RESEARCH INTO CRIMES AGAINST THE ELDERLY

(PART 1)

JOINT HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING

THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC PLANNING, ANALYSIS AND COOPERATION

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

AND THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND CONSUMER INTERESTS

OF THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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RESEARCH INTO CRIMES AGAINST THE ELDERLY (Part I)

JANUARY 31, 1978

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING; SUBCOMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC PLANNING, ANALYSIS AND COOPERATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY; AND SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND CONSUMER INTERESTS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING

Washington, D.C.

The committee and subcommittees met, pursuant to notice at 10:05 a.m., in room 340, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Claude Pepper (chairman of the Select Committee on Aging); James H. Scheuer (chairman of the Subcommittee on Domestic and International Planning, Analysis and Cooperation of the Committee on Science and Technology); and Edward R. Roybal (chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Consumer Interests of the Select Committee on Aging), presiding.

Members present: Representatives Pepper of Florida; Scheuer of New York; Lloyd of Tennessee; Roybal of California; Walsh of New York; Biaggi of New York; and Risenhoover of Oklahoma.

Staff present: Select Committee on Aging: Robert S. Weiner, staff director; Kathy Gardner, professional staff member; and Marie Cunningham, executive secretary. Subcommittee on Domestic and International Planning, Analysis and Cooperation: Jonah Shacknai, technical consultant; Jim Gallagher, minority staff; and Carol Pompliano, secretary. Subcommittee on Housing and Consumer Interests: José Garza, majority staff director; Patricia Lawrence, minority staff director; and Melissa Pollak, research assistant.

Mr. SCHEUER. The hearings in the research into violent crimes against the elderly will commence today.

We have the great honor of having the presence of Congressman Claude Pepper of Florida at these hearings and he will chair these hearings as long as the Rules Committee—which is now meeting—doesn't call him away. Senator Pepper has had a lifelong concern and involvement with the problems of the elderly; he is also as knowledgeable as any other Member of Congress on the subject of crime as he served as chairman of the Select Committee on Crime. So the essential depth of his humanity is a deep knowledge of the aging and a deep knowledge of the crime all combined to give him remarkable insight into the problems of crimes against the elderly, and we are delighted to have him chair these meetings this morning. I am delighted to introduce him as chairman of this session. Congressman Claude Pepper of Florida.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN CLAUDE PEPPER

Mr. PEPPER. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would not want to begin my statement in a dispensatious way, but I must correct one of the remarks made by the distinguished chairman. I'm not the chairman. I am the cochairman along with him. He is the chairman and I am delighted to be able to work with Mr. Scheuer, one of my distinguished and devoted friends. He is one of our greatest Members of the Congress in this important work in which he is engaged.

As I said, I want to thank my distinguished colleague from New York for extending the full House Select Committee on Aging and its Subcommittee on Housing and Consumer Interests this opportunity to join with him and his distinguished committee on continuing the investigation into research into violent behavior.

It is a particular pleasure for me to take part in these hearings with my friend, Jim Scheuer, because I know of his deep commitment to the problems and the concerns of the elderly.

When our antimandatory retirement bill faced House floor scheduling difficulties last year, it was Mr. Scheuer who had the preemptive time on the floor, who was kind and generous enough to accord the privilege to our Select Committee on Aging of taking up our bill against mandatory retirement and making it possible for that bill to be passed by the House by an overriding majority. We will always be most grateful as will the elderly people of this country, now and hereafter, to Mr. Scheuer for making it possible for the House to consider and to enact our bill at that time. Without the kindness of Mr. Scheuer we could not have had an opportunity to continue our bill and have it enacted at that time.

As the former chairman of the House Select Committee on Crime, I remain deeply concerned about our Nation's crime problems. Regrettably, I believe most would agree that crime has not abated. However, there are sporadic instances and certain categories in statistics in which we find in a given community, for example, as in my community in Miami, that murder has diminished in number for a given year. But in general we regret to say that crime has not abated, it has persisted and continues to be, I think, one of the Nation's greatest concerns.

During my service as chairman of the Crime Committee, it became abundantly clear to me that there is no single plan we can immediately implement to reduce the number of criminals or the number of crimes. We do not know of a criminal justice system anywhere that holds that complete promise. Nor do we know what techniques or procedures can be devised which would be capable of transforming a criminal behavior into a lawabiding one.

In sum, our ignorance far exceeds our knowledge and perhaps that is our greatest barrier to effective crime prevention.

With respect to the elderly victims of crime, we know little and we overlook a lot. What do statistics mean, for example, which state that older persons are not victimized more often, sustain fewer injuries when attacked and suffer lower economic losses than younger victims in our population.

It may simply mean that most older persons have reduced their risk by staying at home, as most or many of them do; that the older person by virtue of diminished strength is less likely to require force before submission; and, that the older person, living on a fixed income, most of them very small, has less to lose.

Such statistics mask the cruel realities and the consequences of crime against the elderly and diminish the ability of Congress to estimate the true impact crime has on older Americans.

Perhaps the most tragic consequence of crime, not reflected by these statistics, is the fear it imparts in older persons—the least powerful and most vulnerable segment of the Nation's population. Although the elderly report they fear crime more than any other single problem they encounter, including inadequate incomes and rising health care costs, it would appear from these research findings that their crime problems do not differ from those of the population at large.

The elderly fear crime and circumscribe their behavior, and rightfully so. Many older persons already bear the physical and economic hardships inflicted on the victims of crime. The mere fear of crime, in light of such vulnerabilities further curtails their independence. For older persons the fear of crime can be as debilitating as the crime itself.

I do not believe that Congress can afford to accept the proposition that older people exaggerate their crime problems and I am sure your hearings here will so disclose. Perhaps it is true that the older person's perception or fear of crime rather than actual victimization is increasing. But I hope these hearings will serve to dispel whatever incorrect notions we may have and help us to determine what contributions federally supported research has made, or can make toward reducing the elderly person's fear and their victimization.

Now, may I add just a few words more to the statement that I have just read.

My experience in my 4 years as chairman of the House Crime Committeee led me to the conclusion that the greatest area of productivity, the greatest hope for reducing crime in this country is in the area of prevention.

We can increase the stiffness of the penalties upon those convicted. We can do away with plea bargaining—as a young lady, the State's attorney in Dade County, my home county, has announced she is going to do. We can reduce the amount of plea bargaining if we can get the proper funds to provide the jails in which to incarcerate more people who are convicted.

We would have to get the legislature or appropriate authority to provide more courtrooms and more judges to try cases in those courtrooms and more court personnel and more money to provide the expensive trials and more investigators who make the trials possible and the like. This is unlikely, I regret to say.

So, our present machinery for curbing crime by detection and by conviction and punishment is relatively ineffective. Where I think we can get the greatest return is through the area of prevention, particularly among the young people. I think that most of those who perpetrate crime today are young people. Young hoodlums prey upon old people. The elderly are afraid to walk in our parks; they are

afraid to walk down the street. Young criminals get a certain sadistic pleasure in attacking old people, sometimes not only in robbing them but in killing them.

We had right here in Washington a few years ago a case where a 17-year-old boy attacked a 70-year-old lady on one of the streets of Washington. He robbed her, raped her, and killed her. His punishment was incarceration until he became 21 years of age and then he was released from prison.

A lot of these young people, never having had any discipline to speak of in their homes or in their schools, actually believe they can do anything they want and get away with it. Many of them actually do, in our criminal justice system.

I think you will find a large percentage of the young criminals are school dropouts. If we could provide the money and give the assistance to the school systems of this country to try to stop school dropouts, in my opinion you could reduce crime in this country, particularly among the elderly, by 25 percent. But when we go to the floor in the House or the Senate and try to get more money to stop school dropouts, we don't always get the favorable response that you can get sometimes when you say, let's put more policemen on, let's impose severe penalties, or let's provide more police power, and the like.

So I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that in your very abled inquiry here you will disclose, as much as possible, what the causes of crime against the elderly are, who are the people who generally inflict that crime, and what may be done that will be most effective in preventing those people from inflicting that terror especially upon the elderly people of this country. We have 23 to 24 million people over the age of 65 in this country. To remove the majority of the fear that constantly hangs over the heads and hearts of those people would be a great humanitarian contribution, Mr. Chairman, and I know you are going to make a valuable contribution toward it.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, we thank you very, very much, Mr. Chairman, and we hope you will stay with us.

Mr. PEPPER. I hope I can. It is now my particular pleasure to introduce the cochairman of this joint hearing we are having today, Mr. Scheuer, who has been one of the most forward-looking, one of the most compassionate, one of the most considerate Members of this House. He is a legislator who tries to make things better and lighten the load of poverty, disease, discomfort, and fear from the backs and from the hearts of the people of this country.

Recently, Mr. Scheuer was appointed chairman of one of the most important committees that this House will ever have, and that is the Select Committee on Population. I know I told Mr. Scheuer that I was called upon by one of the municipalities in my area to put a little comment in a 100-year capsule that was to be buried. It will be opened 100 years from now. They asked me to state what I thought would be the subject of most concern to the human race in the intervening 100 years. I said my concern is in the area of two things: one is population explosion, the increasing population of the world; and the second is nuclear energy, nuclear weapons. I'm going to check when they open that capsule to see whether I was right or not.

At any rate, we are very fortunate today to have so able a man, a man that takes such great passion and concern for the people as Mr. Scheuer, to chair these meetings. Mr. Scheuer.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN JAMES H. SCHEUER

Mr. SCHEUER. Thank you very much, Senator. I just hope that I'm around to watch you open that capsule.

Senator Pepper is a very hard act to follow, and he has already eloquently addressed many of the points that I want to make.

We feel that these hearings are terribly important, because as a single group, a small slice of the population pie, the elderly are far more vulnerable physically, psychologically, and financially than any other group in our society. They are so much more vulnerable to violent crime.

The siege mentality that crime against the elderly imposes on all of the elderly, the fact that they are a self-designated shut-in group who are forced by their fears and by the actualities to imprison themselves in their own apartments is a horrible and pitiful commentary on the state of our society today.

The Senator told us that the economic impact of a violent attack is greatest on the elderly. They suffer more in the way of physical disability because they are frail, and they frequently have infirmities to start off with. And starting from a very fragile base any attack can have devastating economic consequences to them, and of course many of our elderly are living on fixed incomes, on basically marginal standards of living anyway, so it devastates their financial well-being.

They are more vulnerable because many of them live in rundown neighborhoods and central core neighborhoods. They rely, many of them, either on walking or on public transportation, which means they have to walk on the streets in the evening and other times of the day. They do not have taxicabs or chauffered limousines at their beck and call, so they are out on the streets and very vulnerable.

They cannot resist. In their senior years they tend to be less strong and perhaps infirm. They cannot fight back, so they are just sitting ducks for a violent attack. These violent attacks come frequently, repeatedly, and predictably.

Half of all our violent crimes are performed by teenagers and three-quarters of all our violent crime is performed by people under the age of 25. So it is a youthful business. The average age at which these crimes are being committed gets earlier and earlier and earlier, and for some reason, Senator, we don't understand the wanton cruelty that you discussed; the absolute, pointless, horrifying, unnecessary cruelty seems to be getting worse and taking place earlier in these young criminals' careers.

You discussed what happened in Washington a couple of years ago, why incidents like that do not even make the papers any more in New York. It is becoming subcomplex. And why these young people will first rob the elderly people in their apartments, and after they have taken whatever pitiful little valuables they may have they will tie them up and stick a plastic bag over their head and tie it tight so they

suffocate, defies my human understanding, and I'm sure it defies your human understanding. We have got to learn more, and that's what these hearings are all about.

I would like now to introduce Congressman Roybal, who is chairman of the Select Committee on Aging's Housing and Consumer Interests Subcommittee. Congressman Roybal has a great deal of expertise in the field of housing for the elderly, and we are delighted to have him.

Mr. ROYBAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I do not want to take the time of the witness to read a statement, and therefore I ask unanimous consent that my statement be printed in the record.

Mr. SCHEUER. It will be printed in its entirety at this point in the record.

[The prepared statement of Chairman Edward R. Roybal follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN EDWARD R. ROYBAL

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Consumer Interests of the Select Committee on Aging, I welcome the opportunity to participate in a hearing on an issue that is of crucial importance to this country's 22 million older persons. The purpose of this hearing is to evaluate the purpose of and the need for research into criminal victimization of the elderly.

I am proud that my Subcommittee took the initiative by preparing the first report addressing the issue of elderly crime victimization from a national perspective. That report and the seven hearings that were held by the Subcommittee prior to its publication presented convincing evidence that there are far too many gaps in our knowledge of the causes and effects of this serious problem. Elderly crime victimization became a "popular" issue, arousing public indignation, when both national and local media focused attention on the problem. However, even with this publicity, our information about the scope, causes, and impact of the problem remains extremely limited.

Since crime is generally acknowledged to be a growing concern for most Americans, we may well be justified in wondering why the Committee on Science and Technology and the Select Committee on Aging are today focusing exclusively on the elderly as victims of crime. In briefly reiterating the unique circumstances confronting elderly victims that were brought out in the report, I would like to point out that for the elderly, crime poses an especially serious problem. For example, if a young, working man or women loses $20 in a mugging or has a television set taken in a burglary, replacement of either item with the victim's current earnings is usually possible within a relatively short period of time. In contrast, for the elderly person, living on a small, fixed income, the loss of $20 may mean that he/she is unable to purchase food for a week, and the loss of a television set could cause a severe hardship for the elderly person who relies on TV as the major source of entertainment and contact with the outside world. In addition, if a young man or woman is knocked down during an assault, any physical injury sustained by that person is likely to be much less severe than if an elderly man or woman happened to be the victim.

Another reason why crime is a special problem for the elderly was vividly exposed in the two hearings we held in which elderly victims testified. In an article appearing yesterday in the Washington Post, it was revealed that nearly 85 percent of the elderly surveyed in Silver Spring, Maryland, have a fear of crime. There seems to be little doubt that fear of crime is a pervasive problem for the elderly. In fact the fear of crime is often much greater than the actual incidence of crime. This fear causes many elderly persons to become recluses, afraid to venture outside of their houses or apartments. One social service provider at our hearing in Los Angeles testified that many elderly persons are afraid to even answer their doors during the day for fear of being victimized.

Now that we have begun to recognize the unique problems crime poses for the elderly, it is time to direct our attention to finding some workable solutions aimed at reducing the physical, financial, and psychological trauma, The Subcommittee's crime report illustrates the need for improvement in many areas of research on crime and the elderly. First, the statistical methods employed by

both governmental agencies and private organizations in gathering data on the magnitude of the problem have been severely criticized. These methodological problems have rendered useless much of the data that has been collected thus far. In addition, very little is known about the causes of criminal behavior in teenagers, the principle victimizers of the elderly. There is growing concern regarding an increase in the violent behavior of teenagers as perpetrators of crime against the elderly. Further, research must be undertaken if we are to discover the causes of fear and formulate effective remedies for eliminating this serious problem.

In order to develop potential solutions to the multitude of problems associated with criminal victimization of the elderly, we need quality research which will enable us to accurately identify those problems. Research is essential if we are to avoid making costly, clumsy, futile attempts at solving those problems. Without the research to identify the type of assistance and/or programs which should prove effective in eliminating the problems, target efficiency may be sacrificed, resulting in many federal dollars being wasted.

I am pleased that the Committee on Science and Technology, the committee which will consider any legislation providing funds for research on elderly crime victimization, is taking such an active interest in this issue. The witnesses here today were invited because they are recognized as being distinguished and articulate experts on crime and the elderly. Many of their names are familiar to me because of the assistance they furnished my subcommittee with the crime report. They will be able to provide the Committees with their opinions regarding the research needed to address the problem. Your thoughts, ideas, and recommendations will be valuable guidelines for the committees. I wish to extend my sincere thanks to each one of you. I appreciate your taking time from your busy schedules in order to be with us today.

Mr. SCHEUER. Before we call the first witness we can call on another colleague of ours to make some remarks. One of our experts in the field of crime, a gentleman who also served on Congressman Pepper's Select Committee on Crime, Congressman Mario Biaggi of New York a very valuable colleague.

Mr. PEPPER. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to add a word to our distinguished chairman's introduction. Mr. Biaggi, a distinguished member of the New York Democratic delegation is also chairman of the Subcommittee on Federal, State and Community Services of the House Select Committee on Aging.

He has been one of the great leaders of our committee in promoting programs and conducting hearings for the elderly of our country. He has held many hearings in his area and assisted in hearings in other areas. He brings his knowledge and experience to the work of this committee. So I am pleased to join my chairman here in commending my friend and my subcommittee chairman, Mr. Biaggi.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE MARIO BIAGGI

Mr. BIAGGI. Thank you very much, Senator and Chairman Scheuer.

My remarks are rather brief because I think the comments made by both of you have been stated many, many times and I don't know that there is anything new so far. I am involved, I have been in this area of crime for better than a quarter of a century. I have been in the Congress for 10 years entrusting myself with the problems of the elderly. We have any number of suggestions that have been made legislatively and administratively, some of them have been implemented, some in the process.

I am just curious, I am here as a curious person and I think it is important because that curiosity hopefully will be satisfied by the

witnesses that will testify today in the process of researching the crime against the elderly.

I guess I could probably be a witness myself and testify, but that's not our purpose. I would like to be where I could benefit, if I can, because I don't know what they are going to say. I hope it is not the same kind of testimony we have heard in the past. That will serve us no good. I hope it is some realistic approach, because the pie-in-the-sky attitude went down the drain a long time ago. And I hope it is not dealing with venal academic understanding, because that won't help a senior citizen one bit.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SCHEUER. Before we hear from our first witnesses I wish to submit for the record a statement from our colleague Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt who is unable to be here today.

[The statement of Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JOHN PAUL HAMMERSCHMIDT

I am pleased that the Select Committee on Aging has collaborated with the Committee on Science and Technology to continue an examination of significance and mutual interest—criminal victimization of the elderly.

In April, 1977, the Housing and Consumer Interests Subcommittee, on which I serve as the ranking minority member, published a report entitled, "In Search of Security: A National Perspective on Elderly Crime Victimization." The report was the culmination of seven congressional hearings, an extensive review of the literature and independent staff research. Our concern in undertaking this report was to determine the actual rate of elderly victimization and to resolve the controversy which surrounds this issue.

An analysis of all the available data "suggests" that the elderly were not victims of crime in any disproportionate measure to their numbers in the population. I use the word "suggests" because the data themselves defied our forming firm conclusions. Both the FBI and LEAA statistics had methodological weaknesses. Studies undertaken by independent researchers had such a variety of samples, settings and measurement techniques, that the results could not be compared with one another. The raw data and the LEAA comparative statistics for 1973 and 1974, however, denoted a significant crime problem. Also, qualitative measures indicated that the elderly are the group most debilitated by criminal victimization.

Our report ended with a number of legislative and administrative recommendations. I would like to share some of these with you and also the progress which has taken place in the last year. I hasten to add that I am not implying a cause/effect relationship between our proposals and the ensuing results.

One of our recommendations was a victim compensation bill that addressed the special needs of the elderly. Although not exactly the bill we developed, H.R. 7010 (a bill providing grants to States for the payment of compensation to injured persons for certain criminal acts) passed the House on September 30, 1977.

A second recommendation called for the creation of a central office of criminal justice statistics. This office would be responsible for compiling and analyzing all crime data. We specifically recommended that the FBI uniform crime report record the age of the victim. On July 26th, the Attorney General directed the Office for Improvements in the Administration for Justice to create a Bureau of Justice Statistics.

A third recommendation, based on legislation introduced by Chairman Claude Pepper, focused on prevention of juvenile crime. It has been clearly established that juveniles are the principal perpetrators of crime against the elderly. The National Institute of Mental Health has determined that having a learning disability is the single greatest reason that children drop out of school—700,000

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each year. Seventy-five percent of these children end up in juvenile detention centers. To be able to identify and treat this special group of potential offenders, Congress amended the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act of 1974. Public Law 95–115 allows up to $14 million for the following three years for programs addressing the relationship between learning disabilities and delinquency.

The final recommendation that I shall mention relates directly to today's hearing—that Congress should mandate that the Center for Studies of Crime and Delinquency of the National Institute on Mental Health, in conjunction with the National Institute on Aging, conduct an in-depth study of criminal victimization of the elderly by juveniles. Even though the actual rate of elderly victimization continues to be out of focus, we cannot remain entrenched in statistics. Our goal is to reduce victimization of the elderly. And, it is our belief that well-directed research can help us achieve that end. We have asked these witnesses, all experts, how we can best utilize research to accomplish our objective. I look forward to their testimony.

Mr. SCHEUER. Our first witnesses will be Jack and Sharon Goldsmith. Will they come forward, please.

The Goldsmiths have been leaders in the academic community on the subject of crimes against the elderly. They have coedited a volume on "Crime and the Elderly: Challenge and Response" and they have both written numerous articles and professional papers together and separately on crime and the elderly.

Mr. Goldsmith served as Chairman of the National Conference on Crime Against the Elderly in 1975 and Mrs. Goldsmith was a coordinator of that conference.

So we are happy to have you with us. Your statement will be printed in the record in its entirety.

[See appendix 1, p. 53, for the prepared statement of Jack and Sharon Goldsmith.]

Mr. SCHEUER. I would suggest that you chat with us informally for 8 or 10 minutes and then I'm sure we will all have questions for you. You can talk together, separately, or however you wish.

STATEMENTS OF JACK GOLDSMITH, Ph. D., ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AT THE CENTER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE, THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY; AND SHARON S. GOLDSMITH, CODIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE ON CRIME AND THE ELDERLY AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Mr. SCHEUER. We have your prepared statement, which will appear in the record. Shall we proceed with questions?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. Yes; you could just ask us questions.

Mr. SCHEUER. Why don't you tell us what the world of science and what the scientific fraternity can do to help legislators in approaching the problems of crime with a little less demagogy and a little more fine tuned perceptions.

Ms. GOLDSMITH. I think the best way to answer that question is to say that it is necessary to take a little bit different view of the problem of crime than has been common in the past.

I agree with Congressman Pepper's comment that there are a lot of things that are not being thought of and not being enacted because they are not perceived as relating to the crime problem but that are integrally related to this problem.

I think that maybe reorienting our focus to a broader perspective to see crime as a social, economic, and political problem would be a first step.

Now, I don't know that that's necessarily a job for the scientific community. It may be that it is the job for those in public office to force that kind of reevaluation or perspective.

Mr. PEPPER. Well, in the first place, who commits crime against the elderly? Are we right that most of the perpetrators are young people?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. I think there is some contradictory evidence on that. Many of the individual studies and the report of the Subcommittee on Housing and Consumer Interests of April 1977, noted that a number of local studies have indicated that it is predominantly young people especially for certain types of crime such as the crimes of opportunity—purse snatching, attempted purse snatching, pocket picking, and that sort of thing.

But there are many other kinds of crimes, and they have to be looked into as part of an attack on this problem. That would include getting very serious about economic crime and victimization by bureaucracy.

Mr. SCHEUER. Do you want to comment on that, the victimization by bureaucracy. Could you please elaborate on that?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. Well I think that many of our social services bureaucracies intending to serve, designed to serve victims and potential victims of crime, are making it, in fact, more difficult for people who find themselves victims.

What I mean to say is that the bureaucracy puts some organizational priorities before the human problems, the human needs of the people it is suppose to serve.

Mr. SCHEUER. Give us a few instances.

Ms. GOLDSMITH. All right, I will give you one.

I think there must be something that can be done about court scheduling of cases involving, shall we use the example, older people who find it difficult to get to court to testify either as witnesses or as victims in a trial.

It seems to me unnecessary to further burden an older person who has been victimized by crime already by postponing, stalling or delaying his case to his or her inconvenience, but to the convenience of the bureaucracy, for an example.

Mr. SCHEUER. I will give you another one. We have a crime victim compensation law in New York, but until very recently the police were not permitted to tell the elderly victim of the existence of this law. The fact is that the elderly victims didn't know that there was somebody there ready to help them.

To me, that was mindless bureaucracy going berserk.

Mr. BIAGGI. Would the chairman yield?

Mr. SCHEUER. Yes; of course.

Mr. BIAGGI. I am happy that the chairman brought that point out because as you might recall I brought that very fact to the attention of the new police commissioner, McGuire. A study that my staff had made revealed that fewer than 50 percent of the precincts in the city of New York had material, brochures, and were in fact complying with the law.

But in further connection with the court procedure and what is happening in the various communities is purely a movement that has exploded as the result—exploded among the senior citizens and they have coalesced when a senior citizen has become a victim of crime. They in fact monitor it. This is very recent in the county where I reside. And I find that the judge in these matters is generally—he conducts himself at least in an equitable fashion, and the conclusion of the cases has been more satisfactory from a practical point of view.

Ms. GOLDSMITH. There is also a question in connection with this giving victims information. Many of these statements—most of them—can be made about any victim of crime, but it is perhaps in some cases more of a burden on older victims.

For example, victims are anxious for the return of recovered property, and notification of what has happened to the offender. If the person who has robbed you is back out on the street—and especially since many of them are, and live within a few blocks of the victim—I think it is the victim's right to know that.

There is inadequate feedback from the criminal justice system to the victims and to the community.

Mr. PEPPER. Do you agree that a lot of the young perpetrators of crime are school dropouts?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. I'm not an expert and don't think I can answer that. It is my feeling that this is the case, but I suggest that some of the other witnesses may be more knowledgeable about this.

Mr. PEPPER. Well, taking the chairman's figures here which are generally accepted that about 50 percent of the violent or serious crimes are perpetrated by people under 17 years of age, what can be done to keep these people from becoming perpetrators.

Let me give you one instance that was brought out in our crime committee hearings. There was a judge in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., named Orlando. He testified that in his juvenile court he took 10 boys who were there for serious offenses and put them into a program to train them to do some kind of maritime work. Some way or another he got the money to set up this kind of a program.

He put these 10 boys, who were so-called bad boys, into that program. He testified, after 11 months of experience with that program that not a single one of those boys dropped out or got into any other trouble. One of them got a job paying about $5,000 a year in one of the cities of Florida, and all of them were anticipating early graduation from that program.

Now, apparently finding a way to use their talents and to engage them in something creative and positive distracted them from careers of crime and directed them toward a useful life.

Now, one other case. I heard of a boy in the black community in my district. A lady who was in charge of a program in that area told me this story one Sunday morning when I was going through the district.

There was a boy that was a terror to the police. They were after him all of the time. They associated him with almost everything that occurred in that area.

One day the lady who was in charge of that program decided she would try a new approach with that boy. She gave him a job in the

office, put a little desk over in one corner and put a little sign up on the front of that desk, Mr. John Smith, or whatever the boy's name was. She gave that boy a job.

Well, it wasn't long before there was a complete transformation in the character of that boy. Shortly thereafter there was about to be a demonstration. Some youngsters of that area were threatening a violent demonstration of some sort in which the police were concerned. This boy went right out where the commotion was going on and walked right up to the front and said: "Hey, ain't going to be no trouble here. I'm here now. Ain't going to be no trouble, you all just wait. Everything's going to be all right." And that boy, instead of being the worst offender in the community became a pacifier of the trouble in the community.

Now, the lady, at the time she talked to me said, "I don't know what's going to happen, his job is going to run out at the end of the summer and if he loses his job I don't know what the boy will go back to."

How could we give more attention to these youngsters, give them jobs, give them supervision, and give them permanent employment, and the like. In other words, wouldn't we profit by spending some more time with them in the earlier age rather than trying to correct them after they have already become serious criminals?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. Yes; I do think that. In describing an ideal situation, if in fact that could be done on an extensive scale I think you would find that there would be a dramatic improvement of the situation.

For example, I know that your concern is very strong in discovering what the relationship is between crime and learning disabled children who run into problems in school, are labeled and perhaps, therefore set out on the wrong track. That kind of interest and inquiry into prevention is necessary. What you are talking about here is a massive effort requiring a great deal of resources and commitment of this country. You and others who believe likewise that this is important must convince the public it is necessary to spend our resources in order to attack a problem which most people do not see connected to crime.

Until the public can be educated to your view, I think that it is going to be awhile before we can see any kind of improvement in that area.

Mr. PEPPER. Let me commend here for the record, Mr. and Mrs. Goldsmith, because they assisted our staff very valuably in preparing legislation which I introduced on learning disabilities and juvenile delinquency. Congress has given some support to that program and it offers great hope. We are very much indebted to Dr. and Ms. Goldsmith for their help in that area.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, in that connnection let me ask Professor Goldsmith a couple of questions and then you just hammer at it.

First of all, give us some idea of what you think the more important research findings are about crime against the elderly. What are the significant things that you have found that you feel could help point us in new directions; things that we may not have realized before or perceptions that were lost in the shuffle?

Second, what has been the governmental response to those findings, those more sensitive perceptions both at the Federal, State, and local

level since all of these tiers are involved in crime control in one way or another?

Third, what innovative programs do you suggest Congressman Pepper and Congressman Biaggi and I ought to be zeroing in on, and recommending to our colleagues?

Mr. GOLDSMITH. There has been a good deal of research—quite a bit of it is contradictory.

Other witnesses this morning, I think, are specialists in this and will go into it with a little bit more detail.

I think what we do find—and it was a surprise to a lot of us—is that perhaps the elderly are less victimized for most categories of crime than the public at large. So there has been a tendency, because of that, to——

Mr. SCHEUER. Let me just interrupt you for a second. I think the statistics indicate that youth, not only the youth victimizing, but the youth are being victimized too. Most aggressors are youth and most victims are youth.

The leading cause of death among black teenage males is homicide; it is a far different set of reasons than for middle-class young people. So young people are victimized more than the elderly, but the young people seem to be able to shake it off, it doesn't have the psychological impact, it doesn't have the economic impact, it doesn't have the physical impact. It is quite true that while elderly people are victimized slightly less than the young people, the results are far more devastating to the elderly. Not only in terms of the individual's life, but this whole panoply of fear that hangs like an umbrella over the community that makes them self-committed inmates in their own dwellings.

Mr. GOLDSMITH. I believe really, as I started to say, quantitative data can take us so far and it can show us rates on various categories of crime, but it does not get at precisely this thing that we are talking about—the qualitative side.

If I am hit over the head and fall down in a mugging or something that's one statistic. If someone in his eighties suffers the same stroke or blow on the head this could be——

Mr. SCHEUER. And the same fall.

Mr. GOLDSMITH. The same fall. An entirely different outcome because of these qualitative factors. Research so far stresses the quantitative. It can only take us so far. We need another dimension to look at the whole equation.

Mr. SCHEUER. The research only gives us numbers and quantifies but does not qualify. It does not give us the quality of the hurt and the injury. Is this not poor research? Should not the research give us some sense of the impact of the crime against the elderly. And on any comparative scale in terms of the impact of the crime on the lives of elderly people, on a scale of 1 to 10 it has to be 9.

Mr. GOLDSMITH. I would not say that it is poor research. I think it is fine research, but it can only go so far—each type of research can only take us so far. What you need is a wider variety.

Mr. SCHEUER. You are saying that some research is missing?

Mr. GOLDSMITH. I say there are several dimensions to the problem, and there is no one best way to arrive at this information.

Mr. SCHEUER. OK, what have we found from our research?

What have governments at the State and local level done with your findings?

Mr. GOLDSMITH. There has been increasing awareness. There have been conferences, there have been articles and newspapers and magazines have been alerting the public, the law enforcement community and the criminal justice community generally. There have also been a number of programs, many of them federally funded to sensitize the law enforcement community to better deal with the special problems of the older citizens.

Ms. GOLDSMITH. I would like to make one comment in regard to what we are doing, what we could do and what we might be doing currently. I think there is a problem in the response that has been generated recently. The initial reaction to this problem of crime against the elderly becoming a highly visible issue—which has only been in the last few years—has been that a do-something mentality or do-something reaction has set in. The intentions are very honorable and very good—which is to do something to help the victim or help protect older people better or to do something to improve the police attitude, to do something.

But I think that as part of this, a lot of money is being spent—especially Federal money—to get a relatively small return. One thing that we should be doing that we are not is to evaluate if that's cost effective. I think, by and large, we don't really know. The program evaluation of many, federally funded programs has been very poor. I think that there is some question about what kind of long-range impact the spending of this kind of money and developing these kinds of programs can have unless there is more coordination and unless it is evaluated more fully. Because we really do not know for certain what is effective and what can be done. We could improve neighborhood watch, escort services, and all these things as something that can be done. The effectiveness is another matter.

I think that there are deeper issues that should be dealt with.

Mr. PEPPER. Mr. Chairman, I am going to have to depart now, but before I go, I would like to recognize one of the distinguished members of the Aging Committee of the House with whom I had a very fine meeting in Syracuse last year when we were there. He is a very important member of our Aging Committee and perhaps when Dr. Goldsmith has concluded, I would appreciate it, Mr. Chairman, if you could give my distinguished colleague the floor to make an opening statement and ask any questions he might have.

Mr. WALSH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate those kind words. Unfortunately, like most of us we all have other meetings and I have another meeting to go to in a few minutes, but I did want to drop in because I am very interested in this subject. I have done some work with the elderly in my area on victimization of the elderly.

Mr. SCHEUER. Mrs. Goldsmith, you mentioned broader issues a moment ago, what are those broader issues?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. Well, I think that crime cannot be divorced from other social and economic issues.

I think that the problem of crime against the elderly is related to the social condition of the elderly and the inadequate housing, the inadequate transportation, discrimination, forced retirement—these kinds of issues. I don't think you can isolate crime and try to solve it as if it were not connected very closed to these other issues.

Mr. SCHEUER. Yes, Mrs. Goldsmith, I agree with what you say, it is a theoretical matter, but as a practical matter there are those who would say that's a copout because we are not going to reach nearby, tomorrow or next week or next month or next year or in this decade or probably in the next decade, you know, we have been talking about a national health program which we urgently need.

Now, we have heard nothing from the administration for that first year, and now they say they are going to send something up here at the end of their second year. Maybe they will and maybe it will come up in the third year, and by the time we get around to discussing it, it will be in their fourth year which will now be election year. The reason is perfectly clear, we can't afford, or at least their perception is that we cannot afford a national health program. New Zealand, Australia, Canada, England, West Germany, and all the Scandanavian countries, Holland and Belgium, almost every civilized country in the world can afford a national health program of sorts, but we can't. OK? So we are not going to solve our housing problems and our transportation problems and our health problems and our school problems in the immediate future. Of course, we must work as a society to solve those problems in the long run, but as John Maynard Keynes said, the great British economist, Sir Keynes said in the long run we will all be dead. And that is especially true of the elderly. They can't wait to resolve all of their problems in this society.

In the short run there must be some targeted programs and policies—I should say policies and programs—to alleviate their problems while we are trying desperately to solve all of the societal problems that you mentioned.

Would my distinguished colleague, Mr. Roybal come up here and take the chair?

Mr. ROYBAL. Surely.

Mr. SCHEUER. So what we are asking you is, while we are solving all of these problems what do we zero in on—what perceptions have we gotten from the research that indicates that what we are doing we should do differently or things that we are not doing we should do or things we are doing we should stop doing. What perceptions have we achieved that we can apply to what the Federal, State and local governments are doing.

How have they responded, and here we are, Mario Biaggi, Ed Roybal, Senator Pepper, myself. We are legislators, this is what you have put us in business to do and this is why you are paying us our salaries to be down here 5 days a week to be legislating. We go back to our districts 2 days a week to service our people there, but 5 days a week, pretty nearly 52 weeks a year we are here legislating.

What can you tell us we ought to do now? What specific programs can we encapsulate in law that will help alleviate this desperate problem, crime against the elderly.

Now, Ms. Goldsmith, we have had a little over 15 or 20 minutes of just give or take and if you feel you would like to read your statement now, you, by all means read it. But I have really enjoyed the give and take and I propose that you just talk with us. We want to learn from you. If you think the best way you can teach us is to read

it, by all means please feel free to read it. You have been wonderful witnesses and we have thoroughly enjoyed it.

I would like Professor Goldsmith to interrupt and get in there and participate. This is what we want, to learn from you. How can we do our job better?

Mr. GOLDSMITH. There are a number of experimental programs around, neighborhood watch and escort services and specially trained police officers; dozens and dozens of innovative programs——

Mr. SCHEUER. Let me interrupt you by saying this: We have gone way over our time and we will continue to go over our time.

I want to announce to the audience and to the other witnesses, we will keep going after 12 o'clock. My next appointment is 3 o'clock. I will not have any lunch, somebody will bring me in an apple. We have gone, as I say, far above our alloted time and we are prepared to do that for the other witnesses so we will not knock off at 12 but will continue up to and including 3 o'clock. So any of you who are scheduled to testify, if you don't think you can last through without a sandwich you might want to go and get one now.

Go ahead, Dr. Goldsmith.

Mr. GOLDSMITH. To continue on the point, I think there is a lot that is going on but there has not been a comprehensive overview in tying together a clearinghouse of information exchange of precisely what is going on and beyond that evaluating to find out what is effective and what is not. We really have not gotten to that point yet and I personally feel that that is what we should do in the near future is sort of take stock——

Mr. SCHEUER. You are saying we should sort of look down from the mountaintop and take a look at the whole array of activity that has taken place, a sort of summing up or an evaluation.

Mr. GOLDSMITH. Exactly. You know, in the last 3 years there has been a wide array of programs. Different communities generating their own programs without communicating with the neighboring community that may or may not have a similar program. There is a need for a lot of sharing and, beyond that, evaluating.

Mr. SCHEUER. Now, what else can Mario Biaggi, Ed Roybal, and I do besides encourage, with funding the kind of evaluation you are talking about. What other fine tuning programs do you have to recommend to us?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. Well, you might look into legislation in other areas where you can have an impact for example, public housing. There has been a lot of work done in terms of trying to improve housing and security, and there is a lot of debate about age segregated housing for the elderly in public housing.

I think maybe it is time to step back there for a minute and ask why we have to stick to old formulas for public housing—and that's a more fundamental issue. I mean, do we put old people in a separate building or not, is not the only issue in public housing.

Mr. SCHEUER. Are you familiar with the work of Oscar Newman?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. Yes; I certainly am. I know that issue, but are you also aware that a great number of senior citizens groups dislike the concept of segregating people by age and creating what they refer to as age ghettos within public housing.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, I think that you are pointing toward an emerging consensus that the elderly do not want to be isolated from the mainstream. They want to be part of the mainstream but in a somewhat protected situation, so that the kids are not running up and down their halls yelling and screaming and so the kids are not batting a ball against the wall of the apartment in which they live on the other side.

Mr. BIAGGI. Mr. Chairman?

Mr. SCHEUER. Yes.

Mr. BIAGGI. Let me address myself to that a little bit.

Mr. SCHEUER. Certainly.

Mr. BIAGGI. One of the few programs that I have dealt with has had a most satisfactory effect on the senior citizens.

What you are saying I have read in a few places, but my experience with the senior citizen in segregated housing has been in direct conflict with what you are saying and what other people have written. I have visited. Oh, I imagine I must have visited 2,000 or 3,000 such places.

In my judgment we have not built enough. We have not provided enough funding for senior citizens and for every apartment available we have 100 applicants. The chairman says it may not be the optimum and perhaps it is not. Perhaps they might like some kind of integrated housing and as the chairman added very wisely with that sense of security.

Well we have come to that conclusion, please come back because it is my observation that that is most difficult to attain.

Ms. GOLDSMITH. I think you are misunderstanding what I am saying.

Mr. BIAGGI. Let me ask you one more question.

The Congress has voted for housing, the Congress has voted for additional jobs, the Congress has appropriated billions and thousands every year for education, that's long range and it will be long beyond your lifetime and my lifetime before we reach utopia. We are talking in terms of now, not once—let me ask you one question. I won't guarrel with your suggestion.

Ms. GOLDSMITH. It was not a suggestion, sir. I think you misunderstood what I said. I was not taking a side on this issue. I was not arguing for or against it. I was asking, is that the only issue in public housing? I was taking the position it was not.

Mr. BIAGGI. I'm sure it is not.

Let me pose a question to you. We have many of these young men and women who commit crimes against the elderly. We have records where they have committed crimes, not once, twice, or three times but as high as 53 times; but they have never been incarcerated because the age prescribed, at least in the State of New York by law, 16, which means a criminal, if he is a juvenile, will not be incarcerated for robbery if that would be the crime.

What would your view be toward reducing the age so that they can be treated in the same fashion as adults when they commit those crimes of a hideous nature.

Ms. GOLDSMITH. In New York is it 21?

Mr. BIAGGI. No; juvenile delinquency is 16.

Ms. GOLDSMITH. Reducing that age?

Mr. BIAGGI. What?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. You suggest reducing the age from 16 to a lower age?

Mr. BIAGGI. Right.

Ms. GOLDSMITH. No; I would not be in favor of that.

I would be in favor of spending the money that you require to do that on preventive programs.

Mr. BIAGGI. Thank you very much. That's all I have.

Mr. SCHEUER. Mr. Roybal?

Mr. ROYBAL. I have been very interested in the exchange you had with my colleague from New York with regard to the lowering of the age that persons can be prosecuted as adults, from 18 to 16 years.

I must say that I agree with you. Our hearings have indicated that there is a great deal of crime against the elderly by those who are 16 years of age and under. No one yet has come forward and told the committee that the solution would be the reduction of the age limit for criminal prosecution as an adult. Sociologists, however, have come forward and have made the recommendation that more attention should be focused in the area of prevention.

I realize this is a controversial area. Some may disagree with the position that you have taken and the position that I at this time endorse, but nevertheless, I think that a great deal still has to be done to further study the problem so that we can come up with some kind of solution.

What we find at the present time is that senior citizens are greatly victimized by young people. It is not the senior citizen victimizing the senior citizen. The hearings we held here in Washington, D.C., clearly indicated that most of the victimization of senior citizens was perpetrated by young men and women 18 years of age and under, and that a good many of them were in the 13-, 14-, and 15-year-old category.

Most of the crimes we heard about involved purse snatching. Many times they were knocked down and even kicked. In a lot of instances they were kicked in the face. So that does happen quite often. It is a problem we have to look at very carefully, and I am not sure that any recommendation to incarcerate a youngster and treat him as an adult would solve the problem. I agree with you that the matter of prevention is something that should be studied.

Ms. GOLDSMITH. I think that perhaps the taking of the moneys that would be required to incarcerate these young people and spending it on programs that would improve the daily lives and security of the elderly would be better.

Incarceration of a large number of people for a long period of time is a very expensive proposition and I submit—perhaps especially in this case—not an optimal spending of resources.

Mr. ROYBAL. Of course, we must realize that this is a gray area. There is a lot of disagreement as to what can be done. We are just discussing this in very general terms, and not really seeking solutions at this moment.

Mr. SCHEUER. Thank you very much, Congressman Roybal.

Now, I would like to recognize Congresswoman Marilyn Lloyd, who serves with me on the Science and Technology Committee which, of course, is the parent committee to our subcommitte and she also serves on the Select Committee on Aging. So she really comes with a very

dual concern and a great depth of interest and we are delighted to have her here.

I would be very happy to have you make a statement, Marilyn, or ask questions.

Mrs. LLOYD. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, I am sorry that I did arrive late, but I was at two other subcommittee meetings. I did not get to hear the testimony but the consensus it seems to me is that we all have agreed with the same thing, that we really do not have any objectives that we can really go toward. Is that the consensus of opinion?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. I think you cannot come up with solutions right now to the problems. I do not think that enough is known about what the problem is or what is effective in combating it yet.

Mrs. LLOYD. But don't you think it would vary in the rural areas, the urban areas?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. The pattern of crime, yes.

Mrs. LLOYD. I talked to my elderly in Chattanooga at a townhall meeting recently and they are very disturbed about it in their housing projects. If they cannot be secure in this small of a area, in the so-called Bible belt in the South, then this problem is not confined to the northern areas. These people too are frightened, afraid to get out of the house at night.

I was very concerned about the fact. I asked the police department why we do not have adequate men on duty who can patrol these areas. So, I sort of thought, well, maybe we could do a little bit better, why do we not put more of our elderly in one of our housing projects. And, of course, this is certainly not agreeable to those over 65 at all. Would you care to comment on this?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. We had touched on that briefly a moment ago. There are a great many recommendations, as the chairman pointed out, and the studies of Oscar Newman, in New York, that advocate age segregated housing in public housing units by the elderly because of the dramatically lowered victimization rate when this happens.

Mr. SCHEUER. But he is not talking about segregation and having a whole project of elderly. He is saying that if there are three or four buildings, we should have one of them for the elderly so when they go outside there are kids, they can babysit, they are involved in a total community, but they are in their own building and they are in a protected situation.

Ms. GOLDSMITH. I have also heard of a proposal that would not eliminate all young people from a project, but maybe only very young children from a project. In other words, it could be almost an adult community where only older children were allowed.

Mr. SCHEUER. As a potential grandfather, I do not think I would like that. You couldn't get me dead or alive to live in a building that did not have young kids.

Mrs. LLOYD. I agree with you, Mr. Chairman.

What is being done to those that commit these crimes, those who are under 18? Basically, what is it?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. I do not want to make generalized statements.

Mrs. LLOYD. Do they pat them on the hand?

Ms. GOLDSMITH. That seems to be the feeling of a lot of people, yes. That is true not just for people who commit crimes against the

older people, but for others as well, that there should be tougher penalties—or that was one point of view anyway.

Mrs. LLOYD. Well, as a mother I firmly believe in the system of rewards. I mean, this can be a positive approach and it can also be a negative approach; but, for the record's sake, I disagree with you. I think we should have stricter penalties for those who commit crimes against the elderly, if they are 13 or 14 or up to 18. If they commit this crime they are old enough to know what they are doing, and I certainly think there should be stiffer penalties for those acts.

I will disagree with you on this. Thank you very much.

Mr. SCHEUER. Thank you, Congresswoman Lloyd.

I think one of the things that elderly people want is to be involved, to be useful, to be wanted, to be needed and one way they can help is taking care of younger kids. They can babysit and they do all kinds of things with young kids while mothers and fathers are working.

So I think to structure communities for elderly people with no young kids is really a mindless exercise. Maybe the 12- to 16-year-olds threaten the elderly, but not little kids. So as I said, as a potential grandfather, I would say that an elderly community that bars small kids would be a very barren, sterile thing.

Well, I understand you have to go back to your teaching, Professor. Let me make just a couple of points before you go. If you are late, please tell them that we insisted on holding you over here way beyond the time because you were such stimulating, thoughtful witnesses.

Second, I wish to thank you very, very much for your acquired assistance in helping us organize these hearings. We are going to have some future hearings on HUD research and we very much hope that you can pick your brains on that.

Third and most important of all, I want to express my sense of pride in the kind of work you are doing. A number of us exactly 10 years ago supported a research arm in the Justice Department, the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. I was the House author of that legislation along with Congressman Bob McClory, of Illinois. Ten years ago there was no research fraternity in the field of criminal justice.

One or two schools around the country, the John Jay School in New York, one on the west coast, one at Northwestern, I think, and that was about it. There really was no research fraternity and because a little nourishment was provided, we have today a really dynamic, terrific research community in the field of criminal justice in which you two are playing a very wonderful leadership role and that gives all of us a sense of real pride. We do not want to legislate just shooting from the hip. We do not want to legislate through demagogy and through responding to know-nothing pressures. We want to produce legislation that works, legislation that helps, legislation that is cost-effective, legislation that produces results. And we are just not going to be able to do that unless we have able, proper, hard-headed scholarly people like you who are pointing—who are giving us some new directions and some new insights.

I think many approaches of the past have proven that they have not worked and we want to know why. As a liberal I am disappointed that many of the liberal solutions, the half-way houses, the released work-

time and other so-called liberal causes do not seem to have effected the pursuit of this quest.

We have to find out why these programs didn't work and we have to adopt programs that do. The whole new fraternity in which you have played a leading role is helping us and it will help us more in the future and I want to express my deep appreciation to the two of you for having played such remarkable and productive leadership roles in this whole new fraternity in criminal justice research.

Ed, do you have anything?

Mr. ROYBAL. No, sir.

Mr. SCHEUER. Marilyn?

Mrs. LLOYD. No, thank you.

Mr. SCHEUER. So with those words, we thank you very, very much for your testimony and we apologize for keeping you far beyond your normal time.

We are now going to get into victimology.

Now, the first thing Dr. Richard F. Sparks of the School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University in Newark, N.J. has to explain to me is: What does "victimology" mean and, then we will get on with the rest of Dr. Sparks' testimony.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD F. SPARKS, Ph. D., SCHOOL OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, NEWARK, N.J.

Mr. SPARKS. To answer your question about what is victimology, that term was invented about 20 years ago by an Israeli lawyer named Mendelsohn.

As a general term, "victimology" encompasses a whole range of types of research on victims.

Mr. SCHEUER. Victimology means the study of victims.

Mr. SPARKS. Of victims, particularly the victims of crime. Some researchers want to talk about victims as a group as if victims all have something in common—whether they are victims of accidents, victims of illnesses, or whatever.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, you could say there is a certain psychological trauma of being a victim of anything.

Mr. SPARKS. I suppose so. But crime is the area that I am interested in and knowledgeable about, and about which I would like to talk. I know you are interested in research on crime and criminal justice, so I would like to talk a bit about the method of studying victims by means of victimization surveys.

Before I talk about these surveys, perhaps I could give you a little sense of my own background in this area. In 1973, when I was on the faculty at the Institute of Criminology in Cambridge, England, I carried out a victimization survey in three areas in London. We were partly concerned to test the methodology, but we wanted also to find out more than was known at the time about victimization in that country.

After that, I came back to this country in 1974; I served as consultant to the National Academy Panel that evaluated the ongoing surveys that the Census Bureau has carried out for LEAA. So in addition to having done some of my own research in this area, I have

some knowledge of the National Crime Panel surveys and their results.

I think that victimization surveys for the moment are our main source of information about victims in general and crimes against the elderly in particular. As you know, the uniform crime reports contain no information at all on victims. Some police forces do routinely collect these data, but they don't get published.

Well, I will come back a little later to the police records of crime because I think that as a research method——

Mr. SCHEUER. Do you think that crime reports ought to require information about victims? Age, sex, physical condition, financial condition, where they live, what kind of neighborhoods, that kind of thing. Would that be helpful to research?

Mr. SPARKS. Yes and no. I do not think it would be helpful to publish it in the uniform crime reports volume that the FBI puts out. It would be helpful if individual police forces collected that information more than they do at the moment.

Some of them do.

Mr. SCHEUER. Either make it a standard requirement that they report or they are not going to report it, isn't that true?

Mr. SPARKS. Well, do you mean——

Mr. SCHEUER. Is there any middle road?

Mr. SPARKS. If the FBI would require them to report that information, that might be a strategy for getting them to collect the information. It has only been through a prodding by the FBI that police forces have collected statistics in the detail that they have, so it would probably be good strategy.

Mr. SCHEUER. I mean, it costs money to ask a question. I think they figure in the census every additional question costs $25 million or something like that. I don't know.

I know when we do a private poll talking to about 200 people, each additional question costs $700, so you would think twice before you just loaded in a lot of unnecessary questions.

On a cost-benefit basis you are suggesting that even though it costs them extra money and time, it is well worth it in terms of the insights with which we approach the problems of victims.

Mr. SPARKS. I would agree with that entirely.

Turning to the question of crime against the elderly and the general dimensions of the problem. I think the impression is very often given and this is a quantitative problem: People describe the victimization of the elderly as substantial or significant or frequent, and the impression given is that it is increasing. The available evidence, in my judgment, shows that that is just not the case. Our best available evidence from the National Crime Panel surveys and other victimization surveys, as you have heard, is that victimization decreases with age and that in particular, people over 65 are much less likely to be victims than people under that age.

Now, this is so for the National Crime Panel; for most of the 39 city-level surveys which have been done to date—except that people over 65 report more personal larceny with contact, purse snatching, and that sort of thing. But that conclusion is one that also emerges from victim surveys done in other countries. We found it in my London survey, for example, and it also has been found in surveys of violent vic-

timization in several other countries. So we are not talking about a large-scale quantitative problem here.

There are some qualifications that you have to make with survey data, and I think they are very important. This is a relatively new research method, and I think that we have to treat some of the findings of the surveys rather carefully and not jump to conclusions on the basis of them.

We know, for example, that these surveys also tend to underestimate the amount of crime just because some people forget incidents or they don't mention them to the interviewer. At the moment we do not know whether the elderly are more likely to forget things than other people.

The second thing is the statistic that is now used to measure victimization; this relates to a point you made in your opening remarks, Mr. Chairman.

The victimization rate is the only statistic that LEAA publishes in its reports on these surveys, but it is very misleading. You work out a victimization rate by taking the total number of victimizations, let's say in a group of people over 65, and dividing it by the number of people in that group. But we know that there is small number of people who get victimized more than once in any given particular period. So if a man is victimized four times, he gets counted four times in the numerator of it and only once in the denominator. So the result of that is it inflates the rate and you can't use it as a measure of risk.

Now, just to take some ball park figures, let's say we had 2 million victimizations committed against 20 million elderly people. You could not jump from that to the conclusion that the elderly as a group have a 1 in 10 chance of being a victim. For most of them the risk would be much lower, but then there would be this very small group with a very much higher risk.

Mr. SCHEUER. You think some of them are victimized more than once in the course of the year?

Mr. SPARKS. Oh, indeed. Some of them are victimized so often that they can't remember dates and particular incidents. So there is an extremely small group who are disproportionately accounting for a lot of the victimization. And again we do not know at the moment whether this is more serious with the elderly than with younger people.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, shouldn't we find out what the characteristics are of that group and whether there isn't some reasonable way that they can minimize the risk to themselves? There are may be something about their conduct that makes them crime prone or victim prone. It seems that the research ought to tell us about that, and maybe they could be counseled to help them to rearrange their lives without locking them into their apartments. I am not suggesting that we convert them all into shut-ins, but it may be that there is something crimogenic about the way they organize their lives and reasonable steps could be taken by them to reduce the danger of attack without circumscribing their activities.

Mr. SPARKS. I agree with that. It is a very important problem; it was only realized very recently that the distribution of victimization was as I described it, with this small group of multiple victims.

Mr. ROYBAL. Wouldn't that statistic be equalized so to speak by the

fact that there are many victims who never report crimes committed against them.

Mr. SPARKS. You are talking now about victimization as measured by surveys, where people are asked directly if they have been victims?

Mr. ROYBAL. Yes; but in order to get a true figure, I suppose you must also examine police records of reported crimes. In compiling the statistics, one must take into account the fact that police departments throughout the country claim that senior citizens do not report crimes. Is that taken into consideration with regard to research on the victimization rate of senior citizens?

Mr. SPARKS. I'm sorry, Mr. Roybal, taken into consideration by whom? Do you mean by LEAA in its measure of victimization?

Mr. ROYBAL. Yes.

Mr. SPARKS. Well, there are two problems here.

One is that some people don't report things that happen to them to the survey interviewers, and of course, in those instances if they don't mention incidents, if they are forgotten or whatever, they can't be included in the victimization reports.

Mr. ROYBAL. Perhaps I may have misunderstood. I think you said that people 65 years of age are less likely to be victimized.

Mr. SPARKS. They are less likely to report being victimized, yes, than younger people.

Mr. ROYBAL. So then they are less likely to report being victimized. But they could actually be victimized to a greater extent than indicated by the surveys because they often fail to report crimes.

Mr. SPARKS. Well, I think that is unlikely, but for the moment we don't know whether they are more likely to forget or fail to mention things than younger people. This is one of the things——

Mr. ROYBAL. Well, how then do you discover the rate of victimization of senior citizens?

Mr. SPARKS. I'm sorry?

Mr. ROYBAL. How do you reach or come to the conclusion as to what the rate is?

Mr. SPARKS. Well, from the surveys they count up the total number of victimization incidents that are mentioned by people whom they interview, and let's say we are talking about people age 65 and over, they take the total number of incidents that those people mention and they divide it by the number of people that they interview or the population estimate.

Mr. ROYBAL. Yes; but you also said that some of these victims are victimized more than once.

Mr. SPARKS. Yes; at the moment that is disguised.

Mr. ROYBAL. On the other hand, then, can you develop a procedure for taking into account those individuals who are victimized but fail to report the crimes. Is there some way of figuring out what the norm would be in a situation of that kind?

Mr. SPARKS. No; theoretically it is possible to investigate that question. For example, you could start with people that you know that have reported crimes to the police and you could go around and interview them and see how many of them mention the crime to the survey interviewer.

I did it in my own particular survey, that particular kind of research and we found that older people were no less likely to forget

than the younger people, but it could be different in a survey being done in this country. For the moment, we just don't have a handle on that problem that you mentioned.

But it is important not to take that rate and jump right to a measure of risk because the rate exaggerates risk for the great majority of people and it understates for this kind of a minority.

Now, I really——

Mr. SCHEUER. May I interrupt you for one moment.

I would like to welcome Congressman Ted Risenhoover of Oklahoma a very distinguished Member of the Select Committee on the Aging and Ted; we are running very informal hearings and if you have a question please interrupt, or if you have a statement we would be very happy to hear it.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. No statement. Thank you very much.

Mr. SCHEUER. OK. If you feel like asking a question interrupt. Go ahead, Mr. Sparks.

Mr. SPARKS. Well, there are some other qualifications that we need to—if I may just address that point that you mentioned, Mr. Chairman.

As I said, this is a very recent problem, it has only been recognized in the last, I would say, 5 years among researchers, that there is a small group of apparently victimization prone people. Whether they are just unlucky or whether they do something to expose themselves to unnecessary risks, we don't know at the moment.

It is, however, a very difficult problem. It is a needle-in-the-haystack problem, because this group is very small. And while I think it is a top priority for research in the area of victimization, I think it is going to be a very difficult problem to tackle satisfactorily.

Another thing that these surveys do, too, at the moment—and I'm sure you realize this—is, they lump everybody age 65 and over together in one category. And that obviously doesn't permit us to get a very good handle on victimization of the elderly in any precise way. There are microdata tapes available to researchers, and you can do a finer analysis with those tapes, but I have not seen any such analysis yet.

Mention has been made of the risk factor in relation to the fact that the elderly don't go out as often. I think that is almost certainly part of the explanation of their lower victimization rate. Now, in my survey in London we asked people—before we talked about crimes at all, we asked them "How many nights a week on the average do you go out?" And we found, just as you would expect, that the older people were, the less often they went out; and when we compared 65-year-old people who went out twice a week with 25-year-old people who went out twice a week, their victimization rates become more similar. They weren't identical, but they became more similar.

Curiously LEAA is asking—in a so-called attitude questionnaire—a very similar question: "How often do you go out in the evenings for entertainment?" Nothing about crime. They haven't analyzed this question yet in relation to victimization, and I'm sure if they did so, they would find something similar to my findings.

Now, maybe part of the reason that people don't go out is that they are afraid of crime, but I don't think that is the only or most important reason. As people get older they tend to cut their social lives back for all sorts of reasons that have nothing at all to do with crime. It is also

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, now, wait a minute. How do you ask the question of an elderly person that will give you a true perception of whether they do or don't fear crime as sort of a major intrusion on their lives?

Mr. SPARKS. Well, there are a variety of ways of trying to get at that, I am suggesting that you don't just ask them straight out the question, "Are you afraid of crime?"

I might give you a little example from my own research. In some of our pilot work I was interviewing a man in Cambridge and I asked him, "Is there a lot of crime around here?" He was an elderly man and he immediately launched into a long discussion of how terrible conditions were, and how much crime there was, and how much vandalism there was, and so forth and so on. And it pretty soon became clear that his talk about crime was symbolic, it was a vehicle for him to express a lot of other discontent that he felt with his life, and he ended up after about 20 minutes saying, "Well, you know, things aren't really much worse than they were when I was a boy."

Now, in our research in London we started off asking people a lot of questions about their neighborhoods. Did they like the neighborhood, would they be happy to leave and so forth and so on. A fair number of them said they didn't like their neighborhoods, they were terrible places and they wanted to get out. So when they said that, we asked why? And at that point almost nobody mentioned crime. And about 5 minutes later in the interview we came back and said, "Is there much crime around here?" And the ones who had previously expressed discontent with their neighborhoods then said there was a lot of crime, they were much more willing than others to say there was a lot of crime.

Mr. SCHEUER. What kind of neighborhoods were these?

Mr. SPARKS. There was a mixture. We had—I don't know if you know London. There were three areas: Brixton, which is the largest West Indian community in London and another one was an East End working class area; and Kensington, a rich middle-class area.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, you know, in my district I have all kinds of neighborhoods and I have one that is a very low-income neighborhood, but they don't seem to be terribly concerned about crime and the rate of crime is quite high but they don't talk about it a lot. They talk about housing and jobs and so forth.

I have another neighborhood that is a middle income, blue collar large scale housing project with its own internal police force, and they must have 10,000 or 15,000 people living there in 25 different high rise buildings, a police force of about 40 security officers, and a crime-free oasis. But, of course if there is a burglary it goes through that project like wildfire and they have a couple of them a year. It is still a crime-free oasis. But when you talk to people in that——

Mr. SPARKS. They are scared to death.

Mr. SCHEUER. They are scared to death, right. And they will tell you verbatim about every incident that has happened in that community in the last 5 years, all the facts surrounding each incident.

Whereas an incident where crime is an everyday happenstance——

Mr. SPARKS. That's a very general finding.

One of the strange things that these surveys are showing us—the crime panel surveys show it and so do those in other countries—is that fear of crime, beliefs about crime, attitudes about crime really have remarkably little to do with a person's experience as a victim. In fact, there are some studies which suggest that nonvictims express more fear than victims and that maybe——

Mr. SCHEUER. Do these surveys show whether they had relatives or friends or immediate family who were victims?

Mr. SPARKS. That, to my knowledge has not been investigated. Not in any detail.

Mr. SCHEUER. Congressman Risenhoover, do you have any questions or any comments to make?

Mr. RISENHOOVER. No.

Mr. SCHEUER. All right, continue Doctor.

Mr. SPARKS. I think this is illustrated by the problem of the elderly because, as you said, they have a relatively low risk of crime, but they express relatively high fear. Not all that much higher, incidentally than the younger people, but because the risk is lower it is disproportionate.

This is what we need, I believe, to try and understand in the future research. Not so much the factors that lead to the risk of crime, but the origins of the fear of crime that people express despite facing a relatively low risk. It is also important to try and create some kind of environment where elderly residents would feel secure as well as being reasonably safe.

Could I conclude my briefing by saying a couple of words about what I think our priorities in future research in this area should be, and say something about the methods that could be used.

As I have already said, victimization surveys are our most comprehensive source of data. These surveys, at the moment, have their limitations and their imperfections, and we do need to be cautious in drawing conclusions from them, but they are still an important research tool.

After the National Academy's panel report, LEAA is reevaluating these surveys. At one time they proposed to stop collecting data entirely; now, I understand they have revised that plan, and they are going to continue collecting data until this June, and after that to collect at a reduced rate so as to allow more research of a methodological, developmental kind.

I think that is the right course. That developmental work should have been done 5 years ago, but it is important to do it now and to make these surveys continue in a more informative form in the future. We should not forget that the first surveys of this kind were done only 12 years ago, and 12 years is a very short time in any science and especially in the social sciences. So even though I have indicated some shortcomings of the surveys in their present form, I believe they are potentially the most important research method that we have in this area.

I don't think that for studying a problem like crime against the elderly that we can rely on surveys entirely. As I have already indicated, I think it is a localized problem and even a citywide survey is in danger of missing particular neighborhoods like the one you men-

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tioned where perceptions of crime and the risk of crime and so forth can change practically from street to street.

You can conduct very localized victim surveys; for example, just go to particular neighborhoods. But that still is a very expensive method of doing research, and in the crime panel surveys, for example, take any 6-month period and only about 10 percent of those that are interviewed, nationally mention any kind of victimization at all. Obviously then you are talking to 90 percent of your sample for nothing.

Even if you went to a high-crime neighborhood you might contact no more than 30 or 40 percent of the people who were victims and that's still a very expensive way to get your information. That's the reason why I suggested earlier that police records of crime could be used here. If we can persuade the police—and perhaps the FBI is the best to do the persuading—to collect those data on age and sex and the neighborhood and so forth of the victim, then we can work from that directly.

Another possibility is that if they will at least collect basic things like age and sex, which a lot of them routinely do now, we can use them for what in the technical jargon is called a sampling frame. We could use them as a way of identifying victims who could then be interviewed and followed up and so forth. And once these data were collected, starting from police records—where by definition, all people involved had some experience with crime and contributed something to the data—once we got data from all of these people, they might help us to identify high-risk areas and high-risk groups, and they could also give us more information about the consequences of victimization. For example, the extent to which victims' needs are being met by compensation programs and that kind of thing.

So I think it is well worth supporting research of that kind based on police records as well as the more general survey approach that the National Crime Panel represents.

Mr. SCHEUER. Thank you very much.

Congressman Roybal?

Mr. ROYBAL. No questions.

Mr. SCHEUER. Congressman Risenhoover?

Mr. RISENHOOVER. No questions.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, just one last question, Dr. Sparks. Your testimony has been very interesting and we have asked several questions. I have one last question. Here we are, sitting here as legislators; what kind of specific programmatic recommendations do you have for us; research programs and other kinds of programs that would address themselves to crime against the elderly. Can you give us some specific fine-tune recommendations?

Mr. SPARKS. I don't believe that there is any clear need for more special funding for research on crime against the elderly over and above what is now available through the programs which fund research on crime generally.

I don't see any indication that there is a need for more research than can now reasonably be obtained through existing means.

Mr. SCHEUER. Incidentally, on the one problem that you raised, the lack of information about victims, our subcommittee has issued a report in which we call for the creation of a bureau of justice statistics

in the Justice Department which would then, of course make its statistics available to the FBI and all of the other law enforcement institutions in the country. The FBI's primary responsibility is not statistics and research. Their mission is an investigative one and not an analytical one.

We think that we will get more adequate statistics that way. So, as you can see, we have thought about this problem and perhaps we will be discussing it with you in the future.

If there are no further questions, thank you very, very much.

[See appendix 1, p. 56, for the prepared statement of Dr. Sparks.]

Mr. SCHEUER. Now, I would like to ask our next witness. Dr. Michael J. Hindelang, professor of criminal justice at the State University of New York in Albany, to step forward.

Dr. Hindelang is going to testify on the analysis of crime survey data. We are happy to have you, and your testimony will be reprinted in its entirety in the record.

Perhaps you might want to talk to us and chat informally and I'm sure we will have some questions.

[See appendix 1, p. 56, for the prepared statement of Dr. Sparks.] lang.]

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL J. HINDELANG, Ph. D. PROFESSOR AND ASSOCIATE DEAN, SCHOOL OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE, STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, ALBANY, N.Y.

Mr. HINDELANG. One of the things I would like to do is to try to deal with very briefly with what some of the findings are and to put them in somewhat of a different perspective, but in many ways it would be quite repetitive of what has been said already today.

One of the questions asked in the national crime panel surveys regards fear of walking alone at night in one's own neighborhood. These data indicate that among the elderly, about 7 out of 10 have such a fear, but it is interesting to note that when the question is fear of walking alone in the neighborhood during the daytime the proportion drops to about 1 or 2 out of 10; 2 out of 10 females, 1 out of 10 males.

One of the things that I'm concerned about is that the perspective on this problem not be taken out of context. That is to say, for example, the national crime panel surveys done to date show quite clearly that when we consider the kinds of crimes that people are most fearful of: namely, personal crimes in which there is some real risk of injury, such as in rape, robbery, assault, and personal arsony, for example, a purse snatching situation, we look at the country as a whole, 99 percent of those 65 years of age or older do not experience such crimes in a given 12-month period.

Mr. SCHEUER. Ninety-nine percent?

Mr. HINDELANG. Yes, sir.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, we keep talking about 1 out of 10 elderly people, et cetera, et cetera, would be victims of crime each year. Is that really a piece of misinformation that we are passing about?

Mr. HINDELANG. Well, I think that the problem derives from talking about crime as if it were unitary.

When we take a look at nonpersonal crimes such as burglary of household, larceny of property not involving a contact between the

victim and the offender, vehicle theft, and so on, those kinds of crime, the 1 out of 10 figure is more realistic. But my point here is that the kinds of crimes that people, especially elderly people, tell us they are afraid of are the high-fear crimes of rape, robbery, assault, and personal larceny. In those crimes 99 percent of the elderly in a 12-month period will not experience those crimes.

This is for the United States as a whole. When we shift to urban areas there have been 26 cities that have been surveyed in the National Crime Panel surveys for the crimes that I mentioned, rape, robbery, assault, and larceny from the person in urban areas, 96 percent of the elderly will not experience those crimes, will not report those crimes to survey interviewers.

One of the things that has been mentioned briefly today and in prior hearings before this committee is that the category 65 years of age and older is a quite heterogeneous category, and so when we talk about risk or rates of victimization for people in this category, we have quite a wide age span.

One of the reasons that this wide age span is used is that that victimization against the elderly is so infrequent that it is difficult to get reliable statistical data for finer intervals.

I have been involved in a project looking very closely at the victimization of the elderly with the National Crime Panel data, and we have used age categories such as 65 to 69, 70 to 74, and so on, and the results that emerge are quite compatible with the findings that have already been published and have been discussed before this committee. That is, regardless of how we resegment the 65-plus age category, the results look very much the same. They have a much, much lower rate for every kind of crime except the purse-snatch type of crime.

One other thing I would like to comment on is the failure of victims to report to the police.

In some prior testimony before this committee it had been suggested that elderly people who are interviewed in surveys and who mention crimes to Census Bureau interviewers are more likely not to report them to the police than younger people. I have looked at this question in a variety of sets of data, the national data available and in data available in the 26 cities surveyed, and if anything, elderly persons have a slightly greater likelihood of calling the police, once victimized.

In connection with failure to report to the police, it has also been suggested earlier and in some of the literature on this topic that fear of reprisal from the offender is one reason why victims do not report to the police. The data from the United States as a whole indicate that those elderly persons who tell interviewers that they were a victim of crime but it was not reported to the police, only 5 percent indicated they had any fear of reprisal. This is exactly the same percentage for nonelderly people, about 5 percent of all victims who do not report crimes which they suffer, to the police, say that they had some fear of reprisal from the offender.

In other words, it is not by any stretch one of the common reasons given for failure to report to the police.

Mr. ROYBAL. Dr. Hindelang, that part of your testimony is in direct conflict with testimony that my subcommittee has heard over a period of 2 years.

You make three points: One, elderly Americans are not likely or are no more likely than the younger American to be victimized by juveniles; two, older Americans, in comparison to younger Americans, are not less likely to call the police when victimized; and three, elderly victims are not likely to say they failed to call the police because of the fear of reprisal.

We had a hearing here in Washington; it was an all-day hearing. That was probably the saddest 8 hours that the members of the subcommittee have ever spent where victim after victim told the subcommittee that they were afraid to report the crime to the police because the young men who were involved would come back and beat them up if they did report it. And in many instances we got testimony from individuals who even had a system of paying off youngsters in order to avoid being beaten up.

Now, that happened here in Washington. But we also have held hearings in other parts of the country, and as far as I'm concerned, I have come to the conclusion that persons over 65 years of age who are victimized by persons they know are not going to report those crimes to the police.

Now, how does that correspond to your findings?

Mr. HINDELANG. It does not.

Perhaps people who have appeared before this committee have been telling you different things than they have been telling the Census Bureau interviewers, but——

Mr. ROYBAL. Well, isn't it possible that your interviewers haven't talked to these people?

Mr. HINDELANG. The persons who are selected for these studies are selected on a probability basis to be representative, for example, of the population of the United States as a whole in connection with the National Crime Panel national sample, and in these 26 cities that have been studied, the samples are representative of the populations of those cities.

Now, it is also possible that the older people appearing before this committee are not representative of those victims——

Mr. ROYBAL. But it can be representative of a particular locale, and it can be representative of the average senior citizen that lives, let's say, in a certain section of the District of Columbia or Los Angeles or New York or anyplace else.

Mr. HINDELANG. Well, all three of those cities that you mentioned have been surveyed along with these 26 cities and the results that I just reported are quite compatible with the results for those individual cities.

These results are based on interviews with 2 million people in the United States; 2 million interviews have been collected. And if there is a difference in this regard, I would—my guess would be it is because—it is not because the Census Bureau is not drawing a representative sample, but perhaps you committee hearings are not drawing representative samples.

Mr. ROYBAL. Well, it could also be true that the representative samples that you have gathered are a grilled cross section of the entire city and maybe the entire country. But how are you able to reach the conclusion that they were less likely to call the police than another

age group is something I can't really understand, particularly since there has been overwhelming evidence that they are afraid to report crimes.

Mr. HINDELANG. I guess I don't understand your question.

What the surveys do is to interview people and ask them if they have been victims of crime. All persons who say yes are asked whether they reported the crime to the police. When we compare elderly and nonelderly responses to that question, the elderly are not more likely to say that they failed to call the police, than are persons between the ages of 12 and 64.

Mr. ROYBAL. There was a study that came out yesterday that shows that elderly persons living in Silver Spring, Md., are often victimized by crime. I haven't read the report in its entirety, but I see a contradiction with your testimony.

Mr. HINDELANG. Well, my testimony is based on interviews, about 2 million interviews, and I am not sure what the source of the information you are referring to is, but I would be glad to take a look at it.

Mr. ROYBAL. Well, this report is from the State of Maryland. So the State of Maryland is perhaps different than other States.

Mr. HINDELANG. Well, the city of Baltimore is quite consistent with what I have just reported, so I'm not sure where in Maryland.

Mr. ROYBAL. You are saying then that in the city of Baltimore, the elderly are less likely to say that they do not report crime to the police?

Mr. HINDELANG. The elderly are about as likely to report crime to the police, slightly more likely in general, than younger people.

Mr. ROYBAL. That is not what the study of the elderly in Silver Spring indicated. I suppose that it is a pretty good report, and I would like to have you read it and see how it compares with studies that you have made.

Mr. HINDELANG. They are not my studies—they are the U.S. Bureau of the Census—but I would be glad to look at it and comment on it.

Mr. ROYBAL. Well, if the Bureau of the Census made the study and if it is as accurate as the study they have made on the population itself, then I would say that that study should be thrown out the window.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. I don't have any questions, but I would like to make an observation.

I suspect that in Maryland the incidents of crime against the elderly and their not reporting them would probably be much higher than it would be in a State like Oklahoma, at least in the area that I represent. But my experience has been that older people do report the crimes. My background in law enforcement and as a newspaper reporter covering trials has been that older people are more likely to show up when someone is brought to trial, at least in my part of the country. I am not familiar with other areas, which could be much different. I'm sure urban areas would be much different than rural areas where you have young people victimizing older people and in my area that would be quite different. So I am sure there would be a difference.

Mr. ROYBAL. With a complete lack of transportation for senior citizens in various parts of the country, including metropolitan areas without accessibility to transportation such as Los Angeles, it seems to me that a senior citizen would have difficulty getting to the police station to make a report.

Many elderly persons testified that they called the police and there were so many questions asked that they finally gave up. They want all kinds of information and finally they say, come down to the police station, and they don't go to the police station.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. In my area the policeman comes out to them.

Mr. ROYBAL. Now, there is a difference. If a policeman comes to see the senior citizen, then I would agree with you. But it is my understanding that the practice in general is that once a report is made, questions are asked on the phone. Then they say you must come back and sign a report at the police station, and this is where the senior citizen finally gives up and say to heck with it, I'm not going to go down to the police department. Therefore, the report is not completed.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. I would agree with that observation.

Mr. HINDELANG. I was just glancing over the study of interviews with 178 elderly Silver Spring residents and it doesn't say how they were selected, but with that number of respondents, I doubt whether it includes people who have not come to the attention of the police. Maybe I could get a little bit more information about that. If only those people have come to the attention of the police it is difficult to see how that would be relevant in terms of comparing the proportions who failed to notify the police.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. May I make an observation at this point.

Mr. ROYBAL. Please do.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. In the reporting end of it, of which I am familiar a lot of times police do not want to indicate through their remarks that their jurisdiction is crime prone.

Mr. HINDELANG. Right.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. A person who called on the phone and asked questions and then did not go to the police and sign the report would not be listed as a victim of crime.

Mr. HINDELANG. Generally that would be true.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. But in your surveys, if you ask someone if they were a victim, they would say yes to the Census Department, they would say yes, they had been a victim. The police department would not carry that because the person did not go ahead and complete the paperwork.

Mr. HINDELANG. That's correct.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. There could be a big difference in the statistics.

Mr. SCHEUER. There would be a falloff in the data? First, because of the fact that a lot of elderly people do not report crimes, and second because of the fact that when they report it, it will not be a reported crime unless they make the trip to the police station.

Mr. HINDELANG. I would not agree that the rate of nonreporting among the elderly is any higher than any other age group.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, I could concede that, but it is very hard for some other reasons. I suppose the greatest nonreported crime of all would be rape where we think less than 1 case in 5 is reported. Now that situation may be improving because the police are beginning to treat raped victims a little bit more sensitively and they are beginning to eliminate some of the harsher accusatory prejudicial ways in which they have treated women who have reported rape in the past. So it

may be that this problem is improving somewhat, but to say unreporting among the elderly is no worse than other segments of the population, you know, does not shed a great deal of new light on the subject.

Mr. HINDELANG. No; the reason I raised that point is that it has been argued that there is a systematic bias in police statistics that would underrepresent elderly victims. And this goes to that statement. That is to say, if it were true that 80 percent of the crimes suffered by the elderly were not reported to the police as compared to 10 percent nonreporting for all other age groups, then our official data would be much worse than they are, but since the best available survey data indicate that there is not an age bias in reporting victimizations to the police once they occurred, that means that we can have more confidence in the official data when we are looking at questions of the relationship between age and victimization than would otherwise be the case.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, except that if Congressman Roybal and Congressman Risenhoover are right, the elderly are frequently asked to come down and sign the report and it is a particular characteristic of the elderly that they move about less and are not quite as mobile as young people. That requirement in itself may be a bias against the elderly reporting crime.

Mr. HINDELANG. But such a requirement would not be a requirement only for the elderly.

Mr. SCHEUER. I know, but this proportionately affects the elderly in practical application.

Mr. HINDELANG. Perhaps; I don't know.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, maybe this is something we ought to find out.

I think you are probably aware that you have taken us all a little aback; we are breathless here in disbelief at your feeling that the impact of crime against the elderly is not disproportionate to the impact of crime against the rest of the population.

Mr. HINDELANG. That's right.

Mr. SCHEUER. Now, we discussed before that we know as a statistical matter—in numerical terms—crime against the elderly is somewhat less than crimes against young people.

Mr. HINDELANG. Very substantially less.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, a young person may have a couple of bucks stolen or somebody may punch him in the nose or he may even be mugged. But to him it may not be a very big deal. If somebody throws him to the ground or takes his money, you know, a young person can shrug it off. He isn't hurt; his life is not really impacted in a very important way, or at least it may not be. Particularly in a ghetto, in a low-income central core area of a city where crime is a fact of life and where young people have accommodated themselves to crime as an existing reality.

But that same crime against the elderly, if they are thrown to the ground, they may break a hip or an arm, and that has devastating consequences upon them. If their purses are snatched, even the few dollars that they lose may have devastating financial consequences. In terms of certain psychological trauma it may have a tremendous impact on them, and it can significantly increase their fear.

It seems to me that when you talk about the elderly and say that they are undervictimized, you are not taking into accocunt the qualita-

tive impact of the victimization. The elderly don't feel that they are undervictimized, and the effect, it seems to all of us, has a devastating impact on their lives.

I know when I go back to my district, this is what I hear more than anything else, and if I told them, look, you are undervictimized, you are not overvictimized, why, they would be hanging me in effigy in my district.

Mr. ROYBAL. In my district, too. That's for sure.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. Mr. Chairman, would you yield?

Mr. SCHEUER. Sure.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. I am not surprised at what the statistics reflect and for the reasons you have stated, but, also, for the reasons that we heard, older people are not less likely to report than younger people. Young people do not report crimes for other reasons. Even though they are more mobile, they are tied up with their jobs and have to take time from their jobs if they are going to go to the police station to report a crime. When you get down to signing complaints and forms and those kinds of things, and talking to investigators, you are doing that in generally what would normally be considered working hours. And that is an economic imposition on young people just like the lack of mobility is on older people.

Again, my personal experience has been that when you get to the point of actually bringing someone to trial, you get much more cooperation from older people about coming to testify than from younger people because younger people are working. The older people are not working, and it is not as much of an economic imposition on them to come and testify.

I am not surprised with the statistics, although I would agree with you there are some other things that need to be taken into consideration in dealing with the problem of crime in general and directly more emphasis toward combating crime against the elderly.

Mr. HINDELANG. May I respond with a qualitative——

Mr. SCHEUER. Yes, but I would also ask you, how can you explain the public perceptions that the elderly people are overwhelmingly the victims of crime? That is not only perceived by the elderly, but by almost everybody else in our society. It seems to be—we all take judicial notice of the fact that the elderly bear the preponderant impact of crime in our society.

How did these perceptions arise and what is their meaning?

Mr. HINDELANG. Let me respond first to your point about the qualitative aspects.

One of the nice things about the LEAA national crime surveys is that they gather a great deal of information about the nature of injuries suffered and the extent that those injuries are suffered.

Elderly victims in personal victimizations—rape, robbery, assault, and personal larceny—suffer some injury about one out of six times. One out of six personal victimizations result in injury to the elderly. For nonelderly persons, one out of four such victimizations result in injury. So in fact, injury is greater for nonelderly than for elderly persons on a proportionate basis.

When we take a look at the kind of injury, we find that the situation that you suggested earlier is not supported in the data; that is,

if we take a look at all of those who required medical attention, one in five of those under 65 years of age, but one in six of those older than 65 was hospitalized. So by the criterion of hospitalization, by the criterion of injury, the results are pretty much the same.

I have looked specifically at weighing victimizations for their extent of seriousness, and the overall results are the same.

Mr. SCHEUER. Is there any way to factor in the psychological trauma, the change of lifestyles that victimization engenders?

Mr. HINDELANG. We can to some extent by taking a look at the attitude data available. The attitude data indicate that although victimization for some types of crime has an impact on fear and on restricting lifestyles, that impact is not nearly as dramatic and as crushing as you suggested earlier.

Now, perhaps the attitude items in that respect are not so particularly good. I am working at the moment on trying to improve them because the attitude instrument in general needs a lot of improvement, and perhaps differences of the kinds you suggest will emerge with a better instrument. But the best data that we have available on the question indicates that is not the case.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. I am not surprised at those statistics either, even if we take into account that even though the older person is more injury prone, the older person is not as likely to resist as the younger person.

Mr. HINDELANG. Precisely.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. If you have armed robbery, it is going to be pretty much the same; but when you go to strong-armed robbery, that is going to be an entirely different situation where you have a younger person versus an older victim.

Mr. HINDELANG. A victim's resistance substantially increases the likelihood of injury. Older persons are much less likely to resist and hence, less but not much less—less likely to be injured.

Mr. ROYBAL. Well, Mr. Chairman, what we are doing here is playing with words as we describe situations.

For example, to go back to your original statement, you said that elderly Americans are no more likely than younger Americans to be victimized. Then you also said——

Mr. HINDELANG. No, no. I did not.

Mr. ROYBAL. Well, I'm reading your statement, and it says, "Elderly Americans in comparison to younger Americans are not less likely to call the police." But you also made a statement that, elderly American victims are not likely to say that they failed to call the police for fear of reprisal by the offender.

The statistics that you have stated are probably correct. When you look at the overall picture, you probably have statistics that are substantially correct.

On the other hand, looking at the situation from the viewpoint of our committee's findings, we cannot come to the same conclusion, particularly insofar as the elderly American's unwillingness to call the police for fear of reprisal. Our evidence overwhelmingly indiates that that fear exists. In instance after instance, the victim calls the police but then does not follow through because he has to go to the police station, and that is too much for him, so he drops it. Therefore, the report is not completed and never appears in statistics.

Now, do you find that to be a fact also or have you found that to be a fact in your studies?

Mr. HINDELANG. Have I found the elderly are what?

Mr. ROYBAL. Well, have you found a situation in which the senior citizen has not completed a report?

Mr. HINDELANG. Does not followup, say a phone call and not completed the report? We have no data on that, I'm not sure.

Mr. RISENHOOVER. I am thinking that the statistics are very misleading, although they may be very accurate.

Mr. ROYBAL. Apparently. That's right, they can be accurately compiled, but still misleading in general.

Mr. SCHEUER. Very briefly please, because the second bell has just gone off and we will declare a 10-minute recess.

Mr. HINDELANG. I will wait until you come back.

Mr. SCHEUER. A 10-minute recess is called.

[The hearing was adjourned for a 10-minute recess.]

Mr. SCHEUER. We will resume our hearings with Professor Michael Hindelang.

Professor, you were about to answer my question. Did you first have something to say in response to the other question?

Mr. HINDELANG. Yes; I did.

Mr. SCHEUER. OK, why don't you answer theirs and then answer mine.

Mr. HINDELANG. One of the last things that was said before we took a break was that statistics can be misleading and the question was asked, how is it that at these hearings people are saying one thing and the Census Bureau interviewees are giving us much different data?

I think that there are pretty clear differences between public information of this kind where interest groups may well not be representative of those that are out there suffering—the Nation's population—and can give a misleading picture. When one holds a hearing and interest groups come in to discuss these data they are not necessarily representing the population at large.

On your question of public perception, victimization surveys, because they are drawn from representative samples of the general population provide us with one of the first opportunities to look systematically at questions that have been of great concern to criminologists since official police data were introduced in Europe at the beginning of the 19th century.

The question has always been to what extent are police data representative of offenses occurring? What do we know about biases in a selection mechanism by which the offenses come in to police records? I will come back to that in a moment.

The second thing is that in victimization surveys for one of the very first times we have relatively good estimates of populations at risk. When one takes a look at offense data in a police file, one may or may not have available decent estimates of the number of persons, say the number of male or females in a particular community; the number of persons of the various ages, various income groups, various marital statuses. Because the Bureau of the Census surveys are general population surveys that also ask about crime, victimization surveys for the first time put us in a good position to estimate the relative risk of

victimization to people with various characteristics. So these surveys, the first surveys of this kind available through the work done by the President's Commission 10 or 11 years ago now and these current LEAA census national crime surveys are really the first opportunity that we have had to look systematically and closely at risk factors, demographic factors associated with risks of victimization. I think as these findings become publicized that the incorrect public perceptions that exist will begin to dissipate.

One of the things that I do think is problematic in taking a look at the news release from this committee that begins: "One out of every ten senior citizens in this country can expect to be criminally victimized each year." I think such statements are misleading in the sense that the kinds of crimes that people care about most, personal crimes, where injury is potential——

Mr. SCHEUER. They are violent crimes, there is no question about that.

Mr. HINDELANG. Which are violent crimes?

Mr. SCHEUER. The kind of crimes that the elderly are concerned about.

Mr. HINDELANG. Right.

Mr. SCHEUER. Crimes of violence. Head-to-head confrontation types.

Mr. HINDELANG. Exactly. In which case that lead sentence would more appropriately read 1 out of every 100 citizens in this country can expect to be victimized by serious personal crimes in a given year.

Mr. SCHEUER. One out of one hundred?

Mr. HINDELANG. One out of one hundred.

Mr. SCHEUER. Jonah Shacknai of our committee staff would like to ask several questions.

Mr. SHACKNAI. Dr. Hindelang, I guess this boils down to the very essential question of how you define violent acts when an elderly person is a victim. Is not the impact of less severe violent crimes like purse snatching far greater when the elderly are victims? It seems to me that their heightened psychological and financial vulnerability make crimes of a normally lesser severity far more devastating. What crimes exactly would you consider violent when the elderly are victims?

Mr. HINDELANG. I would include purse snatching because it is a face-to-face personal crime in that statement that I suggested should be the lead statement of this release. That is, 1 out of every 100 elderly Americans can be expected to be a victim of rape, assault, robbery or purse snatching in the United States.

Mr. SHACKNAI. How about burglary where the home is intruded upon? From Biblical times on, the home is regarded as one's final sanctuary, doesn't burglary have a tremendous psychological impact?

Mr. HINDELANG. It has some psychological impact, but I think that these two statements should be separated because I think that a summary statement of the kind presented in the first sentence of this release is exceedingly misleading, and when the question is asked why is there a misperception among the public, I think that is one of the reasons why. They can be informed through forums such as this, should be informed. This kind of statement will probably be repro-

duced in a number of news reports and so on, and it is going to perpetrate—excuse me—perpetuate the misperceptions that we are all concerned about.

Mr. SHACKNAI. I was not asking for comments on the press release, but rather for a clarification of the definition of violent crimes when the elderly are victims.

Mr. SCHEUER. Please answer my question about the heightened public perception of crimes against the elderly.

Mr. HINDELANG. Continuing about the misperception?

Mr. SCHEUER. Yes; why is the perception present, and what do we do about it? Maybe our communities are not as violent and maybe there are situations that are not as crimogenic as they think they are and we think they are. Maybe they would feel better if they knew what the facts were.

Why is the perception there and what is it that you think Congress can do or society can do that will give our constituents a more secure feeling about their prospects if indeed that is justified?

Mr. HINDELANG. I think that one prime reason why it is there is because all of us recognize that the elderly are very vulnerable, but from that recognition it does not follow that they have a higher rate of crime nor a more serious rate of crime. And I think that that largely accounts for the misperception. In addition, a lot of the professional literature, a lot of hearings of this kind, can continue that misperception, and I would suggest the following to try to deal with it.

First of all, I think that spots on radio and television that provide a little bit of the information about—a little of what we know about the risks of being victimized would go a long way to deal with this problem. But that aside, since that may be quite difficult, I think that there are certain correlates of victimization that need to be discussed and understood by the general population.

For example, 9 out of 10 victims of personal crime are victimized when they are alone. Therefore, people who realize that most crime victims are victimized when alone, if they use kind of a buddy system, travel with companions, and so on, the platitude that there is safety in numbers appears to be true.

Second, most victimizations, most personal victimizations, occur disproportionately in evening and nighttime hours. Therefore, in probability terms, the daylight hours are the safest times, and this is consistent with the relative lack of fear that the elderly have to go out in their own neighborhoods in the daytime. So since the elderly in general have the ability to choose when they will go out to do such necessary things as shopping and cashing social security checks and other checks and so on, it makes much more sense to do it in the daytime, and I don't think you have to convince elderly people that that is sensible.

The third thing is that——

Mr. SCHEUER Your corollary is that they should not go out at nighttime?

Mr. HINDELANG. The corollary is that there is more risk of victimization when one goes out at night.

Mr. SCHEUER. Even if they do it in company?

Mr. HINDELANG. Even if they do it in company.

Mr. SCHEUER. You are saying a pitiful thing.

I have been in the homes of elderly people in my neighborhood, elderly Jewish people who lived across the street, not more than 100 feet from their synagogue. They have a Friday night service that starts at sundown, a very brief religious service, and then sort of a socializing affair where they have refreshments. For the Orthodox Jewish people, that is the big social event of the week. A short religious service and then a very nice little social event. But it doesn't start until sundown. And I have been in their apartments when they looked out the window and say, Congressman, I just can't go to the services—and when I asked them why, they said we are afraid to go across the street.

Now, that's a devastating intrusion on their lives. They don't have many occassions to socialize, and here is a once-a-week opportunity that they can count on where they know the people. It is really a very cherished portion of the week for both religious and social reasons, but they will not go across the street.

Mr. HINDELANG. In my family there are priests and so I can talk more about what I would recommend to a priest because I know more about the situation, and I assume that it might apply to rabbis as well in terms of making a suggestion to them.

I would suggest that in such a case that a rabbi arrange an escort service. I think that an escort service using perhaps younger people who go to the synagog as escorts could be a very effective way, not only to encourage interaction among younger and elderly people, but to make elderly people feel safer about going out at night. What is important when we consider programs that might be introduced to deal with these kinds of problems is that we simultaneously work on the fear as well as the actual risk of victimization. I think as escort programs work on the fear, people will feel safer when out in groups, and I think also they will reduce the objective risk of being victimized because they are accompanied.

I also think, for example, that in very many communities school-buses sit idle all day. I think that it is not inconceivable that some kind of an organized program where those buses could be used to take elderly in groups out to do the business that they have to do and so on, and make them not only increase their social activity as does the synagogue service, but also make them feel safer and make them be safer in terms of crime.

Mr. SCHEUER. Do you have a question?

Mr. GALLAGHER. Yes.

Mr. SCHEUER. This is Mr. Gallagher of the minority staff.

Mr. GALLAGHER. I would appreciate your clarifying something for me concerning your statement that the elderly are more likely to call the police than the nonelderly, and the last page on your charts showing that 20 percent of your respondents gave a reason for not reporting the crime.

Why does it appear that in the third category they would not want to be bothered? Why is it that the 65 and older have an 18 percentage figure as opposed to 10 percent for ages 64 and under, for not reporting when you have testified that they usually choose to report?

Mr. HINDELANG. I am not sure, I can take a guess.

Most studies of attitudes of people toward police indicate that elderly persons are the strongest supporters of the police. They think the police are doing a good job, they endorse what the police are doing, they appreciate the police and the activities, the services the police perform more than younger persons.

My guess would be that because of this appreciation and because they probably perceive the police as very busy and having to do quite a variety of things that they would be less likely to view their own situation as sufficiently serious to call on police time. That's just a guess. I don't know of any other reason why that would be so.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Touching on one other thing that Congressman Roybal brought up about fear of reprisals. You have both categories listed at only 5 percent, a minimal figure for fear of reprisal for aged persons.

Mr. HINDELANG. Yes.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Yet we know that much of the crime is committed by youth under 25, and second, those are the ones that commit most of their crimes within their own neighborhood.

Now, if you have older people living within that same neighborhood, it would seem to me that one could assume that the elderly may know who some of those youth are, and visa versa, and their fear of reprisal may be higher than it appears. They may cover up by using some of the other reasons, but behind it is a fear of reprisal.

Mr. HINDELANG. That's possible, but because it is a Census Bureau interviewer rather than an official of the Justice Department or some police agency that possibility is probably minimized, but one thing that should not be forgotten is that most of the victims of the nonelderly are also victimized relatively close to their home terrain, and so—in fact, when we take a look at the proportion of elderly persons who are victimized by juveniles and the proportion of nonelderly who are victimized by juveniles for personal crimes the proportions are about the same.

So juveniles have a no greater tendency to victimize older persons than do juveniles have greater tendency to victimize nonelderly. So the fact of a juvenile offender in your premise about their committing their crimes closer to their own homes, therefore, being in the neighborhood is correct. The fact that a juvenile offender is about as likely in a nonelderly victimization as an elderly victimization so that presence would be there regardless of the age of the victim.

Mr. GALLAGHER. One final question, Mr. Chairman.

Would it be legally feasible to put a heavier burden on a criminal by giving him an additional penalty for a crime committed against, say a 70-year-old person and up. Would this, in your opinion, be legally feasible? We do it at the other end of the age scale. Example—statutory rape, where the State moves in as a substitute for a juvenile under a certain age. Do you suppose there is any way where we could get some publicity out, providing such legislation did go through that there would be more severe penalties for attacking, in any manner a person 70 and above? That is just an arbitrary age figure.

Mr. HINDELANG. Right, there are two separate questions.

One is do I think we would have much impact and another is do I think it would be good from a policy point of view, as I'm sure you know New York State passed legislation of this kind.

I do not endorse the concept of differentiating among the victims and making special categories of victims except in very special circumstances such as correctional institutions where you have got a much different situation. I would not endorse the principle of saying that an elderly person should be more protected by our laws than a non-elderly person.

What I would endorse and which is already the case the way our laws are set up, is that the consequences to the person, to the victim determine the amount of punishment that is meted out and I think once we get away from that situation we have real problems.

Mr. SCHEUER. We have spent all morning discussing the fact that we have not quantified the psychological, the economic, or even the physical damage to the victim. We have discussed how much more traumatic an attack is to an elderly victim than to a young victim.

I do not see how the criminal justice system is factoring any of those very deep traumatic and psychological wounds and into the penalty structure.

Mr. HINDELANG. Well, I think that we have in fact taken into account the physical consequences.

I think that the physical consequences have been taken into account both in terms of the analysis of the national crime panel victimization data available and I think that they are taken into account and well known to a judge who is considering sentencing.

Other kinds of harm to the victim are not currently taken into account. I haven't thought——

Mr. SCHEUER. And neither are the physical, because much of the physical damage is unpredictable at that point in time. If there is a broken hip involved in throwing an elderly person to the ground, you do not know what complications are going to ensue, how long it is going to take that hip to knit, what the health implications of that will be 1, 2, or 3 years from now, the crippling effects, the physically crippling effects, let alone the psychological crippling effects. We have no way of quantifying those things at the time of an arrest or a sentencing.

Mr. HINDELANG. I know enough about how the criminal justice system works to say that by the time a person is up for sentencing most of those kinds of effects will be known.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, I know enough about the criminal justice system to be cognizant of the fact that a young person is likely to get off scot-free or very nearly scot-free.

Mr. HINDELANG. But that's a different problem. I think that problem for example——

Mr. SCHEUER. Through the plea bargaining device and all of that.

Mr. HINDELANG. But that problem can be dealt with through the plea bargaining device and giving that some attention rather than making special categories of victims.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, another perception is that the criminal justice system just does not sentence appropriately, it does not incarcerate appropriately and consequently there is very little deterrence built into the system to prevent these horrible crimes. The system really is failing.

I do not know if you were here when Chairman Pepper was talking about the importance of building a deterrent factor into our system of

criminal justice. You know it is easy for us politicians to talk about harsher sentence structures and mandatory sentences and all of that, but as a practical matter the limiting factor is how many judges we have to try cases, how many assistant DA's, how many court clerks, how many judicial secretaries in the system, and how many incarceration and correctional facilities. Those are the limiting factors and if the facilities are filled up and we do not have the trial capabilities, what happens? They will not indict for a crime that carries a minimum sentence because they know that we can't house him—if the defendant pleads innocent there is no way we can try him, we simply do not have the trial parts and if we did try them and convict them in a fair trial we have no place to put him. So perforce we must plea bargain.

So what difference does it make whether we have a harsh penalty structure or not and a minimum sentence when the very system compensates for our lack of investment in facilities to try people and facilities to incarcerate convicted defendants. It becomes a fraud.

I just wanted to reiterate Senator Pepper's comments. We have to make the system credible and we have to provide some built-in deterrence, and we do not do that with a cheap shot of yelling and screaming for harsher sentence structures and minimum penalties. We do that by providing a system that can provide prompt, swift trials and then incarceration after the trial if the defendant is found guilty. And that would give the system some built-in deterrence. Right now there is no deterrence at all.

In New York State we have an arrest in the case of about 1 out of 5 felonies. And we have a conviction in the case of about 10 percent of that. So you are talking about an incarceration of about 2 percent, of reported crimes, let alone the majority of crimes that are not even reported. Now, where in the devil is there a deterrence factor built into that kind of system? In my view, that is why these kids run rampant, because they know they are never going to come into contact with the law. The chances are overwhelming that they will not even be arrested; and if there is an arrest, their chance of being incarcerated is still less than 1 in 10.

Now, that is a system in which the deterrent factor is grotesquely absent. I do not mean to criticize you, Professor, as you have absolutely nothing to do with that, but we just have not come to grips with the problem of juvenile delinquency. And most of the crime against the elderly is perpetrated by juveniles. I have to tell you that you may be right on your statistics, but the perception around the country is almost bizarrely in contradistinction to the statistics that you adduced. I am really puzzled as to what the answer is.

I still do not know how or whether we should try to convince the elderly that they really have only 1 chance in 100 of being in a violent confrontation; that's a very different story than what they think their risk factor is.

Mr. HINDELANG. I think there is always some risk of increasing actual victimization if fear is reduced, but if the fear is—fear reduction is accompanied by mechanisms that deal with the actual risk of victimization, I think that problem can be minimal.

Mr. SCHEUER. Yes; would you be afraid that if we convinced them that the reality is really not as bad as their anxieties, they would

liberate their behavior and loosen restraints on their activities, not increase the danger?

Mr. HINDELANG. I think that there would be some of that, but if it were hooked up with things like companionship and other kinds of things that we know which reduce risks of victimization, I do not think that the net effect would be an increase in victimization, but I do think there would be a net reduction in fear of criminal victimization.

Mr. SHACKNAI. Proportionately, Dr. Hindelang, what percentage of the crimes in your data are actually violent?

Mr. HINDELANG. Well, approximately—I think you have to talk about a couple of things.

Violent crimes—I don't like the designation violent crimes because not all personal crimes involve violence or even an element of violence.

Do you mean what proportion——

Mr. SHACKNAI. Well, let's use the FBI's definition, for example.

Mr. HINDELANG. OK, the FBI definition of violent crime?

Mr. SHACKNAI. Right.

Mr. HINDELANG. Something on the order of 90 percent of crimes are nonviolent, by the FBI definition.

Mr. SHACKNAI. Ninety percent of the crimes against the elderly?

Mr. HINDELANG. Ninety percent of crimes against the elderly.

Mr. SCHEUER. They would be commercial crimes, fraud, embezzlement—is that what you are talking about? White-collar crimes?

Mr. HINDELANG. No; what I mean is of the crimes in either the Uniform Crime Reports, offenses known to the police, or in the National Crime Panel victimization surveys. If we take a look at all crimes in either one of those categories, about 9 out of 10 are simply property crimes not involving a face-to-face interaction between the offender and the victim.

Mr. SCHEUER. Yes.

Well, thank you very much, Dr. Hindelang, for your extremely provocative testimony. We are going to take a 10-minute break so I can make this vote, and then we will hear from Dr. Barry Lebowitz of the Center for Studies of the Mental Health of the Aging at the National Institute of Mental Health. He will discuss with us the psychological aspects of crime in the elderly.

[The hearing was recessed for 10 minutes.]

Mr. SCHEUER. The committee is now in session, and we will hear from Dr. Barry Lebowitz on the psychological aspect of crime on the elderly.

Dr. Lebowitz, your testimony will be printed in its entirety in the record. So why don't you just chat informally with us for 8 or 10 minutes and then we will undoubtedly have some questions.

[See appendix 1. p. 74, for the prepared statement of Dr. Lebowitz.]

STATEMENT OF BARRY D. LEBOWITZ, Ph. D., NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Mr. LEBOWITZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am not a criminologist and——

Mr. SCHEUER. What are you, Doctor?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. I am a sociologist and gerontologist, and I study old age. I do not know a whole lot about crime statistics and LEAA victimization surveys.

Mr. SCHEUER. You are a medical doctor, I take it?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. I am a Ph. D.

But, the concern that has been shown to me in my own research and of my social research colleagues in the field of aging is how crime fits into an overall pattern of people's lives, and the way they make decisions.

Let me pick up a couple of the threads of things that were developed here this morning. We know that old people restrict their activities, withdraw, become isolated as the result of the fear of crime.

Mr. SCHEUER. Well, is this the result of sheer old age?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. No, sir.

Mr. SCHEUER. The circle, the circumference of their activities, begins to get smaller. Now, the question is how is that process accelerated by the fear of crime?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. I think, sir, that there is relatively strong evidence that people who have been active throughout their lives maintain their activity well into old age.

Retired professors continue to lecture, continue to write. Retired club members continue to attend clubs. There is a continuity in lifestyle across the life span, those who had relatively few interests outside their work, for example, when they reach old age attempt to have relatively few interests outside their homes. But for those who maintain considerable numbers of interests during their lives and participate in lots of activities, there is no evidence even among the very old that there is a construction as the result of a natural process of aging.

Mr. SCHEUER. That's a comfort.

Mr. LEBOWITZ. It is, sir.

We know, however, that the fear of crime does have an impact on people and does constrain the kinds of options and the kinds of alternatives which they may see as being available to them. We do not know how much the fear of crime contributes.

For example, we talked this morning at length about the relative advantages of age segregated housing and I think the data are fairly clear. Age-segregated housing provides a supportive and strong environment for those people who choose to be there. But for those people who don't want to be there, age-segregated housing is terribly confining, they become very unhappy and they just don't do very well in it.

What we don't know is how much the fear of crime contributed to a person's decision to move into age-segregated housing despite the fact they really didn't want to do it. We don't know.

Mr. SCHEUER. Do you know what percentage of elderly people just don't want to live in age-segregated housing?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. No, sir.

Mr. SCHEUER. Do you know what percentage of elderly people don't want to live in an apartment house for the elderly in the middle of a large apartment house complex where there are all kinds of people?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. No, sir, I don't.

There have been studies in local communities. I do know that the waiting lists in most so-called senior citizen housing developments are

very long and there is a good deal of consternation about the time required from the point in which one signs up to get into a building until the actual moving date. In general, the demand far exceeds the supply at this point.

The studies in those housing settings have shown that patterns of affection, of caring, of sharing, and of reciprocity have developed, and the things that look an awful lot like families have developed among old people who live and share the same environment.

We don't know how much the fear of crime contributes to other sorts of life changes which we consider as being potentially stressful in old age. We don't know how much the fear of crime contributes to retirement. We talked about retirement as being mandatory or voluntary. We don't know how many of those voluntary retirements are actual withdrawals at this point from the labor force because of the fear of victimization.

We have some testimony and some individual case reports that this indeed does occur. Similarly, the decision to change residences might be affected by the fear of crime.

The best that we can do at this time, I think, sir, is to encourage researchers who are working in all of these areas of the expected and unexpected transitions in old age, like stopping work, dealing with housing questions, chronic illness and various others to begin looking at the fear of crime along with the usual kinds of preconditions that we look at—primarily health status and income which seem to be the two major predictors of most families in old age.

We do know that throughout the life course the most effective coping strategy for dealing with stress is first, the seeking of information, and second, the activation of a natural support system, friends, relatives, et cetera. This is true throughout the life course. For example, it has been shown how adolescents coped with moving from elementary to junior high school, a terribly wrenching experience for them.

In old age, retirement, changing housing, and widowhood are all stress points where the contribution of a natural support system may in fact be held down because, as has been pointed out often this morning, you need help, you need someone to come over and they won't, they can't, they are afraid, they are immobilized. Consequently, the individual suffers. He or she has not been a victim of crime, but is suffering because there are people who are afraid and whose lives are changed by that fear.

So that we don't know what the place of crime is in the whole spectrum of people's lives in old age.

The second thing that appears to me that we don't know is something about motivation of those who victimize the elderly. I guess we could speculate on a number of these, old people are easy targets, they don't fight back. On the other hand the benefits probably are not that great—you can't expect to get much from snatching an old person's purse. On the other hand the motivation could be hostility, it could be hostility against authority, or hostility against a general diffuse—other—somebody out there and old people are nice to hit over the head because they don't resist.

Mr. SCHEUER. On the cost/benefit basis although the benefit may not be very spectacular the risk is practically nil.

Mr. LEBOWITZ. Yes; that's right.

Mr. SCHEUER. So on a cost/benefit basis the benefits derived from ripping off somebody who is in their working years and is going to have more money in their jeans will of course be greater, but there is also the likelihood that that person is going to last out and either attack them or run so the risk factor is greater as well.

Mr. LEBOWITZ. This relates to some of the most sensible kinds of preventive strategies that you can recommend to old people.

Mr. SCHEUER. Stay young.

Mr. LEBOWITZ. All right.

Mr. SCHEUER. I think we could get a great degree of unanimity up here on that.

Mr. LEBOWITZ. That's right. Then old people would never be victimized.

Mr. SCHEUER. Right. Now what else do you have.

Mr. LEBOWITZ. At certain points, at least for many old people, the potential benefit of ripping them off is considerably greater such as around the first of the month when social security checks come in.

Many old people that I interviewed in my studies get involved in particular patterns of behavior which are predictable, observable, everybody knows they do it.

Mr. SCHEUER. Yes.

Mr. LEBOWITZ. I'm always on the corner on Fridays, in fact I'm always on the corner every day between 10 and 12. A lot of old people just run their lives that way. They always go to the bank with their

Mr. LEBOWITZ. I'm always on the corner on Fridays. In fact I'm always do that. Very easily observed, very easily followed, very easily taken away.

Old people should be encouraged to use, at least for social security checks, the automatic bank deposit system which has been established. I don't know how many old people use it at this point very early on in the program which was the last time I took any reading on it, there were relatively few old people who were taking advantage of this.

There are other kinds of things like that to break the pattern of their routine to go out at different times and go shopping, or to go to some sort of recreational program. Not everything in their environment is so easily manipulated, though. Religious services are on a fixed schedule, publicly supported nutrition program meals are on a fixed schedule, and indeed there are certain things that they just have to do routinely. But as much as possible they should try to vary routes, they should try to vary approaches, and they should try to vary as much as they have under their control. And I think this sense of control is something which has been shown to be very important in old people's lives.

And I would like to relate that, if I may, to some of our discussion this morning about whether crimes are violent crimes or nonviolent crimes, whether they involve personal confrontation or not, because it has to do with the sense of control.

Old people very often are somewhat rich in assets. Half the old people in the United States own their own homes free and clear without mortgages.

There is concern among specialists in housing that these people are in fact overhoused. There is too much house. But the family home-

stead in a rural area, the old apartment or the old home, is very much a part of the way they define theirselfs.

Mr. SCHEUER. Too much house, and also too much equity in that house.

Mr. LEBOWITZ. They may be income poor but often asset rich because of the equity. Because they are income poor, they can't afford to maintain it.

I find it hard to say that burglarizing an old person's house when that person is not there is somehow not doing violence to that person—at least that person's sense of who he or she is, and consequently to the person's self-esteem, quality of life, and mental health.

A third of the old people in the United States live alone, and I think that the fear of crime, as we have talked about it today, might tell us that they are afraid to go out because it is outside that they are going to be hit over the head.

My own interviews with older people indicate that they are just as likely to be afraid of what they are going to find when they come back. And there is nobody there to watch the house because a third of them live alone.

The LEAA data and I am in no position to say how good or bad those are at this point, especially this morning, indicate that half the violent crimes done against old people happen in their own homes or in the direct physical proximity in the yard, in the hallway, on the sidewalk directly in front. That is not the characteristic of any other age victims as reported in the LEAA data. The home is really not very safe for old people, and that is one of the paradoxes of this whole situation. They don't go out because they are afraid they will be victimized, but they are just as likely to be victimized in the house or while emptying the trash or outside waiting for a bus as they are anywhere else.

The final point that I would like to bring out for you this morning, sir, is what has been referred to this morning as the multiple victim effect; that is, some people have more victimizations against them than others. I guess I am not exactly sure what that means, except in light of some recent data on rape against older women, these are women over the age of 50, and there are only 78 case studies so it is not a great number and it is not a national sample. Of those 78 women, two-thirds of those rapes occurred in combination with another crime. It is not easy to figure out which came first, whether somebody came in and raped an older woman and then robbed or someone went into an older woman's house, robbed and then raped, though Linda Davis and Elaine Brody who have done this study indicate that it is that second way. That what started out as a burglary either out of frustration because of the low amount of results of the burglary or out of anger and hostility, the burglary escalated into a rape.

Now, if that is what multiple victimology means, then I think it is something quite different than saying that the same person gets hit over the head six or seven times during the course of a year. It is that the same act contains many separate crimes against the person. I don't know, maybe that's just unique to this particular study of rape, or maybe it is characteristic of old people who are victims. But I will defer it to my criminology colleagues here who are more expert at the larger national data sets.

But I guess I would conclude by turning the question around. I don't know what I would do if an old person came to me and said: "My life is great. I'm not afraid of being victimized." I think I would wonder whether that person had all of his or her facilities about them and whether they were really in touch with the world or not. So those are just some of the threads that I would like to pick out from what's happened this morning here and what is included in the testimony. I would be pleased to answer any questions that you may have.

Mr. SHACKNAI. You know, Dr. Lebowitz, there is a certain tension playing here when we allay people's concerns and fears by telling them, as Dr. Hindelang has proposed, that crime really isn't as bad as you think, and at the same time risking increased victimization if people free up their activities. If they liberate their behavior, as Chairman Scheuer has stated it.

What are the attendant risks if people do liberate their behavior?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. I would say that a proper concern with security, personal security, would have two results. One, it would liberate action within a set of limits, and the other is that it would give old people a sense of control of their lives.

As part of my testimony this morning, I have attached the early draft of a manual on personal safety for older women, which has been done as the result of a project being funded by NIMH, how many——

Mr. SCHEUER. Is that something that is just being produced?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. Yes, sir.

Mr. SHACKNAI. Linda Davis and Elaine Brody?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. Yes.

Mr. SCHEUER. How many pages is that?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. It's nine pages. It is part of an overall guide which gives lots of information about criminal victimization and the crime of rape, along with instructions as to how to use the particular manual in training older women to deal with rape, or to make rape less likely.

Mr. SHEUER. Is it already printed or is this a draft?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. This is a draft. The entire guide will be in press this year.

Mr. SCHEUER. What part of this year?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. I expect by the end of the calendar year it will be out of the Printing Office.

Mr. SCHEUER. Do you have any idea if the draft is in its current state of publication? In your opinion is it a usable draft, or do you have any further recommendations or additions to make?

Mr. LEBOWITZ. I have a couple of emendations that I would make of the overall text of the guide, which is some 250 pages long; but of the manual itself which is a piece of the guide, no, sir.

Mr. SCHEUER. Because once it is in the record, it begins to get into the stream of consciousness; and if there are any corrections that you would like to make to it, I would be very appreciative if you would do that now before it is printed.

So why don't we hold the record open for 1 week and let Dr. Lebowitz comb through it with a fine-tooth comb and make any necessary changes. We would be very grateful for your input.

Mr. LEBOWITZ. Yes, and I appreciate the time, sir.

Mr. SHACKNAI. But from reading that guide I think that it has applicability to a larger group than just women who are afraid of being victimized by a sexual assault. It would, in fact, be appropriate for use by men and women who wish to increase their personal security outside the confines of their own home.

Mr. LEBOWITZ. Or even within it. I would say that I found it most interesting and useful myself. Much of the material in there could be used as a general guide for old people.

For example, keep a telephone in the name of the couple even if only one spouse is still alive. Keep the name of the couple on the mail box even if one spouse is alive. The manual has a number of those kinds of tips which I agree that are not just applicable for older women to defend themselves from rape.

Making sure, to the greatest extent possible, that you go out with someone else, has the kind of ripple effect to an older person's life that could only be beneficial, that won't just let them get out, but it will in fact give them a sense of control which is terribly important in preserving a person's sense of who they are and where they are in preserving their quality of life in mental health. And so I can see a number of benefits in something like this.

Mr. SCHEUER. Dr. Lebowitz, thank you very much. Your testimony has been extremely interesting and provocative and we will ask you to accept this little extra burden of combing through that report so that it is in good form for publication.

We will now adjourn until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

[Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.]

APPENDIX 1

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JACK AND SHARON S. GOLDSMITH

OVERVIEW OF CRIMES AGAINST THE ELDERLY

We would like to thank Congressmen Pepper, Scheuer and Roybal for the invitation to provide an overview of the problem of crimes against the elderly as part of this series of hearings on research into violent behavior. We also wish to commend the staff of the committees for the excellent job that they have done in planning these hearings and to thank them for their assistance.

In providing an overview of the problem of crime against the elderly, we will concentrate on important themes and major concerns and will leave specific details to the expert witnesses who will testify subsequently.

BACKGROUND

The 1971 White House Conference on Aging raised the issue of public safety and older Americans by making a series of recommendations on the subject. Since that time a number of investigative hearings, a National Conference on Crime Against the Elderly (1975) and an increasing number of research reports have greatly improved our understanding of the problem of criminal victimization of older people.

When our own work in this area first began, very little was known about the extent, the patterns or the impact of crimes committed against the elderly. As you will hear today and tomorrow, this situation has greatly improved in the past five years. In spite of lingering difficulties in collecting data, we are increasingly able to replace assumptions with documented facts, and our general understanding of the scope of the problem has improved. There remains much to be learned, however, about why particular patterns of victimization persist and about how crime and fear of crime impact on the lives of older Americans.

Improved understanding of this problem is due in part to the great number of local initiatives generated by both concerned public officials, by independent researchers and by older persons who are actively working to make their communities safer and better places to live.

In large part, however, it is due to the active encouragement and funding of research and programs by the federal government—primarily through the Administration on Aging (DHEW) and the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (DOJ). Federal involvement appears to have focused primarily on highly visible projects and programs which have immediate "payoffs". It remains to be seen what the impact of such programs will be after the federal money is gone. Unfortunately many of these programs and projects appear to be adding little to our understanding of the problem or to the development of effective measures to reduce victimization. We would urge in the future more emphasis on basic research, on rigorous program evaluation and on coordination of efforts.

A number of research programs have given us important information, however, and a better idea of where we must go from here.

Before proceeding to an overview of key issues and in order to help explain our perspective on this subject, we would like to offer a series of general observations for your consideration:

Crime is not a problem to be left to "the criminal justice system" to solve.

The criminal justice system cannot solve the crime problem because crime is not a "technical" problem which can be corrected by the criminal justice bureaucracy. Rather, crime must be understood within its social and economic context. Solutions—where and if possible—will have to be political decisions.

Crime and its consequences must also be understood in human terms.

This is true for both offenders and for victims. A crime is an event with a history and an aftermath. At long last—and still far too slowly—public policy

makers and criminal justice personnel are directing concerted efforts to relieve the impact of crime on victims and their families. Victim assistance, victim compensation and victim advocacy programs have been making increasing contributions to easing the impact of crime. It is necessary to know the statistical description of crime. It is also, however, important to ask why? And at what cost in human suffering?

Criminal victimization of older persons must be understood within the general context of the quality of life for older people in this country.

Crime against older people is integrally related to a wide range of "problems" which confront them—including inadequate housing and transportation; poverty; malnutrition; discrimination; forced retirement; and inadequate or poorly coordinated social services.

Ideally, it should be unnecessary to single out older victims for special treatment.

We believe that ideally any special needs or problems which older people might have (or which any other group might have) would be recognized and dealt with in an appropriate manner. Yet, it is the case that too often agencies do not recognize special needs and that resources are unavailable to meet these needs.

Furthermore, we feel that it is necessary to stress that older people who are victims of crime or victims of fear are not the problem: they are people who have a problem—crime. In many communities across this country older people have proven to be important resources—capable in many ways of contributing to the reduction of crime and its consequences.

Finally, it is not necessary to prove that a particular group is "overvictimized" in order to justify action on behalf of those who have been or those who may be victimized.

We believe that provision of victim services, victim compensation or crime prevention education is not inherently age-related. However, unless or until adequate social services are provided to all people in need, there exists a basis to demand special programs to meet the specific needs of any group.

Of course, deciding which groups get which resources becomes a political issue. It is not surprising, therefore, that crime and the elderly programs which have been initiated recently have a highly political flavor. To some extent they reflect the "do something" reaction—the need to provide an instant remedy to a serious problem. Such programs will no doubt have some immediate effect and perhaps some lasting effects as well.

In calling for basic research aimed at a comprehensive solution to the crime problem or to the problems of older people, we recognize that such research may raise political issues which this society is either unable or unwilling to resolve.

OVERVIEW

It is not our intention in this overview of the problem of crime and the elderly either to reiterate well-known research findings or to engage in further debate about whether there is in fact a serious problem. We will raise some of the key issues for your attention and will let subsequent witnesses document specific problem areas. We would also like to avoid repeating the fine work of the Subcommittee on Housing and Consumer Interests (of the Select Committee on Aging) chaired by Congressman Roybal and would refer those interested in detailed analysis of the major issues to the Report of April, 1977, titled "In Search of Security: A National Perspective on Elderly Crime Victimization."

Older people are victims of the same kinds of crimes as the rest of the population. Patterns of victimization vary, however, and the extent and nature of the criminal victimization of older people continue to be subjects of debate. It is safe to say that definitive answers remain to be found.

On one hand, there are methodological difficulties involved in relying solely on aggregate data (See Subcommittee Report noted above). On the other hand, there are also problems in extrapolating too much from the more intensive studies which deal with a limited geographic area or a specific crime.

We believe that it is logical to assume that patterns of crime vary from community to community and over time within the same community. Therefore, it should not be a matter of tremendous concern if research findings vary. Furthermore, we believe that the absolute number of crimes committed against older persons indicates a serious problem exists.

For most categories of crime which are regularly analyzed, data indicate that older people have lower rates of victimization. This also appears to be true spe-

cifically about violent crime. Such generalizations can be made based on reported crime statistics and the results of victimization surveys. Taken alone, however, this is relatively useless information.

Statistical data on crime can offer important descriptive information when carefully broken down and analyzed. Data can also obscure specific information. Current knowledge about victimization rates is incomplete. We need to know more, for example:

About which segments of the older population are most susceptible to which crimes;

About the relationship among variables such as sex, race, neighborhood, time, etc. and their impact on crime rates;

About the rates of victimization for crimes for which reliable statistics are currently unavailable—such as medical quackery and other frauds;

About the effect of "risk reducing" lifestyles of many older people on their victimization rates as a group; and

About who commits which crimes against whom.

We further believe that it is also necessary to go beyond questions of who, what, how many and so forth to the qualitative, more complex questions of why; what is the impact; and what can be done?

In order to reduce crime against older people it will be necessary to learn more about why people commit crimes and specifically why some choose to victimize older people. Systematic research into the causes of violent behavior and efforts to reduce juvenile delinquency are both important steps in this process, but there are many other areas requiring analysis as well.

It is impossible to ignore the impact of crime and the fear of victimization on older Americans. We understand that you will be hearing detailed testimony on this pervasive problem later, but we would like to underscore the impact of fear on the quality of life for many older people. For too many who are poor, alone and afraid to leave their homes, old age is a bitter, empty struggle to survive. We ask, why is this so?

The overall impact of crime is often greater on older victims than on younger victims. Factors which contribute to this differential impact include:

The physical changes associated with aging which can increase vulnerability to crime and the likelihood and severity of injury;

The often drastic reduction of economic resources associated with forced retirement, discrimination, and fixed and inadequate incomes which in combination with inflation can magnify the effect of monetary or property loss; and

The restriction of activity which is often associated with social isolation and the psychological trauma and victimization.

Crime is a major concern for all Americans. It appears to be a very serious problem for older Americans. Thus, basic research and programs which enhance our understanding of the problem of crime against the elderly and increases our ability to reduce victimization and its consequences are needed.

Older Americans belong to a rapidly growing—and perhaps the most unique—minority group in this country.

Members of this minority group are drawn from all economic and social classes—but few are rich and many are poor; some are men—more are women; some are employed—more are retired; some live in the country—most live in the cities; they are liberal and conservative; they are in good health—and in poor health; they may be active—or may be isolated; older people are of all races, all faiths, all nationalities; they were once young; and, most of us either are now or one day will belong to this minority.

We would do well to see "their" problems as very much our own.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns with you.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Jack Goldsmith, Ph. D., is associate professor at the Center for the Administration of Justice, The American University, Washington, D.C. Dr. Goldsmith is Co-director of the Institute on Crime and the Elderly at the American University; co-editor of Crime and the Elderly: Challenge and Response (Lexington, Mass.. D. C. Heath, Lexington Books, 1976); and author of numerous articles and professional papers on crime and the elderly and on police and society. Dr. Goldsmith was Chairman of the National Conference on Crime Against the Elderly (Washington, D.C., 1975) and was a public administration faculty fellow at the Administration on Aging (DHEW) in 1973.

Sharon S. Goldsmith, M.A., is an independent consultant and Co-director of the Institute on Crime and the Elderly at The American University, Washington, D.C. Ms. Goldsmith is co-editor of Crime and the Elderly: Challenge and Response (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, Lexington Books, 1976); is author of numerous articles and professional papers on crime and the elderly; and was Coordinator of the National Conference on Crime Against the Elderly (Washington, D.C., 1975).

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD F. SPARKS, SCHOOL OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, NEWARK, N.J.

CRIMES AGAINST THE ELDERLY—PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES

Introduction: Studying the victims of crime

I have been asked to testify on problems and perspectives in studying the victims of crime in general, and elderly victims in particular. I will therefore try to deal with what is known about the current dimensions of the problem of crime against the elderly; with some of the methods by which criminal victimization may be studied; and with some of the limitations inherent in the data which we now have on victimization, especially where the elderly are concerned.

In particular, I would like to discuss the value and limitations of victimization surveys, as a method of studying crime. In victimization surveys, representative samples of persons are interviewed, and are asked whether or not they have been victims—for example, whether they have been assaulted, or had their houses broken into—in some period such as the preceding six months or year. One advantage of this method of measuring crime is that it can include offenses which have not been reported to the police, or which, though reported to the police, were not recorded by them in statistics (such as the Uniform Crime Reports). The first surveys of this kind were carried out for the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, in 1966; since that time, victimization surveys have been carrried out in a dozen different countries around the world.[1] At present, of course, the largest program of victimization surveys is the National Crime Panel (NCP), being carried out by the U.S. Census Bureau on behalf of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA).

Before addressing these subjects, I would like to describe briefly my own research experience in this area. In 1973, when I was on the faculty of the Cambridge Institute of Criminology in England, I carried out a victimization survey in three areas in Inner London. In this survey, my colleagues and I were partly concerned with methodological questions: we wanted to find out how accurately people would remember incidents involving crimes which had been committed against them, and whether they would mention those crimes to survey interviewers. For this reason, we included in our sample some people whom we knew to have reported crimes to the police within the year preceding our survey. But we also wanted to learn as much as we could about the extent and distribution of victimization among inner London residents; so we also interviewed representative samples of adults living in the three London areas.[2] After returning to this country in 1974, I served as a consultant to the staff of the Panel for the Evaluation of Crime Surveys, of the Committee on National Statistics, National Academy of Sciences. This panel had been asked by LEAA to evaluate the National Crime Panel surveys; its report was published in 1976.[3] Thus in addition to having conducted my own research in this field, I have gained some knowledge of the NCP surveys and of the data which have so far emerged from them. I am also in the process of carrying out some exploratory analyses of the NCP data from one city (Newark, N.J.); however, this work is still at an early stage, and no results are available yet.

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[1] In addition to several surveys in American cities, victimization surveys have now been carried out in Australia, Canada, England, Denmark, Finland, West Germany, Holland, Norway, Switzerland, and Sweden.

[2] The results of this research are described in Richard F. Sparks, Hazel G. Genn and David J. Dodd, "Surveying Victims: A Study of the Measurement of Criminal Victimization, Perceptions of Crime and Attitudes to Criminal Justice" (London: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd., 1977).

[3] Bettye K. Penick and Maurice E. B. Owens, "Surveying Crime," Final report of the Panel for the Evaluation of Crime Surveys, Committee on National Statistics, Assembly of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, National Research Council (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 1976).

For the moment, victimization surveys are our main source of information about the victims of crime in general, and about crimes against the elderly in particular. As I am sure you know, regularly published police statistics (like the Uniform Crime Reports) give no information about victims; while some police forces do routinely collect data on victims of crimes reported to them, these forces are in the minority, and the data collected typically go no further than basic demographic facts such as age and sex. I will return later to police records of crime, since I believe that these have considerable unrealized potential for research. But most of the evidence which I shall discuss will be evidence derived from victimization surveys, in particular the NCP surveys.

Crimes against the elderly: Dimensions of the problem

Crime against the elderly has often been described, over the past few years, as a problem of crisis proportions. Legislators, criminal justice system officials and the media have asserted that the elderly are disproportionately victimized, that crime against older persons is frequent, and that it is increasing. The impression is often given that the problem is a quantitative one: that large (and increasing) numbers of crimes are being committed against the elderly, and that crime intrudes on their lives more frequently than on the lives of younger persons.

This view is, I believe, fundamentally mistaken. Our best available evidence—from the NCP and other victimization surveys—is that victimization rates decrease with age, and in particular that persons over 65 have a much lower incidence of criminal victimization than persons below that age. This is so, for all types of personal and household victimization, in the NCP national data; it is also generally true for the 39 city-level NCP surveys which have so far been carried out, except that in a few cities persons aged 65 and older report more personal larceny with contact (purse-snatching, pocket-picking) than persons under 65. The general conclusion that the elderly are less likely to be victims of crime also emerges from surveys conducted in other countries; for example, it was found in my London survey, as well as in surveys of violent victimization in the four Nordic countries.

This general conclusion needs several important qualifications. The first concerns the accuracy of the victimization survey data. It is known that such surveys tend to underestimate victimization, since some respondents forget things which have happened to them; there is also a tendency for people to forget exactly when an incident happened, and to report it as (usually) having happened more recently than in fact it did. Little is known, at the moment, about how these biases in the survey data affect estimates of victimization for different age-groups—for example, whether the elderly are more or less likely to report incidents accurately to interviewers than younger persons.

Second, the statistic used to measure victimization in the survey reports published by LEAA—the victimization rate—is very misleading. The victimization rate equals the total number of victimizations reported to interviewers by the persons in a particular group (say those 65 and over), divided by the number of persons in that group. But a small proportion of the population is victimized more than once, in any given six-month or one-year period. A person who is victimized four times would thus be counted four times in the numerator of the rate, but only once in its denominator; the result is that the rate is artificially inflated, and cannot be used as a measure of risk. Thus, suppose that the surveys showed that there were two million victimizations committed against the 20 million people aged 65 and over; we could not conclude that the elderly had one chance in ten of being a victim. On the one hand, the true risk for the majority of the population would be much lower; on the other hand, a small proportion of the population would have a very much higher risk than the rate would suggest.[4] This is a general point about victimization rates, and does not apply only to the elderly; for the moment, however, we do not know whether it applies to them in a way that distorts comparisons with other age-groups.

It is also true that in the published reports which LEAA has issued on the surveys, all persons aged 65 and over are lumped together; the reports may thus be masking some important distinctions, and do not really permit us to identify "the elderly" with any precision. More detailed analyses are possible, using the

[4] Some respondents experience so many incidents of victimization that they cannot remember dates or details; these so-called "series" victimizations are now excluded from the LEAA-published tabulations.

micro-data tapes which LEAA makes available to researchers, but I have not seen the results of any such analyses yet.

Third, at present the NCP surveys give very little information on the social and personal context of victimization, against the elderly or anyone else. Considerable information is collected on incidents of victimization (for example, whether the victim took self-protective measures, and who they thought the offender was). But analyzing these data raises a number of difficult computational problems; and there are not as many items of data about the people themselves (both victims and non-victims) as one would like. As a result it is difficult to measure vulnerability and exposure to risk, except in a crude way. In my London survey we asked respondents, "On average, how many nights a week do you go out?" As might be expected, we found that older people tended to go out much less often than younger ones. This is admittedly a very rough measure of exposure to risk. Nonetheless, when we controlled for it—that is, when we compared (say) persons 65 and over who went out twice a week with younger persons who also went out twice a week—the difference in their victimization rates was substantially reduced, though not completely eliminated. A similar question is included in the "attitude questionnaire" administered to people in one-half of the households in the NCP city-level surveys; as far as I am aware, answers to this question have not been analyzed in relation to victimization, but my belief is that if they were analyzed, the results would be the same as we found in London.

It is, of course, possible that part of the reason why elderly people do not go out so often in the evenings is that they are afraid of crime. My own opinion is that that is certainly not the only, or even the most important, reason: as people get older, they tend to restrict their social activities for all kinds of natural reasons which have nothing to do with crime. (Moreover, when they do go out in the evenings, they are probably more likely to visit friends or family, and less likely to go to bars, clubs, sports events and so on.) But I would like to return to this point shortly, and deal with it in the general context of fear of crime.

Fourth, though there are some data available from the NCP surveys, there has so far been very little analysis of the qualitative aspects of victimization, especially against the elderly. On the one hand, an offender's behavior—say, a purse-snatching—might be successful with an elderly person, and might even result in fairly serious physical injury; whereas that same offender's behavior might result in a mere attempt, with no injury, where a younger victim was concerned. On the other hand, we know that different types of people tend to define things in different ways: an elderly person jostled in the street by a group of teen-agers might interpret the situation as an assault or an attempted robbery, whereas a younger person might shrug it off as a normal piece of juvenile mischief.

Fifth and finally, it should be noted that the NCP surveys ask about only a few of the kinds of crime which take place; and they do not ask respondents about some kinds of crime which may be a special problem where the elderly are concerned. A good example here is consumer fraud: for example, the bogus repairman who promises to repair the roof or re-surface the driveway. Often, in such cases, the victim does not realize that a crime has been committed: plainly such crimes cannot be included in a victimization survey. It may well be that elderly people are especially vunerable to crimes of this kind.

Nonetheless, despite these qualifications, I think that the findings of the NCP and other victimization surveys to date are broadly correct. The weight of available evidence is that the elderly are, if anything, less likely to be victims of crime than younger persons. The problem of crime against the elderly is not, in purely quantitative terms, a large problem; in general, the risk of criminal victimization is less for the elderly than for younger persons. This is not a kind of crime which is so frequent, so widespread, that the police and other agencies of the criminal justice system cannot cope with it. I am not, of course, denying that occasional cases happen, where murder or other serious crimes of violence are committed against elderly persons. Of course this sometimes happens. There are certainly cases in which wantonly vicious attacks are made on elderly persons, which result in terrible injuries. But cases of this kind, in part because they are rare and terrible, tend to receive great amounts of publicity. The best available scientific evidence, whatever its limitations, tends to show that—fortunately—such cases are rather rare.

Nor am I denying that there may be areas in some of our inner cities, in which crime against the elderly is a much bigger problem than the NCP or other survey statistics suggest. For a variety of reasons, the NCP surveys in their present form

are not well suited to identifying localized problems of that kind; but that is not sufficient reason to deny that the problems may exist. I believe, however, that even here the problem is complicated. It may well be that elderly residents of poor areas in our inner cities are often victims of crime. But in such areas, surely, the residents face criminal victimization primarily because they are poor, and not because they are elderly.

It should also be noted that we have no evidence that crimes against the elderly are increasing more rapidly than crimes against other persons. Indeed, the NCP vitcimization data show little evidence of any increase in victimization of persons aged 65 and over, over the period 1973–75 (which are the only years for which national data are now available). Comparing 1974 with 1973, there were increases in some categories of personal victimization, for both males and females aged 65 and over; in almost every case, however, those patterns are reversed by a comparison of 1975 with 1974.[5] Two years do not, of course, provide much of a basis for comparison; and for methodological reasons such comparisons must be made with extreme caution, especially for sub-groups of the population with low victimization rates. It is also true that in several of the thirteen cities surveyed (as part of the NCP) in 1972 and 1974/75, persons aged 65 and over reported higher rates of victimization, especially of personal larceny with contact. But there is certainly no evidence of a general increase in victimization of the elderly.

Fear of crime and the elderly

I would like to turn now to another important aspect of this problem, namely the fear of crime and the effects which that fear may have on the day-to-day lives of people in general and the elderly in particular. It has often been reported that elderly people, especially those living in the poor inner-city areas, are constantly fearful of being robbed or attacked, and that as a result they do not go out, becoming virtual prisoners in their own homes. Clearly there are some areas in which this is true. Again, however, we must assess the problem carefully, and avoid leaping to the conclusion that fear of crime among the elderly is a national problem.

Apart from individual case-studies, the evidence on this subject is in fact rather ambiguous. Some data are available from public-opinion polls and other surveys (including the NCP city-level surveys); but these data have not been much analyzed yet, and they need careful interpretation.[6] In my experience (and I think most survey researchers would agree) it is not much good asking a person directly a question of the form "Are you afraid of crime?" or "Have you limited your activities because of fear of crime?" Such a question tends to invite the answer "Yes", and may not reflect the respondent's true feelings, still less his actual behavior. Crime is, after all, a powerful emotive issue, and in many cases expressed concern about crime may merely be a vehicle for concern about a variety of other things. If I may give another example from my own research; in our London survey we asked our respondents a number of open-ended questions about their immediate neighborhoods—what kinds of areas they were, would the respondents be happy to leave, and so on. Substantial numbers expressed dissatisfaction with their neighborhoods; but when asked why they did not like their surroundings, almost none spontaneously mentioned crime. Later in the interview, they were asked if there was much crime in their neighborhoods; and at that point, many who had said they disliked their neighborhoods said that they felt there was a lot of crime.

We also need to look at the attitudes and beliefs of the elderly in the general context of fear of crime: are older persons more fearful than younger ones?

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[5] The only exceptions are aggravated assault for males, and personal larcency without contact, for females, both of which increased in both years; robbery with injury for females, and personal larcency with contact for males, decreased in both years. See "Criminal Victimization in the United States. A Comparison of 1973 and 1974 Findings." National Crime Survey report No. SD–NCP–N–3, Table 4; and the comparable table in the 1974–75 report. No. SD–NCP–N–5 (both published by the National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service, LEAA).

[6] Data from the NCP "attitude questionnaire" administered to half of the households in thirteen of the cities surveyed are summarized in James Garofalo, "Public Opinion About Crime: The Attitudes of Victims and Non-victims in Selected Cities," Analytic Report SD–VAD–1, 1977. Other attitude data are summarized in Michael J. Hindelang et al., "Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics," 1976, section 2. (Both volumes published by the National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service, LEAA, Washington, D.C., 1977.) Unless otherwise indicated, findings discussed in this section of my testimony are taken from these sources. It should be noted that the "attitude" questionnaire is not at present administered in the NCP national survey. Also, though the NCP "attitude" data are available for thirteen cities for two years (1971/72 and 1974/75), no comparison of those findings has to my knowledge yet been done.

For what they are worth, survey data to date do not invariably show that this is the case. Thus, in the thirteen-city NCP "attitude" data, persons aged 65 and over were no more likely than other respondents to think crime in the United States was increasing; they were slightly less likely to think that crime in their own neighborhoods was increasing, and less likely than others to believe that their own risk of being attacked or robbed had risen. They were less likely than others to say that there was an area in their city where they would be afraid to go, either by day or by night; and no more likely to mention as a problem in their neighborhoods. They were somewhat more likely than younger persons to say that they had limited their own activities because of crime. They were somewhat more likely than other respondents to say that they went out less frequently than a year or two previously; and (together with persons aged 50 to 64) they were slightly more likely than younger respondents to mention crime or fear of crime as a reason for this. But that was not the commonest reason given: it was mentioned by 18 per cent, while "age" was mentioned by 27 per cent of those 65 and over, and health by 23 per cent. Those aged 65 and over were slightly less likely to say that they felt safe when out alone in their own neighborhoods during the day; but they were much more likely than younger respondents to say that they felt "very unsafe" when out alone at night. This was especially marked for female respondents aged 65 and over, 48 per cent of whom said they felt "very unsafe" when out alone in their own neighborhoods at night. But this question was virtually the only one indicating that older respondents were more fearful of crime than younger ones; and as I have already indicated, we need to be careful in interpreting that figure of 48 per cent.

In general, the findings from most surveys indiciate that beliefs about crime, and fear of it, are remarkably unaffected by personal experience as a victim. This is indeed illustrated by the elderly, who tend to express fear and concern at least as much as others, though their own risk of victimization is generally lower. Nonetheless, whatever its source, fear of crime can plainly have a damaging effect on the lives of the elderly persons—especially those living in poor neighborhoods of cities, who have few resources to protect or reassure them. It may well be that the surveys done to date, which have included respondents from the whole of central cities, have masked the extreme fear (and limitation of behavior as a result of it) which may occur in particular inner-city neighborhoods. As with victimization, fear of crime seems to me likely to be a problem for elderly people in particular neighborhoods or areas of cities, rather than a general problem. It is obviously important to try to identify those areas of high risk or high fear, and to try to create an environment in which elderly residents can feel secure as well as being as safe from crime as possible.

Priorities for future research

I would like to conclude by discussing briefly what seem to me to be priorities for future research in this area, and to say something about the methods by which that research might best be carried out.

As I have indicated, victimization surveys such as the NCP surveys are for the moment our most comprehensive source of information on crime in general, and crime against the elderly in particular. In their present form, the NCP surveys certainly have their limitations and imperfections, and we need to be very cautious in drawing conclusions from their findings. Following the National Academy panel's report, LEAA is in the course of re-assessing the NCP surveys. At one time, LEAA proposed to suspend data collection in the NCP. Now, I understand that they have revised their views, and propose to continue collecting national panel data until June 1978, reducing data collection after that date to allow more research on conceptual and methodological issues. In my view, this is the right course. While many criticisms may be made of the NCP surveys to date—in particular, too little work has yet been done on methodological questions, and on analyzing the data so far collected—it remains true that such surveys may make an enormous contribution to our understanding of crime and its social consequences. I would hope, therefore, that LEAA would continue to give the NCP a high priority. It should not be forgotten that the first surveys of this kind were conducted only twelve years ago. Twelve years is a short time in the history of any science, and in particular in the social sciences.

The NCP surveys may provide us with a broad perspective on problems such as crime against the elderly; data from such surveys can provide a national or a city-level overview of those problems, and can put more detailed studies into perspective. But we should not, in my opinion, rely entirely on the NCP surveys to assess the nature and quality of crime against the elderly. As I have already

indicated, it seems clear that this problem is likely to be highly localized: to exist in particular neighborhoods, especially in inner-city areas. A city-wide victimization survey—like those already conducted, as part of the NCP program, in 26 American cities—may not reveal clearly the acute problems which may exist in certain neighborhoods of those cities. One possibility would be smaller-scale local victimization surveys, targeted to particular areas and populations where there is reason to suspect that crime, and fear of crime, are problems for elderly residents. Such surveys could also illuminate the extent to which elderly persons—victims and non-victims—make use of existing social services (including compensation or restitution programs for crime victims), and could indicate what further services are needed.

Victimization surveys, however, are extremely expensive. In the NCP national panel surveys, for example, only about ten per cent of those interviewed mention any victimization of any kind, in the preceding six-month period. Even a survey done in a high-crime neighborhood might yield only 20 or 30 per cent of the sample of respondents who had been victims; and the number of "multiple victims" who are attacked several times is of course much smaller. An alternative research method, which has so far been virtually neglected but which may produce much uesful information, is research based on crimes reported to the police.

As I noted earlier, some police forces—my guess is the majority, among big-city forces where this problem is likely to be the most acute—now routinely collect some information on victims who have reported offenses to them. It is likely that the quality and the quantity of this information varies, across cities; but there is, in principle, no reason why it should not be both augmented and improved in particular cities where crimes against the elderly are seen as a problem. Once these data were collected, they could help us to identify high-risk areas and groups in the population; they could provide more information on the factual substance of crimes against the elderly, and help us to devise preventive strategies and assess needs for compensation.

In addition, police records of the sort I am referring to could serve as a way of identifying victims of crimes reported to the police, so that further and more intensive research on those victims could be carried out. In the general population, only a minority of a random sample will have experienced any victimization; but in a sample of people reporting crimes to the police, all will (by definition) have experienced something which they thought involved a crime against them. Such a selected sample cannot, of course, be used to measure the level of crime, since it would not include victims who had not notified the police. Nor can it serve as a basis for statements or policies concerning victimization in general, for the same reason. But it can provide much valuable data on that part of the problem with which the criminal justice system, and the social services, must deal. Where elderly victims of crime are concerned, the element of bias introduced by the exclusion of victims who have not reported crimes to the police may not in fact be too severe: data from the NCP surveys to date suggest that persons aged 65 and over are, if anything, somewhat more likely to report incidents to the police than younger victims. In my opinion, therefore, research on victims who have reported offenses to the police is well worth supporting, especially if it is carried out in large cities like those in which victimization surveys have already been done.

Biographical sketch, Richard F. Sparks

I am a Professor at the School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University, the State of New Jersey. The School of Criminal Justice is a graduate school, located in Newark, New Jersey; it was established in 1974, as a result of a mandate from the New Jersey legislature.

I received the B.A. degree from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, in 1954; and the Ph.D. degree from the University of Cambridge, England, in 1966. My previous university appointments were as Lecturer in Criminal Law and Criminology; Faculty of Law, University of Birmingham, England (1964–67); and as Assistant Director of Research, Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge, England (1967–74). I was Visiting Professor at the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice during 1974–75; and have held my present appointment as Professor at that School since 1975.

In addition to journal articles and technical reports, my publications include the following books: "Key Issues in Criminology" (with R. G. Hood; London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970); "Local Prisons: The Crisis in the English Penal System" (London: Heineman, 1977); and "Surveying Victims: A Study of the Measurement of Criminal Victimization, Perceptions of Crime and Attitudes to Criminal Justice" (with Hazel G. Genn and David J. Dodd; London: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd., 1977).

I have served as a consultant to the Panel for the Evaluation of Crime Surveys, Committee on National Statistics, National Academy of Sciences; to the Division of Crime Problems of the Council of Europe; and to the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Section of the United Nations Secretariat. I am a member of the Crime and Delinquency Review Committee of the National Institute of Mental Health. I am also a member of the American Society of Criminology, and the American Sociological Association.

At the present time I am writing a monograph on "Studying the Victims of Crime: Problems and Perspectives," under a contract with the Center for Studies of Crime and Delinquency, National Institute of Mental Health.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL J. HINDELANG, PH. D., PROFESSOR AND ASSOCIATE DEAN, SCHOOL OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE, STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION OF THE ELDERLY

(Prepared Jointly by Michael J. Hindelang and Ellen H. Richardson, School of Criminal Justice, SUNY, Albany, N.Y.)

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this Committee today. The topic "Crime Against the Elderly" is one that has received enormous attention from the public, researchers, and legislative bodies during the past few years. Crime itself is an emotional topic and crime against the elderly evokes great concern from most younger and older Americans alike. Among those of us who are not elderly, this concern stems not only from an interest in the general social well-being of elderly Americans but also from concern over our elderly parents, relatives, and neighbors and from the recognition that most of us who are younger will live to become elderly. I share all of these concerns.

Perhaps because of my personal feelings on this topic I find it all the more necessary to step back away from the fears that we hear voiced by our parents and step back from individual cases of which we are all aware in which elderly persons have been criminally and mercilessly victimized. Such stepping back is necessary because rational solutions to such problems—to the extent that such solutions are within our grasp—require an attempt at objective and dispassionate assessments of the exteut and nature of the problem.

For the past five years I have directed several research efforts at the Criminal Justice Research Center in Albany, New York involving criminal victimization in the United States. Included among our research topics have been several in which prime attention has focused on the relationship between age on the one hand and both fear of crime and actual criminal victimization on the other. In these studies we have used data collected by the Bureau of the Census from representative samples of Americans about crimes they may have suffered, whether or not these crimes came to the attention of the police. These surveys, sponsored by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) are known as the National Crime Survey. The following—to be elaborated below—are major conclusions from some of our research:

(1) Elderly Americans—for our purposes here those 65 years of age or older—have a substantially greater fear of criminal victimization than do younger Americans.

(2) Elderly Americans in urban areas and in the United States as a whole have a higher rate of personal larceny (e.g., purse-snatching) than do Americans in some younger age groups.

(3) However, elderly Americans have far lower rates of homicide, robbery, rape, assault, burglary, larceny from the household, and motor vehicle theft victimization than do younger Americans.

(4) Elderly Americans are less likely to be injured and less likely to be confronted with weapons in criminal victimizations than are younger Americans.

(5) Elderly Americans are no more likely than younger Americans to be victimized by juveniles.

(6) Elderly Americans, in comparison to younger Americans, are not less likely to call the police once victimized.

(7) Elderly American victims are not prone to say that they failed to call the police because they feared reprisal by the offender.

(8) Elderly Americans have not experienced a recent upsurge in criminal victimization.

With the exception of the first of these conclusions—that elderly Americans have a great fear of crime—most of these conclusions are not consistent with either prevailing opinion or media portrayals. Before getting to the specifics of of these conclusions, permit me to say something more about the LEAA/Census surveys themselves, because they are the basis of my discussion today.

The National Crime Survey is the generic name for two series of surveys conducted by the Bureau of the Census for LEAA. One series—the national survey—involves samples drawn for the United States as a whole and the other—the city surveys—is for 26 selected American cities. In the national sample, a probability sample of 130,000 Americans twelve years of age or older is interviewed twice per year on a continuing basis. In the city surveys, 22,000 city residents in each of 26 selected cities[1] were interviewed during 1974 and 1975 (about 600,000 persons). In the combined national and urban samples in excess of 2 million interviews have now been conducted.

Respondents, who are drawn from the general population, are asked whether they have been victims of rape, robbery, assault, larceny, burglary, or motor vehicle theft during the six months (12 months in the city surveys) prior to the interview. For those who report such victimizations, details of the event—what actually happened, when and where it happened, what the consequences were, whether it was reported to the police, etc.—are solicited. In addition, respondents in the city surveys were asked about their fear of crime and the effects of crime on their daily activities. Because cooperation with Census Bureau interviewers is generally excellent, it is possible to make quite reliable estimates of victimization experiences in the population on the basis of the sample results. Permit me to highlight some of these results.

ATTITUDES ABOUT VICTIMIZATION

The data in Figure 1 are consistent with most results that bear on the relationship between "fear of crime" and age. Among urban males and females as age increases there are steady increases in the proportions who report feeling unsafe or very unsafe about being out alone at night, even in one's own neighborhood. When these urban respondents were asked about feelings of safety in their neighborhoods during the daytime, much less fear was expressed; one out of ten elderly males and two out of ten elderly females reportedly felt somewhat or very unsafe.

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[1] The cities are: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Buffalo, Cleveland, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Newark, New Orleans, New York, Oakland, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland (Oregon), St. Louis, San Diego, San Francisco and Washington D. C.

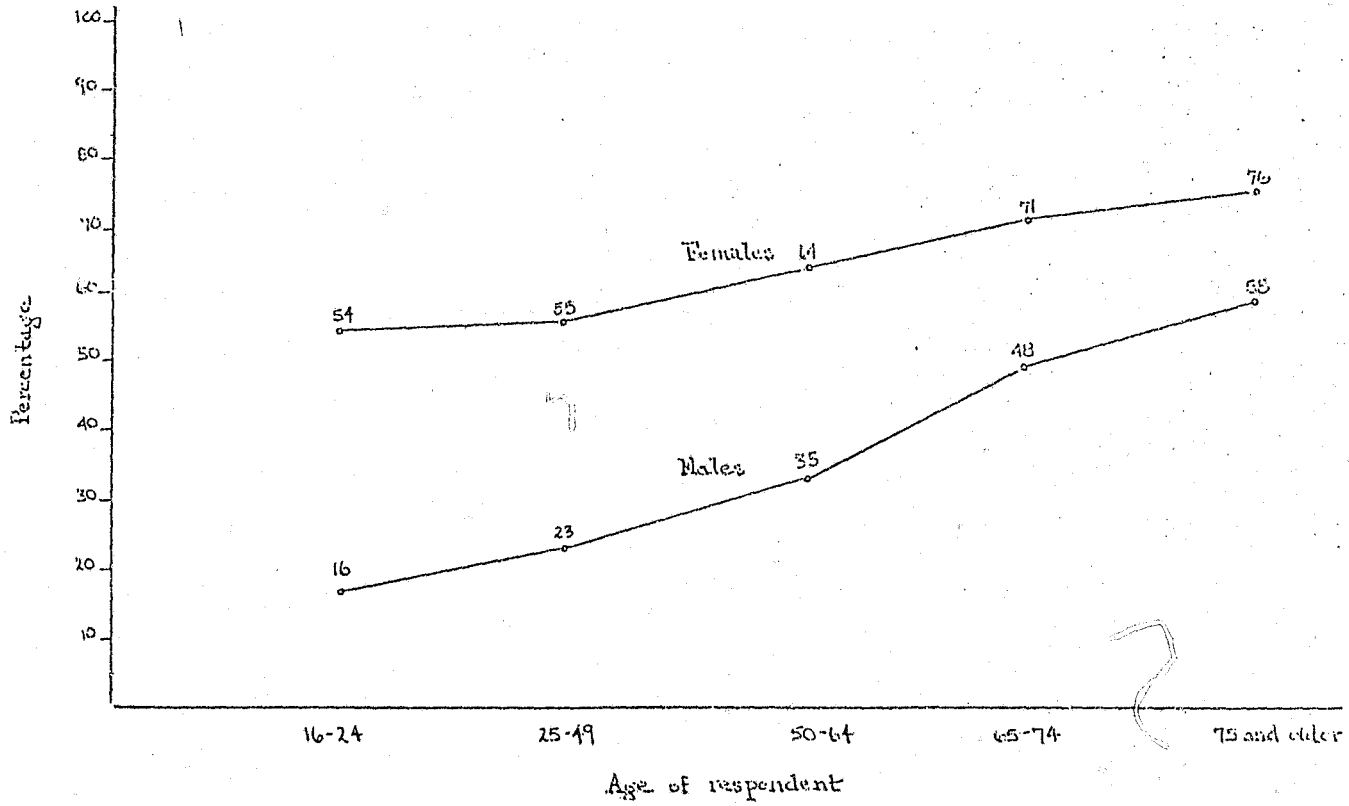


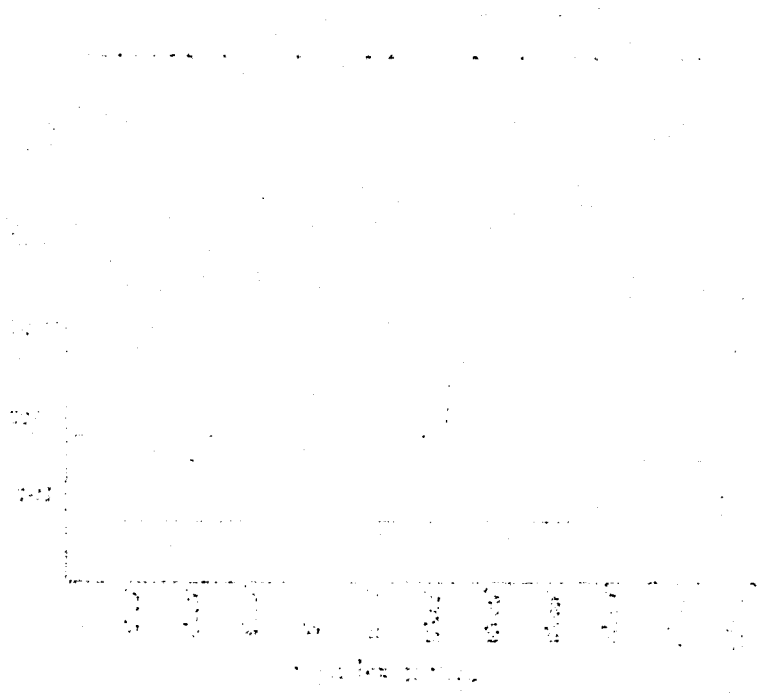
FIGURE 1.—Percentage of male and female respondents reporting feeling somewhat or very unsafe being out alone at night in their own neighborhoods, 26 American cities, 1973–74

Urban respondents were also asked whether they had "limited or changed their activities in the past few years because they [were] afraid of crime". Again, a relationship with age is apparent in the results: just over one-third of those 16–24 years of age and more than one-half of those 75 years of age or older reported limiting their activities because of fear of crime.

In summary, most elderly urban Americans feel unsafe on their neighborhood streets at night, but the vast majority of elderly feel safe there during the daytime. Just over one-half of the elderly residents of these cities reported changing their activities in recent years because of fear of crime.

VICTIMIZATION EXPERIENCES

Age is one of the strongest predictors of the likelihood of being criminally victimized. Contrary to popular belief, however, for almost all types of crime as age increased rates of criminal victimization for the crimes studies in the LEAA/Census surveys decreased markedly. Figure 2 shows data from the 1975 calendar year for the United States as a whole. For the crimes of rape, robbery, assault, burglary, household larceny, and motor vehicle theft, the rates of victimization are generally smaller for the older groups than for the younger groups. For example, for the crime of robbery—which involves the use of force or threat of force directed against the person in a crime of theft—there were more than 1,000 robberies for every 100,000 persons under 25 years of age but less than half that rate (430 robberies per 100,000 persons 65 years of age or older) in the oldest age group. For burglary, the rate for households headed by those under 19 years of age was about 4 times as great as for those 65 or older (21,000 vs. 5,000).



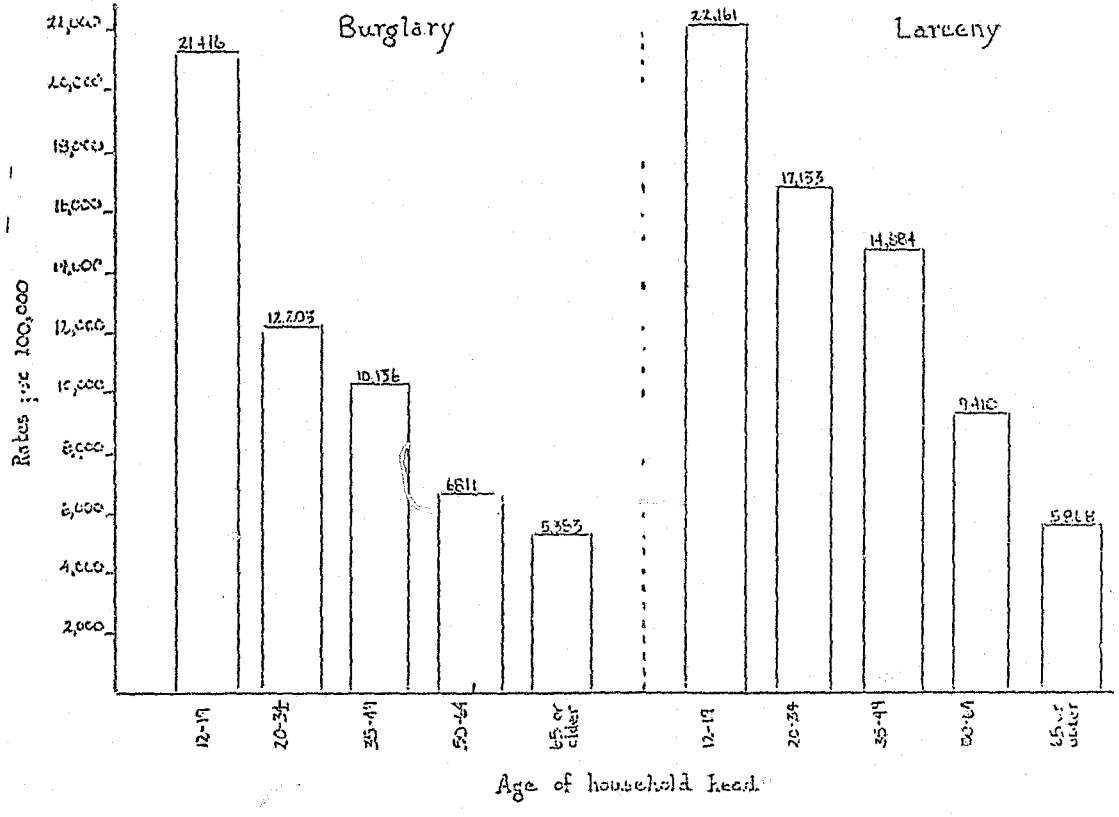


FIGURE 2a.—Rates (per 100,000 household) of burglary and household larceny, by age of household head, United States, 1975

Rape
Robbery
Rates per 100,000
1,200
1,100
1,000
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
79
243
259
122
26
19
16
1,125
1,063
1,081
627
459
434
435
12-15
16-19
20-24
25-34
35-49
50-64
65 or older
12-15
16-19
20-24
25-34
35-49
50-64
65 or older
Age of victim

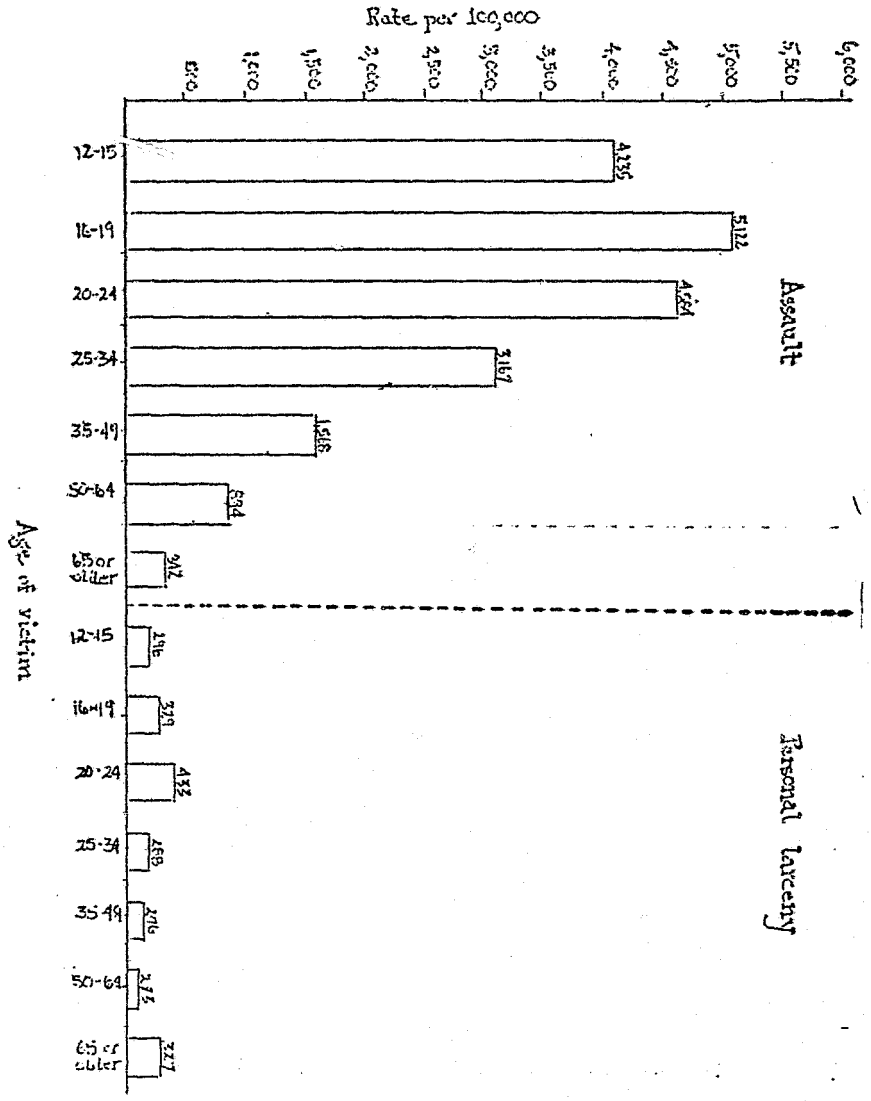


FIGURE 2b.—Rates (per 100,000 persons) of rape, robbery, assault, and personal larceny, by age of victim, United States, 1975

Only for the crime of personal larceny—which involves theft from the person without force or threat of force directed against the person (as in pocket picking and purse snatching by stealth)—was the rate for the elderly as large as or larger than the rate for some younger age groups. As can be seen in the figure, although the rate for personal larceny from those 16–24 years of age was greater than the rate for those 65 or older, the rate for the latter was greater than the rate for those 26 to 64 years of age.

The data in Figure 3, which are for the 26 urban areas surveyed, show the same general pattern as the data for the United States as a whole. For every major crime except personal larceny, the rate for the elderly is much less than that for the other age groups. Overall, then, these data suggest that actual victimization rates of the elderly are not nearly as great as the rates for other age groups.

Rape
Robbery
Rates per 100,000
3,000
2,750
2,500
2,250
2,000
1,750
1,500
1,250
1,000
750
500
250
313
85
30
19
2794
1926
1742
1615
12-34
35-49
50-64
65 or older
12-34
35-49
50-64
65 or older
Age of victim

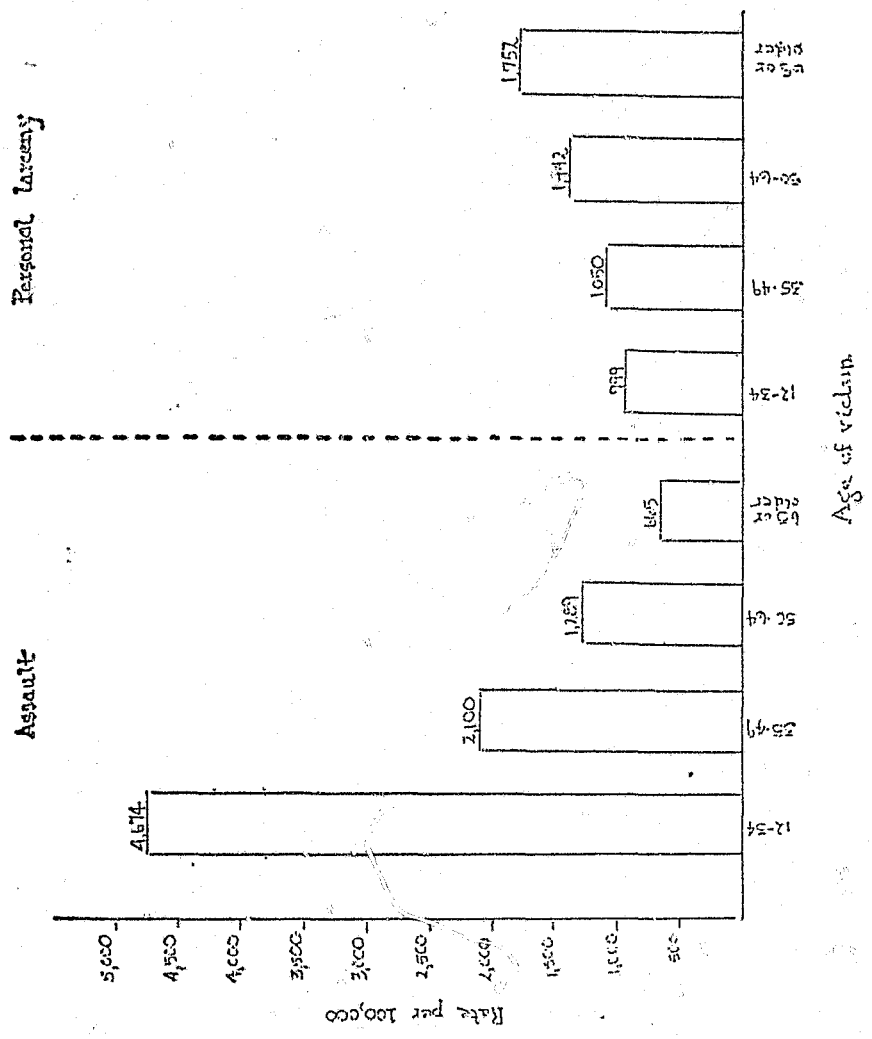


FIGURE 3.—Rates (per 100,000 persons) of rape, robbery, assault, and personal larceny, by age of victim, 26 American cities, 1973–4

Some have suggested that although the elderly are less frequently victimized than are younger persons, the elderly are more seriously victimized. When the seriousness of the victimization—such things as presence of weapons, extent of injury, and extent of financial loss—is taken into consideration, this expectation is not supported. For example, in the 26 urban areas surveyed, four out of five personal crimes suffered by the elderly involved theft or attempted theft and more than half of these did not involve force or threat of force directed against the victim. Elderly victims reported being confronted with a weapon in 24 percent of the personal victimizations compared with 42 percent for younger victims. Some bodily injury resulted to elderly victims in about one out of six victimizations, compared to one out of four for younger victims. Among all age groups about two-thirds of the injuries suffered were minor, involving bruises and scratches. Of those victims requiring medical attention one in five of those under 65 years of age, but only one in six of those 65 years of age or older was hospitalized over night or longer. By several criteria then, the victimizations suffered by the elderly are not more serious than those suffered by younger persons.

Juvenile offenders

Much of the common law crime committed in the United States is committed by youthful offenders. To what extent are the elderly disproportionately victimized by juveniles? In the course of the victimization survey interviews conducted in the 26 cities, victims were asked to estimate the offender's age. When there was a single offender, one-quarter of the robbery victims under 35 years of age, but only one-sixth of the robbery victims 65 years or older, were victims of offenders estimated to be less than 18 years of age. When the robbery victimization involved more than one offender, the youngest of the offenders was estimated to be less than 18 years of age in one-half of the robberies of victims under 35 years of age but in only one-third of the robberies of the elderly. For personal crimes overall, the elderly were no more likely to be victimized by juveniles than were younger victims.

Reporting to the police

In the literature relating to crimes against the elderly it is often alleged that the elderly victims of crime are less likely than younger victims to report the crime to the police, because, it is argued, the elderly have less confidence in the criminal justice system, want to avoid red tape, and fear reprisals from offenders. Before the advent of victimization surveys such claims were speculative and not subject to systematic testing because police data by definition only count offenses reported to the police. The availability of victimization survey data permit an assessment of some of these suggestions. In the 26 urban areas surveyed and in the United States as a whole, about half of all personal crimes—rape, robbery, assault, and personal larceny—reported to survey interviewers were said by victims not to have been reported to the police. The hypothesis that the elderly are more likely not to report to the police was not confirmed in either the 26 urban areas or in the United States as a whole. For all age groups, the seriousness of the offense—whether weapons were used, whether injury or loss were sustained by the victim, etc.—seemed to determine whether the event was reported to the police.

All of those who did not report the victimization to the police were asked why they did not. Figure 4 shows for the United States as a whole the reasons given by victims who failed to notify the police about their victimizations. (Some victims gave more than one reason). For both younger and older respondents the belief that "nothing could be done about the victimization" and that the victimization was "not important enough" were most commonly given. It is noteworthy that "fear of reprisal" is one of the rarest reasons cited by elderly or younger victims as reasons for failing to notify the police about a personal victimization.

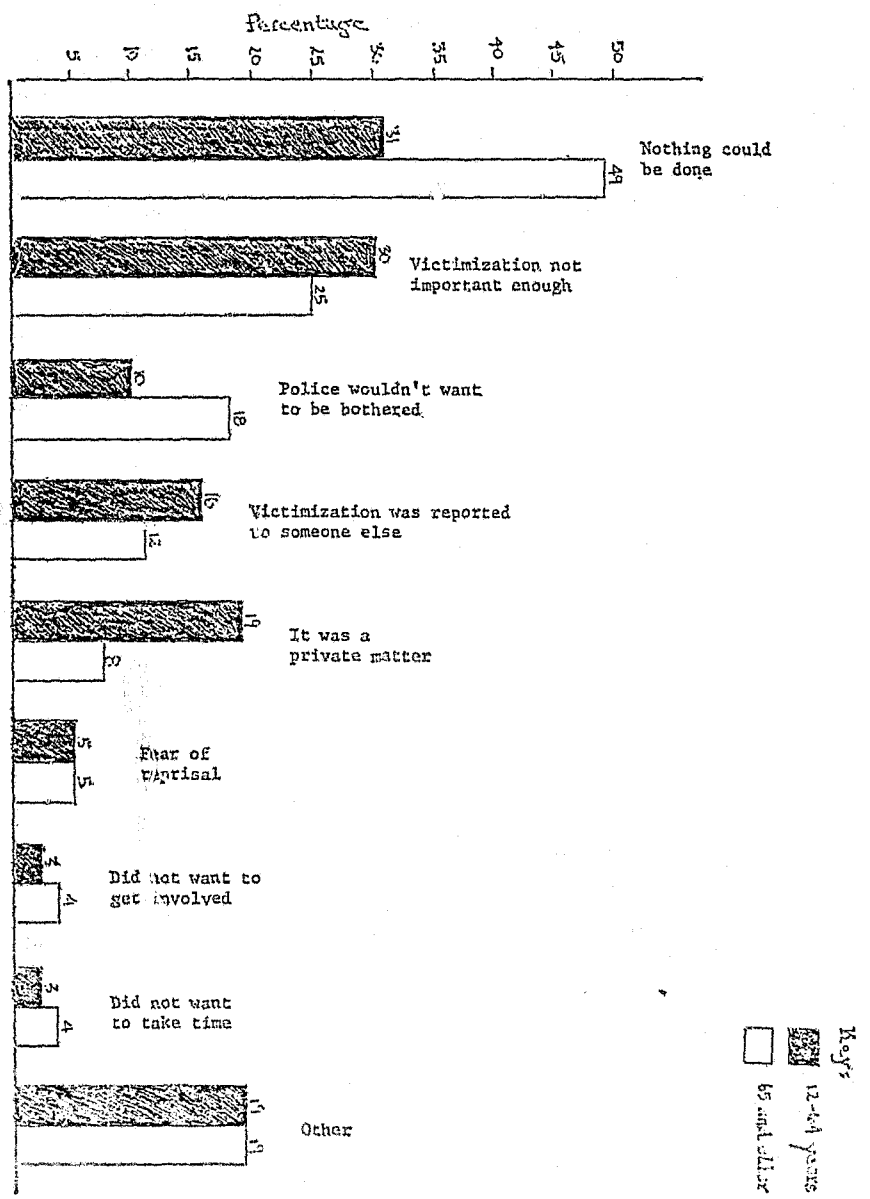


FIGURE 4.—Percentage of respondents giving each reason for not reporting victimization to the police, by age of victim, United States, 1974

Conclusion

The National Crime Survey data indicate that the real and paralyzing fear of being victimized that is expressed by older Americans is disproportionate to the frequency or seriousness of criminal victimization suffered by the elderly either in large urban areas or in the United States as a whole. Undoubtedly this fear, translated into limitations on behavior that severely constrict the daily activities of the elderly, results in both a lower rate of actual victimization than would otherwise be the case and a serious deterioration of the quality of life of older Americans. Many beliefs about victimization of the elderly popularly held among professionals and the public alike, are not consistent with the best research data currently available. Overall, elderly persons have relatively low rates of both personal and household victimization; they are slightly less likely than younger victims to be confronted with a weapon, to be injured, or to be hospitalized if they are victimized; they are not more likely than younger victims to be victimized by juveniles, to fail to report their victimization to the police, or to cite "fear of reprisal" as a reason for not reporting the victimization to the police.

In light of the high fear and yet relatively low rate of victimization, programs designed to address the special problems of the elderly should focus on ways to reduce the very high levels of fear. Decoy programs—in which police officers disguised as elderly persons await victimization and arrest the offenders—attempt to reduce actual victimization of the elderly by making unobtrusive attempts to arrest offenders. Although this approach may be sensible in unusual instances in which there is heightened victimization of the elderly within a given section of the city, as a general policy this approach would not appear to be cost effective in light of the low rate of elderly victimization. Rather, it would seem to make better sense to use more foot patrol officers in such areas because their visible presence will tend not only to discourage actual victimization of elderly and non-elderly alike, but also to reduce the fear of victimization so strongly held by older Americans. In addition, educational "spots" on radio and television might be used effectively to inform audiences, for example, that most victims of crime are victimized when alone; therefore the "buddy" system—going out into public places (e.g., on the streets) where most personal crimes occur, with a friend or a group of friends—would be safer than going out alone. Such an approach to the problem would simultaneously make the elderly (and others) feel safer, and actually be safer when out in public accompanied by friends. The survey results show that the elderly suffer a higher proportion of "lone" victimizations than do younger persons.

This may be because the elderly have fewer companions. Hence an organized escort program—in which groups of older persons who want to go out, say to shop, would be accompanied by volunteer escorts or foot patrol officers could be implemented. Again, this approach would reduce fear and would reduce the actual chances of being victimized. The point that I wish to emphasize is that programs designed to focus only on reducing actual victimization of the elderly—like decoy programs—without also reducing fear are doomed to failure. Of course it is possible that if fear is reduced actual victimization may increase to some extent, but this should not occur if the means of reducing fear includes as a by-product an actual reduction of risk of victimization as well (e.g., an escort program). More importantly, reduced fear which is more commensurate with objective assessments of the risks of actual victimization will serve to remove some of the self-imposed fear barriers that now severely and unnecessarily reduce the quality of life of elderly Americans.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BARRY D. LEBOWITZ, PH. D., NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH

Mr. Chairman, I am honored to have the opportunity to testify before your committee concerning the issues relating to crimes against the elderly. My remarks will focus on four general issues:

What are the factors which increase the vulnerability of the elderly to criminal victimization?

What is known about the nature and extent of criminal victimization of the elderly?

What is the impact of criminal victimization of the elderly?

How does criminal victimization relate to other factors which contribute to social isolation?

Let me acknowledge, at the outset, my debt to colleagues at the Center for Studies of Crime and Delinquency in the National Institute of Mental Health for our many discussions over general issues of criminology and specific discussions over the issues I will present today.

VULNERABILITY

Each day, 4,000 persons reach the age of 65 in the United States, and 3,000 of those over 65 die. At the present time, approximately 11 percent of the American population is over 65, and projections have this proportion reaching 16 percent by the year 2040. The largest proportionate growth in the elderly population is in the oldest portion—those over 75. In the elderly population there are approximately 150 women for every 100 men. It is surprising to many that only 5 percent of the elderly population lives in institutions like nursing homes or State mental hospitals, and, indeed, only 19 percent of those over 85 live in institutions. Approximately one-third of the elderly population lives alone.

The heterogeneity within the elderly population has been noted by many researchers, as has the inevitability of certain declines and losses. Nonetheless, there are characteristics of the aged population which may well be expected to increase vulnerability to criminal victimization.

(1) Physiologically, the decline in bone mass and associated brittleness of the bones with age, coupled with decreases in sensory functions of vision and hearing may contribute to uncertainty and ineffectiveness in dealing with aspects of an environment. Older people may have to walk more carefully, risk missing auditory or visual cues associated with danger, and experience weakness and fatigue.

(2) Mentally, some 10 to 25 percent of the elderly suffer from some sort of mental impairment. Manifestations of these impairments may include problems with memory, confusion, disorientation, and a weakening of intellectual functioning. Any of these characteristics could contribute to the vulnerability of an elderly person.

(3) Socially, although many of the elderly do not live alone, approximately one in three does live alone. In addition, many elderly persons are dependent upon a fixed schedule of income, e.g. pension checks, Social Security, or Supplemental Security Income checks are delivered at predictable times (usually the first of the month). Therefore, shopping, banking, and other activities become settled into an easily observable pattern or routine. All of which increase vulnerability.

In summary, physiological, mental, and social characteristics of the elderly would seem to contribute to a high vulnerability to crime. The risk involved in victimization of an elderly person could be seen to be slight, especially if these features were seen as characteristics of all elderly persons. The extent to which the available data on victimization support this contention will be examined in the next section.

CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION

There is absolutely no consensus in the field on the nature and extent of criminal victimization of the elderly. Analysis of national survey data collected for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration shows that overall the rates of victimization of the elderly are lower than rates for younger persons. Even at this gross level some interesting age differences are presented. For example, nearly one-third of the violent crimes (rape and assault) carried out against the elderly occur in the victim's home and over half occur in or near the home (such as the yard, hallway, or adjacent sidewalk). This relative unsafety of the home is characteristic of the elderly to a much greater extent than to those of any other age.

These national survey data have been questioned on a number of methodological and technical grounds, and several surveys of specific neighborhoods or cities have shown variance with the national survey estimates. In and of themselves, however, the numbers mask more than they illuminate. For example, in analysis of 78 case histories of women over 50 who have been raped, Davis and Brody indicate that in nearly two-thirds of the cases "the rape was associated with theft. It is not known whether the rapist enters primarily for rape or for theft. Many of the case histories, however, reveal that what started out as a burglary, escalated to rape when the burglar discovered the victim or become frustrated with her." This

doubling up of offenses may well be a unique pattern of victimization, and it is deserving of considerable attention by researchers in criminology.

Another issue which needs research is the situational and motivational aspects of crimes against the elderly. My NIMH colleague, Dr. Christopher Dunn, of the Center for Studies of Crime and Delinquency, has helped me frame the issue in terms of juvenile delinquency. The literature on delinquency is sparse when it comes to identification of situational and motivational aspects of delinquent behavior, particularly regarding the direction of aggression and the selection of targets. or victims. To date, much theoretical and empirical work has been directed at explaining the social distribution of criminal offenses and victimization along with the personality of offenders and victims.

The general issue is that it is important to study not only the social and personality dimensions of criminal acts directed at older persons, but also the situational and motivational aspects of these acts. To date, the best research in the field has not established the validity of self-report research for serious or specialized types of delinquency and crime. In addition, many self-report studies have not dealt with significant situational and motivational aspects of serious offenses. Yet because crime is known to occur at rates above that known to police, and because official data are not reliable indicators of behavior, self-reports seem to offer a useful means of investigation.

Specific research should be conducted on the techniques and methods of self-reports that are best able to provide information from juveniles about situational and motivational aspects of their delinquencies. Particular attention could be directed to the discovery of delinquencies against the elderly through self-report methods and to patterns of youth activity that lead to predatory contacts with older people. The research could determine the scope of information that can be ascertained about the motives for such activity and whether such patterns and motives of behavior are unique to the juvenile offender/elderly victim or are more typical of juvenile offending generally.

Adjunct to this research could be a study of the motivation and reconstructed activities of known juvenile offenders who had victimized an elderly person. The objective of this research would be to describe in detail some of the motivational themes which underlie known criminal behavior. For example, two such themes that may be postulated are: Utility i.e., elderly persons are victimized because they are easier to con, cheat, swindle, rob, mug, or otherwise utilize for criminal purposes; and hostility, i.e., elderly persons were victimized because the elderly personify authority that can be successfully challenged, and because rebelliousness can more easily be directed at older persons.

Such research would do much to contribue to our understanding of the elderly victim of crime. Since only half the victimizers of the elderly are juveniles, however, this research would only be a start toward developing a more complete and complex understanding of the dynamics involved in the criminal victimization of the elderly.

An emphasis on reported crime rates, however, has the potential for misleading us.

For the actual number of crimes seems to have little to do with the personal impact of crime both for the elderly victim and for all elderly persons. We may be lulled into a sense of security by observing the overall age differentials in victim rates or we may be motivated to outrage by observing the increased risk of many older persons. Regardless of our judgment, however, the fear of being victimized is a major determinant of an elderly person's behavior in the United States, and it is to this factor which I would like to draw the attention of the committee.

IMPACT

In a 1974 nationally representative poll of 4,200 adults, Louis Harris and Associates asked about the very serious problems for the 65 and over population. The most frequently mentioned problem by the elderly respondents was fear of crime—even more than poor health and not having enough money to live on. In addition, more than 4 in 10 of the Black elderly respondents rate the fear of crime as a very serious problem. But what does a very serious problem mean? At base, it means that many elderly people restrict their range of activities to a minimum and become withdrawn and isolated. For example, my own research has shown that over 70 percent of the older population of large cities report that they would be afraid to walk alone at night. This finding has been repli-

cated several times and is generally acknowledged to be valid. The most common response to this fear is, simply, to stay indoors, and this means, for at least one in three, to stay alone. Now, decades of research have consistently shown that social isolation has deliterious mental health consequences of the most serious kind.

That this is especially true in an elderly population was convincingly shown by Dr. Alexander Simon, Majorie Fiske and their associates in the NIMH-supported studies at the Langley Porter Neuropsychiatric Institute in San Francisco. Significantly, one does not have to have been a victim to undergo this self-imposed isolation. Indeed, one of the tragic ironies of this whole state of affairs is that many older persons isolate themselves as a preventative strategy when the data show that the likelihood of being the victim of a violent crime is as great at home as it is elsewhere for an older person. Consequently, the impact of criminal victimization is felt by all old persons, those who have been victimized as well as those who have not. The withdrawal and isolation, curtailing of activities and occasional obsessive concern with security, can have only the most serious effects on quality of life and mental health of the older person.

On the other hand, a concern with security is only reasonable and proper for the older person. As part of a project sponsored by the National Center for the Prevention and Control of Rape of the National Institute of Mental Health, Linda Davis and Elaine Brody of the Philadelphia Geriatric Center have prepared a manual, "Protecting Yourself Against Sexual Assault." This short, 9-page manual, though directed toward rape, contains useful and general information for personal safety at home, in a building, on the street, and in various other situations. A draft of the manual is attached as an appendix to my remarks. The overall guide, of which the manual is a part, will be published this year.

We must be careful about the conclusions to be drawn from the relationships between victimization and social isolation of the elderly; this will be discussed in the final section of the presentation.

MULTIDIMENSIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Research, theory, and practice in the field of aging must be informed by a perspective which stresses the interplay of biomedical, social, and behavioral factors. This is very clearly illustrated by subject under discussion today—the effect of the fear of criminal victimization on the social isolation of the elderly. Let us suppose that we were able to eliminate the fear of criminal victimization tomorrow. Would it necessarily follow that we would eliminate isolation? Unfortunately, and obviously, the answer would have to be no. Several other factors came to mind as potential contributors to isolation. First, we must be concerned with access and effectiveness of health care. In particular, if podiatry is unavailable, then shoes are too uncomfortable, and mobility becomes too painful. Consequently, isolation will be increased. Once the person gets outdoors, however, environments may not be designed for access by the elderly. For example, studies with which I have been involved show that an individual's self-reported ability to cross a street before the traffic light changes is a strong predictor of quality of life. In other words, inability to cross the street, severely limits a persons territory—although it extends beyond the home it is limited by a block for those in the city. Finally, if public transportation continues to be designed with the long first step above the curb or roadway, then access by the physically-impaired elderly person is severely limited.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there is no question in my mind that the fear of crime is an important contributor to the quality of life of the elderly in the United States. At this point, however, it is difficult for me to assess the degree of its importance when weighed alongside physical, social, and other factors. This assessment needs careful and systematic research which will focus on unravelling the complexities and misunderstandings which pervade the area.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you for providing me with the opportunity of testifying on this important issue, and I shall be pleased to answer any questions that you and the members of the committee may have.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF BARRY D. LEBOWITZ

Date and place of birth: Boston, Massachusetts, February 11, 1942.

Marital status: Married, two children.

Education: June 1964, B.A., McGill University. January 1967, M.A., Cornell University; January 1970, Ph. D., Cornell University.

Experience: 1968–73, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Portland State University. 1973–76, Associate Director for Research, Institute on Aging, Portland State University. 1975–76, Visiting Scientist, Administration on Aging, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. 1976, Present, Research Sociologist, Center for Studies of the Mental Health of the Aging, National Institute of Mental Health.

Professional societies: Gerontological Society; American Sociological Association; Western Gerontological Society; Contributing editor, Black Aging.

Honors: Bobbs-Merrill Award (Cornell).

Papers and publications. 12 publications and some 30 reviews and papers in gerontology, sociology, and methodology.

APPENDIX

PROTECTING YOURSELF AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

(Sponsored by the Center for Prevention and Control of Rape, National Institutes of Mental Health, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare)

Sexual Assault, is committed against women of all ages, incomes and living arrangements.

According to reports by law enforcement and survey agencies, sexual assaults are committed much less frequently than all other crimes except homicide. It is therefore highly unlikely that you will ever experience such an attack, real or threatened. It is also true, however, that all women must be aware of their actions and surroundings at all times in order to reduce the chances of becoming a victim of any crime.

The following list of personal safety ideas has been formulated with publications of and interviews with many law enforcement agencies and experts on rape prevention. Perhaps you are familiar with some of these ideas. Others may be new to you. In any case, they all deserve your careful consideration. While police, housing personnel and neighbors may be helpful in deterring crime, enough cannot be said for your own skills in protecting yourself.

PERSONAL SAFETY IDEAS

In your living unit

I. Don't advertise living alone—

(*a*) Use initials on mail box, in phone book—add dummy name.

(b) If alone and the door bell rings, call out, "I'll get it, John" as though someone is with you.
(c) Draw shades, drapes at night.

II. House should always look and sound occupied—
(a) Use timers to turn on lights at night.
(b) Use porch light.
(c) Play radio.
(d) Leave phone off hook if leaving home for considerable period during the day.
(e) Notify neighbor if going away—ask to collect mail, papers, etc.
(f) Don't pin notes to door.
(g) Keep a bathroom light on at night.

III. Essential hardware—
(a) Keep doors and windows locked.
(b) Use peephole.
(c) Change locks from former tenant.
(d) Never hide key—give to a friend.
(e) If key is lost, change cylinder.
(f) Never put address on key ring.

IV. Use of phone—
(a) Have phone near bed.
(b) Have emergency numbers near phone in big letters so you can read them without glasses.
(c) Never reveal personal information on phone: plans; that you live alone; your schedule; name or address; any personal information.
(d) Report series of obscene calls to police
1. blow whistle into receiver.
2. tap mouthpiece and say, "Operator—this is the call I wanted you to trace."
(e) Have friend to check on daily at specific time, verbal code to indicate if something is wrong.

V. Valuables—
(a) Keep purse, radios, stereos, TVs out of window reach and visible view.
(b) Engrave valuables with special security number, social security or driver's license.
(c) Deposit and keep money in bank.
(d) Don't keep large amount of cash in home.

VI. (This may sound unfriendly but) never open door to stranger—
(a) Don't rely on chain for identification of visitors.
(b) Require identification from everyone—utility men, maintenance men, police, repairmen, salesmen; pass ID under door, when in doubt—check with company by telephone.
(c) If stranger requests use of phone, regardless of reason or "emergency", offer to make call for him while he waits outside of locked door.

VII. If intruder is suspected—
(a) If awakened, pretend to sleep and stay in room.
(b) Try to retreat without being seen.
(c) If confronted, do not antagonize—observe description. Self defense measures are appropriate only if you are certain of your advantage and skill, or if loss of life appears imminent.

VIII. Know your neighbors—work out procedure for alerting each other in case of emergency.

In a building

I. Always have key in hand before you reach entrance.

II. Avoid deserted areas within building when alone—stairways, laundry, trash and storage areas.

III. Avoid or use caution when getting into elevator with stranger—
(a) In elevator—stand near control button and push for main floor or emergency if concerned.

IV. Don't overload yourself with bundles—be prepared to drop them quickly if being followed.

V. If you think you're being watched when leaving apartment, shout to mythical companion, "Take the cake out in ten minutes, George!"

VI. If apartment seems to have been entered, don't go in yourself.

VII. This may sound silly, but if accosted, yell "fire," not "help"—it will attract attention quickly.

On the street

I. Whenever possible don't walk alone—
(*a*) Use buddy system, or groups.
(*b*) Don't shortcut through vacant or parking lots.
(*c*) Stay away from doorways and shrubbery.
(*d*) Walk near curb, facing traffic.
(*e*) If car pulls next to you going the same way you are, reverse direction.
(*f*) Avoid streets in unfamiliar neighborhoods.
(*g*) Vary route in going to store, coming home.
(*h*) If insecure on sidewalk and traffic permits, walk down middle of street.

II. Talking to strangers—
(*a*) Be very cautious when stranger asks directions or time—or offers to carry your packages home.
(*b*) Beware of an individual who claims to have found money and wants to share with you—or who offers goods at low prices.

III. Always look and be alert to surroundings—
(*a*) Don't walk through a group of men, cross street or walk around them.
(*b*) If approached, look for lighted windows, wave and shout upward as though someone at window is watching you.

IV. Carry purse, papers, umbrella under arm—or keep purse between body and bundles—
(*a*) Carry purse on side away from the street.
(*b*) Carry minimum of cash.
(*c*) Carry money in two places—use shoe, bra or hidden pocket.
(*d*) Don't overload yourself with packages, keep hands free.
(*e*) Don't hang bag on hook in public bathroom.
(*f*) Keep bag tightly in grip in stores and market.
(*g*) If you think someone might take purse, drop it in nearest mailbox—it will be returned to you.
(*h*) Never wind purse-strap around wrist (if grabbed—you can be pulled down and injured).
(*i*) If someone tries for purse—throw it in street, or turn it upside down and let contents fall out.
(*j*) Insert comb in wallet with teeth up to prevent easy removal.
(*k*) If purse snatched—beware of phone call giving information where to retrieve it (call police for advice).
(*l*) If possible, do not carry a purse at all.

V. Carry whistle—
(*a*) Put whistle on key chain—not around neck.
(*b*) Have it available to blow when you feel threatened.

VI. Know location of police call boxes, buildings with doormen on duty, all night stores, and other sources of help along your route.

VII. When going to visit—call ahead to tell how you are going, when to be expected.

VIII. If accosted yell "fire," not "rape" or "help."

IX. When brought home, have friend, taxi wait till you're inside and safe.

While traveling

I. Travel with companion whenever possible.

II. When awaiting or riding transportation conveyances, stand with feet apart in a balanced position.

III. At bus and subway stops—keep your back to the wall to avoid being approached from behind—
(*a*) Sit in front—near driver or conductor.
(*b*) Always have token ready.
(*c*) In subway, sit in populated car, avoid last car—get near conductor.
(*d*) Use busy stop—avoid deserted ones.
(*e*) If suspect being followed—don't get off at normal stop—get off at busy stop, tell attendant in change booth.

While banking

I. Bank by mail.
II. Deposit checks soon after receipt.
III. If you must walk, don't go alone and vary route and time of deposit.
IV. Put your cash away before leaving window.
V. Ask for direct deposit of checks by public assistance or other agencies involved.

In your automobile

I. Key in hand when approaching car—
  (a) Keep car key on separate chain— separate from house keys.
  (b) Leave only ignition key with attendant.
  (c) Don't put name/address on keys.
II. Drive with doors locked and windows rolled at least three-quarters up.
III. Put packages on floor out of view.
IV. Don't pick up hitch-hikers.
V. Always have at least ¼ tank of gas in your car.
VI. Disabled car—Raise hood, tie white cloth to aerial or doorhandle—
  (a) Stay in car—do not get out, ask interested motorist to call police for you.
VIII. Night—always park in well lit area—
  (a) Have friend escort you to car in dark.
  (b) Always check back seat and floor before entering, use flashlight at night if necessary.
VIII. If you notice a vehicle with a person in distress—don't stop. Note location and stop at first safe phone to call police.
IX. Don't leave credentials or personal papers in car.

You may notice as you read these tips that they are ideas which will help to protect you from all types of crimes, not just sexual assault. There is a good reason for this. Statistics show that most sexual assaults against middle aged and older women occur in the victim's own home and in connection with another crime, particularly burglary and robbery.

The main idea is to be aware, alert, and to prevent a potential assailant from having the opportunity of making you his next victim.

In addition to using these ideas for individual safety, many groups of neighbors have organized formally or informally in an effort to protect each other from victimization. Some examples of successful programs include buddy systems, neighborhood watches, lobby sitting, door monitoring, escort services, cooperative shopping and many other activities.

In Philadelphia, the Citizens Local Alliance for a Safer Philadelphia (CLASP), (well known for their Freon Horn Program), is an agency which any group may contact for guidance in planning and implementing a community protection program. Their address and phone number are as follows: CLASP, 1710 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103 (215) 732–4288.

Remember that every woman is a potential victim of rape or other other sexual offenses. The suggestions in this booklet deal with how to protect yourself and your neighbors from victimization.

If you follow these suggestions for personal safety, chances are you will never be confronted with an attacker. If you are, however, the most important things to remember are:

1. Try to remain calm and use your head. Escape from the situation with the least amount of harm to yourself.
2. Be able to identify your assailant.

If a sexual assault occurs:

Call the police immediately at 911. Tell them what happened and how badly you are hurt.

Avoid cleaning up yourself or the area where the assault occurred. Physical evidence is essential for apprehension and prosecution of your assailant.

Call the rape crisis 24 hour hotline: Women Organized Against Rape (WOAR) (215) 823–7997.

A volunteer will counsel you, tell you what to expect and how they can help you. They understand—don't be afraid to call!

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE,
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE,
ALCOHOL, DRUG ABUSE, AND MENTAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION,
February 10, 1978.

Mr. JONAH SHACKNAI,
Staff Director, Subcommittee on Domestic and International Scientific Planning, Analysis, and Cooperation, Committee on Science and Technology, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. SHAKNAI: During my testimony at the Subcommittee's joint hearings on Crime Against the Elderly on January 31, there were questions raised concerning the direct deposit feature of Social Security.

The direct deposit of recurring Federal payments into financial institutions designated by the beneficiaries has been available since 1972; in 1975 this was made available to Social Security beneficiaries. The Social Security Administration reports that by June, 1976 approximately 14 percent of the beneficiaries over the age of 65 were using this feature. These data are contained in the Social Security Administration's research and statistics note, "Social Security Beneficiaries Using the Direct Deposit Procedure," published January 31, 1978. This note also indicates the planning of a study of the direct deposit feature with interviews to be carried out with those who now use direct deposit, those who formerly used it, and those who have never used it.

If you would like any further information on this, please do not hesitate to request it.

Yours sincerely,

BARRY D. LEBOWITZ, PH. D.,
Research Specialist, Center for Studies of the Mental Health of the Aging, Division of Special Mental Health Programs

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