 million injuries requiring professional medical assistance each year. Estimates of low frequency events tend to be unstable, and by chance may appear to rise or fall precipitously. Thus, estimates made at different times or reflecting different locations--even if they were to employ identical procedures--could vary substantially without suggesting a reliable trend or valid relationship.

This point should be kept in mind as divergent findings are noted in this Section, and recalled later when the suggested causes of school crime are discussed and the impacts of various attempted interventions are considered.

A. National Surveys

Several attempts have been made to develop a nationwide picture of crime in the schools. Although these efforts collectively suffer from several serious limitations, as will be described shortly, they do provide a rough estimate of the magnitude of the overall problem.

1. A survey of the school crime experience of 110 urban school districts was prepared for the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency in 1970 (McGowan, 1973). Figures were collected for 1964 and 1968:*

	1964	1968	Percentage Increase
Homicide	15	26	73
Forcible Rape	51	81	61
Robbery	396	1,508	306
Aggravated Assault . . .	475	680	43
Burglary, Larceny. . . .	7,604	14,102	86
Weapons Offenses	419	1,089	136
Narcotics	73	854	1,069
Drunkenness	370	1,035	179
Crimes by Nonstudents. .	142	3,894	2,600
Vandalism Incidents. . .	186,184	250,549	35
Assault on Teachers. . .	25	1,081	7,100
Assault on Students. . .	1,601	4,267	167
Other.	4,796	8,824	84

2. A study by Senator Bayh's Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency (Report Card, 1975) requested data from 757 of the larger public school districts, enrolling about half of the country's students, on their experience with crime between 1970 and 1973. Published information from this survey consists only of changes in reported rates and not, except for selected locations, in actual numbers of incidents. The figures are based on replies from 516, or 68.1%, of the districts that responded either to the original questionnaire or to a follow-up letter:

> Homicides increased by 18.5 percent;
> Rapes and attempted rapes increased by 40.1 percent;
> Robberies increased by 36.7 percent;
> Assaults on students increased by 85.3 percent;
> Assaults on teachers increased by 77.4 percent;
> Burglaries of school buildings increased by 11.8 percent;
> Drug and alcohol offenses on school property increased by 37.5 percent.

3. The National Education Association (1976) prepared an estimate of the nationwide incidence of school crime during 1975. They do not describe the source of their figures, nor how this extrapolation to the country as a whole was made:

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*These data have been reproduced in a number of reports. Unfortunately, apparent typographical errors have caused the figures from various sources to differ slightly. The astute observer also may note that several minor computational mistakes in the percent-increase column have been carried over from one source to the next.

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homicide . . . . . . . . . . . .         100
armed robberies. . . . . . . . .      12,000
rape . . . . . . . . . . . . . .       9,000
aggravated assaults (on
    teachers and students) . . .     240,000
burglary . . . . . . . . . . . .      270,000
vandalism . . . . . . . . . . .    $600 million
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These widely quoted figures are strikingly similar to those attributed to the National Association of School Security Directors by U.S. News and World Report (1975, p. 37) for 1974:*

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homicide . . . . . . . . . . . . . .     not given
armed robberies . . . . . . . . . .         11,160
rape and other sex offenses  . . . .         8,568
major assaults . . . . . . . . . . .       189,332
burglaries . . . . . . . . . . . . .       256,000
estimated cost of school crime . . .  $600-$700 million
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4.   An unpublished study by the National Education Association, cited by the Institute for Development of Educational Activities (1974, p. 3), and later quoted by several authors was based on "... a random survey comparing current problems with those of 1970." This comparison revealed:

- in-school assault and battery increased by 58 percent
- school robberies increased by 117 percent
- sex offenses increased by 62 percent
- drug problems increased by 81 percent

5.   The need for better data on the incidence of school crime was recognized by Congress in the Educational Amendments Act of 1974 (PL93-380). Section 825 directed the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare to conduct a Safe School Study to obtain this information. Part of this effort consisted of a survey of 8,000 schools in 4,000 school districts by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Figures were collected on the numbers of offenses committed on school premises between 1 September 1974 and 31 January 1975 which had been reported to the police. These results are to be combined with a companion study being conducted by the National Institute of Education in a report now scheduled for release in August 1977. In the meanwhile, preliminary data on the survey itself have been released by the NCES (1976) under the Freedom of Information Act.

The following table shows national estimates based on the combined numbers of more serious crimes reported to NCES both in schools and on school

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*It has not been possible to determine the derivation of these figures, and they are not included in available articles by, or testimony of, the officers of National Association of School Security Directors for 1974 through 1976.

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property; the cited figures have been doubled to reflect a full, ten-month school year:

rape	707
robbery	21,133
assault	66,733
personal theft	129,540
burglary	234,883
arson	14,531
weapons offenses	22,136
all property loss	$179 million

6. Finally, the House Subcommittee on Equal Opportunities (1976) heard from B. C. Watson on his study of school crime in 15 U.S. cities, all with more than fifty percent minority students, and representing a total enrollment of slightly more than 2 million. Figures on specific crimes are reported for seven of these cities with a total enrollment of about 1.7 million, or about four percent of the total national school population of about 45 million. If both Watson's "mean rate" and the median rate from the seven cities are used to calculate the incidence of serious school crimes nationwide, the results are:

	mean	median
homicide	450	180
sex offenses	6,795	7,515
robbery, extortion	33,840	26,100
assault	131,670	101,475
larceny, theft	167,625	135,540
burglary	241,875	260,145
arson	16,200	10,260
weapons violations	33,480	35,280

B. Sources of Discrepancies

There obviously is considerable room for error in all of these findings as most of their authors--and several critics of individual studies--point out. The principal themes of these criticisms are:

1. Sampling. The majority of these studies focused their attention on larger school districts, those with enrollments of 10,000 or more. This tends to emphasize crime rates in urban areas which, according to the NCES survey, may reach a level for certain school crimes as large as three times what it is in nonmetropolitan areas (e.g., assault has an annualized rate of 2.34 per thousand pupils in central metropolitan schools, but .42 per thousand in nonmetropolitan schools; robbery has rates of .83 and .17 respectively). And the sampling process itself, as noted earlier, can lead to potentially large

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errors of estimate when the real frequency of crimes is low, as in the case of homicide and rape.

2. <u>Definitions</u>. Each study, by and large, appears to have defined specific crimes somewhat differently or allowed the reporting school official to decide what was to be included. As will be described shortly, this can have enormous impact on tabulating crimes such as assault or sex offenses. Then, too, there is the problem of which crimes are to be counted: those involving students and teachers exclusively, and occurring within the school during regular classroom hours versus such events as a nightime rape that happened to take place on school grounds or a store robbery that happened to be committed by a school student. The severity of an event also may influence what is counted as an offense, as in the case of arson or vandalism.

3. <u>Reporting</u>. Many school crimes are likely to be underreported. This is particularly true of the NCES study which addressed only crimes reported to the police. But there also is a tendency for school officials not to report crimes when they believe the offense is better handled administratively, for teachers not to report crimes when they fear this will be taken as evidence of their own incompetence, and for pupils not to report crimes when they are afraid of retaliation. To make matters worse, many schools or school districts do not maintain adequate records of crimes, and the accuracy of their reports depends on the accuracy of some official's recall. Estimates of underreporting range from between 30 and 60 percent (Kemble, 1975), to three to five times (Burton, 1975), to more than tenfold (National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education, 1973), to only one in twenty (U.S. News and World Report, 1975). Cross (1976, p. 30) quotes Stalford, Program Administrator of the Safe School Study, as saying that the forthcoming NIE crime-specific study will show "... a vast discrepancy between the number of crimes reported by students and teachers and those by principals ... by a magnitude of twenty to one."

C. Specific Crime Estimates

Although the three principal estimates of current levels of crime in the schools (NEA/NASSD, NCES, and Watson) do not differ beyond the limits of sampling error in most categories, they do in others. And all sets of estimates deserve some comment to clarify what is represented by offenses in that category. Given the problems of sampling, definition, and reporting just described, it is not possible to provide a "true" picture of what is going on. On the other

hand, it is important to understand these figures and their implications if appropriate countermeasures are to be selected to meet the needs of an individual school or school district.

1. Homicide.

> In May 1975, a 17-year-old Largo Senior High School student was shot to death during an argument with four other youths in the school parking lot. He had been shot once in the chest with a handgun. Witnesses, including between 50 and 75 other students in the school parking lot at the time, said the victim was sitting in a car and had begun arguing with the four youths when he was shot. At the time, he was scheduled to be in physical education class. It was not known whether the four youths were students or outsiders. (SVVH, 1976a, p. 330)

> In March 1975, a Cooper High School student was shot after leaving the school bus. An argument had taken place on the bus between the victim and another student while the bus was en route to Cooper High School. Upon leaving the bus, the assailant pulled a weapon from his pocket and shot the victim one time. The victim subsequently died of the gunshot wound. (SVVH, 1976a, p. 156)

Homicides occurring in or at school or while going to and from school clearly are rare events. Only 9 actually were reported in Watson's survey (1976), of which 6 occurred in Los Angeles. Los Angeles reported only one fatality in 1973-4, however, and none for the 1974-5 school year (SVVH, 1976a, p. 164). There were two homicides in the Chicago schools in each of the 1972-3 and 1973-4 school years (SVVH, 1976a, p. 123). A report from the State of Washington (Seattle, 1973) included one homicide in 1972 for about half the state's school population. Most cities report none in their descriptions of crimes in their schools.

In terms of rates, the Chicago and Washington State experiences are on the order of .03 and .02 per 10,000 students rather than the .10 calculated for Los Angeles in 1976. If the median of Watson's rates is used instead of the mean,* the estimate would be .04 per 10,000, for a projected national incidence of 180. Even this may be high to the extent that homicide is probably more of an urban crime, thus one more likely associated with very large school districts. Even so, these rates suggest that cities the size of New Orleans or St. Louis, with school populations of about 100,000, are likely to experience no more than one school homicide each two or three years.

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*Because of the way the mean rate was computed, without weighting results by enrollment, the mean well may be an overestimate.

2. Rape and Sex Offenses.

> In Pensacola, a 15-year-old girl was abducted at gunpoint at a
> dance at the Pensacola High School by a man who took her to the
> school parking lot and raped her. The girl related that the
> young man, in his early twenties, invited her to dance. As
> they began dancing, he pulled out a gun and forced her to go
> with him. (SVVH, 1976a, p. 210)

> In 1975, at Woodson High School, a girl student was dragged
> into a girl's bathroom and stripped of her clothes by other
> girls, who then invited boys in to take a look. (SVVH, 1976a, p. 569)

The data on sex offenses may include only forcible rape, or may encompass lewd exposure, prostitution, sexual abuse, and other offenses (even "streaking" has been reported). This may explain the very substantive differences in reported rates. There also may be considerable variability across the country in the tendency to report rapes and other sex offenses to the police even when these crimes become known to school officials. And, finally, there is the problem of where the offense occurred. According to the NCES survey (1976), one fourth of school rapes take place outside the building, and no data were collected on rapes occurring on the way to or from school.

The Washington State survey (Seattle, 1973) yields a rate for sex offenses of about 1.5 per 10,000 for 1972. New York City reported 26 rapes for 1973, or about .26 per 10,000 (Report Card, 1975), but five for the 1973-4 school year, or about .05 per 10,000 (SVVH, 1976a, p. 98). Since another NYC schools report (SVVH, 1976a, p. 373) indicates 44 as the total for all sex offenses for the year ending March 1973, the rape data suggesting a rate of .26 per 10,000 either may be an error or an unusual chance fluctuation. The Chicago schools report one rape in the 1972-3 school year and two in the 1973-4 school year, or an average rate of less than .03 per 10,000 (SVVH, 1976a, p. 123). Bellevue, Washington, reported four sex offenses--indecent exposure, child molestation, and indecent liberties--for the 1973-4 school year, a rate of 1.8 per 10,000 (SVVH, 1976a, p. 279). The only other generalizable report on rape located was for Dade County for the 1974-5 school year. Twenty-two rapes and 30 other sex offenses were reported, yielding an approximate rate for rape of .89 per 10,000 and for all sex offenses of 2.11 per 10,000 (SVVH, 1976a, p. 564). There were 7 rapes in the Washington, D.C. schools or on school grounds in 1974, plus nine cases of sodomy (SVVH, 1976a, p. 570), for rates of .53 per 10,000 for rape and 1.23 for both offenses combined.

The .14 rate of rape, combining in-school and school grounds offenses, obtained in the NCES (1976) survey is lower than suggested by these other figures, particularly in light of the relatively even distribution of rape cases reported among elementary and secondary schools and across metropolitan and nonmetropolitan districts. A more realistic figure might be in the order of .20 rapes per 10,000, and 1.5 total sex offenses per 10,000, yielding national estimates of 900 rapes and 6750 total sex offenses per year.

3. Assaults.

> In 1974, a 17 year-old girl in a Detroit city high school was awarded $25,000 in damages for physical and psychological injuries following an incident where she was attacked by about thirty of her classmates who knocked her down, beat her and stabbed her with pencils. The motive behind the incident was a feeling among these students that the victim was more attractive and had better grades. (Report Card, 1975, p. 24)

> In a Fayette County High School, a female teacher was slapped in the face and knocked to the floor by a 15 year-old male student as she was attempting to complete a disciplinary report on the boy for defiance and class disruption.(SVVH, 1976a, p. 314)

The frequency of school assaults should make the data more stable, but there is still a wide discrepancy between the NEA estimate (1976) of 240,000, the NCES estimate (1976) of 66,733, and the projection from Watson's survey (1976) of between 101,000 and 131,000. Part of the problem certainly is in the definition of an assault, the location where it occurred, and the likelihood that the victim would report it.

In the NCES survey, only offenses reported to the police are included. A Detroit reporter who requested a breakdown of the 134 "assaults on students or teachers" recorded by school security personnel during a two-and-a-half month period in 1973, found that only three of the victims had required medical treatment; other cases included "shoving matches between teachers and students or, in one case, a student snatching a wig from a teacher's head" (SVVH, 1976a, p. 551). In principle, even playground fights between two eight-year-olds or the use of certain four-letter words in the presence of a teacher can be--and are--considered assault by some school districts. Although disciplinary action may be appropriate, police involvement is not.

The importance of a lack of uniform criteria for what might be considered an assault is suggested by some 1974-5 data on the Los Angeles County Schools (Lucas, 1977). The reported figures yield an annual rate

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in the neighborhood of 5.3 per 10,000 for assaults on students, 72.5
per 10,000 for assaults on teachers, and in the 2,000.0 per 10,000 for
assaults on school security officers! Anecdotal evidence seems to be con-
sistent with the probable tendency for students to apply more stringent stand-
ards and then underreport even more serious assaults, while school staff may
even overreport these offenses in extreme cases to facilitate a transfer to a
"better" school or to rid their classroom of a perturbing youngster.

Another source of discrepancy among the survey findings has to do with
the location of the incident. The NCES survey counted only those events that
occurred on school grounds. This is perhaps too narrow a focus considering
the possibility a student will be beaten on the way to or from school as a
consequence of gang activity, for example, or that students from rival schools
may be assaulted after an athletic event. Teachers and staff, on the other
hand, are less likely to encounter these problems beyond the school's grounds
or, if they do, may be less likely to interpret an offense as school related.

There are a number of sources of specific figures on school assaults
which make it possible to separate events with students and staff as victims.
Senator Bayh's Subcommittee, for example, released figures (Report Card, 1975)
which permit the calculation of annual rates for teachers in various locations:

Philadelphia	165 teacher assaults in 1973	150/10,000 teachers
Boston	139 teacher assaults in 1973	350/10,000 teachers
Chicago	2,217 teacher assaults for 3 years	350/10,000 teachers
Cleveland	672 teacher assaults for 3 years	370/10,000 teachers
Indianapolis	19 teacher assaults in 1973	40/10,000 teachers
Phoenix	16 teacher assaults, 1972-3	160/10,000 teachers

and for pupils:

Indianapolis	142 student assaults in 1973	10/10,000 pupils
Phoenix	138 student assaults, 1972-3	60/10,000 pupils

Chicago (SVVH, 1976a, p. 123) tabulated four categories of assault offenses
for the 1972-3 and 1973-4 school year. Severe assaults were defined as those
resulting in grievous injury or requiring hospitalization:

	1972-3	1973-4	Average rate
Severe assault on employees	12	10	2.2/10,000 staff
Severe assaults on students	69	96	1.5/10,000 pupils
Verbal assaults on employees	490	434	92.4/10,000 staff
Physical assaults on employees	813	930	174.3/10,000 staff

Bellevue, Washington (SVVH, 1976a, p. 279), reported 10 assaults on students and two on staff in 1973-4, for approximate rates of 4.6 per 10,000 students and 10 per 10,000 staff. The rates for New York City for 1973-4 (SVVH, 1976a, p. 397) were approximately 6.6 per 10,000 students, and 145.0/10,000 for teachers (there actually were more assaults on teachers reported, 725, than on students, 658). Dade County in the 1974-5 school year recorded assault rates of 37.3 per 10,000 students and 93.8 per 10,000 staff (SVVH, 1976a, p. 564). Watson (1976) reports a mean assault rate of 21.3/10,000 students and roughly 116/10,000 teachers.

These very considerable differences between rates depending on reporting standards and whether the victim is student or teacher shed some light on why the NEA estimate (equivalent to 51/10,000 students and teachers combined), the NCES results (equivalent to 15/10,000), and the Watson mean rate (given as 29/10,000) are so uneven. In general, the schools appear to record an assault rate three to five times higher for teachers than for pupils, but a high percentage of teacher assaults seem to fall outside of what would be meant by a "serious school crime" (Watson cites an example of an elementary school child who during a temper tantrum kicked over a chair which struck a teacher).

If seriousness is measured by whether the incident is reported to the police--although this may be an overly harsh standard--(the NCES data), and offenses against pupils and teachers are distributed in the ratio of four to one (as Watson's findings suggests), it is possible to estimate national figures of approximately 13,347 assaults on teachers (53.4/10,000 teachers) and 53,386 assaults on pupils (11.9/10,000 students) per year. This teacher rate is still considerably higher than what were recorded as "severe assaults" in the Chicago report cited above, and therefore may be reasonably descriptive of what most people term "assault." This pupil rate, reflecting more stringent standards, is likely to be too low, however, and it would be prudent to assume that the number would be roughly twice as large if identical criteria were applied to students and teachers.

4. Robbery.

> In Los Angeles, a kindergarten teacher was robbed at gunpoint in front of her class. The teacher reported that a bandit walked into her classroom at the 95th Street Elementary School with a pistol in his hand and robbed her of five dollars and her engagement and wedding rings. She was then forced at gunpoint to an empty building next door, where she was ordered to take off all her clothes so he would have more time to escape.
> (SVVH, 1976a, p. 209)

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In 1973, three third-grade pupils in Winston Salem were charged
with robbery for forcing two 9-year-old classmates to pay nearly
$1,000 in extortion payments over an eight-month period. The
boys, two 9 and one 11 threatened their classmates with beatings
or death if the money was not paid. What had begun as lunch
money extortion on the second day of school soon developed into
$10 and $20 payments. The scheme was discovered when one
victim's father missed a $100 bill from his wallet. (SVVH, 1976a, p. 574)

Robbery and extortion, like assault, are crimes that seem to vary consider-
ably in severity, and reported frequencies will depend on how effectively
robbery is distinguished from larceny. Except for occasions such as athletic
events, school dances or fund drives, schools are not likely to be the source
of substantial amounts of cash and personal valuables. Student-on-student
extortion, on the other hand, may be much more prevalent than the various
surveys indicate. Offenses of this kind, although often limited to small
amounts of change or even pencils and marbles, have been reported where the
threat includes the destruction of homework and "pass privileges" to the
lavatory as well as the direct threat of physical harm.

Even small losses can be enormously significant to a young child, however.
As one school official points out (SVVH, 1976a, p. 318), an incident may be revealed
only after many months when reasons are sought for a child's dropping grades,
nervousness and irritability, and actual hunger when arriving home from school.
It must be true that many robbery and extortion offenses are never brought
to light, that many children are victimized repeatedly without affecting the
"count," and that many of these events are never reported to the police.

Both the police report criterion and the likely location of most such
robberies, on the way to or from school rather than on school grounds, may
partially explain the relatively lower rate of 4.7/10,000 reported in the
NCES survey compared with Watson's results. The NCES survey also indicates
that central metropolitan schools experience roughly five times as high a
robbery rate as nonmetropolitan schools, which would account for Watson's
finding of 7.5 robberies per 10,000 students in his study of large-city
schools. The 1973 Washington State tabulation (Seattle, 1973) yields a
robbery rate of approximately 2.2/10,000, New York City experienced a robbery
rate of about 1.9/10,000 for the 1973-4 school year (SVVH, 1976a, p. 98), and
in Chicago the robbery rate averaged roughly .9/10,000 for the 1972-3 and
1973-4 school years (SVVH, 1976a, p. 123). Dade County reported a rate for
robbery of .8/10,000 for 1974-5 (SVVH, 1976a, p. 564). The NEA estimate is
equivalent to a rate of some 2.7/10,000 (1976, p. 3).

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5. Larceny and Burglary.

> In November, 1974 six of the House Springs, Missouri High
> School's star football players were identified as having been
> responsible for the theft of $6,000 in equipment from the
> school. Because they often had to come to school when the
> building was closed, they had been given master keys which
> permitted them to enter not only the building but all the
> rooms as well. The police were not informed and only
> administrative action was taken. The boys were suspended
> for the remainder of the year although all were able to
> enroll in other schools. All were members of substantial
> families in the community. (SVVH, 1976a, p. 254)

> In Wynnefield, vandals entered an elementary school over a
> holiday weekend. They killed all the school pets, including
> hamsters, goldfish, and birds, in more than 25 of the 40
> classrooms. They also rifled teachers' desks, ransacked
> supply closets, and stole 30 cassette tape recorders and
> an adding machine as well as $35 in cash. (SVVH, 1976a, p. 210)

Burglary in the schools often is associated with vandalism and arson,
but which precipitates the other is not clear. Supplies and equipment--
much of it with little intrinsic or open-market retail value--regularly
disappear from schools at nights and on weekends at a substantial cost both
in replacement dollars and reduced instructional effectiveness. School
budgets rarely provide for the replacement of stolen equipment during a
school year so the theft of projectors, typewriters or band instruments may
be felt for many months. When a set of walkie-talkies valued at about
$10,000 was stolen from the principal's office of a New York City School,
the schools' security guards were no longer able to contact one another
(SVVH, 1976a, p. 247). Boston equipped several schools with alarm systems;
five of the systems were stolen in one year (Slaybaugh, 1975).

Burglary is one offense where the various estimates of incidence agree
closely. The NEA estimate was 240,000 per year, the NCES estimate was 235,000,
and the estimate based on Watson's mean was 242,000. These all represent an
approximate rate of 53.3 offenses per 10,000 students per year. This con-
sistancy is reflected in the lack of any appreciable difference in burglary
rates between central metropolitan and nonmetropolitan schools in the NCES
survey. Rates do seem to vary from one community to another, however. For
1972 through 1974, the Chicago burglary rate averaged a very low .5/10,000
(only 26.5 reported offenses per year) while Dade County experienced a rate of
73.0/10,000 in 1974-5 (there were 1797 reported breaking and entering offenses for

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the period)(SVVH, 1976a, p. 123, 564). Chicago perhaps confined its report to particularly significant incidents or those not associated with vandalism.

Larceny seems at least as frequent, although much of it may involve relatively insignificant dollar losses. According to a New York city teacher (SVVH, 1976a, p. 247):

> Teachers have had their wallets stolen out of their pocketbooks and pocketbooks have been stolen off desk tops in full view of an entire class while the teacher was conducting a lesson. Students have gone up to write on the chalkboard only to return to their seats to find their wallets, pocketbooks, coats or shoes stolen. Despite the fact that we have guards on duty in the locker rooms, the number of reported thefts for such items as money, clothing, jewelry, books, bus passes and lunchroom passes is highest there.

Thefts of automobiles or their contents from school parking lots, and of students' bicycles from school racks are reported frequently. The disappearance of books from the school library and money, clothing or personal possessions from a student's desk or locker are commonplace.

There again is relatively good agreement between Watson's mean rate of 37.2/10,000 and the NCES projection of 28.8/10,000 for larceny (neither the NEA nor NASSD estimates include larceny or theft). Once again, however, individual communities seem to differ substantially, either in their reporting criteria or in their security practices. Dade County experienced a larceny rate of 98.9/10,000 in 1974-5; the reported rate in New York City schools was roughly 3.5/10,000 in 1973-4; and in Los Angeles it averaged 66.4/10,000 in the 1972-3 and 1973-4 school years (SVVH, 1976a, p. 564, 397, 164).

6. Arson and Major Vandalism.

> In a Fayette County school, two elementary school pupils, boys 9 and 12 years old, entered a portable classroom at their school and totally destroyed the contents. Over $4,000 damage resulted when books, displays, paint, glue and human feces was strewn around the room. Projectors, tape recorders and other equipment was destroyed. Several fires were attempted.(SVVH, 1976a, p. 319)

> In 1974, a fire at Newport High in Bellevue, Washington, destroyed the building housing the learning resource center. The million dollar loss also included approximately 40,000 volumes, about 10,000 periodicals, and a considerable amount of audiovisual equipment. Some of the publications which had taken the librarian ten years to accumulate were irreplacable. The fire was set by molotov cocktails following a student beer party where burning the school was suggested. Police arrested one 16 year old and three 18 years olds who pleaded guilty. (SVVH, 1976a, p. 281)

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Arson, bombings and related offenses tend to be more completely documented than most other school crimes because of the existence of specialized reporting networks for these crimes. Grealy (1974a) reports there were 188 actual bombing incidents in schools in 1972, and 6,689 telephoned bomb threats to schools in 1973. In his Subcommittee testimony (SVVH, 1976a, p. 202), Grealy points out that because of the police and fire personnel response to a typical bomb threat, the cost is between two and three thousand dollars.

Arson is a particularly disruptive and damaging event at a school although injury and loss of life from school fires are quite rare events. A report by the National Fire Protection Association (1973) estimates a total of 20,500 school fires of all kinds in 1971; roughly three-fourths of the 155 fires actually reported in the survey were believed to be deliberately caused. According to Strom (1974), nearly eighty percent of all school fires occur when classes are not in session. Perhaps because of the structural damage, losses from incendiary fires exceed those of any other category of vandalism--glass breakage, property destruction, and equipment theft--and amount to thirty to forty percent of the total cost of vandalism (Slaybaugh, 1975; School Product News, 1976).

Several attempts have been made to calculate the total cost of school vandalism. A study by Market Data Retrieval for 1972-3 (Marvin et al., 1976) estimated losses nationwide at $260 million, or $5.65 per pupil, because of vandalism plus another $240 million for security support services. On the basis of their survey of districts enrolling nearly five million pupils, Furno and Wallace (1972) estimated the total cost of vandalism at $150 million, with 29% due to glass breakage, 35% to larceny, 22% to property destruction, and 14% to arson. A survey of 36 districts across the country for the City of Baltimore (Baltimore, 1975) yielded a median vandalism cost of $1.96 per pupil for 1972-73. Greenberg et al. (1975) reports a loss of $1.05 per pupil in a representative California school district for 1974-5. The NCES study yields a figure of $180 million per school year, or $4.00 per pupil. Brenton (1975) cites a vandalism cost of $2.79 per Los Angeles student in 1972-3, and costs of about $4.80 and $3.80 per New York City student in 1972 and 1973 respectively.

Schools may vary considerably in their reported per pupil vandalism costs from all causes due to the number of destructive fires that occur. Bellevue, Washington, for example, experienced property losses of $1.35, $1.44, $2.11, and $3.03 per pupil for the 1970-1 through 1973-4 school years, but then was

faced with a loss estimated at $55.00 per pupil in 1974-5 as the result of three very destructive fires (SVVH, 1976a, p. 281). Prince Georges County in Maryland suffered seven major fires in a fifteen-week period in 1974 (Juvenile Justice Digest, 1975). Watson (1976) reports losses from vandalism among 12 cities ranging between $.14 (Gary) and $9.14 (Berkeley) per pupil in 1974-5, with a median figure of $4.21. Davis and Thomson (1976) estimate the cost of all school crime and disruption at $12 billion annually, or over $250.00 per pupil. This is considerably out of line with all other estimates, however. The NCES nationwide, current figure of around $4.00 per pupil or $180 million may be more accurate. This estimate is slightly higher than the one developed by School Product News (1976), which reported that per pupil losses of $3.48 in the 1973-4 school year were reduced to $3.38 in 1974-5.

D. Summary

The current level of school crime indicates there is a major problem, although the level reached thus far is not as overwhelming as some reports suggest. While we do not believe comparisons between the level of crime in the schools and the much higher level that might be reached in surrounding neighborhoods is very productive, schools seem relatively safe. But in answer to the question, "Are schools safe?", the answer has to be no, not as safe as they could be and certainly not as safe as they should be from the point of view of parent, child or teacher. Very few children or school staff ever will experience--or for that matter witness--a homicide, sex offense, assault or robbery in or around their school. Yet the trend toward an increasing incidence of school crime is unmistakable.

At the present time, we believe differences in sampling bases, categorical definitions, and reporting standards make the development of a national picture of serious school crime enormously difficult. Nevertheless, decisions regarding sometimes costly remedies will be made on the grounds of whatever information is available and, for this purpose, some composite estimate may be better than none at all. On the basis of the analyses reported above, the following rough estimates seem to describe the current incidence of serious school offenses.

		per 10,000 students		incidence
Homicides		.04		170
Sex Offenses:	rape	.20	900	
	other	1.30	5,850	
	total	1.50		6,750
Assaults:	teacher	2.96	13,300	
	pupil	23.73	106,800	
	total	26.69		120,100
Robbery, Extortion		5.49		24,700
Burglary		53.33		240,000
Larceny, Theft		32.89		148,000
Arson/Vandalism		$4.00/pupil		$180 million

Most of these estimates, as described in the text, are more or less consistent with the three leading sources: the NEA estimate, the NCES national survey, and Watson's survey of a number of metropolitan school districts, once the reasons for discrepancies have been sifted (e.g., NEA's tabulation of all sex offenses under "rape"). The arson/vandalism figure given here, incidentally, is not meant to include the cost of all school crime, as it did in the NASSD (U.S. News, 1975) estimate, or the cost of petty vandalism which often is more rightfully regarded as ordinary wear and tear.

III. SCHOOL CRIME TRENDS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Even if the incidence of serious school crime may be less than
some narrators would lead us to believe, its rate seems to be growing at an
alarming pace. Not all schools are equally affected, however. And through
such differences, it may be possible to characterize circumstances which
differentiate between high and low rates. These patterns in the appearance
of school crime might serve both as clues to possible causes and as targets
for possible remedies.

Studies focused on identifying the conditions that typify school crime
have been meager. This is not altogether surprising in light of the overall
infrequency of serious offenses, and the corresponding need to amass a very
sizable sample of data in order to draw meaningfully stable conclusions.
Some applicable findings have been reported, on the other hand, and this
information--together with various observations and anecdotes that comprise
much of the literature in this area--form at least a rudimentary picture of
school crime trends, offenders, and settings.

A.   Trends in School Crime

Although there is some question as to the rigor involved in calculating
trends in serious school offenses over time, there are sufficient reports
from different sources to show that the rate of school crime has climbed
substantially over the past several years. The table below summarizes some
of the findings described in the preceding section (McGowan, 1973; Report
Card, 1975; IDEA, 1974) in terms of reported percentage increases. Percentage
figures based on data collected by Kiernan (1975) on the incidence of certain
crimes in a large suburban high school in Illinois have been added.

Offense	McGowan 1964-68	Report Card 1970-73	IDEA 1970-74	Kiernan 1971-74
homicide	73%	18.5%		
rape, attempted rape	61%	40.1%	62%*	
robbery	376%	36.7%	117%	
burglary, larceny	85%	11.8%		304%
assaults on teachers	7100%	77.4%	} 58%	-8%
assaults on students	167%	85.3%		

*all sex offenses

Watson (1976), in his study reported to the House Equal Opportunities Sub-committee, collected usable data on reported school assaults from six communities for the 1972-3, 1973-4, and 1974-5 school years. In converting this information to percentages, Watson's rate figures--rather than reported frequencies--were used to eliminate the effects of fluctuating enrollments. The table shows percent changes from one year to the next.

| | student assaults | | teacher assaults | |
Location	1972-3 to 73-4	1973-4 to 74-5	1972-3 to 73-4	1973-4 to 74-5
Baltimore	90%	116%	32%	126%
Berkeley	-50	19	-50	-28
Dade County	-10	52	-23	38
Detroit	27	41	-14	01
Gary	54	-85	-15	-82
Los Angeles	57	-14	48	-04

The numbers in both tables are widely erratic, so much so as to raise real doubt over their accurate interpretation.** And one might as easily presume changes in reporting willingness and accuracy as changes in underlying frequencies. It is entirely possible, in other words, for the real crime rate in schools to have remained more or less constant over the past several years and yet appear to rise because more teachers, parents, students and school administrators are reporting crimes that may not have been reported--or even recorded--in the past.

There certainly are more articles being published on school crime than ever before, and this publicity may itself stimulate the collection of more

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**And the magnitude of these year-to-year fluctuations should be a major concern of any study which attempts to assess the success, or failure, of a school-crime intervention program.

data. In Watson's study, for example, none of the six cities cited above were able to supply information on their experience with student assaults for the 1969-70 school year. This grew to two each for the 1970-1 and 1971-2 school years; all six have compiled figures on assault since 1972.

Records of the Office of School Security for the New York City Board of Education (SVVH, 1976a; p. 405) show an increase of 60 percent in reported incidents between the 1972-3 and 1973-4 school years. However, they caution that:

> The temptation to draw firm conslusions from a comparison between statistics of the current year and previous years must be resisted.... In previous years there was no regularized, standard method of collecting the incidents... (but 1973-4) produced a sound, comprehensive and accurate data base which will ... (provide) a reliable comparison.... (p. 393)

The average increase in New York City school incidents from 1973-4 to 1974-5 was 63 percent (Challenge for the Third Century, 1977, p. 11).

But for all the selective availability and apparent irregularity in the data, the question of whether school crime is getting worse or better still deserves an answer. And the answer probably is that school crime is somewhat worse than it was a decade or so ago, but not surprisingly so. As Grealy (1976) points out, the overall national crime picture has gotten steadily worse over the same period, particularly because of the growing prevalence of teenage offenders. Schools cannot expect to be immune from juvenile crime and still serve that age of clientele.

One might even have expected rate figures on school crime to have grown faster than they did over the past ten or fifteen years due to the changing age distribution among elementary and secondary school students. Because of the declining birth rate and the sharp rise in the proportion of students continuing their education through high school graduation, not only has the sheer number of secondary students increased but the percentage of the total student population enrolled in grades seven through twelve has risen sharply as well. The Census Bureau (1976a) reports these figures:

Year	% in grades 7-12	Number (millions)
1960	40%	14.4
1965	43	18.2
1970	45	20.8
1975	48	22.2

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The number of children age 12 and over attending public school has risen at least 54% since 1960, and their proportion relative to all school children has grown at least 20%. Because of this numerical growth alone, then we should expect correspondingly higher frequencies and rates--regardless of whether juveniles are now more likely to engage in crime than they were in the past.

B. Characteristics of Offenders

Changing age patterns within the schools do not tell the whole story. Several authorities have pointed out that much of the growth in secondary school enrollment has been due to the enforced participation of those children who least want to attend, and who are least able to cope with the demands of formal education. Changing social attitudes and employment opportunities for youth have led to the retention of a sizable number of youths who previously might have left school prior to graduation. According to the Census Bureau (1976b), the percentage of those attending school through graduation has grown about fifty percent since 1950.

	Completing 9th grade	Completing 12th grade
1950	80.7%	50.5%
1954	87.2	55.3
1960	90.4	62.1
1964	93.0	67.6
1970	95.9	75.0
1974	98.5	74.4

The lack of recognition and boredom felt by many of these less than eager youths has been suggested as a likely precondition of school crime, particularly vandalism, by some authors (Clement, 1975; Brenton, 1975; Goldman, 1959). This relationship generally is supported by the results of a six-year study of 2,617 students enrolled in eight metropolitan California secondary schools which was carried out by Elliott and Voss (1974). Their analysis, based on self-reports of delinquent acts, suggested that experiencing failure in school leads to delinquent behavior. These authors conclude, "As the holding power of our schools has increased, so has the rate of delinquency. Compulsory school attendance facilitates delinquency by forcing youth to remain in what is sometimes a frustrating situation in which they are stigmatized as failures"(p. 207).

Another aspect of their findings may be more controversial. Using successive annual questionnaires and interviews with dropouts, Elliott and Voss found that delinquency reached its peak while a youth was still attending school, and that there was a substantial reduction in reported offenses after dropping out. In other words, dropping out was not a cause of delinquency, but rather it was a consequence of the same pressures that originally tended to produce delinquency. When these pressures were lessened, delinquency tended to diminish. Moore (1961) has suggested an opposite view, "... schools, because they compensate for home and neighborhood deficiencies, should strive to keep their students in school" (p. 209). She points out that, "... between 95 and 98 percent of school-age children are normal personalities, reasonably healthy, and law-abiding. Of the less than 5 percent who express their deviation in delinquency, 95 percent of the seventeen-year-olds, 85 percent of the sixteen-year-olds, and 50 percent of the fifteen-year-olds are not in school. In fact, approximately 61 percent of the delinquents between the ages of eight and seventeen are out of school" (p. 202).

Elliott and Voss present data to refute this point. According to their findings, juvenile delinquency is hardly limited to a small fraction of all youths. In their study, half of all females and nearly two-thirds of all males reported engaging in one or more "serious" acts; one in seven females and one in four males reported at least one police contact during the period of the study (1974, p. 90). Although both this research and Moore's article deal with delinquency in general and not only with school crime, the Elliott and Voss results also seem to be at odds with the commonplace contentions that only five percent of all adolescents are responsible for all acts of crime in the schools (IDEA, 1974), or that most school crime is committed by a hard-core group of offenders representing about ten percent of enrollment (U.S. News, 1976).

We do not know, then, whether school crime offenders typically are enrolled students or dropouts/pushouts, and whether most school crime is perpetrated by some juveniles or some school crime is perpetrated by most juveniles. (The role of adults will be considered in a moment.) Part of this problem, perhaps, stems from a failure to distinguish between the typically serious offenses of chronic delinquents and the typically nonserious offenses of occasional misbehavors. These seems to be no large degree of

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atypicalness or maladjustment evident in this characterization of juvenile vandals compiled by Ellison (1973), for instance:

1. Vandalism is primarily a group offense.
2. Vandals are likely to be males.
3. Vandals are likely to be between the ages of 11 and 16.
4. Vandals tend not to be career delinquents.
5. Vandals tend to fall into the same age categories as other juvenile delinquents.
6. Vandals' parents tend to be less mobile than other delinquents.
7. Vandals are likely to be Caucasian.
8. Vandals tend not to have serious mental disturbances.
9. Vandals' acts tend to be "out of character" with past behavior patterns.
10. Vandals tend to come from homes where there is significant discord between parents and children.
11. Vandals tend to live in close proximity to schools in which acts of vandalism take place. (p. 29)

The distinction between vandals and other delinquents is further emphasized by Martin (quoted in Ellison, 1973), "... it is clear from comparisons between vandals and other juvenile delinquents that, in terms of their sex, age, and ethnic characteristics, vandals appear to differ somewhat from the general delinquent population" (p. 28). No corresponding characterization of those typically responsible for more serious school crimes was found.

C. Intruders as Offenders

Not all school crime is committed by those who "belong" there. Schools traditionally have been rather public places--especially at the secondary level where students may have irregular class schedules, attend athletic or special interest sessions, or be at liberty to engage in occasional truancy. Any large school can expect a steady flow of outsiders, from maintenance personnel to yearbook salesmen, from probation officers to volunteer aides. There also appears to be a sizable number of youths who enter schools where they should not be--because they are enrolled elsewhere, are dropouts/pushouts, or even are graduates.

Intruders are thought to be a major factor in serious school crime. Anker (SVVH, 1976a, p. 88), for example, indicated that of 4,775 incidents reported in the New York City schools in 1973-4, 1,020--or more than 21 percent--were attributable to intruders. Los Angeles believes most of its school violence is created by outsiders and intruders--truants, dropouts, students who have been suspended or expelled, and persons enrolled in other

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school districts (SVVH, 1976a, p. 165). Intruders also are mentioned promi-
nently in testimony before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delin-
quency by officials from Bellevue, Washington (SVVH, 1976a, p. 293), and
Chicago (SVVH, 1976a, p. 194). Grealy (SVVH, 1976a, p. 215) believes
"practically all" intruders responsible for school crime are dropouts,
truants, or suspended or expelled students.

The Subcommittee, in its final report (Challenge for the Third Century,
1977, p. 22-3) concluded:

> The intruder is a person, frequently of school age, who is
> not presently attending school, but will congregate with
> others around the building and occasionally enter the
> school without authorization. All too often the entrance
> is merely a prelude to more serious problems for the school
> community. Intruders account for a surprisingly large
> percentage of the violence inflicted on teachers and students
> within our schools.

For all the apparent significance of intruders in school crime statistics,
only one study of intruders as offenders could be found. The New York City
experience cited above contains the following breakdowns for 1973-4 (SVVH,
1976a, p. 397, 401):

offense	#	# attributed to intruders	% attributed to intruders
assaults	1578	267	17%
on students	658	114	17%
on teachers	725	112	15%
on others	195	41	21%
robbery	190	115	61%
sex offenses	50	26	52%
other offenses	2957	612*	21%
total incidents	4775	1020	21%

*Includes 511 instances of trespassing; if trespassing is excluded from
the table, the total percentage of all incidents attributable to intruders is
slightly under 10%.

According to anecdotal evidence, parents constitute an impressive share of
assaultive intruders. The following example appeared in a 1975 newspaper
article (SVVH, 1976a, p. 525):

> Jacqueline Newson hadn't planned to punch her son's teacher
> in the face. She had gone to school to find out why the
> teacher allegedly made her eight-year-old son Robert eat soap.
> But before Mrs. Newson left the Lea Elementary School in West

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Philadelphia on September 18, she left a bruised teacher
hunched over a desk. Police, who were summoned during the
incident, arrested Mrs. Newson, 25, and a friend, Leo Smith,
22 ... "I'm sorry I hit that woman but she acted smart," said
Mrs. Newson. "I asked the teacher why she made my son eat
soap and she said she makes any child who disrupts her class
eat soap. She said she would do it again."

D.   The School Climate

One might imagine that schools where crime is prevalent would be dis-
tinguishable from schools which experience very few offenses. Alienation,
hostility and rebelliousness should be as much a product of the environment
as of the actor. Nielsen (1971), for example, quotes sociologist Stanley
Cohen's observation that (p. 15):

> Most research into school vandalism indicates that there is
> something wrong with the school that is damaged. The highest
> rates of school vandalism tend to occur in schools with
> obsolete facilities and equipment, low staff morale, and
> high degree of dissatisfaction and boredom among pupils.

But there is little systematic evidence showing any relationship between such
school climate features as range of activities or type of discipline and
serious school crime.

On the other hand, many observers do characterize schools with a crime
problem in a somewhat consistent way. In the School Violence and Vandalism
Hearings (1976a), one teacher noted that overcrowding in the school resulted
in, "a general lack of respect for teachers and a general breakdown of
discipline" (p. 229). Another suggested, "Because of the size of the school,
2,000 plus students, students can hide behind the anonymity a large school
provides" (p. 235). In their research on school crime, McPartland and McDill,
(1977) found school size to be an important correlate of severe offenses,
even after controlling for the size of community in which the school was
located. School size and whether it is located in low-socioeconomic
neighborhoods are related to school crime according to the California State
Department of Education (1973). In an investigation of student protest and
disruption, Bailey (1970) concludes, "The size of the student body is a more
important variable than the size of the city in which a school is located.
Larger schools have more problems" (p. 16).

The mechanisms that might link larger schools with a higher incidence of crime and disruption are not at all clear. Variability in the student body may be one possibility, opportunity may be another. The most likely phenomenon, however, may be the impersonality of a large institution where most students do not know most of their fellow students, and most staff are strangers. This might well create the climate that breeds insensitivity, frustration and crime. Certainly the underlying rationale of large schools-- making possible the variety of programs and activities that students may need to stimulate and interest them--is not achieving its purpose. Rank boredom, frequent class cutting, widespread drug usage, and lack of effective dis- cipline are mentioned over and over again as characteristics of crime-prone schools.

The possible part played by classroom teachers in producing this environ- ment should not be overlooked. Chaffin (cited in SVVH, 1976a, p. 512-3), says, "Teachers themselves are part of the problem ... (when they) say and do things which invite and inspire acts of hostility and disruption." Slater (1974, p. 253-4) quotes a teacher as saying, "... there are very few dedicated teachers around these days. Most teachers are simply working the job, like at any other job. Twenty years ago maybe there were more dedicated teachers." And he quotes a student as writing, "Violence between students and teachers could be because of both parties or just one. Like the teacher could give two shits about the kid; the job pays money is all that the teacher cares about." In looking at correlates of school crime, there has been a rapid increase in teacher salaries coinciding with the rise in school violence. Perhaps the teaching profession has become unnecessarily attractive to those whose primary motivations no longer include a love for children.

Bloch (1977), who summarizes his psychiatric experience in treating 250 classroom teachers in the Los Angeles area between 1971 and 1976, suggests they all share the symptoms of "combat neurosis." In addition:

> These teachers indicated they were unprepared to cope with
> school violence, especially when gang warfare and weapons
> were involved. They were not prepared physically or psy-
> chologically to be the focus of threats and physical
> assault.... When disillusioned by their vulnerability and
> helplessness and the absence of protection or support from
> the administration, they became anxious and fearful....
> An impared ability to deal effectively with fear or danger
> was the primary predisposing factor present in more than
> 75 percent of the teachers I treated. (p. 61-2)

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Fear on the part of teachers, and their unsuccessful response to it, may be another indication of a crime-likely school.

E. The Setting and Circumstances

The tendency for school crime and violence to be overrepresented in poor and inner-city urban areas has been voiced in several statements. The California State Department of Education (1973), for example, found through their survey that, "... a relationship exists between the frequency of criminal incidents and the socioeconomic status of students--more crime occurs in schools located in low socioeconomic areas (p. 5). L'Hote (1970), reporting on crime in the Detroit schools, said, "if we plot losses due to theft on a map of our system, we find a concentration of incidents in the poorer sections of the city. We find no such pattern if we plot fires, false alarms, or malicious damage" (p. 21). An American School and University (1966) article states, "In New York City, school executives are nearly unanimous in agreeing that the highest rate of vandalism occurs in areas of deep poverty" (p. 26).

The National Center for Education Statistics (1976) data provides comparisons between crime occurrences in elementary and secondary schools and between central metropolitan, other metropolitan, and nonmetropolitan districts. This information is summarized below for person crimes only (rape, robbery and assault) and for all reported crimes (including person crimes). All numbers are rates per 10,000 students.

person crimes			
	elementary	secondary	total
central metropolitan	.84	2.85	1.48
other metropolitan	.24	1.44	.68
nonmetropolitan	.13	.59	.30
total	.36	1.55	.80

all crimes			
	elementary	secondary	total
central metropolitan	4.84	13.06	7.90
other metropolitan	3.39	11.80	6.50
nonmetropolitan	2.84	8.23	4.87
total	3.60	11.08	6.38

In general, the rate of school crime in the NCES survey is roughly three times larger in secondary schools than in elementary schools. Person crimes are more than twice as frequent in central metropolitan schools than in other

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metropolitan schools, and more than four times as frequent than in nonmetro-
politan schools. The rates for all crimes also is higher in central metropoli-
tan schools, but not to the same degree as for person crimes.

Brenton (1975) believes vandalism is as prevalent in affluent suburban
schools as in inner-city schools, but that while elementary schools suffer
mainly broken windows, more serious acts of vandalism tend to occur in secondary
schools--especially during periods when the schools are not in session. Gold-
man (1959) suggests that vandalism is more related to the "transiency and
instability of an area" rather than its low socioeconomic status. Changes at
the school, particularly massive staff changes, says Goldman, produce low
morale and subsequent high vandalism. Coursen (1975) points out that
vandalism breeds vandalism--as vandalism increases, the school becomes more
dehumanizing, making it still more prone to vandalism.

Pablant and Baxter (1975) compared 16 schools having high rates of
vandalism with an equivalent set of schools experiencing low rates of
vandalism. Matched pairs of schools were formed on the basis of location,
enrollment, grade level, and minority representation. Within pairs, vandalism
damage estimates ranged as much as thirty to one between the high and low
rate schools although in no pair were the schools more than three miles apart.
All schools were rated on several design attributes such as distinctiveness,
isolation, and lighting. In general, low vandalism schools were characterized
by excellent upkeep and maintenance, and by landscaping and beautification
efforts. The overall appearance of these schools was superior to that of the
immediately surrounding neighborhood. And they tended to be less isolated,
more visible, and in locations of greater community activity. The age of
the building made no difference.

An analysis of assaults on teachers in the Chicago schools over a ten
year period (Today's Education, 1972) revealed, "... the typical assault on a
teacher occurs when the teacher disciplines a pupil or breaks up a fight.
Usually the assailant is a boy in grades 7 to 10 who is a student of the
teacher's. Few outsiders and parents have assaulted teachers in Chicago ...
the greatest number of incidents occur (a) in schools in integrated neigh-
borhoods; (b) between 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.; (c) on Fridays; (d) in
March, April and May" (p. 31).

A study by the New York City Board of Education of offenses during the 1972-3 and 1973-4 school years (SVVH, 1976a, p. 405-6) showed a peaking in total number of reported offenses in March although this was not true of all individual categories of crimes, and highest rates of crimes per school day in December and March, which are vacation periods. An analysis of the location of various offenses for 1973-4 (SVVH, 1976a, p. 402-4), shows the following distribution in percentage of the total for each offense (totals do not add to 100 because of rounding):

|	robbery (n=190)	assault (n=1578)	sex offenses (n=44)
hall	28%	22%	27%
classroom	14	38	7
cafeteria	4	7	0
gym	1	3	0
yard	34	14	23
entrance, exit	7	5	5
stair	7	5	16
lavatory	3	1	14
locker room	2	1	0
lobby	1	2	0
auditorium	0	1	2
basement	0	0	7

More data like this are required before significant conclusions can be drawn, however. This table represents only one school year and the experience of one highly urbanized school system. As an example, the lavatory frequently is singled out as a trouble spot although, in these figures, that location accounts for only a small share of all robberies and assaults. This may not be characteristic of other schools. Blodgett (1975), for instance, found that over a third of the students in his study were always or often afraid to use the school bathroom because of expected harm. While fear and actual violence may not be that well correlated, the two measures should not be so far apart.

F. Summary

Information presently available on school crime suggests a trend that is rising, but also one that is erratic and not too out of line with increases that might be expected simply on the basis of increasing enrollments at the secondary level occurring over the same period of time. More accurate and open reporting also may account for some of the apparent increase.

Although many believe that only a small proportion of students are responsible for most serious school crime, little has been done to characterize typical offenders. Useful knowledge about those who commit crimes in schools may be hard to come by both because of a probably low apprehension rate for many offenses and because of current practices protecting information about juveniles. Intruders are widely held to be responsible for much school crime, but may account for a smaller share of more serious offenses than is sometimes suggested.

Large, overcrowded schools seem more likely to experience violence and vandalism than other schools, perhaps because of their impersonal climate. Crime also seems more likely among schools serving poorer neighborhoods, teaching at the secondary level, located in central urban settings, and those with a neglected appearance. Crime, furthermore, seems to vary according to the season and by locations within the school. These relationships tend not to be widely documented, however, and may be misleading to the degree that many crimes often are aggregated together. Person crimes and vandalism may occur in quite different settings, for example, and may be the result of offenders with quite different characteristics.
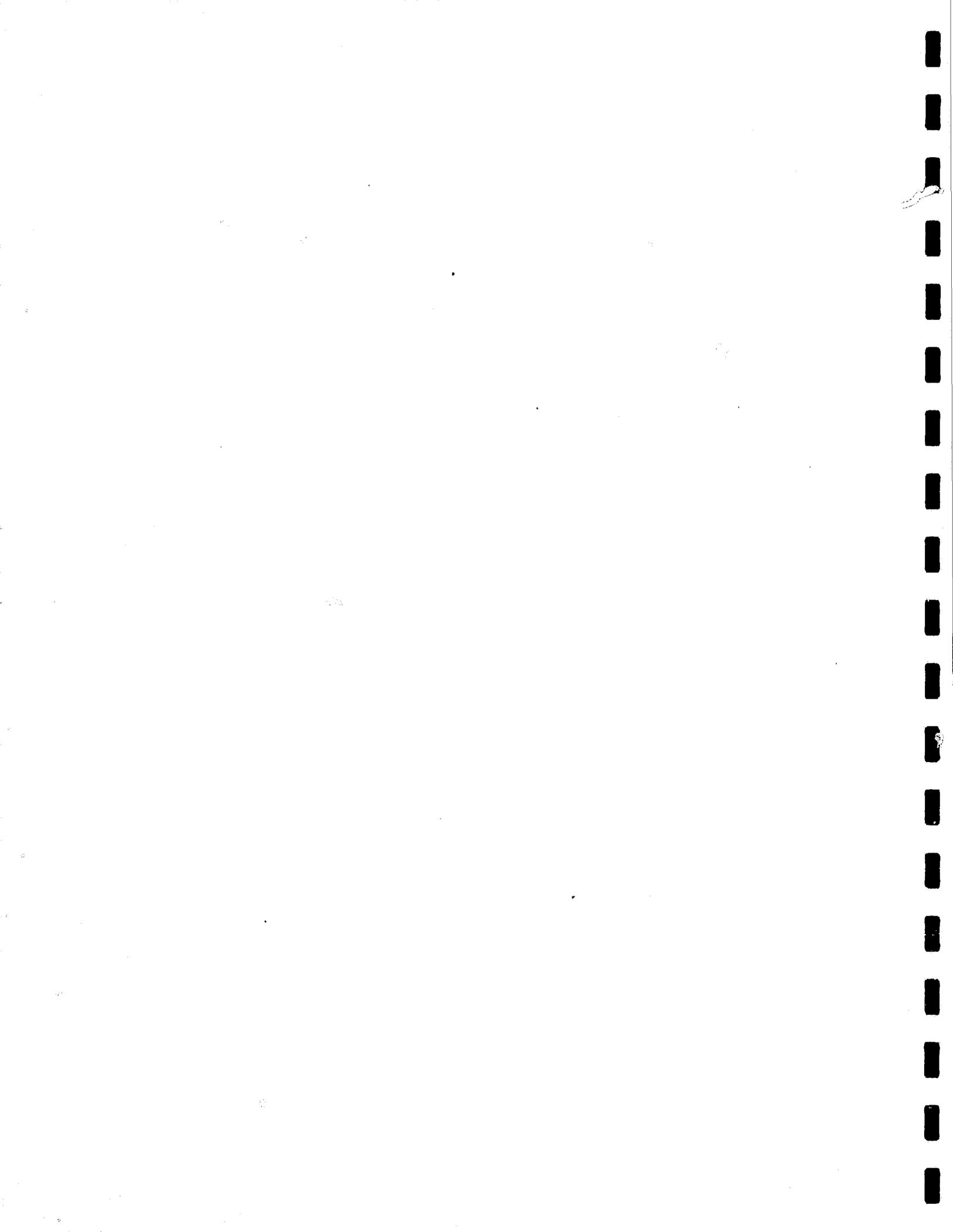
IV. CAUSES OF SCHOOL CRIME

Speculation on what influences may be responsible for the apparent surge in serious school crime dot almost every available article on the subject. Suggestions range from poverty to antiwar sentiment, and from television to school dress codes. Before examining various possible causes, however, it is important to consider the nature of causality in this context and the role of cause in the design of school crime controls and remedies.

To begin with, many statements of cause do no more than describe symptoms or, in extreme instances, only rephrase the problem using other words. To say a child engages in misdeeds because he is bad tells us nothing new. If something is to be done about this behavior, it is necessary to identify antecedents rather than synonyms, and it is essential that these antecedents satisfactorally distinguish between the backgrounds of those who misbehave and those who do not. Most vandals are boys, but this does not mean that maleness causes vandalism. Even more important, to be useful a cause must be open to manipulation. It has been suggested, for instance, that our changing society could be responsible for increasing school crime. But even if it was, we still would have to look for ways of dealing with the problem which permitted intervention.

Another set of considerations has to do with the specificity of the effect we are trying to explain. Are we concerned with school crime only, or with juvenile crime in general, or with all crime in our society? Should we distinguish between school violence and vandalism because these phenomena seem to follow different patterns? And even if we limit ourselves to serious school crime, which aspects of these offenses are we trying to explain? For example, serious arson may be as much a consequence of the flammability of the building as the pyromania of the perpetrator (Juillerat, 1966), and more teachers may be injured attempting to break up a fight than are attacked directly (SVVH, 1976a).

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In this survey, we attempted to examine the full range of causes suggested for school crime but tried to emphasize most those antecedents which had some logical relationship to education and were in the power of the schools to change. Our aim was not to place blame on teachers and administrators and relieve parents or the community of their responsibility. Nor was it to say education is any more at fault than society as a whole for the strife, maladjustment, or inequities that seem to make conditions ripe for violence and vandalism. Yet, schools can take steps to diminish their levels of crime if they well enough understand the causes which they are able to correct.

A. Overview of School Crime Causes

Different authorities tend to use different terms in their analyses of the school crime problem. And considering the paucity of evidence that might separate out major positions, let alone subtle nuances, it is appropriate to combine various proposed causes into types that can be considered categorically. To develop these groupings, three lists of causes developed for or in surveys as to the origins of school crime were reviewed. One such study (NEA, 1956) asked teachers to rate what they believed were factors responsible for pupil misbehavior. In rank order from most important to least important these were:

1. irresponsible parents
2. unsatisfactory home conditions
3. lack of parental supervision due to a working mother
4. lack of training or experience in moral and spiritual values
5. lack of special classes for academically retarded pupils
6. lack of special classes for those of low intelligence
7. overcrowded classes
8. increased availability of automobiles to teen-agers
9. undesirable comic books, magazines, etc.
10. school program or curriculum unsuited to needs of some pupils
11. undesirable radio and TV programs and movies
12. lack of recreational programs and facilities for young people
13. unskilled, untrained, or inefficient classroom teachers
14. newer theories and philosophies of education held by some teachers
15. lack of authority of teachers to determine and mete out punishment
16. lack of strong support of teachers by school principal
17. conditions in neighborhood around school building

Watson (1976) conducted a similar survey among superintendents and other school personnel from his sample of urban school districts. Again in rank

order according to results, his list of causes were:

1. insensitivity on the part of school staff
2. climate of violence in society
3. lack of and reduction in support services due to budget deficits
4. economic causes--the state of the Nation's economy
5. student alienation
6. resentment of or lack of confidence in authority figures
7. supensions and expulsions--hangers-on outside the schools
8. permissiveness in society
9. gangs
10. lack of communication between staff and students, school and community
11. truancy
12. lack of parental control
13. inconsistent application of school discipline
14. student academic deficiencies
15. narcotics
16. disuse of school facilities after hours
17. poor condition of school facilities

Marvin et al. (1976) sought educators' perceptions of factors contributing to the problem of school violence and disruption. He separates "school factors" from "non-school factors" (p. 61):

school factors
1. building size
2. class size
3. dreariness of school building
4. educators unwilling to acknowledge problems
5. expectations of the schools
6. failure of administrators to report crimes
7. forced attendance
8. ignorance of due process
9. lack of an alternative to suspension
10. lack of due process
11. lack of parent-educator unity
12. lack of professional unity
13. lack of sufficient commitment to problem
14. lack of teacher-student relations
15. school response to problem
16. staff hostility, aggressiveness
17. staff inadequacy
18. whole curriculum

non-school factors
19. attitude--nothing can be done
20. boy-girl triangles
21. community response to problem
22. family feuds
23. ineffective juvenile justice system
24. lack of community awareness
25. lack of coordination of community services
26. lack of multi-cultural understanding

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27. lack of parental interest
28. news media cause problems
29. parents, community workers confront teachers
30. police handling of students

By and large, these causes can be thought of as distributed among the
following headings: (1) societal problems, (2) family influences, (3) com-
munity conditions, (4) persuasive suggestibility, (5) individual deviancy,
(6) curriculum suitability, (7) ineffective teaching, (8) classroom discipline,
and (9) physical environment. Each of these groupings are part of an intact
picture, but they can be examined separately.

B.   Societal Problems

There is no doubt that our society as a whole is far from perfect. During
the last decade alone there have been a number of prominent crises that have
affected all of us including emerging political violence, an unpopular war
and defense policy, a major economic recession, loss of confidence in govern-
ment, and enforced rights for minorities and women. Wells (1971) is one of
the authors who believes, "The basic problem stems from the ills of society.
They affect the schools, which are unable to root out the problem" (p.12). He
cites a study by Bailey (1970) which identifies ten societal causes of destructive
and violent disruption including the violent times, the success of civil
rights protests, the visibility of college protests, the expression of racial
and ethnic pride, the participation of the poor in public policy, slum life
styles, black revenge, manifest racism, violence on television, and spreading
permissiveness.

Slater (1974) contends that, "High school violence, which largely affects
black youths both as perpetrators and victims, ... was exacerbated by a complex
of factors which included parental impotence, ghetto despair, and an inflexible,
unimaginative school system" (p. 252). He believes the civil rights movement
produced a large amount of energy among black youths, some of which surfaced in
impulsive, violent acts. Herrick (1961) suggests serious breaches of
discipline, including assaults on teachers, have resulted from major changes
in society such as the population increase, growing urbanization, substandard
incomes, discrimination, inadequate health care, disorderly homes, broken
families, and adolescent strivings. Pringle (1974) believes the increase in
vandalism and violence may be due to changes in recording or reporting, but
she also identifies several societal causes. One is a more impersonal

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environment for young people due to redevelopment, high density living,and
job mobility. A second is the concern for atomic weapons coupled with the
open display of brutality and violence in mass media. And a third is the
greater general affluence which may make relative deprivation more difficult
to bear.

Pinning school violence on social discrepancies and turmoil may be more
easily proposed than demonstrated. And most people would be totally unwilling
to accept the notion that crime in the schools is a necessary consequence of
social change--so that to diminish one, we have to forgo the other. Those who
point to broad social unrest as the source of school crime also fail to take
into account the many periods of profound disorder in our past. Certainly
the urban crowding brought about by mass immigration in the 1910s, the anarchist
and labor movements of the 20s, and the great depression and dust bowl of the
30s produced as much social pressure as anything in recent years. The condition
of our society may manifest itself in what happens in the schools, but if this
turns out to be the principal cause we will be hard pressed to accomplish any
lasting remedies. New societal problems invariably will emerge to replace
those we have learned to live with.

C. Family Influences

There has been a significant alteration in family patterns over the last
two decades. The at-home mother is now more of an exception than the rule,
and the "door-key" generation is upon us. According to Kiernan (1975, p. 7), "One
of the most appalling features of this nationwide problem (school crime) is the
lack of knowledge on the part of too many parents as to the whereabouts of
their children, day or night.... Allowing children to run the streets unchecked
and unsupervised is the perfect formula for producing the irresponsible young
citizen and potential vandal." Davis and Thomson (1976) point to "loose
family ties" and the need for parents "to be reinvolved with their sons and
daughters." The NEA (1976) talks about "the increasing numbers of disorganized
families as one more reason for the soaring school crime rate. No longer
is ... delinquency limited to minorities and the poor. Family disorganization
is spreading throughout middle class society..." (p. 5).

The National School Public Relations Association (1975) states, "The
root causes of a student's misbehavior in such acts as extortion, burglary,

'strong-arming,' and assaults on other students and teachers can be traced
directly to problems stemming from the home situation ... the permissiveness
of parents" (p. 16-7). A U.S. News article (1968) cites "the apathy of parents
and the breakdown of home influence ... what can you expect when you turn a
child into the streets with no training, with no respect for property or for
other human beings?" (p. 37). Herrick (1961) observes that, "Some children
come to school from homes which are not orderly or friendly.... No one has
been around to set and justify goals for them to reach, or to indicate to
them that other people have rights" (p. 217). She also considers broken
families as a source of the problem.

Abdicating responsibility is only one aspect of parental blame. Jones
(1973), for example, says "the anarchistic attitude of the young stems from
adult failure, especially adult failure to exert authority ... (but) if some
parents are too passive and lack the character to assert reasonable authority,
there are other parents who actually encourage defiance" (p. 6). Slater (1974)
notes that the parents of offenders often are cheaters, too.

It is not altogether surprising that the parent tends to be listed as a
prominent cause of school disruption and crime by school people, but infre-
quently by non-school people. Thus, few authorities seem ready to conclude,
along with the NEA (1956), that:

> Unquestionably, much of the misbehavior of children in school
> originates in the home and family. A child of irresponsible
> parents, living in a crowded, inadequate dwelling, flat, or
> apartment, has two strikes against him before he even enters
> school. If the mother works away from home and provides little
> or no supervision for her children, the odds favor her children
> becoming trouble makers. (p. 103)

There is no doubt that the child does bring to school many of the values,
or lack of them, that have been learned at home. And these values may well
set the stage for defiance of authority, racial tension, and disregard for
the rights of others in the school setting. Parents furthermore may under-
mine a teacher's attempts at discipline, and (rightfully or wrongly) take
the child's side in any dispute with the school staff. Yet, it is difficult
to imagine any sizable proportion of parents condoning violence or vandalism
on the part of their children. It is more likely that parents are caught up
in the same web as teachers, experiencing disobedience without the skill to
prevent or control it. While it is inescapable that some parents do not do

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as good a job as we might hope, giving them the time, the knowledge, and the wherewithall to do much better may be an unreachable goal.

D.   Community Conditions

Poverty and its consequences are widely believed to encourage juvenile crime in general and school crime in particular. The NEA (1956) says, "The types of communities and homes in which children live have a tremendous impact on the way they behave in school" (p. 81). The authors of this survey suggest that disruption is most frequent in mixed residential commercial neighborhoods with deteriorating areas, where the income level is not sufficient to provide a reasonably good standard of living, and where there are neither community recreation programs nor programs of moral and spiritual guidance provided by churches, civic clubs, and youth organizations. Herrick (1961) states that half the children in large cities come from homes with substandard incomes, "... homes which find it difficult to counteract the pernicious influences in the community, especially when both parents are working" (p. 216).

One consequence of poverty is alienation. According to Davis and Thomson (1976), "Poor people may develop a sense of personal worthlessness and become alienated from society. This is expressed, especially by youth, as antisocial behavior. Other causes include 'rising expectations,' the gap between what society teaches can be expected ... and what actually is achieved" (p. 2). The disappointment of slum and ghetto children toward school as a way out is echoed by Bailey (1970), by McPartland / McDill (1977), and by Goldberg (Safe Schools Act Hearing, 1973). The National Urban League (1971) applies this theme particularly to blacks, "... one must believe that the educational system is not equipped to educate Black people ... (it) is designed to perpetuate the existing structure and ... (it) fails to teach children how to gain and maintain a positive identity" (p. 4).

Gangs also seem to be more prevalent in economically deprived neighborhoods. Anker (SVVH, 1976a) believes gangs are responsible for "violence, disruption of the educational process, danger to students and school personnel ... (and) truancy" (p. 108). He observes that street gangs are found primarily in ghetto areas, where the members are from families "likely to be fragmented, low income or welfare supported, and a high incidence of addicted mothers" (p. 105). Gangs are believed to be a major cause of school crime in many large cities, including Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Detroit (Challenge for the Third Century, 1977).

Still another alleged companion of poverty is drug abuse which, in turn, can produce robbery, extortion and assault. Slater (1974) quotes a youth as saying, "The drug problem is that a lot of kids that go to school don't have enough money, so they sell dope ... (or) two or three guys get together and jump another guy for money to buy dope" (p. 254). The use of drugs and alcohol by teen-agers was repeatedly brought up as a factor contributing to school violence and vandalism in testimony before the Senate Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency (Challenge for the Third Century, 1977). McPartland and McDill (1977) also believe drug and alcohol abuse is a major factor in school crime but contend this problem is spread evenly throughout the population without regard to socioeconomic level, and that the need for drug and alcohol money is not usually a motive for crime. Anker (SVVH, 1976a) agrees that drug usage is not limited to the economically disadvantaged but feels crime among users is largely directed at supporting drug purchases.

The poverty neighborhood may create conditions which do not lead directly to crime, but trigger frustration, isolation and antagonism which in turn can turn off a youngster. Bailey (1970) puts it this way:

> Administrators, teachers, parents, community organizers, and students all agree that the established white society has simply failed to comprehend the depth of ghetto squalor and filth that surrounds many of these young people. In several of the cities we visited, such neighborhoods often defy description. Broken glass and other debris is everywhere; predators in the form of drunks, junkies, fairies, and pimps abound amidst many fatherless children, surly fourteen year olds, and the vacant, tired stares of old men and old women who have long since given up the fight for simple decency against these monstrous odds. To expect young people surrounded by such squalor to come to school everyday and to perform more or less like their middle class compatriots is simply absurd. (p. 29)

Not all experts believe poverty and its ramifications are significant causes of school crime, however. Wilson (1976), for example, says, "... we have as much reason to believe that eliminating poverty will cause crime to increase as to decrease ... crime was also increasing between 1963 and 1969, when unemployment was very low and an average real family income was mounting" (p. 4). Kiernan (1975) states, "... it should be emphasized that the rise in youth crime is not primarily due to poverty since it exists in the affluent suburbs" (p. 8). And, finally, the California State Department of Education (1973) suggests, "... misuse of drugs and alcohol, gang violence, and similar

highly visible problems do not function as causes of crime in schools but rather as symptoms" (p. 13).

The tendency for serious school crime to be more prevalent in inner-city, urban areas where poverty is characteristic may cloud the issue of what causes it. There seems to be no similar tendency in very poor rural areas, or at least none has been reported. And it also seems clear that by far the majority of all youths attending ghetto schools do not become offenders-- in fact, they are considerably more likely to be victims. Poverty is a major social problem, and it deserves high priority by government planners and policy makers. But there is little evidence that eradicating poverty will have a major effect on school violence and vandalism.

E.   Persuasive Suggestibility

The influence of media, particularly television violence, on youngsters has been a staple among the hypothesized causes of juvenile crime. For instance, Kimmel (SVVH, 1976b, p. 34) states, "... we are concerned with what is the influence of the public media on the problem ... it is the belief of many that patterns of violence in schools often follow what was on television the night before, or the week before, and the instruction given through these programs is really excellent." Bell (SVVH, 1976a, p. 233) agrees; referring to that week's TV Guide, he says, "The entire publication is devoted to violence on TV and its impact on the viewing public. I maintain that TV violence has had an influence on aggressive behavior we witness in our schools." The same point is made by Bailey (1970), "... graphic and incessant TV publicity of disruptions in the whole society creates a climate which, in our opinion, makes disruptions in a high school much more likely" (p. 33).

A sizable number of studies have been conducted which attempt to test the relationship between TV viewing and subsequent violence (see National School Public Relations Association, 1975), but not all agree in their con-clusions. As part of one recent study (Crawford, 1976), teachers at three grade levels were polled as to whether they had actually observed children engage in behavior that could be attributed to watching violent TV shows. Of the survey's kindergarten teachers, 71% said they had, but the percentage declined to 62% at grade 3, and to 49% at grade 6. Younger children probably are impressionable and are likely to act out not only what they see on TV or at the movies, but what they read in books or hear described to them in a

classroom. With increased age, this fantasizing generally will be less and less overt. And perhaps the most surprising aspect of complaints about TV is why it should be regarded as such an effective instructional tool where violence is concerned, but so ineffective a model with respect to more useful skills--like reading, or politeness, or good speech.

Television is not the only alleged source of inspiration for violence and vandalism. Pringle (1974) points to some adolescents' need for excitement, "The more uneventful and dull life is, the more we become bored, frustrated, and restless ... (and then) the forbidden, risky or dangerous are liable to acquire an aura of daring and excitement. What may start as a lark ... can turn into vandalism and violence" (p. 85). Neill (1976) quotes an educator as saying, "The more we go into the causes of vandalism and violence ... the more we find that kids do it for kicks" (p. 9). Peer pressure may be a far more powerful influence on school crime than many more public teen-age experiences, but this source of motivation does not seem to have captured as much attention as television, movies, or lurid magazines.

F.   Individual Deviancy

One of the more popular theories on the origin of criminal behavior is that, by some peculiar combination of heredity or environment, certain individuals turn out prone to commit violence. As older theories, including those stressing morphology and phrenology, are disproved, newer ones are proposed to replace them, such as those attributing misbehavior to an extra chromosome or a learning disability. In the absence of much research at all on the pupils who engage in school crime, however, there has been little speculation as to any specific defects that might characterize these children.

On the other hand, it is popularly believed that low ability levels often go hand in hand with serious school crime. Polk (1976) presents the argument that deviance is unlikely among those who are doing well in school because being caught poses threats to their career aspirations. But, "For the student doing poorly, quite a different situation exists. Such students can be explicitly excluded from the social activities of the school by virtue of their low academic output ... (and then have) one major alternative ... (the) peer culture ... increasing the probability that a young person will engage in public acts of deviance" (p. 30). Another proposed link between low ability and school crime concerns boredom and frustration--that pressures to keep "slow-witted" youngsters in school aggravates the discipline problem (U.S. News, 1975).

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The importance given to traditional measures of ability in the educational setting may differentially impact disadvantaged pupils. Frequent tests, rigid grading systems, and other commonplace school practices tend to heighten the significance of minority culture differences and, instead of leading to an increase in the availability of educational services to those who need them most, they often cumulate in decreased performance standards and achievement expectations which, in turn, heighten the chances of eventual delinquency (Schafer and Polk, 1967).

McPartland and McDill (1977) argue that while much of the source of school crime is in the large society, schools actually may promote delinquency through their responsiveness, or lack of it, to student behavior. For example, "Report cards as they are presently administered in most public schools have created a group of students who are the perpetual losers ... (and) lack of success in school--as measured by report card grades-- is correlated with the probability of student disciplinary problems" (p. 14). This same theme is echoed by Smith (1952), "When interpreted as a symbol of mental inadequacy, inability to do well in his studies can have a serious effect upon a highly sensitive individual and thus lead to antisocial behavior" (p. 87).

The notion that low-ability students have trouble adjusting to the demands and desires of the schools perhaps deserves further attention than it has received. At the same time, there has been an obvious lack of research, or even serious speculation, on the role of emotional maladjustment in school violence and vandalism. Although much of the anecdotal evidence on school crime suggests underlying emotional disturbances, these are rarely cited as causes in the literature. One of the few authorities who emphasizes disturbed youngsters as offenders is Juillerat (1966) who says, "Too often schools are an easy mark for disturbed young people to vent their wrath and revenge their grievances, real or imagined" (p. 16). McPartland and McDill (1977) suggest "damaged personalities" as a plausible cause but add, "Few claim that (these) individuals ... comprise more than a small fraction of the youth who commit delinquent acts. The usual estimates are on the order of 5 to 20 percent" (p. 11).

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G.   Curriculum Suitability

Closely tied to the ability problem is the availability of suitable curricula and materials for all students. Schafer and Polk (1967) contend that schools foster alienation among minority students by emphasizing middle-class models. "Current textbooks and other curricula materials are largely irrelevant to the experiences, language, style, skills, and orientation of lower class children, especially in the urban slums" (p. 237). They also believe the schools, especially inner-city schools, provide "... inadequate compensatory and remedial programs for offsetting initial and continuing physical, psychological, intellectual, and social difficulties of some children" (p. 242).

Metzner (1969) believes the basic reason for the schools' lack of success with minority groups is, "... the unresponsiveness of the educational structure to the needs, aspirations, and learning styles of ethnic minorities which were culturally different from the majority of the American school population" (p. 3). Similar statements on the failure of schools to provide for the needs of disadvantaged youth appear in Cavan and Ferdinand (1975), Moore (1961), Herrick (1961), Smith (1952), and the National Urban League (1971) which states, "Given the nature of the American society and its tradition, one must believe that the educational system is not equipped to educate Black people" (p. 4).

The thread between an inappropriate curricula and the response of students to it has been described by Berger (1974):

> ... the schools have become increasingly the sole acculturating institution in our society. Both family and church seem to have lost much of their former influence in this area, so that teachers often need to promote positive attitudes toward society and education before any learning can take place. Many teachers find this task impossible and react negatively to it. They prefer to continue covering their subjects in an academic manner regardless of whether students learn the material or not. Consequently, pupils frequently view the curriculum as irrelevant, turn off, and sometimes attack (both verbally and physically) the people they hold responsible for this charade. Their attacks, in turn, often lead to more rigid control, to the detriment of both the cognitive and affective realms of learning. (p. 16)

Ornstein (1971) is particularly adamant about the shortfalls of educational content and how it is taught. "Although students come to school to learn, they get grades instead.... (They) spend long hours doing their

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homework ... (and then) cannot escape the teacher's watchful eye, sensitive ear, and red pencil. Some teachers are brutal--and continuously test their students with written quizzes.... Their assumption is the student must be coerced to learn, and this is true if he has to learn trivia. When students claim their courses are irrelevant, they mean ... they are unable to apply what they learn in school to problems outside of school.... Indeed, it is a sick school that makes students sick of learning" (p. 10-1).

There is a wider issue with respect to the school curriculum that focuses on the responsibility of the schools to provide instruction in social values as well as academic and technical skills. Reagen (1973), in commenting on society's obligation to socialize children, says, "... in reality Americans have handed their children over to the schools just as we have handed over our safety to our police" (p. 7). Weeks (1976) believes vandalism may result from students "rebelling against being treated as kids." There have not been many suggestions that the schools teach their pupils to respect the rights of others in a mature way. However, Wolfgang (1977) suggests, "... activities can be promoted in schools to socialize students into nonviolence--to desensitize them to linguistic and behavioral cues that evoke violence ... (to) promote the greatest probability of nonviolent conformity to social rules of conduct" (p. 42). IDEA (1974) suggests "training for citizenship" to help the student acquire "a balance between individual rights and social responsibility" (p. 20).

H. Ineffective Teaching

Teachers, as Schafer and Polk (1967) point out, are trained as though they all are going to suburban middle class schools. They are ill prepared to understand the intellectual and motivational deficits of inner-city children, to work with parole officers, truant officers, welfare workers and others who will work with them in slum schools, and to deal with the alienation, disruption and violence they are likely to encounter. These authors cite findings by Martin Deutsch that, "... as a result of inadequate understanding and inappropriate control and instruction techniques, some teachers in lower income areas spend as much as 80 percent of their time in the classroom attempting to exert control.... This compares with 30 percent of teaching time devoted to control of students in middle class schools" (p. 239). And they note the disproportionate use of inexperienced, substandard and substitute teachers among inner-city schools.

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Smith (1952) makes a very similar point when he blames the teachers'
middle class conceptions of normal behavior and their puritanical attitudes,
and says, "It is a matter of common knowledge that many teachers are inade-
quately trained for the task of handling behavior problems" (p. 89). Many
teachers are so fearful in the classroom that they lose control over the disruptive
student (National School Public Relations Association, 1975), and even them-
selves (Bloch, 1977). Jones (1973) quotes Laurel Tanner as saying (p.5):

> Look at our schools. In how many ways do teachers help to
> create aggressive and hostile behavior? By the mechanism of
> failure, by sarcasm and physical punishment, we almost force
> children into more aggression and hatred. Teachers need to
> learn to use reason and affection ... instead of coercion and
> hatred.

and Lloyd Trump as remarking (p. 5):

> Those teachers who do the most complaining about discipline
> in their classrooms are often those who talk endlessly, who
> dwell on the irrelevant and who bore their students beyond
> description. It's no wonder that kids get angry and restless.

Kiernan (1975) describes a trend toward apathy among teachers, particu-
larly toward events outside the classroom, allowing "the disruptive student
(to) exploit the reduced supervision to steal, to vandalize, and congregate
in the washrooms or elsewhere for gambling, extortion, drug peddling, and
similar tragic ventures" (p. 6). Herrick (1961) looks at experience, "An inexperi-
enced or unqualified teacher, particularly if not given special help, is al-
most certain to have discipline problems in his classroom" (p. 217). And Berger
(1974) sees a demise of student-teacher contact, "... teachers have success-
fully demanded that they be relieved of such responsibilities as hall, yard,
cafeteria, and study hall duty ... teachers have become strangers to all but
their own classes, and their ability to serve as deterrents to crime and
violence is severely limited" (p. 15).

I. Classroom Discipline

No one contends it is easy to maintain reasonable control over 30 to
35 youngsters, even under the best of circumstances. There are bound to
be instances of disruption and defiant behavior in most classrooms. How these
instances are dealt with can have major impact on school violence and vandal-
ism. Most authorities agree that there has been a growing discipline problem
in the schools and that this is related to school crime. Neill (1976), for

example, says, "... the most oft-stated answer for the upswing of school crime is the decline of discipline" (p. 7). She quotes Wenk as observing, "... students who are disruptive and cause most disciplinary problems are often the same students who commit school crimes.... Misconduct in the schools ... precedes misconduct in the community, and the way schools react to school misconduct may determine if it is followed by delinquency" (p. 7-8).

School codes for student behavior are a point of contention both for those who believe standards are too lax and those who believe they are too severe. The National School Public Relations Association (1975) cites an editorial in the _'ashington Star_, "School violence didn't just happen overnight. It has grown as discipline has been replaced by permissiveness.... Dress and personal grooming codes were allowed to go by the boards; smoking regulations were all but abolished ... swearing and abusive language were tolerated.... Students have been given so many inches, is it any wonder they have taken a mile?" (p. 14). In contrast, Cross (1976) sees the need to abolish "petty roles, such as not allowing blue jeans, which serve only as conflict points that students may use as an excuse for vandalism or bodily violence" (p. 29). Herbers (1969) contends dress and hair codes account for more student protests than any other cause. Wells (1971) believes quarrels over restrictions on clothing, hair styles, political activity and so forth are major causes of in-school disruption.

What should be done about an infraction also is a controversial issue. Smith (1952) says teachers are under pressure to preserve order at all costs and frequently resort to scolding, ridicule, or the use of force, even when the children are being punished for disobeying rules they do not understand. Students themselves may feel there is insufficient control. Bailey (1970) reports, "We had significant numbers of low-income youngsters, both black and white, who told us in no uncertain terms that 'there is not enough discipline around here'" (p. 28). Michelson (1956) also believes a student would feel more secure "if he knew there were definite limits beyond which he could not go" (p. 14). He also contends students "sense when the authorities are blocked from carrying out certain discip'inary measures" (p. 13) and take advantage of those situations. Reagen (1973) nevertheless believes it is essential to remove corporal punishment from the schools, and do away with other practices that hurt a child's self-image, such as expulsion, suspension, and in-school detention.

Some punishments are more devious. Schafer and Polk (1967) say that
current practices serve mainly to push away the misbehaving student and cut
off opportunities for needed growth by isolation, assignment to a special
classroom, and withdrawal of privileges. DeCecco and Richards (1975) paint
a picture in which rules are challenged, students express their anger, and
teachers respond "by resorting to draconian measures for keeping silence and
order." They continue, "Their ultimate punishment, of course, is to go
through the motions of teaching even though no one pays attention. They can
leave their students ignorant, and many of them do" (p. 52, 54).

The courts have taken an interest in both school codes and disciplinary
measures in recent years, generally giving students more rights and restrict-
ing the kinds of punishments schools are allowed to mete out (Jones, 1973).
The courts also are expected to play a role in punishing serious offenders.
However, Brenton (1975) believes the courts are not fulfilling their responsi-
bility because few offenders are prosecuted, and juvenile courts tend to be
lenient even with those who are prosecuted. Kiernan (1975) also complains
about "lethargic courts," and Kemble (1975), in commenting on violence in
the schools, says, "While the Supreme Court and agents of the Ford Founda-
tion concentrate on attacking and hamstringing the public schools, the
problem gets worse" (p. 6).

Truancy is recognized as a special case among discipline problems.
Challenge for the the Third Century (1977), McPartland and McDill (1977), and
Cavan and Ferdinand (1975) all suggest a startling parallel between truancy
and increasing violence and vandalism, but none suggest a causal linkage.
Cavan and Ferdinand, for example, state, "Truancy per se does not inevitably
lead to delinquency. But the high percentage of truants among delinquents
probably indicates a tendency common to both, i.e., an inability to fit into
an orderly, regulated pattern of life" (p. 264).

J. Physical Environment

The overcrowded, archaic, and poorly maintained schools characteristic
of most inner-city neighborhoods contrast sharply with the modern, attractive
facilities commonplace in the suburbs. Herrick (1961) comments on poor build-
ings and disruptive surroundings as a possible cause of school crime. Goldberg
(Safe Schools Act, 1973) finds ghetto schools "physically repulsive." Schafer and
Polk (1967) believe vast building programs are required, "especially to replace

and improve deteriorated schools in low income areas" (p. 266). Even minor improvements may help. Herbers (1969), for instance, points to the frequency of school disruptions attributable to poor toilet facilities. A small amount of paint, tile or plaster may make the difference between a facilitating and debilitating learning environment.

Because the typical school is an indefensible space, it may directly contribute to serious school crime, particularly those offenses attributable to outsiders and intruders. Their openness and vulnerability literally may invite crime. But, as the Centre for Research Associates (1976) points out, "target-hardening may only raise the stakes of vandalism for students, and create an intellectual challenge for them" (p. 10). In a similar vein, Ellison (1973) observes that there appears to be no consistent reason for wanton vandalism in the schools, "... and the types of structures likely to be attacked seem irrelevant" (p. 28).

Perhaps the best available findings on the physical environment as a plausible cause of school crime were collected by Pablant and Baxter (1975) in their study on vandalism. They conclude (p. 275):

> ... the quality of upkeep and aesthetic appeal of the school property, although modest, may be instrumental in engendering community concern and pride in the school. This process, then, may be an effective deterrent to criminal acts against school property. This is an important consideration because it suggests that beautification efforts such as regularly swept school grounds, modest landscaping, painting of buildings, and maintenance of school grounds may be more effective in deterring vandalic acts than steel fences, electronic sensors, and fortresslike expensive building construction. Indeed, it is important to note that the use of fences, protection of windows, lighting of school grounds and buildings, and electronic alarm systems were found to be undifferentiating features between HV (high vandalism) and LV (low vandalism) schools in the present sample.

K.   Summary

Several generalizations can be drawn from these brief looks into suggested causes of school crime. First, there is no apparent shortage of plausible ideas. Most experts, in fact, focus their attention on a substantial variety of issues which may, or may not, all fall into a reasonably consistent pattern. It is not altogether unlikely that somewhere in this range the cause, or causes, of school crime will be found--no other outcome

would be statistically probable. On the other hand, there almost is no evidence whatsoever to make any of these suggested causes more trustworthy than any other. Recognizably, there are constraints on the kinds of investigations that might be done, but no real progress toward understanding the antecedents of serious school crime is likely until what are suspected as causes are converted into testable hypotheses, and until these hypotheses are then examined empirically.

Second, almost all causes fall either "outside" or "inside" the schools' control (Herrick, 1961; Wells, 1971; Bailey, 1970, etc.). This poses a significant dilemma for those who are interested in remedial action. The outside causes include poverty, racism, broken families and individual deficiencies--conditions that would be corrected, if we truly knew how, for many more pervasive reasons than school crime alone. And, as Wilson (1976) and others have suggested, crime in the schools seems to be relatively unaffected by changes in these conditions, throwing at least a shadow of doubt on the premise that mitigating these various influences (eliminating them seems unreachable even to zealous optimists) will have a recognizable impact on school violence and vandalism.

Events and conditions in the schools appear far more open to practical manipulations, although not everyone agrees on whether the schools are villains or victims. Improving curricula, classroom teaching, physical plants, and discipline standards and methods seem good things to do regardless of their ultimate connection to school crime. But this nation literally has spent billions of dollars on educational improvement over the past ten or fifteen years. Rather than any visible payoff for this investment, there is a continuing cry for still more. National test scores keep falling, dilapidated buildings continue to deteriorate, and school crime figures go on rising. The answer may be in the schools, but so far we know too little to focus our resources sufficiently to expect recognizable gains from any generalized school-improvement initiative.

Third, while the interaction between schools and community has not been totally ignored, it does not receive much emphasis in discussions of the origins of school crime. And this interaction extends far beyond the notion of involving community members in decisions that affect student safety and well being. The consequences of school crime are not amenable to allocation

between "we" and "they." Teachers and parents do share the same goals, and they both have to share the responsibility when serious offenses occur. Getting more parents into the school and more teachers into the community at least ought to enhance mutual understanding.

Fourth, conclusions about the causes of school crime necessarily are based on suppositions about the nature and frequency of offenses that may not be valid. There is little reason to suspect, for instance, that all varieties of school violence and vandalism stem from the same cause or group of causes, or that all offenders engage in crime as a result of the same antecedents. Causality in this arena may be due--as in most manifestations of crime and delinquency--to complex combinations of causes that happen to place a victim and offender on a grievous course, a course that improbably ever will be repeated again.

Finally, it may not make much difference what the underlying causes of school crime are if we can modify ongoing conditions that facilitate or stimulate offenses regardless of their source. As McPartland and McDill(1977) say (p. 21):

> Presently, the most immediately useful aids involve piecemeal tips on actions to be incorporated into the day-to-day routine of the school rather than broad policies for categories of related offenses or specific reforms derived from scientific evidence on critical variables.

> The source of the ideas does not matter, as long as they are good ideas--ideas that can be proved to actually work in many school settings. This means that the best ideas will be those that are stated in such a way that they have many practical ways of implementation, and that are based on solid evidence of a measurable impact on the problem. To help acquire such evidence, specific action programs for school reform should incorporate scientific standards of design and measurement that will permit convincing evaluations.
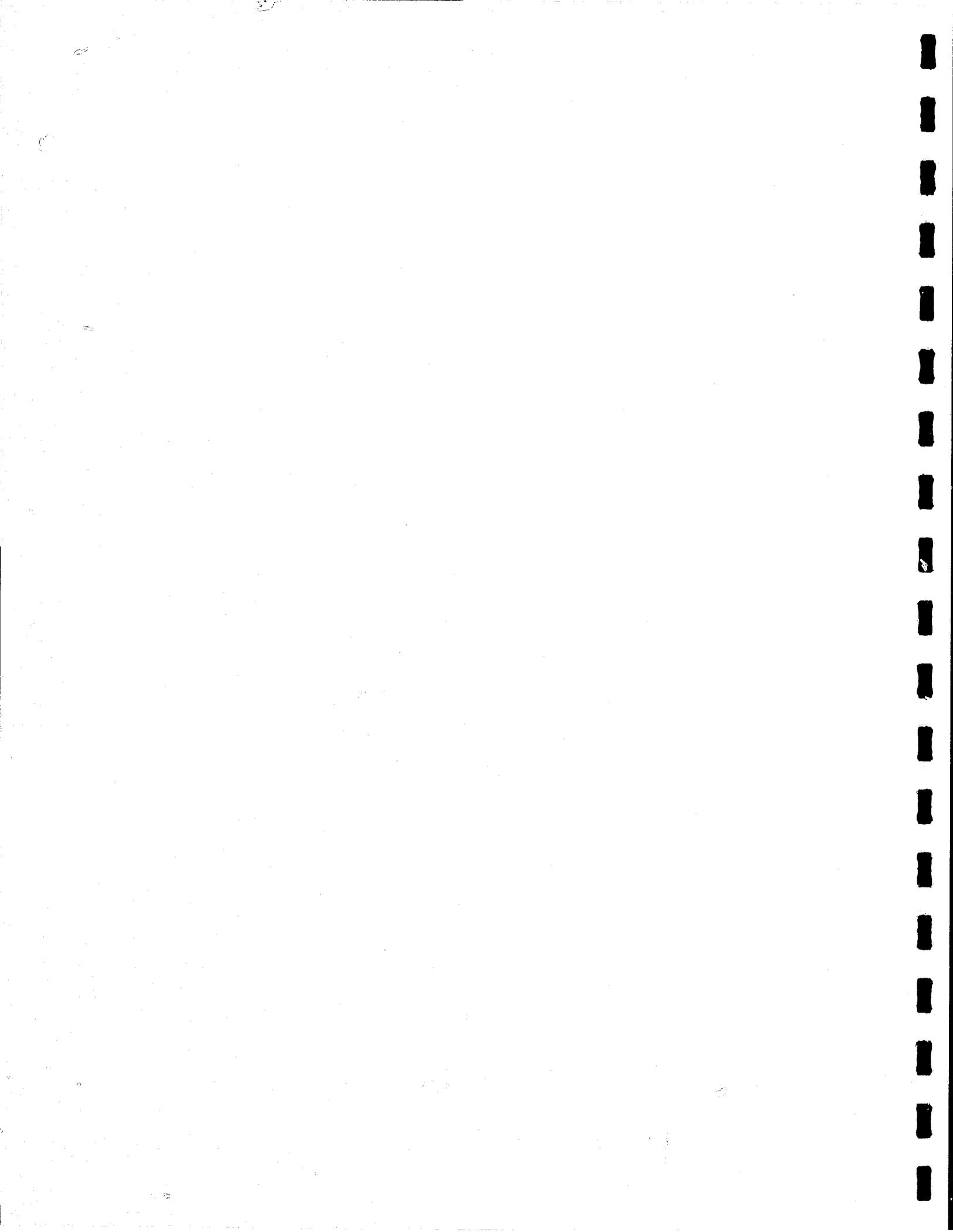
V. SCHOOL CRIME INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

A number of comprehensive reports on alternative ways to prevent and control school crime have been prepared, including those by Olson and Carpenter (1971), Marvin, et al. (1976), the National School Public Relations Association (1975), IDEA (1974), Jones (1973), Bailey (1970), and the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency (Challenge for the Third Century, 1977). And literally hundreds of case studies have been published or compiled for secondary sources on the experiences of individual schools and school systems with one or more intervention techniques. Unfortunately, there once again are few figures to back up claims of success or identify the causes of failure.

As background for this section, it should be noted that few authorities are ready to contend any one approach is substantially better than another, or that any specific strategy is likely to work well everywhere. Schools may share some problems, but many others are relatively unique to an individual building or district. Before an approach is adopted, it should be considered carefully to weigh its costs--both financial and educational-- against expected benefits. Officials may be goaded into action by a particularly repugnant event only to discover, later, that their solution was counterproductive. The National School Public Relations Association (1975), for example, reports the direct losses to vandalism in three major cities as $3.72 per pupil for New York, $5.71 for Los Angeles, and $6.51 for Chicago, but the security costs as $8.14, $7.38, and $12.04 respectively in these three locations (p. 9).* One has to question the return on these investments.

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*A mathematical inconsistency in the table raises doubt, however, over how to interpret these figures.

We also would like to suggest a very cautious approach to any strategy for controlling school crime. It is not an appropriate endeavor for do-it-yourself enthusiasts who are ready to install electronic gadgetry or psychiatric services without expert advice and assistance, and without profiting from the experience of others. Bailey (1970), for example, notes that half of the principals in his survey felt "the mere presence of uniformed police inside a school building is often a cause rather than a deterrent of school disruption" (p. 44). The National School Public Relations Association (1975) quotes J. R. Lion as saying about a violent child, "Naive intervention by the well meaning but untrained person can be risky-- even dangerous--to the teacher and to the student" (p. 41). And IDEA (1969) suggests with respect to disciplinary actions, "Because of the abrupt changes that are taking place in the legal position of students, alert educators are using considerable restraint ... and, in many cases, are seeking the opinion of the school district's attorney" (p. 5).

For convenience, this Section has been divided into four sections corresponding to four broad types of solutions to the school crime problem. The first considers Security Measures such as police patrols, site hardening, and alarm systems. The second examines Individual Measures including disciplinary practices, counseling programs, and offender sanctions. The third looks at School Measures and what can be done to strengthen curricula, provide remedial instruction, and improve teaching technique. Finally, the fourth area concerns Community Measures as represented by parental involvement, enhanced job opportunity, and neighborhood cooperation.

A. Security Measures

A vast array of security practices have been proposed or implemented, often modeled after the kinds of programs used by industry and various governmental agencies for a number of years. These may include: (1) the use of security personnel, (2) the installation of automatic alarm or surveillance systems, (3) the adoption of access controls and trouble alert devices, and (4) the application of assorted site-hardening techniques. In a survey of 137 programs initiated (or to be initiated) by local school districts, Research for Better Schools (Marvin, et al., 1976) found 23, or 17 percent, involved security systems. These ranged from installing simple burglary alarms for detecting nighttime intruders to assigning uniformed

police to schools, and from the development of a safety corridor for children going to and from school to equipping school buses with movie cameras for recording instances of disruption and violence.

Usable data on the costs of these security measures are hard to come by because of variability in building designs and their vulnerability, and because some or all of any accompanying personnel costs may be assumed by other agencies, such as the local police, or by volunteers. And most efforts to upgrade school security depend on a carefully planned system which integrates several specific approaches to meet local requirements. A program which matches the needs and resources of one community may not be adaptable to those of another. Carlton (1974) provides some procedural guides for developing a local school security program which may be of help in the planning process. Finally, it should be clear that none of these measures is likely to eliminate school crime entirely, or avoid the creation of new problems.

1.   Security Personnel. Statistics on the use of security staffs to protect school persons and property vary according to the source, but there is ample evidence that the use of both regular and special security personnel is relatively widespread. Bailey (1970) conducted a survey of school principals which revealed 6 percent have uniformed police regularly assigned to their buildings, 66 percent have police "on call," and only 28 percent report never having police in their schools. A survey of 711 larger school districts (Katzenmeyer & Surratt, 1975) revealed almost one-third of the districts used security forces to patrol the halls during the school day, and more than one-third use them after school. About two-thirds reported using security forces at football games and other after-school events. Furno and Wallace (1972) report that 64 percent of the districts they surveyed employ security guards, compared with under 10 percent only a decade earlier.

Of the districts employing security guards, about two-thirds provide them with uniforms and 65 percent expect their guards to be armed (Furno & Wallace, 1972). Katzenmeyer and Surratt (1975) report that more than a fifth of the school districts they polled use local police, generally without cost, to patrol schools and grounds after regular hours. Eleven percent also report having local police assigned to secondary schools during the day,

usually in uniform and armed. In New York City, specially trained and
screened school safety officers "patrol buildings, enforce school regula-
tions, apprehend malefactors, (and) eliminate intruders (National School
Public Relations Association, 1975). Their description of the New York
approach continues (p. 22):

> Security personnel maintain instant communication through
> the use of handy-talkies ... and, in pilot schools,
> teachers are given ... an apparatus worn around the neck ...
> to summon aid in the event of attack, confrontation or
> emergency.... Guards are stationed at the doors of some
> buildings ... guards hold the rank of special patrolman ...
> and they have arrest powers similar to a city police officer.

Not all authorities agree that security personnel are beneficial.
Bailey (1970), for example, says "half of the principals agreed with the
statement--the mere presence of uniformed police inside a school building is
often a cause rather than a deterrent of school disruption" (p. 44). Coppock
(1973) reports on a survey by the National Urban League (p. 4):

> Only four of the fifty-one major cities responding did
> not employ their own security officers or use city
> policemen in daily school operations. The NUL contends
> that it is impossible for a favorable learning climate to
> be established within this type of environment. Therefore
> the unchallenged use of more and more security forces in
> schools must be reversed.

Grealy, the head of the International Association of School Security
Directors, takes a dim view of stringent security forces according to U.S.
News and World Report (1973) which quotes him as saying, "Guns and uniforms
are not the answer." One of the most telling rebuttles to security patrols
resulted from an evaluation of property protection practices covering a
complex of schools in the Watts section of Los Angeles (Nelken & Kline, 1971).
Although noting the costs of vandalism were computed with zero expense for
labor, and no beneficial value could be assigned to the generalized deterrent
value of patrols, they conclude (p. 18-19):

> Given the cost of a two-man security guard team with car
> as $90. per 8-hour shift, there are no time periods of day
> slots whereby the cost of an extra pair of guards would be
> exceeded by the cost of damage or loss of school property....
> There is no way for a pair of security guards to be allocated
> to the complex (of 10 schools) without their cost exceeding
> the savings which they bring the district.

The term security personnel need not be limited to regular police forces or specially hired security guards, of course. Schwartz (1973) reports using Civil Defense volunteers to patrol school grounds during the summer months. Although uniformed and equipped with radios, they are unarmed. Foster (1971) recommends the use of specially trained educational personnel as a substitute for security guards. These "intervention teachers" are to provide a calming effect in a crisis setting and, when necessary, use nonpunitive physical intervention. Ertukel (1974) describes the use of "monitors" who patrol school buildings, check parking areas, and serve related duties without the more traditional responsibilities of a security guard. The National Urban League (1971) urges hiring parents of students as security personnel when they are needed. And Rigdon (1976) reports on the assignment of student aides to the school security officer, "Helping him are 11 student aides who keep an eye on what is happening around school and report back. Fifty students are on (the) waiting list" (p. B3).

Training for a school security staff probably is essential regardless of whether they are volunteers, specially hired guards, or even regular police officers. Creekmore (1974) found that less than half of 133 school districts he surveyed whic⁣ employed their own security officers had a formal training program for them; most of those were limited to on-the-job training. Human relations and prevention were stressed. Coppola (1975) describes an eight-and-a-half month orientation and training program for school security officers which included about 40 hours of classroom training and 10 hours of on-the-job examinations. The results, based on a comparison of attitude measures and offense incidence between the test school and one without a security force training program, were favorable.

2. <u>Automatic Alarm and Surveillance Systems</u>. Perhaps the most immediate response of a school district to a rise in violence and, particularly, vandalism is the installation of electrical or electronic monitoring devices. A broad spectrum of these systems are described in the literature. One example, described by Richard Velde (in Burton, 1975) as "a national model," was installed in the Alexandria, Virginia schools under an LEAA grant in 1972. According to Burton (1975), the security director who designed the system, it includes the following features (p. 27):

- Public address systems (two-way intercoms already in place in most classrooms) in each school were adapted for use as audio monitoring systems.

- Intrusion detection devices--including video, microwave, radar, ultrasound and infra red devices--were placed in areas that housed expensive equipment...

- A closed-circuit TV monitor and (video) recorder system was installed in the main high school.

- A school security center was established at the main high school to monitor electronic equipment.

Burton (1975) estimates that school vandalism and burglary losses have been reduced from $175,000 in 1971 before the system was installed to $50,000 in 1974. An average of 30 audio sensors are activated nightly in each of the 22 schools served by the system, which both allow detection and permit the system attendant to "listen in" on what may be happening before notifying the city police. Each school also may have one or more other devices for recognizing intruders or fires. The TV system serves only the main high school but provides remote surveillance of several locations where records or valuable equipment is stored.

A variety of detection sensors are available commercially to meet usual, or unusual, needs. American School and University (1970) lists ten basic types: photoelectric (infrared beam) detectors, audio (microphone) detectors, vibration (motion) detectors, high frequency sonic (area surveillance) detectors, closed circuit television, mechanical (switches, window tape, etc.) detectors, capacitance (electromagnetic field) detectors, radar (radio frequency) detectors, remote door controls (permitting inquiry before access is allowed), and taut-line (fence-top) detectors. Other systems have included magnetic door switches, temperature limit sensors, and smoke detectors (Miller & Beer, 1974); passive (heat sensitive) infrared detectors (Schnabolk, 1974); pressure (under mat), ambient light, and stress sensitive (underfloor) detectors (Baughman, 1971); and an electronic (proximity detector) fence (Nation's Schools, 1968). Several authors suggest the use of automatic dialing devices for remote alarm systems to eliminate the need for specially leased telephone lines.

Coursen (1975) lists six criteria for selecting an alarm system-- confidence that any entry attempt will be detected, the false alarm rate, cost, reliability, resistance to defeat, and limitations on effectiveness imposed by the operating environment. As an example of the latter, successive infestations of both moths and mice were responsible for triggering

elaborate microwave motion detectors in one school district (Kolstad, 1974). Alarm systems can fail for even simpler reasons, too. A combined entry-detection and audio verification system installed in many District of Columbia schools was responsible for 22 apprehensions in three months of 1971 (Edwards, 1971). In 1977, however, a newspaper article in the Washington Star (Middleton, 1977b) reported:

> The principal at Van Ness Elementary School was feeling pretty lucky about security at this time last year when a new alarm system was being installed.... However, the alarm system failed its first test two weeks ago, when five burglars broke into the school twice in the same week, stealing equipment worth thousands of dollars ... the alarms beeped and beeped ... suggesting someone is sleeping on the job.

Five school alarm systems themselves were stolen in Boston in a single year (Slaybaugh, 1975). As Greenberg (1974) suggests, school districts spending considerable funds on intrusion alarms frequently discover, "that the alarms were technically deficient, poorly installed, easily defeated, and subject to a high false alarm rate" (p. 13). He adds they provide little protection against glass breakage, one of the costliest forms of vandalism. Finally, he argues, electronic systems may be counterproductive--a major California school district spent more than one million dollars over an eight year period on alarms for 74 schools, with only a very temporary reduction in losses before they again began rising sharply.

Alternatives to intruder detection systems that have been described include the use of trained watchdogs (Wells, 1971; Madison, 1970; Kolstad, 1974), helicopter surveillance (Cross, 1976), installing "school sitter" families in mobile homes on school grounds (National School Public Relations Association, 1975; American School Board Journal, 1974a), combined automatic sprinkler and water pressure alarm systems (Strom, 1974; Neville, 1974), phosphorescent dust (Clement, 1975), and automatic recording movie cameras on school buses (Nation's Schools, 1973). Not to be overlooked is James' (1974) suggestion (p. 43):

> A no-cost deterrent can be made from a large can, two pounds of marbles, some string and a small shelf. Attach the shelf above your windows. Fill the can with marbles and balance it precariously on the shelf. Tie the string between the can and the window shades. This is the "trigger" which upsets the can when an unwelcome visitor moves the shades. If the first

shock does not give the thief a heart attack, the noise and risk of a broken ankle attendant to prowling around a dark room whose floor is covered with marbles may encourage an early exit.

3.   <u>Access Controls and Trouble Alert Devices</u>.   While security personnel and alarm systems serve a deterrent role, they do not deal with one of the main fears, that of a potentially violent intruder or student. Safety precautions for teachers and their students are the main theme of a booklet prepared by the United Federation of Teachers (1974). Some of the tips include avoid being alone anywhere in the school, particularly before or after the school day, avoid stepping into a student fight, and avoid sending or permitting students outside the classroom unless they go in pairs. The booklet suggests a number of measures to restrict access to the school through external doors (p. 15):

- All but the main entrance doors should be locked all the time. This includes service and delivery entrances.

- Exterior handles should be removed from all but the main entrance doors.

- Face-plates should overlap door-locks to prevent would-be intruders from prying them open.

- Doors should be inspected every 30 minutes to prevent lock-stuffing and other tampering.

- Signs should be affixed above the exterior of all exits directing visitors and tardy students to the main entrance.

- Signs should be posted within a school building to instruct visitors to leave by the main entrance.

It also suggests several procedures for visitor control (p. 15-16):

- All visitors should be asked to show identification.

- Badges or large numbered passes should be issued to all legitimate visitors.

- Where visitors are not required to report to the main office first, they should be announced to the office by an intercom phone.

- People visiting classrooms--or any office other than the main office--should be escorted to their destinations.

- A conference area should be established near the main office, in which visitors can meet teachers and other school employees.

● Small signs should be posted on the windows of classroom
    doors, instructing visitors to show their passes to the
    teacher inside. Teachers should not open their doors if a
    visitor cannot produce a pass.

The use of quality locks on classroom doors, keeping them locked, and
maintaining careful control over keys--particularly pass keys--is stressed
by several authorities. And because school keys often are so difficult to
keep out of the wrong hands, some more elaborate systems for controlling
access have been suggested. These include office-to-door intercoms to
screen visitors before they are admitted (Dukiet, 1973), keyless coded locks
(Slaybaugh & Koneval, 1971), and even a system for using electronically
compared hand configuration as an identification device (American School
Board Journal, 1972). Staff and student photographic ID cards are recom-
mended (California State Department of Education, 1973) but how these
would reduce school crime is not made clear.

Methods for summoning help when it is needed include the two-way class-
room intercom, alarm buttons on the wall or at the teacher's desk, and
"personal" transmitters. As described by Schnabolk (1974), "each teacher
carries a transmitter, either in a pocket or on a necklace-like chain. If
there is a disturbance in her classroom, the teacher simply presses a button
on the transmitter, activating a receiver on the classroom wall. The receiver
sends a signal to the annunciator panel in the administration office" (p. 35). Plans
for how the school might respond to such a signal if no security guards are
employed are not given. The low cost of closed-circuit TV has led to the
frequent suggestion that these be used as sentries in hallways, cafeterias,
locker areas, and other trouble-prone locations during school hours
(Kravontka, 1974). Control over class-skipping, truancy, and the moment-by-
moment location of students through computers connected to classroom terminals
has been proposed (Slater, 1974; McGowan, 1973).

4. Site-Hardening for Schools. Another general form of security
protection is through practices and design features which physically make
crime less likely. Locks and other access-limiting devices already have
been described; other approaches will be considered here. Much of the litera-
ture on this problem deals specifically with vandalism, arson, and nighttime
breaking and entering. Some of the solutions also may help make person
crimes more difficult, however, by increasing the visibility of isolated

locations, by removing temptations, and by creating a more pleasant school environment. And, finally, there has been speculation that crime breeds crime--by reducing petty theft and vandalism, more serious crimes may be made less probable.

Certainly one of the most comprehensive and widely quoted analyses of school-building vulnerability was prepared by Zeisel (1974; and also Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1974), who lists more than 50 specific suggestions for reducing losses due to vandalism and illegal entry. His position is that "School buildings provide a challenge to kids--a test of their ingenuity to enter or scale a building, and these actions may lead to damage. In law, facilities that invite destructive or dangerous misuse-- are termed attractive nuisances ... (and) school districts and their architects must provide buildings that are not easy and inviting targets for would-be vandals" (p. 1). Some of his suggestions are (EFL, 1974, p. 3-8):

- Ensure there are no footholds on exterior surfaces.
- Locate climbable plantings far from walls.
- Provide sliding or pull-down grilles that cover transparent doorways when the building is closed.
- Eliminate exterior hardware on all doors used primarily for exits.
- Locate offices near entries so that the staff can see who is going in and out of the building.
- Minimize glass around play areas.
- Provide wall and ground surfaces that can be written on but can be cleaned and withstand other abuse.
- Remove only abusive graffiti during maintenance.
- Keep quick drying touch-up paint in stock.
- Avoid soft materials such as grass or flowers immediately adjacent to narrow paths or parking lots.

Other design and construction standards which have been advocated include plastic window material such as Lexan acrylic (Slaybaugh & Koneval, 1971); playground sweepers to remove stones and other "potential ammunition" (Underwood, et al., 1968); trim trees and shrubs to make buildings more visible from the street (American School Board Journal, 1972); engraving identification on them and keeping expensive equipment in vaults (Clement, 1975); removing and depositing all cash, including that in teachers' desks and vending machines, at the close of each school day (Nation's Schools, 1973); avoid nonrectangular building sites (Baughman, 1971); install tamperproof

lockers (American School and University, 1966); eliminate windows at lower building levels (American School and University, 1974); and install automatic sprinkler systems (Juillerat, 1966).

Other suggestions include electronic detectors to prevent the theft of library books (Coppock, 1973); locking up tools, turning off water supply valves, and dispersing separate components of audiovisual equipment in different locations (James, 1974); moving lavatory sinks and towel dispensers out into the hall and reducing space in toilets (National School Public Relations Association, 1975); and adequate perimeter fencing (Neville, 1974). Many articles recommend increased levels of lighting both inside and outside the building. Gardner (1972), for example, recommends a minimum exterior nighttime illumination of 12 foot candles. He says that although "documentation of crime rates, before and after improved lighting on educational sites, is almost nonexistent ... some recorded evidence of crime rate decreases have resulted from improved lighting in the larger cities ... in the range of 10 to 50 percent and, in a few cases, as high as 87 percent" (p. 12).

More work on protecting schools and the teachers and pupils in them from serious crime through design features obviously is needed. It also is clear that no one approach is likely to succeed by itself. For instance, Olson and Carpenter (1971) found no relationship between vandalism rates and the use of exterior lighting. Pablant and Baxter (1975) did demonstrate neighborhood lighting reduced vandalism, but that school lighting alone had no effect--presumably the need is to increase pedestrian traffic rather than simplify detection. Experimental efforts such as the site-hardening study now underway in Broward County, Florida (National Clearinghouse for Criminal Justice Planning and Architecture, 1975) should help supply information on physical changes that are likely to do some good.

B. Individual Measures

A number of school crime intervention strategies are directed at the actual or potential offender. As noted earlier, we do not know very much about this group. Some suspect serious school violence and vandalism is a product of only a small percentage of the student body while others believe most juveniles may be responsible for an offense at one time or another. The role of intruders is not clear. Nor is the role of dropouts and

pushouts, the role of low ability students, or the role of emotionally disturbed youngsters. Part of this problem is due to low apprehension rates and poor reporting practices.

But, in addition, regulations and policies designed to protect the privacy of juveniles--even prior to recent Federal legislation in this area--has made the systematic compilation of data on offenders responsible for school crime exceedingly difficult. Although the misuse of such information is deplorable, it also is true that lack of this knowledge may sorely reduce the effectiveness of intervention and treatment programs. Offenders themselves may be as much losers as their victims because they are not receiving the help they need, or obtaining it early enough. As a consequence, most prevention measures directed toward the individual are either voluntary (and therefore often reach the wrong youngsters) or punitive (and therefore applicable only after the offense has occurred).

In this section, we will not consider steps the school might take to deter violence and vandalism in general or deal with the educationally disruptive student--these are discussed below. Instead, we will focus on those who have or can be expected to become serious offenders. We will look just at sanctions and their enforcement, then at methods for coping with crimes taking place to limit the harm or damage that might result, and finally at ways of dealing with previous and likely offenders in the school setting to ward off future incidents.

1.   Sanctions and Enforcement. Suppose an event does occur. Some sort of disciplinary response often is called for, but school people disagree on the form this ought to take. Michelson (1956) favors "old fashioned" discipline in the schools to prevent a pattern of minor infractions from escalating into serious delinquency. She advocates such measures as having the children pick up paper shreds they have scattered, and washing walls they have smeared. McGuire (1975, p. 23) stresses that "Something must be done about students who are engaging in serious criminal offenses. No English teacher should have to rehabilitate heroin pushers. That should be a matter for the police."

Punishments that can be administered by the schools have been limited by a number of recent court tests. Nevertheless, Cavan and Ferdinand (1975) note that corporal punishment is permitted in most elementary schools and

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some secondary schools as well--while perhaps not entirely constructive, they point out that elementary school teachers have few other options short of contacting the police. The American School Board Journal (1975, p. 78) took a straw vote of subscribing school board members on "how they would solve the problem of crime and violence in the schools." The most popular solution (28 percent of the votes) was to "make discipline stricter; use corporal punishment; expel troublemaking students." Most authorities tend to agree with Reagen (1973), however, who feels all corporal punishment should be removed from the schools.

Temporary detention either to remove a troublemaker from the classroom or to punish misbehavior by requiring the student to remain after school or miss an activity period appears as a more frequent practice. Bailey (1970, p. 47) reports, "many school authorities provide for a kind of detention area inside the school to which they send unruly students. Half of the principals in our survey indicated that they had such areas. These varied in style from enforced study halls to dark closets with a prison-like atmosphere." Farquhar (1977b) recommends detention for cutting classes. The National Congress of Parents and Teachers (see Kimmel in SVVH, 1976b) proposes the use of "in-school suspension" as an alternative to forcing the disruptive child out of school entirely.

Formal suspension and expulsion have been limited, but not prohibited, by the Supreme Court (see Goss v. Lopez and Wood v. Strickland, SVVH, 1976b). And whether these steps do more harm than good has been questioned in several contexts. Cross (1976, p. 30), for instance, says "Suspension and expulsion reinforce a youngster's sense of failure, put him or her out on the street to become more involved in crime, and interrupt his or her education." Davis and Thompson (1976, p. 4) observe that "The penalties now imposed--suspensions, loss of privileges, and even expulsion--often are not significantly important costs to youth." And according to Wells (1971, p. 45-46), "There is no evidence to show that a crackdown in discipline, spanking, suspension or expulsion does much more than intensify the problem in many cases and in too many school districts."

Firmer prosecution, particularly for intruders, has been proposed. Kimmel (SVVH, 1976b, p. 43), president of the National PTA, states, "We believe that students should be punished by the law when they are involved in

assaults or violence of any kind. A school should not become a sanctuary from the law. Teachers and principals cannot depend solely on school penalties." Murphy (1973, p. 3) describes "The Toledo Safe Passage to School Law" which provides "a fine of up to $1,000, a year in jail, or both, upon conviction of assaulting, harassing, or using obscene language to school personnel while on school property, going to or from schools, or in stadiums or gymnasiums, or the grounds thereof." He reports having taken six cases to court, four resulting in jail terms and the other two in fines. The National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education (1973, p. 118) says, "An assault in school must not be treated like a casual fight, as a discipline problem to be solved by hasty--and often inappropriate--punishment meted out by busy school personnel. This is a matter for the courts."

Action by the courts is not always swift or sure, however. Shanker (SVVH, 1976a, p. 8) feels,"the courts are powerless to act, because even when they find that a student is dangerous to himself and to those around him, there are no special school or institutional facilities available. Those engaged in repeated acts of violence know that this lack exists and that ... they are free to do as they please." Perhaps this logic was at work in an incident described by Juillerat (1974) where a judge observed juveniles awaiting trial wiling away their time by carving their initials in new court benches while their parents sat unconcerned.

Another approach is to make parents liable for the actions of their children, especially when property damage is involved. Nation's Schools (1973, p. 37) reports on a Los Angeles program "to publicize the fact that damage suits may be filed against parents of young vandals," despite the fact that it earlier (1968, p. 61) reported on a study by Alice B. Freer showing, "Most states which enacted parental liability laws have found that vandalism actually increased ... liability laws may actually contribute to delinquency." The results of a poll of school administrators on the same issue showed 99 percent favoring holding parents liable for school damage caused by their children. Koch (1975) reports the city of Calgary recovered an average of only 3.2 percent of school damage costs over a five year period. Bellevue, Washington had similar experience with restitution over a four year period (SVVH, 1976a, p. 292). Maryland's recovery record for the 1973-74 school year was slightly lower (SVVH, 1976a, p. 457). Furno and Wallace (1972) polled districts with and without parental responsibility laws. The recovery rate averaged

4.4 percent in districts with these laws, but 8.8 percent in those without them. In some districts (Wells, 1971), pupils are required to work off their own vandalism debt performing school maintenance tasks.

At the present time, then, no form of sanctions seem particularly effective, and new ways must be found for handling day-to-day disciplinary problems (Rector, 1975). According to Reagan (1973, p. 12), "There is no evidence that shows corporal punishment, suspension or expulsion does much more than intensify the problem.... There have been no concrete, positive results even in cities which have laws punishing parents for the acts of their delinquent children." McPartland and McDill (1977, p. 16) also question "the value of different school penalties as deterrents to potential school offenders ... whether secondary schools command sufficient disciplinary resources to meet the range of offenses with which they have to deal."

2. <u>Coping with Crime</u>. Surprisingly little has been written on what a teacher or school administrator is supposed to do when confronted with a crime in process. Notifying the police and letting them handle it is one obvious option (Vestermark, 1971). IDEA (1969) lists steps to be taken, including what to say to the press and police, during a mass demonstration or boycott. On a more individual level, the United Federation of Teachers (1974) has suggestions regarding impending attacks by both students and intruders (p. 4-6):

- Classroom attacks--by students on teachers--are more likely in the elementary and middle schools than in the high schools, though they are usually more serious in the upper grades than in the lower.

- Elementary school youngsters who assault teachers are especially prone to kicking and biting. But teachers should also be wary of flying objects: light, movable furniture is a recent favorite of younger children who are prone to throwing things at their teachers.

- With most elementary school students, teachers can see that an outburst is coming. And with most of them, physical restraint is the best response. If a teacher anticipates that an attack is coming, he should get as close to the child as possible; spin the youngster around; and embrace him in a bear-hug that pins his arms to his body. The child should then be removed from the classroom-- and quickly. An audience will only encourage further struggle.

- With older--and bigger--students, more caution is needed. If the assailant is larger or stronger than the teacher, discretion is the better part of valor. A teacher should go for help whenever he is threatened with an assault; if he is trapped, the teacher should yell or scream for assistance.

- Classroom intruders pose more serious problems.... The teacher is a sitting duck if he is seated at his desk; though there is a natural tendency to freeze at the approach of a menacing intruder, teachers should force themselves to get up from behind their desks--and thus to escape or minimize injury.

- Don't resist the armed robber. Talk slowly; talk softly; and avoid quick movements. Many robbers are prone to gratuitous assaults, particularly against teachers. Go down with the first blow and stay down.

- Older kids who break into classrooms are usually interested in abusing and harassing teachers. Often they commit a minor sexual assault aimed principally at humiliating a teacher. The best advice is: get out fast and call for help. When a teacher can't get out, he should tell one or more trustworthy students near the rear door of the classroom to run for help.

- Teachers should attempt to calm irate parents before they do something that they themselves will regret. A quiet, friendly and reasoned discussion is the best approach. Most attacks by parents are one-shot matters, usually a slap; but they can be more serious, and teachers are advised to take the precautions suggested above.

The problem often is more complex when the teacher is a bystander rather than the intended victim. An AIR teacher's manual (1975, p. 3), points out "Some teachers simply opened their doors and stood silently aside. Their position had been: 'I'm a teacher, not a policeman ... I'm paid to teach my subject, not to keep kids from smoking in toilets or walking out of school.' " The report also has a series of suggestions on what a teacher should do if a fight breaks out, including taking time to size up the situation, preventing others from getting involved, and getting help since it takes at least two to disengage fighting students. There even has been a course developed for teachers on how to deal with aggressive pupils through physical intervention. In part, "Participants practiced breaking up fights, falling without hurting themselves, and disarming a child attacking with a knife, scissors, or lead pipe" (Today's Education, 1972, p. 71).

Unfortunately, we were not able to locate similar concrete advice for dealing with the victims of school crimes. What do you say to a child who has been molested on the way to school, or who has had his lunch money taken from him, or whose prized gym shoes have been taken from a locker, or who was beaten up in the hall? This apparent lack of genuine interest in the victim, at least as evidenced in the school crime literature, may tell us something about our response to the school violence problem that certainly ought to be remedied.

3. Guidance and Treatment. Not all experts believe punishment is the proper way to deal with serious misbehavior in the school setting. More positive theraputic action--preferably before an offense has occurred-- certainly is preferred. In Marvin's survey (1976), 30 of the 137 programs, or 22 percent were categorized under the "Counseling Services" heading. These ranged from informal, weekly "rap sessions" to actively seeking out students with problems so counseling could be provided. A number of examples of counseling programs aimed at school crime are given by Pritchard and Wedra (1975). Counseling often is combined with special instruction in small classes provided as an alternative to suspension for such infractions as disobedience, truancy, or smoking (Davis & Thompson, 1976).

One more or less typical counseling program operating in San Jose is described by the National School Public Relations Association (1975, p. 49, 52-3). This program is designed "for solving the problems of school, family and neighborhood--the kinds of problems that can lead to vandalism and violence unless preventive actions are taken. The model has proved to be successful," virtually eliminating vandalism and serious violence. The aim of the program is to "prevent problems and to defuse situations that could turn into a crisis," in part by establishing strong linkages between the school and social service agencies in the community. A staff of trained counselors serves the school's "crisis students," as well as supervises a hotline, works with parents, and otherwise tries to help youths who may get into trouble.

Professsional counselors are not always recommended to provide help to students. Rector (1975), for example, suggests that teachers should be trained for dealing with special problems that may occur, such as drug or alcohol abuse and truancy. Cross (1976) suggests the possible use of plain- clothes police officers who would be available to students who wanted to discuss their problems or obtain advice on the legal implications of crime. IDEA (1974) also suggests security officers may be able to provide more appropriate help for students involved with the law than guidance counselors or educational professionals.

Darrow (1975) believes counseling for delinquency prevention should begin in elementary school. His view is that (p. 32):

All children, no matter how "nice" they are, get subjected
to temptations and influences that might lead them to become
delinquents. Delinquency is an infectious disease. Children
get exposed to it, may get infected; and some get sick. For
them a cure is needed before it becomes chronic; and the
school should help all children, particularly the weaker
ones, to resist delinquency producing influences, and thus
immunize them. This is necessary by the school because the
church and the home now have become less influential than
they formerly were.

No one really can argue that assistance for young people in the form of
advice, understanding, and guidance is not a good thing. But even the logic
that it is troubled youngsters who get into trouble may not justify the
implementation of a comprehensive counseling program primarily on the grounds
of its potential impact on serious school crime. Such programs can be more
strongly supported as essential to other outcomes, even if addressed to
relatively specific concerns including gang activity or drug abuse. The
fact that some schools may desperately need improved student services and
the fact that these same schools very often experience the effects of school
crime does not mean that supplying one will cure the other. Yet the success
of some of these programs--the San Jose effort is an example--suggests that
many schools could get more involved in the lives of their pupils to
everyone's benefit.

C.   School Measures

For many youngsters, attending school simply is not a particularly
pleasant experience. Regimentation, excessive intellectual demands, incon-
sistently administered discipline, uncaring teachers, and irrelevant
content are frequent complaints, and are conditions that seem to be asso-
ciated with delinquency, vandalism,and violence (see Schafer & Polk, 1967;
Bailey, 1970; Olson & Carpenter, 1971). There is a subtle logic that
somehow education must be painful to be productive, and all too often the
cause may be evident without the desired effect. It is not surprising, then,
that a number of authorities have examined the possibility of combating
school crime by making school a better, more pleasant place. In Marvin's
study (1976), 26 percent of the surveyed school crime programs involved
curricular or instructional changes, and 29 percent were based on organiza-
tional modifications in school structure, regulations or practices.

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These categories are perhaps too broad to examine likely interventions, however, and a finer breakdown may more accurately describe the approaches schools have been taking to reduce school crime through educational reforms: (1) educational programming, (2) restructured discipline, (3) increased responsiveness, and (4) crime prevention. It should be noted, also, that these remedies tend to be used in combination with one another or with other countermeasures described in this report. Multifaceted programs often are required to deal with school crime but they make it difficult to attribute success or failure to particular ingredients. Furthermore, almost any change in the school curricula or climate is likely to have some favorable impact akin to the famous "Hawthorne Effect."*

1. <u>Educational Programming</u>. The feeling that much of the content of traditional education fails to meet the needs and expectations of a sizable proportion of students is widespread. This lack of relevance often is cited as a cause of disinterest and alienation which, in turn, frequently is believed to lead to violence and vandalism. Kemble (1975) is one of those who feel that the schools should be given the funds to provide alternative school settings and special services for students who are habitual discipline problems, thus providing them with help without resorting to jails and detention homes. According to U.S. News (1975, p. 39), such a system has been established in Dade County, "where 800 problem students--about 80 percent of them disruptive--are taught a wide range of skills from art to auto mechanics under a less rigid schedule with more private attention.... Annual expulsions in the district have dropped from 135 to 20 in one year."

A more open form of alternative education has been established in Sarasota, Florida (Van Avery, 1975). The "Downtown School," a former Salvation Army Headquarters, is used as a gathering place for the students who engage in guided study projects utilizing resources in the surrounding community. Projects are designed as learning experiences in areas of each student's special interests. Participants are fully involved in the design of this nontraditional curriculum. Still another approach, part of the San Jose crisis counseling project (SVVH, 1976b), is directed at potential problem students in the sixth through eighth grades. These pupils are

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*Where industrial employees responded favorably to any change in plant conditions, including the reversal of prior improvements.

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transported to the high school for daily 2-1/2 hour periods of intensive instruction in reading and mathematics including tutoring from a model high school student. Participants not only successfully raise their skill levels, but also develop loyalty and respect for the school they later will attend regularly.

Special help for "youth who have less opportunity to complete school successfully because of cultural, experiential, or economic limitations" is described by Marburger (1966, p. 260). The inclusion of needed compensatory education in the elementary program, he says, "provides the opportunity for preventive rather than the remedial, rehabilitative kind of activities necessary at the secondary-school level" (p. 263). Byerly (1966) suggests that such a program ought to include nongraded instruction, the use of audiovisual aids, built-in success experiences, materials which realistically reflect urban life, an emphasis on communication skills, and other features. Many similar suggestions on the design of educational programs for disruptive youth are given by Smith (1973), who also suggests smaller class sizes, shorter school days, and continuous supervision as helpful.

The need to maintain student interest is behind McGuire's suggestion (1975, p. 23) that "we should encourage, design, and support experimental programs, alternative and other nontraditional approaches to educating students who are bored or unmoved by traditional approaches." Pringle (1974, p. 87) believes, "Secondary schools, in particular, need to reform their curricula and organization to become more appropriate and relevant to the 20 percent least academically able or interested pupils." Clement (1975, p. 19) urges "a curriculum continually evaluated and revised to meet student needs; good teaching involving a variety of the most appropriate procedures and materials--interesting and satisfying presentations produce happy pupils-- ... (and) appropriate extra-class activity to build individual interest and school spirit."

IDEA (1969) provides a number of additional suggestions for increasing the relevance and appropriateness of the school curriculum, particularly for students with histories of disruption, from nonmajority ethnic backgrounds, and for that often sizable segment of the student body that is not college bound. Powell (1976) emphasizes specific training for self-direction and greater opportunity to achieve basic skills. And Wenk (1976) stresses the

need for an optional career education sequence beginning even as early as age seven. Many school practices, and not the curriculum alone, are identified as causes of antisocial behavior by Schafer and Polk (1967, p. 223) who feel this results, "in part from adverse or negative school experiences of some youth ... (brought about by) fundamental defects within the educational system, especially as it touches lower income youth."

The possible role of nontraditional educational formats in preventing violence, vandalism, and disruption has not been effectively tested. However, Berger (1974, p. 24) reports that:

> It is significant that alternative schools have experienced
> a minimum of violence, regardless of where they are
> located, what type of curriculum they follow, or who constitutes
> the student body. In fact, Harvey B. Scribner claims that of
> the 10,000 students attending auxiliary high schools in New
> York City, there has not been a single reported act of
> violence. This is despite the fact that these pupils have
> all either dropped out of regular high school or been
> expelled, and some have criminal records as well.

On the other hand, many millions of dollars have been spent over the past several years on trying to improve the quality of education, especially for disadvantaged pupils without much apparent or replicable success. While this goal remains laudable, it would be unfortunate to seize upon school crime as a reason to continue making similar, equally diffuse, investments in the future. We are not convinced that the deep-rooted problems of quality education can be solved within the scope of any school crime prevention effort, and we similarly are not yet convinced that safe schools should be the principal criterion of educational quality.

2. <u>Restricted Discipline</u>. America's "youth culture" has found typical school codes and regulations to be particular irritants in many educational settings. As a result, according to U.S. News (1975, p. 40), "more and more schools are trying to encourage self-discipline by easing what students call 'Mickey Mouse' restrictions. Officials estimate, for instance, that one third of the nation's high schools now allow student smoking ... (and) high schools in Birmingham, Alabama, are allowing students 20 absences a year without explanation or excuses from parents.... Attendance rose 3 percent after the experiment began." Yet, the article adds that in another district "parents let it be known they wanted disrupters dealt with, and some students who were caught marking up the school were quickly suspended. After that ... the

rest of the kids finally realized that the school meant business, so they
cut it out" (p. 39).

Some of the factors Holman (1975) has observed in schools which experi-
enced violence include (p. 44): "Overly restrictive student dress and
grooming codes; unreal application of disciplinary measures; lack of a
grievance mechanism." He encourages (p. 44):

> Administrators to develop a centrally administered, school-
> wide policy of discipline which is comprehensive enough to
> cover all identified problems of discipline; flexible
> enough to be readily applied to the unique characteristics
> of schools and to unforseen situations that might arise;
> easily understood by all persons whom it affects; widely
> published to insure that those affected have the oppor-
> tunity to become familiar with it; and equally enforceable
> among all schools in the system.

> The primary focus of discipline policies and regulations
> must be toward maximum education and the well-being of
> all the students, rather than toward the convenience of
> the school system.

Phay (SVVH, 1976b) similarly advocates very explicit and detailed school
misconduct codes, both because the courts have been requiring specificity
in disciplinary rules and practices and because their development should
involve students. He points out (SVVH, 1976b, p. 149), "The discipline in the
public schools of thirty years ago--which served basically a white, middle-
class student--was reinforced by the discipline standard set at home ... but
(schools) now are pluralistic, containing all classes and races of people ...
students today cannot be expected to modify their behavior in school sub-
stantially, at least not for a long period of time, when the restraints placed
on the student in school are not found outside the school."

The handling of infractions also has been routinized by many districts.
Jones (1973) in his comprehensive report on school discipline describes
what is characterized as a "highly successful" system in the Alexandria,
Virginia, schools (p. 35):

> The system works like this: at the beginning of the school
> year, each classroom teacher in grades 7-12 receives a pre-
> printed batch of computer cards listing 20 violations of
> classroom behavior. If the student is guilty of one of the
> violations (e.g., skipping class, cheating, using foul
> language), the teacher checks the appropriate box on the
> card, fills in the date, her name and the name of the student,
> and returns the card to the principal at the end of the day.

The principal turns the card over to the computer center; it's fed into a machine the following day along with instructions for the type of letter to be sent to the student's parents.

The letter contains the details of the misconduct and the type of action the principal and the teacher recommend to the parents. One parent may be asked to get in touch with the individual teacher or the assistant principal or principal; another may be asked to attend a parent-teacher conference. The system not only keeps the parents informed of the misbehavior of their son or daughter but also it provides an accurate and complete record of all infractions. If more serious disciplinary measures are deemed necessary, the school system stands ready to present evidence of past misdeeds.

There are other approaches. Wint (1975) reports on how one principal converted his violence-filled high school to "one of the most peaceful in the nation" with firmness, swift punishment, and alertful vigilance. Berger (1974) suggests "student courts" to deal with violators, but points out that students tend to be harsher with their peers than administrators and teachers previously were. Colver and Richter (1971, p. 111) discuss "Self-Directive Day," a program in which students can participate if they sign a "contract" agreeing "to attend all scheduled classes and homeroom, obey all laws, refrain from vandalism, smoking, the misuse of drugs, and any other activities which might be disruptive.... Attendance has increased.... Truancy has decreased and grades have gone up slightly.... Smoking and disruptive behavior have decreased greatly, and vandalism is at a new low." How adherence to the "contract" is enforced was not made clear.

Student discipline is an area that seems to have received more attention from the courts--in terms of rulings on corporal punishment, differentially administered suspensions, and due process--than from educators and behavioral scientists. We do not know the relationship between discipline practices and serious school crime, for example, or how teachers ought to cope with occassional infractions of school rules. Launching a paper airplane when the teacher's back is turned hardly can be considered a capital offense, but the teacher's fear of loss of control may result in much sterner punishment than is justified. School perhaps is a good place to learn about social rules, but each lesson should be a carefully planned educational experience which meets both the school's need for tranquility and the child's need for growth.

3.   Increased Responsiveness. McPartland and McDill (1977, p. 13), postulate an interesting relationship between school practices and violence and vandalism. "We question whether the main themes of delinquency theories overlook the independent role that schools may play in promoting delinquency. Schools may directly affect student delinquency through their responsiveness to student behavior.   By responsiveness we mean the degree to which schools take specific notice of changes in student behavior by distributing rewards for improvements in desired behaviors, placing costs on misbehavior, and providing access for students in school decision-making procedures." The thrust of their argument is that schools often are insensitive to the needs and resources of the individual student, that children are seen only as members of a group or deviants from it.

The importance of the school's interpersonal environment also is described by Bailey (1970, p. 37-8):

> For persons not accustomed to visiting large urban public high schools, the experience can be a bit startling. Bells ringing, buzzers sounding, public address systems making all those announcements, ... all these and many more give an impression of unmanageable social interaction in which education is effectively precluded. At the same time, one can feel a clear difference between a school which is essentially a happy one and a school which is not. The differences show up in the tone of the noise, not necessarily its level, and especially in the kinds of brief human contacts among adult staff, hall guards or whatever, and students moving hurriedly to their next assignment. The smiling level is important. The kinds of jocular interplay are probably more important. In the most interesting schools we visited, there was a subtle mixture of obvious respect and obvious friendliness which seemed ever present and, significantly, which ran both ways.

Students, particularly those who come to school from a disadvantaged home, those with evident skill deficits, or those culturally different from the school staff may perceive the impersonal stance of the school as a specific reflection of their own adequacy. As Powell (1976) points out, teachers can have a powerful effect on a student's feeling of self-worth. An anecdote in the American School Board Journal (1975, p. 36-7) is more explicit about the cause of this problem in one Chicago elementary school known as the "snake pit:"

> Students spent their time playing baseball in the hallways, sipping wine, gambling, and throwing furniture out of

windows. Only two of the 800 pupils could read.... Today ...
there isn't any litter in the place ... everybody reads....
Teachers hate to miss school almost as much as the children
do.... (The new principal said) in the first staff meeting
I called, I told my teachers that I believed in some very
simple ideas. One of them is that all children can learn;
and all black children can learn.... I showed my staff
members how to make success possible for children who rarely
experience success.

Several suggestions have been made as to how schools can be made more
responsive. The NEA (1975) describes steps taken in a Compton, California
school to establish a "caring" relationship between teachers and pupils.
The teachers spend time with their students outside the class, and make
every effort to recognize the different personalities and background of their
students. The accessibility of school staff and their willingness to
communicate with students is a frequent point (see Hart & Saylor, 1970).
Pringle (1974) believes that praise and recognition are essential; students
who fail to receive enough from their teachers may turn to violence and
vandalism to gain attention from their peers. Berger (1974, p. 25)
believes greater effort on the part of teachers is required to overcome
the lack of identity students feel with their schools--"Many teachers go
through an entire semester without being able to recall the full names of
their pupils unless they are in their assigned seats. Many administrators
never leave their offices during the school day."

Individual attention, liberal praise, a friendly disposition, and
mutual respect are very inexpensive additions to the classroom teacher's
repertoire. And yet they are features of the school climate which certainly
influence student involvement and cooperation. It would have to be believed
that a warm and welcome school will suffer less from school crime than one
which is characterized by hostility and alienation. Individual responsiveness
thus may be a useful ingredient in any program to reduce school violence
and vandalism.

4. Crime Prevention. Aside from the many general changes schools
can adopt to diminish crime, a number of specific steps also can be taken.
One is to enlist the participation of students in a crime deterrence program.
Grealy (1974b, p. 42), for example, says "In my system, we make the students
aware of how both they and their school property are being harmed. When they
understand, they resent what's happening. Students then are stimulated to

assist us in protecting other students and school property." The American School Board Journal (1972) suggests "turning on" students to the problem by appealing to their sense of responsibility. Nielsen (1971) describes how the aid of students is sought through pep talks by gym coaches, and by former students who have become police officers.

James (1974) encourages discussing crime problems with the students and seeking their suggestions for intervention strategies. The California State Department of Education (1973) suggests placing student restrooms under the supervision of the student government organization to reduce vandalism. And Underwood,et al., (1968) describes a program in Akron where, in addition to encouraging student pride, students are given an active role in school surveillance and vandalism reporting.

A number of authorities believe greater emphasis should be given to crime problems in the regular school curriculum. Berger (1974), for instance, recommends law-related education which focuses on the causes of violent behavior and instills in pupils a responsibility to prevent disruption. Munnelly (1971) also recommends including the study of conflict and violence in the standard school program. Weintraub and Morley (1974) describe a Los Angeles high school program on understanding the criminal justice system. The program includes presentations by law enforcement officials and attorneys, visits to criminal justice facilities, and mock arrests and trials. Laub (1961) reports on a course that includes information on the law, courts, and the offenses most frequently committed by young people. Farquhar (1977a) gives details on a junior high school course on law enforcement which covers such diverse tasks as gathering evidence, directing traffic, categorizing fingerprints, and investigating for arson.

A quite different approach to involving student support for crime prevention is suggested by Haney (1973, p. 4):

> Each of the 22 schools in the district is given a budget
> allocation of one dollar per student at the beginning
> of the school year. The funds are to be used for any
> worthwhile school project but cannot be spent until
> the second semester. An accounting of all vandalism
> costs at each school is kept and the costs of vandalism
> at each school is subtracted from its original allocation.

Student committees describe how the money will be spent once the amount is known. Even including the cost of the awards, there was a 65 percent reduction in expenditures for vandalism in the program's first year. Davis and Thompson (1976) describe a similar program in New Jersey.

Still another way in which schools can reduce crime is through scheduling. Baughman (1971), the American School Board Journal (1972), and Edwards (1971) all suggest adjusting the shifts of maintenance, groundskeeping and custodial personnel to have someone at the school around the clock. Weeks (1976) believes poor maintenance encourages disrespect for school property and that needed repairs should be made promptly. School Management (1973) also stresses the importance of regular maintenance and the need for respect toward custodial workers.

This assortment of crime prevention techniques, like most of the interventions categorized under the School Measures heading, generally are low cost but fairly diffuse in their aims. Schools can be made more interesting, less oppressive and more pleasant places to be. And while it seems perfectly credible that these improvements should decrease student alienation and reduce school crime, we have very little direct evidence to this effect. Even McPartland and McDill (1977, p. 15), who focus on the impact of the schools on serious student offenses conclude, "This is not to say that factors outside of school are not the major source of the problem: the small percentage of variance in delinquency that is explained by our school measures does suggest that most of the causes lie in unmeasured family, occupational, and societal factors."

That what happens in the school has relatively little effect on school violence and vandalism is not inconsistent with most notions about delinquency in general, but it is discouraging with respect to school crime in particular. Most educators would like to believe that schools are able to exert a pronounced influence on the behavior of their students. But we seem to have as much difficulty teaching all children to read and do arithmetic as we have teaching them to respect the rights of others. The ultimate control of school crime may well depend on enhancing the quality of our schools, but the realization of this outcome seems a long way off.

D. Community Measures

The remaining set of interventions to be reviewed are those involving
or initiated by the community in which the school is located. The newsworthi-
ness of school crime may be due as much to most citizens' concern about their
civic responsibilities as it is to their specific fears about harm to their
children. Communities and even neighborhoods often are measured by the
quality of their schools--poor education, high dropout rates, and frequent
school crime suggest things are not going well now and cannot be expected
to improve in the future. Then, too, the community often sees school crime
as a consequence of neighborhood delinquency in general. Offenses occurring
in the school may be no more remarkable than a nearby street assault, store
robbery or sex attack, but a community problem nevertheless.

It is surprising, then, to find so few communities joining in action
against school crime, and so few of these doing more than recognizing the
problem. The first step in involving the community is to overcome indiffer-
ence and establish regular communication between the school and the surround-
ing neighborhood. A logical next step is to convince the community that the
school is a valuable neighborhood resource, and that the protection of its
staff, students and property is a worthwhile goal. The third step would be
for the community to take an active role in getting at the roots of school
crime--"would be" rather than "is" because thus far there are no reports of
communities taking this role.

1.   Community Involvement. Although a few parents of school age
children may display a real interest in school affairs, the traditional PTA
no longer is a very effective mechanism for sharing ideas (Bailey, 19?0).
Therefore, there are no convenient channels for involving parents and com-
munity members in setting school rules, dealing with misbehavior, and pre-
venting violence and vandalism, as suggested by Rioux (SVVH, 1976b) and
Smith (1952). The California State Department of Education (1973) strongly
recommends expanded citizen involvement in the schools through the establish-
ment of community advisory councils. Murphy (1973, p. 2) describes setting
up a task force including civic groups, police and fire officers, booster
clubs, parents, student leaders, respectable citizens, the mayor and the
courts to deal with school security because "the problems involve the
entire community and must be solved by the entire community." Grealy (1974b)

points out that each Broward County, Florida school has a safety and security committee of students, parents, school personnel and community representatives who meet monthly.

Parents and neighbors need not limit their involvement to advice, of course. Bailey (1970), for example, suggests recruiting paid school aides from the community. These individuals could serve both as a deterrent to unruly neighborhood children who were aware the aides knew their families and as an advocate to protect a child's rights against unfair treatment. Another simple measure described by National Committee for Citizens in Education (1975, p. 12) is to have persons living near the school:

> Keep a watchful eye on the children walking to school. In one community, certain houses are designated by a card in the window as "shelters" for children who are or feel threatened on the way to school. In each house, the adult has agreed to be available at the appropriate hours. Troublemakers look elsewhere for trouble if they know they are likely to be observed.

2. Neighborhood Resource. A school can be as valued to a neighborhood as a public park or library. Many school districts encourage residents living near a school to report trespassers or acts of vandalism as a neighborly gesture (National School Public Relations Association, 1975; Virginia DJCP, 1974; Clement, 1975; Edwards, 1971). Citizens can be encouraged to walk their dog around the school instead of around the block and slowly drive around the school when returning home late at night (American School Board Journal, 1974b).

Encouraging community use of school buildings after class hours not only may reduce vandalism, but may increase neighborhood support as well (Edwards, 1971). Ellison (1973) suggests developing new programs for making the school a focal point of community activities. Franklin (1961) describes the use of New York schools as neighborhood recreation and youth activity centers in the late afternoons. Flint, Michigan offers a wide variety of community services through its public school facilities which serve some 92,000 persons per week (Wells, 1971). Greenberg (1974, p. 15), however, suggests this approach may not be all that advantageous, and cites Olson and Carpenter as concluding "The more evenings a school is open, the more vandalism has been experienced." Then, too, neighborhood vigilance and encouraged after-hours use is not likely to impact on crimes which occur while school is in session.

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3. Community Action. Many neighborhoods and neighborhood organizations can take positive action to help reduce the likelihood of serious school crime. The NEA (1975) recommends that local churches be urged to provide space and supervision for youth activities, and that the aid of clubs and other community organizations be solicited. Pritchard and Wedra (1975) similarly encourage the involvement of churches in preventing violence and vandalism, especially at an early age. The Nation's Schools (1973) describes the operation of a rumor control program in a Pennsylvania community where citizens receive personal replies to inquiries about their schools, and can make suggestions for improving school operations.

Job opportunity has been recognized as a major factor in juvenile delinquency and school crime by several authors (Anker in SVVH, 1976a; Cavan & Ferdinand, 1975). One community that has attempted to deal with this problem is San Francisco which has been experimenting with a street-work program designed to channel troublesome students into crime-free activities (U.S. News, 1973). A substantial decline in "major incidents" in the schools resulted.

Communities obviously could do more to counteract crime in their schools. That they do not suggests that schools may be as anonymous to the residents of the area as any other structures which might have been placed in the same location. Few people seem to view their local schools as community resources--perhaps because they have so little voice in their operation, and so little contact with the staff. Many schools depend on the neighborliness of nearby residents for protection against vandalism and burglary, and for their support in controlling trespassers. But how many of these schools are good neighbors in return? How many are as concerned about the well being of area residents as they expect those residents to be about the school?

E. Summary

In this section we have described many of the steps that have been taken to control and prevent school crime. Many schools have become increasingly security conscious over the past decade, and have installed alarm systems, hired security personnel, and reduced access to outsiders. Other schools have given increased attention to the disturbing or disturbed youngster, sometimes to provide them with special help before their problems--

and the school's problems--get worse, and sometimes to more vigorously invoke administrative or criminal penalties for infractions. Still other schools have attempted to adjust their curriculum, make special provisions for youngsters who might be trouble prone, or otherwise try to improve the relevance and quality of education. And, finally, some schools have made an effort to involve the nearby community in their school crime prevention efforts.

Despite this variety, however, there is little evidence that any approach will yield consistent results at a reasonable cost. This does not mean that these solutions, individually or in combination, are clearly ineffective--there simply has been too little done to assess what works and what doesn't, and why. Greenberg (1974) addressed this problem with respect to vandalism, but his comments apply equally well to all school crime (p. 16):

> While many such examples could be cited of vandalism control measures being instituted with uncertain or paradoxical results, the fact remains that such programs remain for the most part unsatisfactorily evaluated. It is no wonder, then, that policy formulators at the federal, state, or school district level face a dilemma because of their inadequate basis for formulating decisions. Worse yet is the dismay experienced when several hundred thousand dollars later it is discovered that the program that has been implemented is useless!
>
> The basic difficulty in solving the problem of school vandalism thus lies not in failure to recognize that the problem exists, or in lack of literature on the subject, but lies in the inability of an administrator to ascertain what specific control measures would give the best results in his local environment.

We are no further ahead in knowing how to curtail most school crime-- and, particularly most serious school crime--than we were several years ago. But this does not mean the problem is insolvable. Given the imperfections in our society, school crime probably always will be with us. The consequences of school related offenses are too great, however, to abandon the quest even for partial solutions.
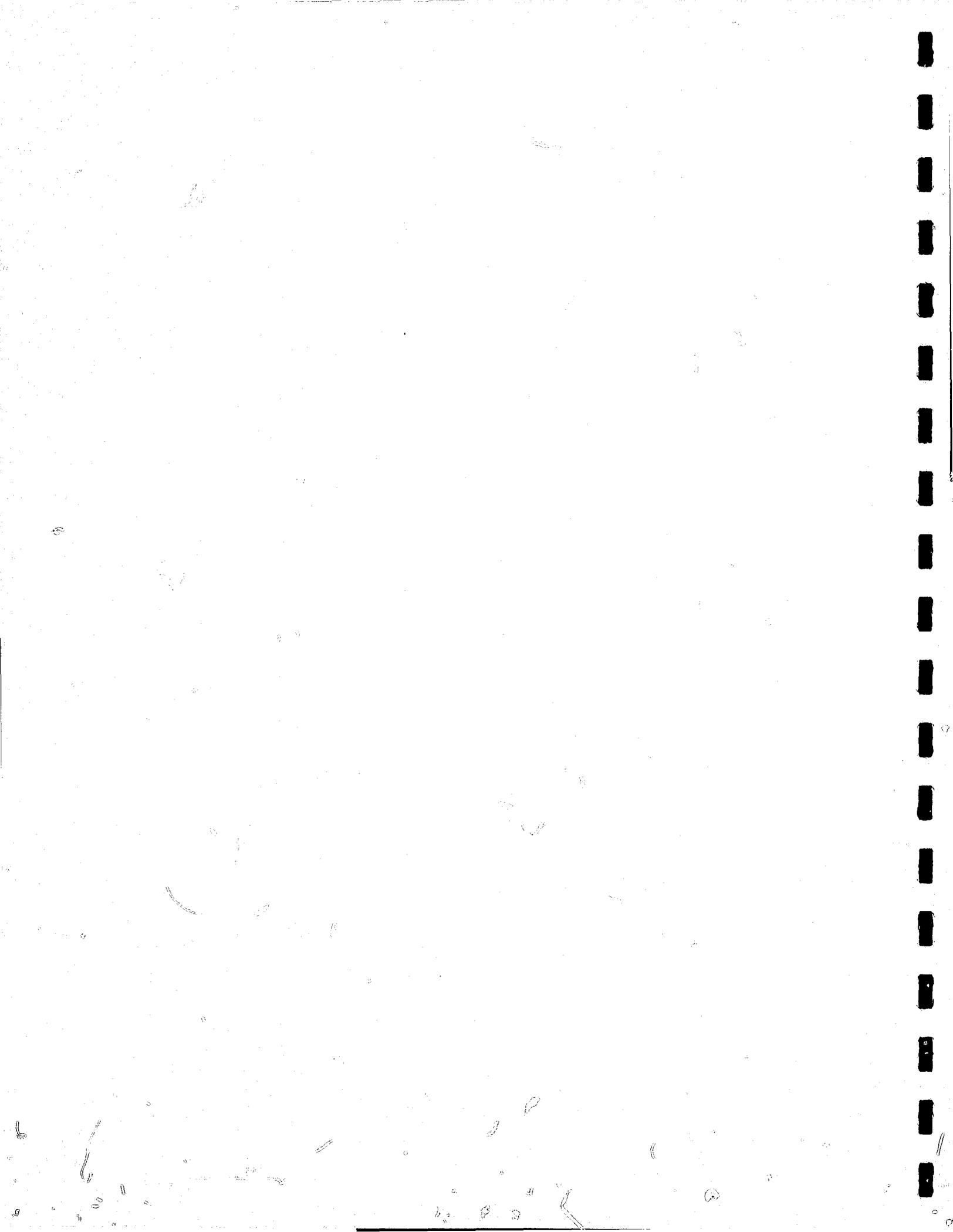
VI. CONCLUSIONS

In the Introduction to this survey, we noted that knowledge about school
crime is sparse but that it nevertheless was appropriate to use whatever
information is at hand to better control and prevent serious school crime.
When data on the incidence of school crime were examined, it was suggested
that the frequency of serious offenses in the schools has reached a disturb-
ing level although the rate was not as frightening as is sometimes suggested.
When trends were examined, it was shown that at least some of the apparent
rise may be explained by the increased numbers of secondary school students,
particularly those who might have dropped out of school in other generations.
However, it was clear that serious crime is a problem in our schools and that
it can have serious consequences for educational quality.

When possible causes of school crime were explored, it was evident that
most of the suggested antecedents are those associated with crime and delin-
quency in general, or with the adequacy of education--and that neither set
provided much in the way of clues as to practical intervention strategies.
And, when interventions that have been tried were discussed, it was evident
that no approach has universal applicability or yields consistent benefits.
So, what use can be made of this information? What steps can be taken by
school authorities, law enforcement officials, and concerned parents to deal
with the school crime problem?

The answer may not be in _what_ is done, but _how_. If any useful lesson
can be extracted from this literature survey, it has to do with the way in
which the problem is conceptualized, the way in which solutions are sought,
and the way in which success is measured. In this Section, we will not
attempt to summarize the opinions and findings described in preceding
chapters. Instead, we will see what has been learned about pitfalls that
should be avoided and policies that should be adopted in future efforts to
understand and combat school crime.

A. What Not To Do

On the basis of this analysis of past literature, we can identify a number of assumptions about school crime which, although understandable, should be avoided.

1. Avoid assuming that all school crime is similar. Although it may be easier to talk about the school crime problem than the school armed robbery problem or the school pupil extortion problem or the school break-in and arson problem, lumping various groups of offenses together--at least before it can be shown that they are, in fact, related--may well preclude opportunities to be more specific about causes and solutions. A high vandalism rate may have nothing to do with a high assault rate, and steps to prevent one should not arbitrarily be expected to impact on the other.

2. Avoid assuming that all schools are similar. The causes of school crime may not be identical from one school or community to another, and the choice of interventions should not be either. Effective interventions are likely to require a combination of approaches which are tailored to local conditions and which utilize local resources. Some schools may profit from tighter security but others would find their investment in intruder control or alarm systems wasted.

3. Avoid using measures of school crime, particularly serious school crime, as criteria for evaluating interventions. Most kinds of school crime are relatively rare events, and counts of crime frequencies are far too unstable to assess the quality or success of an intervention, particularly over the short term. Although it will be difficult, more appropriate interim measures will have to be used to test new control and prevention methods, such as opportunity for assault or arson rather than those events themselves.

4. Avoid dissipating resources intended for school crime interventions on more fundamental problems such as delinquency in general or education in general. These also are serious social issues, and should be dealt with. But expanding the problem is not going to make it any easier to achieve a solution. School crime is serious because of where it occurs and whom it affects. That is enough of a challenge without looking for additional goals to pursue concurrently.

5. Avoid rash decisions regarding the need for--or the choice of-- interventions. Some solutions actually may do more harm than good,

particularly over an extended period of time. School security systems may be more expensive, for instance, than the cost of the vandalism they were installed to prevent. Uniformed police officers may deter school violence, or they may only displace assaults and attacks out into the neighborhood and instigate antagonism in the process. Most interventions will have costs, both monetary and social, that should be thoroughly thought through.

6. Avoid assuming there will be major breakthroughs in ways of preventing and controlling serious school crime. Progress toward making schools safer is likely to be far slower than anyone would hope. Massive infusions of funds are not likely to speed what can be accomplished until the necessary foundations have been built. There are not likely to be any successful innovations until there is better understanding of the circumstances that lead to school related offenses than there is at present.

7. Avoid grappling with too much of the problem at one time. The appropriate place to begin is not with broad, comprehensive studies but with narrowly focused investigations that try to deal with specific issues. It would be better to focus on assaults associated with drug abuse or intruders, for example, than all assaults, or on the prevention of thefts from student lockers if this is a problem than on the prevention of all school larceny.

B. What To Do

This survey of the literature on school crime also suggests some courses of action that are likely to have pay-off. These need not necessarily be the main theme of further efforts, but should be considered as desirable features.

1. Promote more accurate record keeping and reporting for school crime data. The need for better information on what is happening is obvious. School districts should be helped to compile statistics on their crime experience and encouraged to record and report this data systematically. There also is a need for ascertaining the validity of self-report data which has served as the basis for almost all existing compilations.

2. Promote the more careful investigation of individual offenses. A considerable amount of potentially significant information either is not being collected or is not being assembled and analyzed. Aside from anecdotes, we know very little about school crime victims, offenders, or pertinent circumstances. The protection of privacy is an important concern but so is the protection of other children from potentially avoidable crimes.

3.   Promote the more widespread use of appropriate technical assistance
in identifying needs and designing interventions. Much of the investment
being made in preventing and controlling school crime is poorly spent because
of a lack of expert advice. Ineffective building alarm systems and illconsid-
ered evaluation methods are obvious examples. Part of this problem, of course,
stems from a supply of appropriate sources of help that is too small and too
inaccessible, and enlarging this supply should be a priority objective.

4.   Promote the involvement of the students and community as well as the
school staff in identifying alternative solutions. School crime is not the
kind of problem that will be solved by committee, but there are many ways of
looking at the suitability of any proposed intervention. Students and
neighbors should have a voice in considering proposed remedies since their
cooperation may be essential to achieving success.

5.   Promote research on school crime that attempts to relate causes and
outcomes. While hit-and-miss efforts to alleviate the school crime problem
occasionally may yield results, a better understanding of the problem will
insure more certain progress. Additional studies like those of Olson and
Carpenter (1971), Pablant and Baxter (1975), or McPartland and McDill (1977)
are preferable to expenditures of equal amounts on sophisticated hardware
applications or major educational reforms that may not have their intended
effect.

6.   Promote the development of suitable standards and goals for safe-
guarding school occupants and property. The complete eradication of school
violence and vandalism is not realistically attainable. But reasonable
objectives with respect to school crime should be established as guides to
policy and investment decisions and as a basis for assessing progress.
Well publicized standards also will serve as a means of establishing
priorities among schools, neighborhoods or communities for allocating
support.

7.   Promote the adoption of routine interventions when probable benefits
far outweigh probable costs. Many recommended steps to deal with school
crime and its consequences are simple and straightforward. School districts
ought to be encouraged to install deterrent hardware on outer doors, to be
included in police patrol plans, to provide adequate control over visitors,
and to eliminate unobservable areas. Too often, these simple measures may
not be adopted until after a serious offense has occurred.

C. Summary

The growing awareness that serious crime does happen in our schools has created a demand for quick and effective public action. But although some suggested remedies may have fostered good results in some settings, there is little more than common sense available to guide a community or school district in selecting among plausible interventions. Most schools do not have the resources they would need to turn their facilities into fortresses or their staffs into warders. Yet few are ready to sit idly by while the fear of crime steadily erodes educational investment and opportunity.

An infusion of funds will, by itself, do little more than placate uninformed critics. Almost any intervention will seem advantageous when providential fluctuations in recorded occurrences coincide with stated expectations. Perhaps the clearest measure of how ready we are to resolve the school crime problem is how accurately we can predict it. But aside from a few vague generalities, we cannot now forecast who will be offenders, or which schools will suffer the most, or what communities will experience the worst crime, or which children are likely to become victims, or when the rates will rise or fall. Only when we can answer these questions will it be possible to design countermeasures that are both efficient and effective.
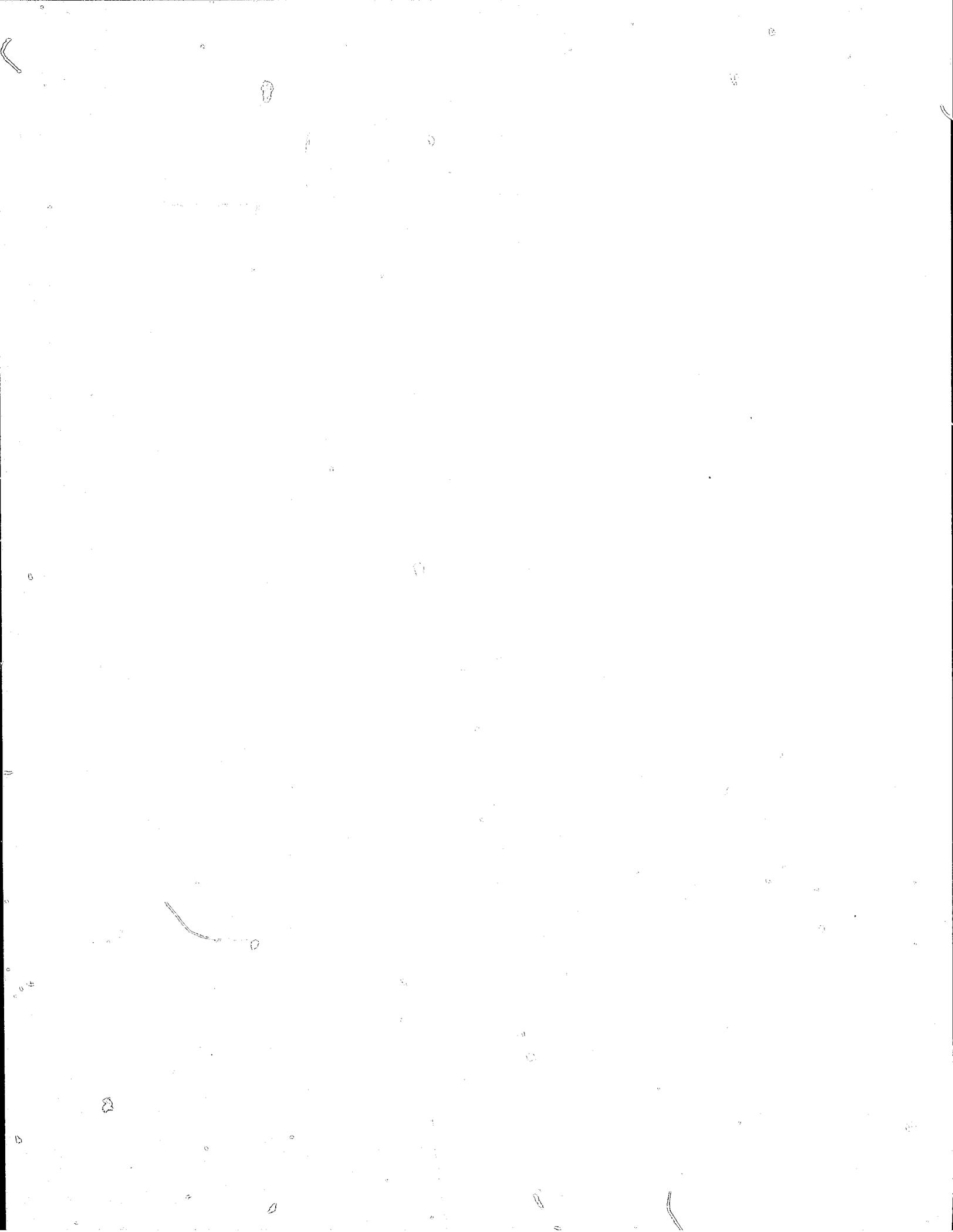
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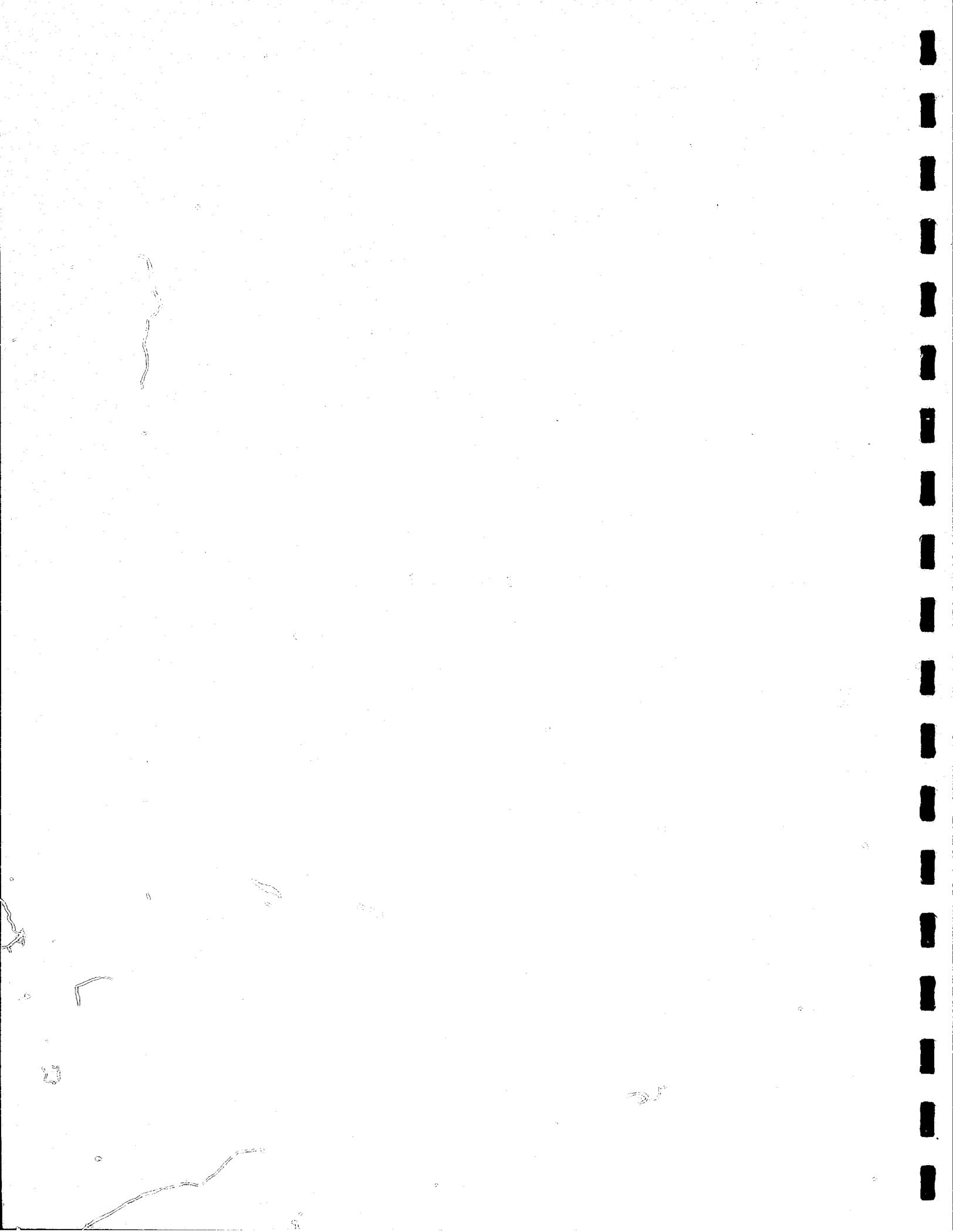
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These clearinghouse requests were supplemented with manual searches of various index and abstract series beginning in the summer of 1976, and updated through the first few months of 1977. Publications searched included:

> Crime and Delinquency Literature
> ERIC Resources in Education
> Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)
> Education Index
> Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature
> Psychological Abstracts
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Finally, as requested documents were received, their reference lists were examined and a few additional titles were identified in this way. Bailey's (1970) bibliography and the publications cited by the Senate Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency (1976) were particularly useful.

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