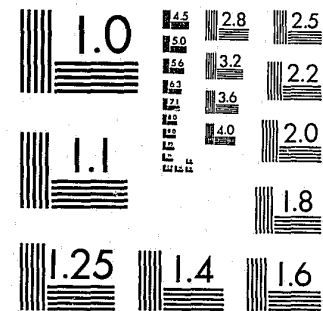


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3/2/83

77338

# OHIO CITIZEN ATTITUDES

## An Executive Summary A Survey of Public Opinion on Crime and Criminal Justice

U.S. Department of Justice 77338  
National Institute of Justice

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## FOREWARD

The Ohio Citizen Attitude Survey is a unique study which measures public opinion about crime and criminal justice. It is the first comprehensive project of its kind and has produced a wealth of public opinion information on issues ranging from police strikes to plea-bargaining to home security measures.

Is this information really important? Yes. Every year in Ohio officials at all levels of government make decisions affecting the process of criminal justice. Legislators pass laws, judges make rulings, agencies disperse large numbers of criminal justice dollars, all of which assume an understanding of public opinion and attitudes. Prior to this Survey there was no scientific means for gaining such an understanding.

The Survey can also be used to determine the public "mood" when addressing specific kinds of issues. For example, it is extremely helpful to know the public tolerance for locating offender treatment facilities in local neighborhoods, increasing taxes to support new prisons and carrying shotguns in police cruisers. Miscalculating public opinion on these issues can result in much wasted time and citizen alienation.

Another dimension of the Survey is its capacity to measure the effectiveness of criminal justice programs geared toward the public. "Operation Crime Alert," a major crime prevention program of the State's Division of Crime Prevention, is using Survey results to evaluate its effectiveness in communicating to the public. The Survey holds similar potential for fear reduction programs, victim/witness assistance efforts and numerous others dealing with public participation.

The Survey was administered by phone between August 18 and October 15, 1979. The 803 persons interviewed were selected by a scientific statistical process which assures that the opinions presented are representative of all of Ohio's citizens (see appendix, "Survey Background/Methodology").

The tables and graphics displayed in this report are meant to be self-explanatory and the narrative has deliberately been kept to a minimum.

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ACQUISITIONS

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## ATTITUDES ABOUT CRIME

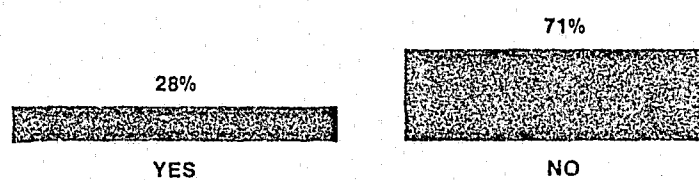
Public attitudes about crime affect not only criminal justice agencies but also business and cultural institutions, as well as other agencies of government. For many years professional planners have been warning against the development of a "siege mentality" within the Public, one in which citizens respond to crime by progressively isolating themselves from the Community. It is feared that such a response will eventually seriously impact economic and social functions, particularly in urban areas.

To determine "fear of crime" perceptions the Survey asked Ohio residents how safe they felt while out alone in their own neighborhoods, during the day and at night. While trends cannot be determined from this single year data, the figures listed below in Table 1 indicate that Ohioans are not particularly fearful of crime in their own neighborhoods, even at night. That finding is even true for women and senior citizens.

TABLE 1 FEELING OF SAFETY IN OWN NEIGHBORHOOD (WHILE OUT ALONE)

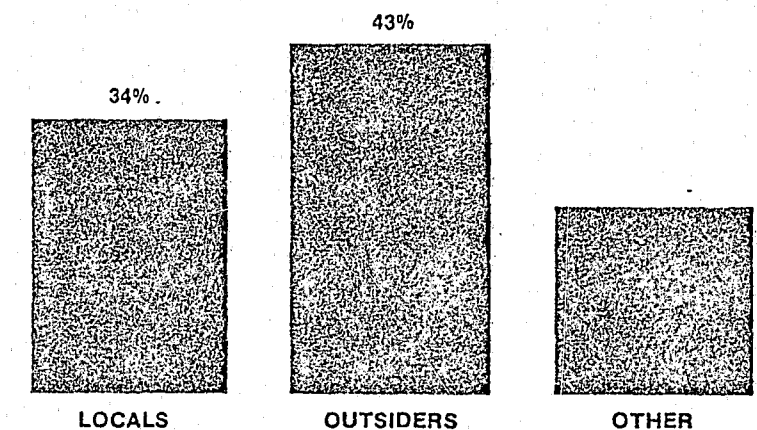
	STATE	FEMALES	SENIORS
"VERY SAFE"			
DAY	72%	67%	67%
NIGHT	35%	25%	31%
"REASONABLY SAFE"			
DAY	23%	26%	23%
NIGHT	43%	43%	37%
"SOMEWHAT UNSAFE"			
DAY	3%	3%	6%
NIGHT	13%	19%	14%
"VERY UNSAFE"			
DAY	2%	2%	5%
NIGHT	9%	13%	18%

FIGURE 1 DOES FEAR OF CRIME LIMIT PERSONAL ACTIVITIES?...



Respondents were further asked if the fear of crime limited their personal activities while away from home. Nearly three-out-of-four responded negatively to the question but it is difficult to know how to interpret that response. Emphasis could either be placed on the comfortable majority of persons whose lifestyles are not seriously affected by the fear of crime or on a significant minority who do feel personally intimidated. Once again there does not appear to be a significant difference among senior citizens, 70.5% of whom responded negatively to this question.

FIGURE 2 WHO COMMITS CRIMES IN NEIGHBORHOOD?...

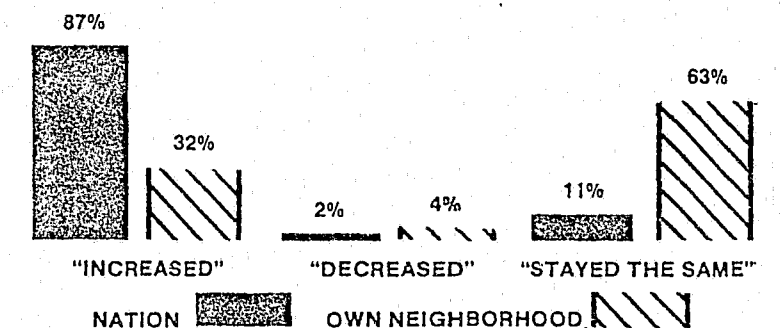


A significant finding of the Survey is the tendency among Ohioans to view their neighborhood crime problems more optimistically than crime problems in general. This finding supports previous results from the National Crime Survey series which discovered that even in urban areas people tend to think that crime problems are probably worse in other neighborhoods.\*\*

Two questions in the Ohio Survey reflect this same trend. Figure 2 indicates that a plurality (43%) of residents feel that outsiders are responsible for most of the crime in their neighborhood. (Somewhat surprisingly, rural respondents were less suspicious of the outsiders' role in their crime problems than were urban residents.)

Respondents overwhelmingly felt that crime had increased nationwide during the past year (87%), but most were not willing to make such a critical judgement about crime in their neighborhood (Fig.3). Nearly two-thirds felt that crime had stayed about the same locally.

FIGURE 3 PERCEPTION OF CRIME: NATION v OWN NEIGHBORHOOD?...



\*Some figures will not add to 100% due to rounding error

\*\*Public Opinion About Crime. James Garofalo, Project Coordinator. Criminal Justice Research Center, Albany, New York. U.S. Department of Justice (LEAA). (See selected results from surveyed cities.)

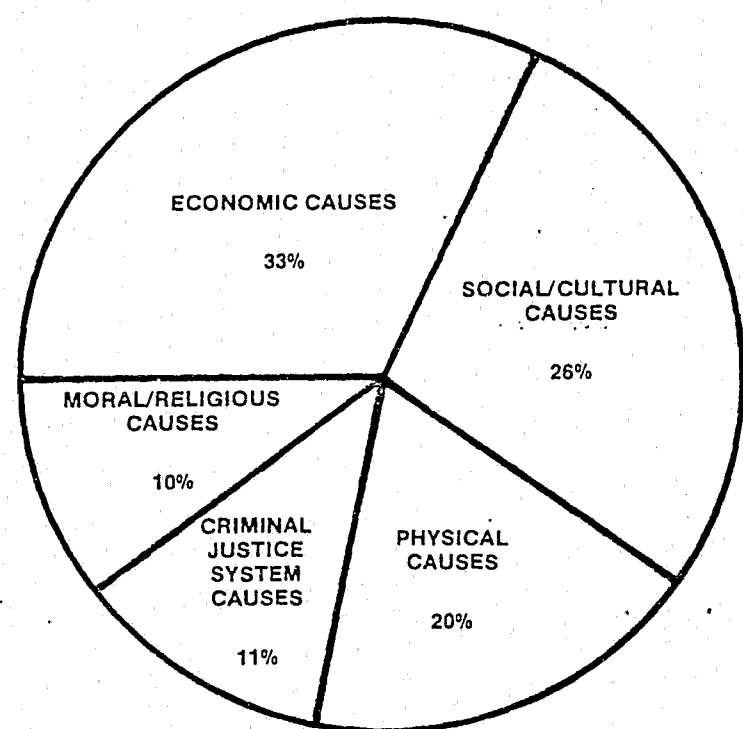


There is a wide variety of opinion concerning the causes of crime. There were nearly as many different answers as respondents, but the responses tended to fall within forty areas which, in turn, could be roughly collapsed into the five general categories pictured below (Fig. 4). (Note: See "Survey Background/Methodology," p. 39)

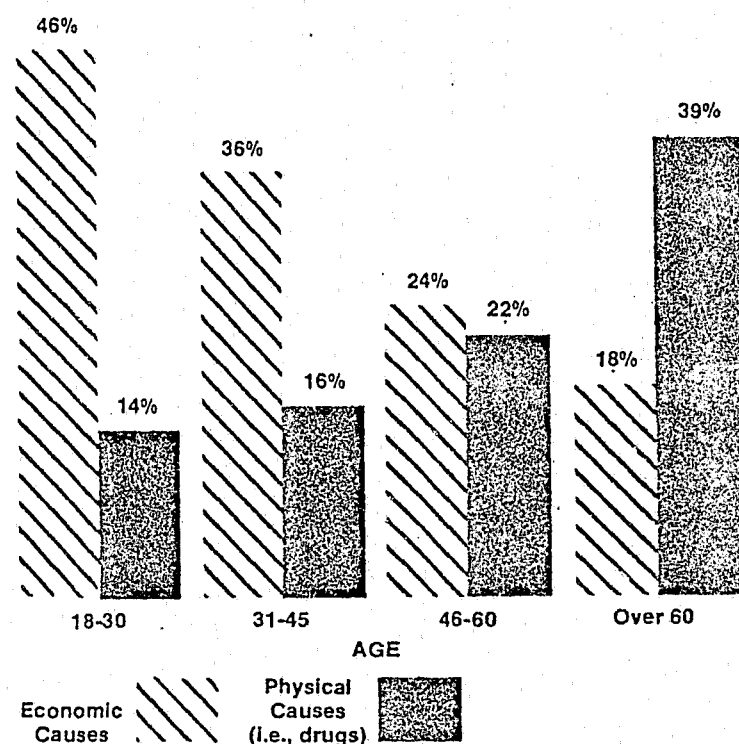
The most common single response given was "drugs," which was mentioned by 16% of those interviewed. (It is included below under "Physical Causes".) "Family problems" was next in importance, cited by 11% of the respondents. However, no other single reason received more than 10% of the Survey total.

Age appears to affect some of the reasons people assign to crime problems. Specifically, there is a correlation between advancing age and the tendency to see drugs as the primary cause of crime. On the contrary, younger people tend to see economic issues at the root of crime (Fig. 5).

**FIGURE 4**  
WHAT CAUSES CRIME?...



**FIGURE 5** WHAT CAUSES CRIME?  
BY, AGE OF RESPONDENT



## ATTITUDES ABOUT LAW ENFORCEMENT

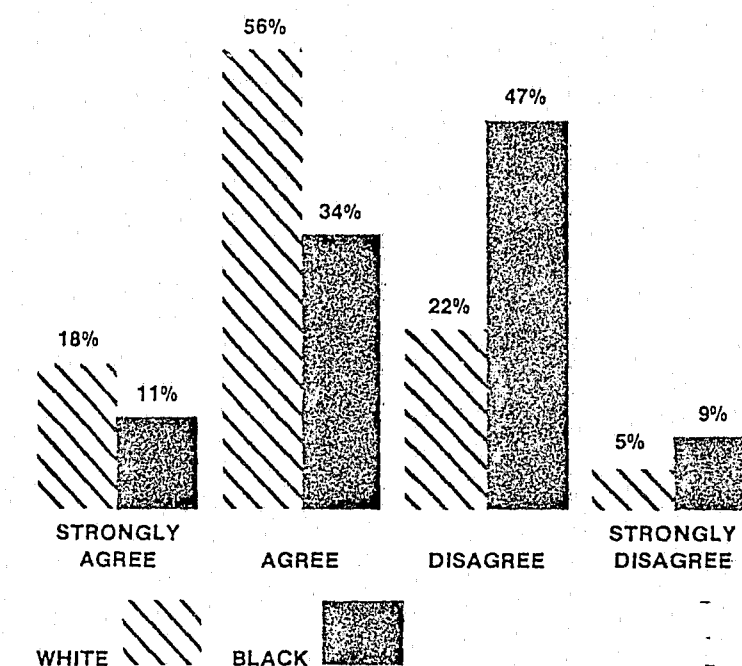
Public attitudes about law enforcement (basically police, sheriff and Highway Patrol officers) are important because this is the level at which citizens usually first come into contact with the Criminal Justice System. Because of this early and direct contact the Public is usually more vitally concerned with law enforcement operational issues (eg., use of shotguns, enforcement of traffic ordinances, etc.) than it is interested in other operational issues in Criminal Justice (eg., court scheduling, prison treatment programs, etc.). Thus, the Survey contained four questions which often draw the police into the public arena. These are listed in Table 2.

**TABLE 2** POLICE ISSUES  
SHOULD POLICE BE ALLOWED TO...

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
...CARRY HANDGUNS ON DUTY?	43%	54%	2%	1%
...CARRY SHOTGUNS IN CRUISERS?	17%	54%	24%	5%
...FORM LABOR ORGANIZATIONS?	11%	57%	28%	4%
...STRIKE?	4%	42%	41%	12%

Respondents were asked if police should be allowed to carry handguns while on duty. The question was asked both as an unofficial referendum on the issue and as a backdrop for the question about the use of shotguns. This second question only concerned the carrying of shotguns in the passenger portion of police vehicles, yet the idea was supported by a significantly smaller number of people than that found in the "handgun" majority. Even so, seven-out-of-ten Ohioans agree with the practice which, again, leaves some room for interpretation. Apparently, the Public sees the shotgun as a necessary evil but is probably not ready to assign it the same status as the handgun or other traditional pieces of police equipment. The issue is further clouded by the noticeable difference in attitudes between whites and blacks on this issue (Fig. 6).

**FIGURE 6** SHOTGUNS IN POLICE CARS  
BY, RACE



Public support for police labor organizations and activities was not quite as strong as that for shotguns. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of those interviewed felt police should be allowed to form labor organizations, and forty-six percent (46%) agreed that police should be allowed the right to strike when such an action is called by a recognized labor organization. This last figure may be higher than expected given the Public's traditional dislike for and fear of police job actions. Data from succeeding years will help determine if the Public is experiencing attitudinal change regarding this issue.

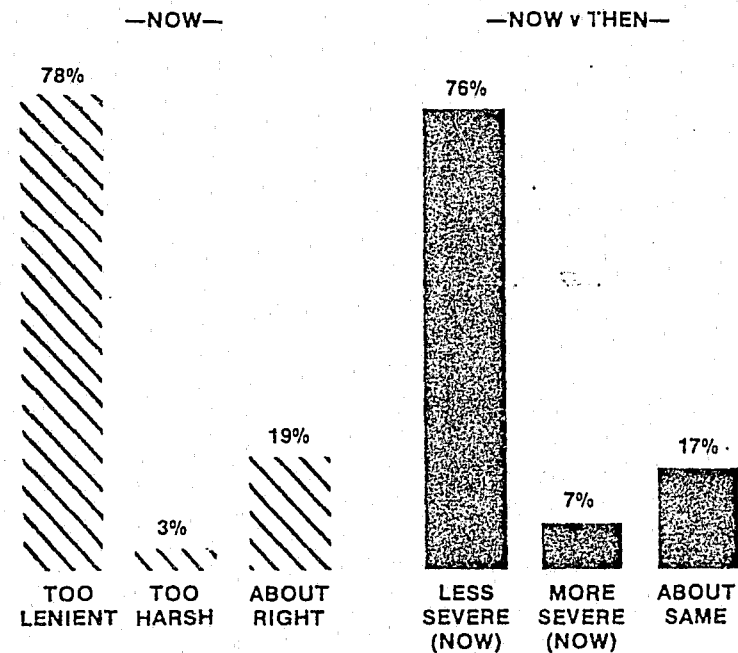
Generally, attitudes toward law enforcement officers seem positive, especially in comparison with other components of the Criminal Justice System. This can be more clearly seen in the various "confidence scales" beginning with Table 14.

# ATTITUDES ABOUT COURTS

The vast majority of Ohioans view the Court Component of the Criminal Justice System as too lenient and feel that sentences were tougher ten years ago. Blacks and those in the Survey's youngest age grouping (18-30) were less likely than the remaining respondents to see court sentencing as too lenient, but even among these two groups the "too lenient" category was the most popular response.

While public opinion about court sentencing seems overwhelmingly one-sided there is some reason to suspect the intensity of this opinion. When asked if they were willing to sustain increases in the State Income tax to fund prison construction, a logical consequence of longer sentences, three-fifths of the respondents said no (Table 7).

**FIGURE 7**  
HOW TOUGH ARE CRIMINAL COURT SENTENCES?



**TABLE 3 SENTENCES BY LAW OR JUDGES**  
(QUESTION:) Do you think that state laws should specify exact sentences for each type of crime, or do you think exact sentences should be determined by judges?

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
LAWS	307	38.2	38.2
JUDGES	421	52.4	90.6
DEPENDS	47	5.9	96.5
DON'T KNOW	27	3.4	99.4
N/A	1	.1	99.5
TOTAL	803	99.5	99.5

If the respondents were critical about sentencing practices they showed little inclination to limit or remove the sentencing authority of judges. Most of the respondents (52%) felt that sentences should be determined by judges as opposed to more rigidly defined state law. (Table 3)

The data in Table 4 represent a preliminary probe into public opinion about judicial qualifications. The results should not, however, be interpreted as a public mandate for action as there is good reason to believe that the average citizen's knowledge of and interest in this area is minimal.

**TABLE 4 JUDGESHIPS BASED ON MERIT PROCESS**  
(QUESTION:) Do you think that candidates for judgeships should be screened through a merit process based on meeting certain standards and receiving recommendations from professional legal persons?

OPINION	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
STRONGLY AGREE	181	22.5	22.5
AGREE	487	60.6	83.1
DISAGREE	66	8.2	91.3
STRONGLY DISAGREE	8	1.0	92.3
DON'T KNOW	57	7.1	99.4
N/A	4	.5	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

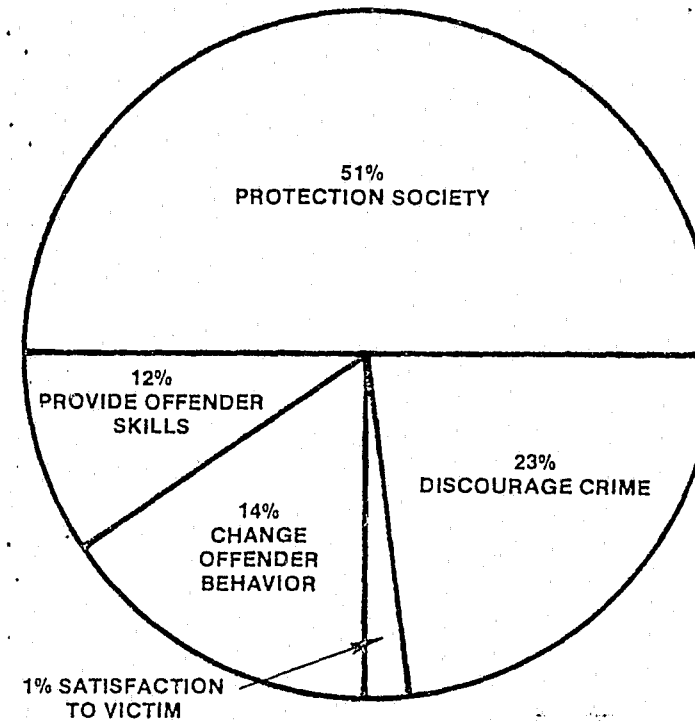
The Survey illustrated quite clearly that Ohioans accept the belief that money can influence the course of justice with regard to defense counsel. Nearly three-fourths of the respondents felt that persons financially able to hire private attorneys fare better in court than those who must rely on indigent defense counsel. This attitude is further substantiated in the confidence rating in Table 22.

**TABLE 5 PRIVATE vs COURT APPOINTED ATTORNEYS**  
(QUESTION:) People who can afford private attorneys generally fair better in court appointed by the state.

OPINION	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
STRONGLY AGREE	126	15.7	15.7
AGREE	460	57.3	73.0
DISAGREE	116	14.4	87.4
STRONGLY DISAGREE	9	1.1	88.5
DON'T KNOW	91	11.3	99.8
N/A	1	.1	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

# ATTITUDES ABOUT PRISONS

**FIGURE 8 ATTITUDES ABOUT PRISONS**  
WHY DO WE NEED PRISONS?



The Public has less contact with the Corrections Component of Criminal Justice than any other, yet opinions run strong on the role and effectiveness of prisons. By a three-to-one margin Ohioans feel the role of prisons should be a defensive one. When asked to identify the most important reasons for having prisons seventy-four percent (74%) of those surveyed cited protection of society (51%) or discouragement of crime (23%) (Fig. 8). Only twenty-six percent (26%) noted reasons aimed at offender rehabilitation or skills improvement. This finding seems consistent with the perceived need for tougher sentencing illustrated in Fig. 7. However, there was very little vengeance noted in the responses, with only one percent (1%) of the respondents stating that prisons should exist for the satisfaction of the victim. And, even within this category, those who interpreted the question in terms of monetary restitution should not be considered vengeful.

A vast majority of the respondents also believed that prison sentences do not deter offenders from committing more crimes after being released (Table 6). Better than 80% of the respondents felt that at least one-quarter of all offenders commit new crimes after prison, and 50% believed that at least half of all such offenders recidivate. There was a predictable clustering of responses around the 50% figure, often seen as a "safe" response area for this type of question, but the overall response characteristics strongly indicate that the Public is skeptical of the Criminal Justice System's capacity to effectively reform criminal offenders.

**TABLE 6 PERCENT COMMIT CRIME AFTER PRISON**  
(QUESTION:) What percent of all persons released from prisons do you think commit a crime after their release?

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
0 - 10%	18	2.1	2.1
13 - 20%	25	3.1	5.2
25 - 30%	49	6.1	11.3
33 - 40%	51	6.3	17.6
45 - 50%	178	22.2	39.8
55 - 60%	92	11.4	51.2
62 - 67%	31	3.7	54.9
70 - 80%	200	24.8	79.7
85 - 95%	62	7.7	87.4
98 - 100%	12	1.4	88.8
DON'T KNOW	83	10.3	99.1
N/A	2	.2	99.3
TOTAL	803	99.3	99.3

**TABLE 7 INCREASE IN TAX FOR NEW PRISON**  
(QUESTION:) Would you be willing to have the state income tax increased about 10% over each of the next five years, in order to build new prisons in Ohio?

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
YES	239	29.8	29.8
NO	482	60.0	89.8
DEPENDS	37	4.6	94.4
DON'T KNOW	41	5.1	99.5
N/A	4	.5	100.0
TOTAL	803	100.0	100.0

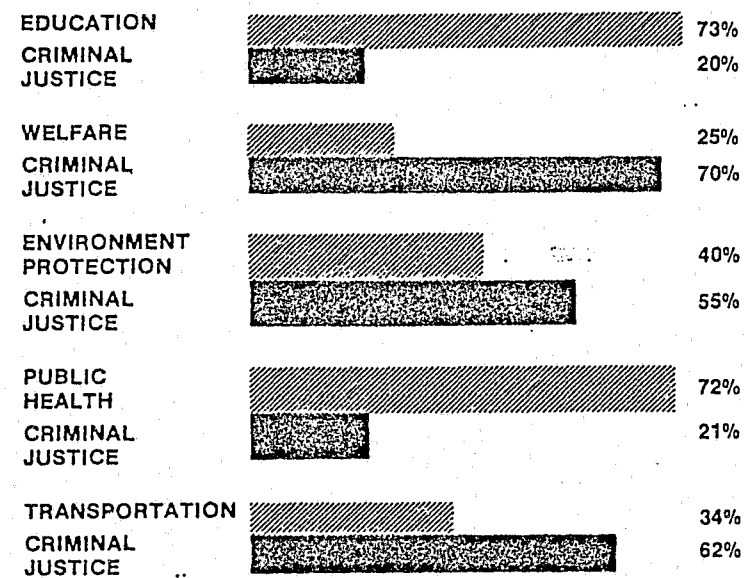
A final question about prisons concerned public support for additional prison space. The question was posed as a hypothetical increase in State income taxes and drew a decidedly negative response from those surveyed (Table 7). It is possible that the mention of "income tax" triggered a defense mechanism strong enough to override the issue in question, and future survey efforts will attempt to approach the issue from alternative standpoints (eg., sales tax, license taxes, etc.). Still the response points to a possible inconsistency in the Public attitude, one which decision-makers should keep in mind. The actual dollar commitment called for in the hypothetical tax increase would have been very modest (\$20-\$30 for the average Ohioan), yet anything less than this kind of total State funding effort would probably be inadequate for the expensive proposition of building new prisons.

# PUBLIC OPINION ISSUES

Several questions in the Survey dealt with issues which draw a disproportionately large share of public debate and which tend to affect several areas of Criminal Justice, rather than just one. These issues included capital punishment, plea bargaining and dollar support for Criminal Justice.

Because government spending priorities are always of concern the respondents were asked to choose, in terms of spending tax dollars, between Criminal Justice and a series of other traditional government functions. The issue was addressed as a series of paired comparisons between Criminal Justice and each of the other functions (Fig. 9).

**FIGURE 9**  
PUBLIC SUPPORT COMPARISONS:  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND.....



Not surprisingly, most Ohioans feel that public education claims on the tax dollar are of greater importance than those of Criminal Justice. Education is typically the biggest spender in local government and, in Ohio, outspends Criminal Justice by a seven-to-one margin. Public health was also rated as a higher priority than Criminal Justice, although there is some reason to believe that the respondents may have misunderstood the intent of the question, substituting "health" for government subsidized "public health" programs.

In three head-to-head comparisons citizens indicated a higher priority for Criminal Justice. Respondents favored Criminal Justice over Welfare by nearly three-to-one, a predictable result even though Welfare services in Ohio currently cost twice as much as those of Criminal Justice. Criminal Justice also fared well against Public Transportation winning that paired comparison by nearly two-to-

one. The results were closer for Criminal Justice vs. Environmental Protection, but a solid majority favored the former. This last finding may reflect the growing impatience with environmental issues in Ohio.

**TABLE 8 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS INHUMANE**

OPINION	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
STRONGLY AGREE	51	6.4	6.4
AGREE	181	22.5	28.9
DISAGREE	439	54.7	83.6
STRONGLY DISAGREE	83	10.3	93.9
DON'T KNOW	48	6.0	99.9
N/A	1	.1	100.0
TOTAL	803	100.0	100.0

Attitudes about capital punishment were measured through a series of three questions, each one stronger than the last. The first question asked respondents if they felt capital punishment was "inhumane", this as a test of the "cruel and unusual punishment" clause of the Constitution, often cited in this debate. The series then proceeded to ask if respondents believed capital punishment was an "effective deterrent" against crime and, finally, if the practice should be used as a punishment for certain types of crime (not specified). Surprisingly, the responses showed the opposite progression from what was expected. That is, whereas 29% felt capital punishment was inhumane, only 16% felt that it should not be used. Conversely, 82% of the respondents said capital punishment is an appropriate penalty for some crimes, but only 65% were willing to state that it was not inhumane.

The same tendency was noted when the results were broken out by race (Fig. 10). Barely half of the black respondents felt that capital punishment was an effective crime deterrent and more than half (52%) believed it was "inhumane." Nevertheless, an overwhelming majority (70%) agreed with the statement that "Capital punishment should be legal for certain types of crimes."

**TABLE 9 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS DETERRENT**

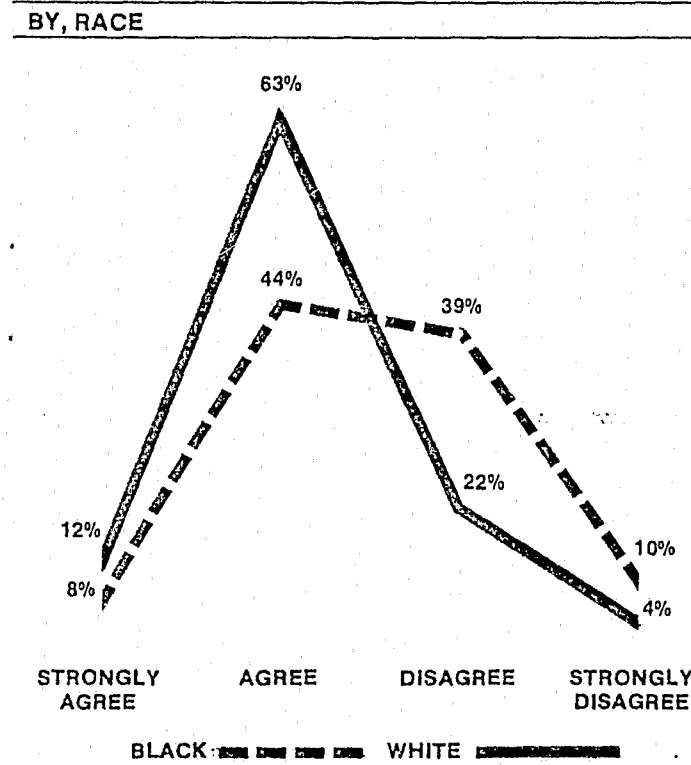
(QUESTION:) Is capital punishment effective in deterring criminal acts?

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
STRONGLY AGREE	87	10.8	10.8
AGREE	473	58.9	69.7
DISAGREE	173	21.5	91.2
STRONGLY DISAGREE	32	4.0	95.2
DON'T KNOW	38	4.7	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

**TABLE 10 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT FOR SOME CRIMES**

OPINION	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
STRONGLY AGREE	172	21.4	21.4
AGREE	488	60.8	82.2
DISAGREE	98	12.2	94.4
STRONGLY DISAGREE	30	3.7	98.1
DON'T KNOW	15	1.9	100.0
N/A			
TOTAL	803	100.0	100.0

**FIGURE 10 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS A CRIME DETERRENT**



The questions about plea bargaining brought predictable responses. By a large majority the Public disapproves of the practice. In order to preclude any biases which the actual term "plea-bargaining" might have drawn the questions were phrased without actually using that term. Not surprisingly, Ohioans are somewhat more tolerant of the practice when used to induce further testimony than when used to secure a guilty plea from the defendant (Tables 11 and 12).

**TABLE 11 REDUCE CHARGES FOR A PLEA**

(QUESTION:) Prosecuting attorneys should be allowed to reduce felony charges against an arrested person in exchange for a guilty plea.)

OPINION	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
STRONGLY AGREE	10	1.2	1.2
AGREE	188	23.4	24.6
DISAGREE	420	52.3	76.9
STRONGLY DISAGREE	119	14.8	91.7
DON'T KNOW	64	8.0	99.7
N/A	2	.2	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

**TABLE 12 REDUCE CHARGES FOR TESTIMONY**

(QUESTION:) Prosecuting attorneys should be allowed to reduce felony charges against an arrested person in exchange for that person's agreement to testify against another person charged with the crime.

OPINION	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
STRONGLY AGREE	15	1.9	1.9
AGREE	275	34.2	36.1
DISAGREE	355	44.2	80.3
STRONGLY DISAGREE	74	9.2	89.5
DON'T KNOW	83	10.3	99.8
N/A	1	.1	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

# ATTITUDES ABOUT JUVENILE JUSTICE

Ohio citizens, in general, feel about Juvenile Justice as they do about Criminal Justice—it is too lenient. Three-out-of-four respondents felt this way, and 71% believed that juveniles who commit serious violent offenses should be bound over to be tried as adults. Also, four-out-of-five respondents disagreed with the statement that "juvenile courts interfere too much," implying that Ohioans are sympathetic to strong juvenile court options, even when those involve family relationships.

However, two of the questions drew unforeseen responses. Seven-out-of-ten respondents felt that juveniles should not be put in jail for running away, a practice which is currently the cause of serious debate, nationally and in the State. The Survey did not attempt to determine citizen intensity on this issue. A second surprise was the three-to-one majority who said they would have no objections to the locating of a juvenile justice treatment facility in their neighborhood. The finding seems at odds with difficulties which have occurred in recent years when trying to place such facilities in residential settings. Part of the explanation may lie in the intensity of those who answered "Yes" (Table 13).

**TABLE 13 JUVENILE JUSTICE ISSUES**

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Juveniles Should be Tried as Adults for Serious, Violent Offenses.	16%	55%	26%	3%
Juvenile Courts Interfere Too Much.	2%	18%	73%	8%
Juvenile Court Judges Should be Allowed to Jail Runaway Youths.	2%	28%	61%	10%
The Juvenile Justice System is Too Lenient.	10%	66%	23%	1%
Would you have any objections to the location of a juvenile justice treatment facility in your neighborhood?	"YES" 23%	"NO" 77%		

# PUBLIC CONFIDENCE LEVELS

Public confidence in some of the various Criminal Justice System components was measured by a series of ten questions (Table 14-23). Respondents were asked to describe their confidence levels in each component, choosing from "a great deal," "some," "not much," and "none." Law enforcement agencies tended to rate higher confidence levels than did courts and attorneys, with the

State Highway Patrol ranking far above all others. The lowest ratings were reserved for local criminal courts and court-appointed defense attorneys. Once again, it can probably be assumed that these judgements are at least partly based on the amount of public contact with and exposure to each of these components. Confidence levels for the federal components did not reflect any deepseated mistrust or animosity despite the enormous amount of controversy surrounding Watergate and various U.S. Supreme Court decisions in recent years.

**TABLE 14 CONFIDENCE IN FBI**

(QUESTION:) For each agency I read, would you tell me if you have a great deal of confidence in it, some confidence in it, not much confidence in it, or no confidence in it at all.

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
A GREAT DEAL	389	48.4	48.4
SOME	296	36.9	85.3
NOT MUCH	62	7.7	93.0
NONE	33	4.1	97.1
DON'T KNOW	22	2.7	99.8
N/A	1	.1	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

**TABLE 15 CONFIDENCE IN HIGHWAY PATROL**

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
A GREAT DEAL	520	64.8	64.8
SOME	237	29.5	94.3
NOT MUCH	24	3.0	97.3
NONE	9	1.1	98.4
DON'T KNOW	11	1.4	99.8
N/A	2	.2	100.0
TOTAL	803	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 16 CONFIDENCE IN LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENT**

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
A GREAT DEAL	347	43.2	43.2
SOME	288	35.9	79.1
NOT MUCH	96	12.0	91.1
NONE	47	5.9	97.0
DON'T KNOW	19	2.4	99.4
N/A	6	.7	100.1
TOTAL	803	100.1	100.1

**TABLE 17 CONFIDENCE IN COUNTY SHERIFF**

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
A GREAT DEAL	267	33.3	33.3
SOME	323	40.2	73.5
NOT MUCH	106	13.2	86.7
NONE	48	6.0	92.7
DON'T KNOW	58	7.2	99.9
N/A	1	.1	100.0
TOTAL	803	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 18 CONFIDENCE IN UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT**

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
A GREAT DEAL	244	30.4	30.4
SOME	317	39.5	69.9
NOT MUCH	140	17.4	87.3
NONE	57	7.1	94.4
DON'T KNOW	43	5.4	99.8
N/A	2	.2	100.0
TOTAL	803	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 19 CONFIDENCE IN LOCAL COURTS**

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
A GREAT DEAL	103	12.8	12.8
SOME	411	51.2	64.0
NOT MUCH	171	21.3	85.3
NONE	54	6.7	92.0
DON'T KNOW	63	7.8	99.8
N/A	1	.1	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

**TABLE 20 CONFIDENCE IN UNITED STATES ATTORNEY GENERAL**

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
A GREAT DEAL	201	25.0	25.0
SOME	378	47.1	72.1
NOT MUCH	76	9.5	81.6
NONE	22	2.7	84.3
DON'T KNOW	124	15.4	99.7
N/A	2	.2	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

**TABLE 21 CONFIDENCE IN PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS**

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
A GREAT DEAL	160	19.9	19.9
SOME	437	54.4	74.3
NOT MUCH	112	13.9	88.2
NONE	36	4.5	92.7
DON'T KNOW	55	6.8	99.5
N/A	3	.4	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

**TABLE 22 CONFIDENCE IN COURT APPOINTED ATTORNEYS**

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
A GREAT DEAL	109	13.6	13.6
SOME	377	46.9	60.5
NOT MUCH	184	22.9	83.4
NONE	62	7.7	91.1
DON'T KNOW	69	8.6	99.7
N/A	2	.2	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

**TABLE 23 CONFIDENCE IN PRIVATE ATTORNEYS**

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
A GREAT DEAL	201	25.0	25.0
SOME	378	47.1	72.1
NOT MUCH	76	9.5	81.6
NONE	22	2.7	84.3
DON'T KNOW	124	15.4	99.7
N/A	2	.2	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9



# CRIME PREVENTION ATTITUDES

The State of Ohio has had a special office for the development and conduct of statewide crime prevention programs since January, 1976. The Division of Crime Prevention presently conducts these programs under the title, "Operation Crime Alert." The present program is a coordinated effort, utilizing state resources and the leadership of local citizens and officials.

A portion of the survey was used to measure data which might reflect on the past impact of the crime prevention program. It was also designed to solicit citizen concern for the continuance or expansion of crime prevention programs within the State.

The analysis which follows differs from that found in the first part of the Report, primarily because the "Crime Prevention" section of the Survey made extensive use of filter questions (i.e., questions designed to isolate respondents displaying the "looked for" traits or qualities). Thus, several of the questions were addressed to only a small number of the 803 Survey respondents. Also, this section makes considerable use of "three dimensional" analysis. For example, persons who made their homes more secure during the past year are analyzed in terms of their responses to the "safe in neighborhood" question from the first section of the Survey.

FIGURE 11

QUESTION: As far as you know, is there a local crime prevention program in your community?

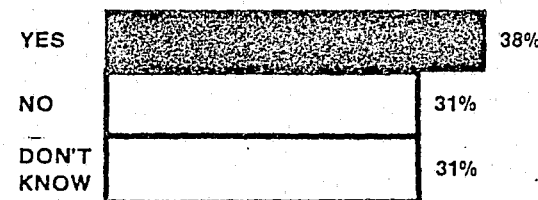
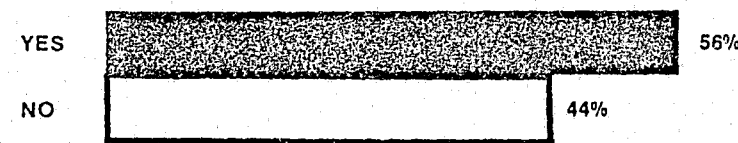


FIGURE 12

When the "Don't Know" responses are removed the "Yes" and "No" answers divide as follows:



A "Yes" response to this question means that there is a crime prevention program in the community and it is known to the respondent. A "No" response may mean that there is no program, or that the respondent is not aware that a program exists. Our analysis is limited to the "Yes" responses. We are concerned to note those factors which might lead one to know, or seek to know, about a local crime prevention program.

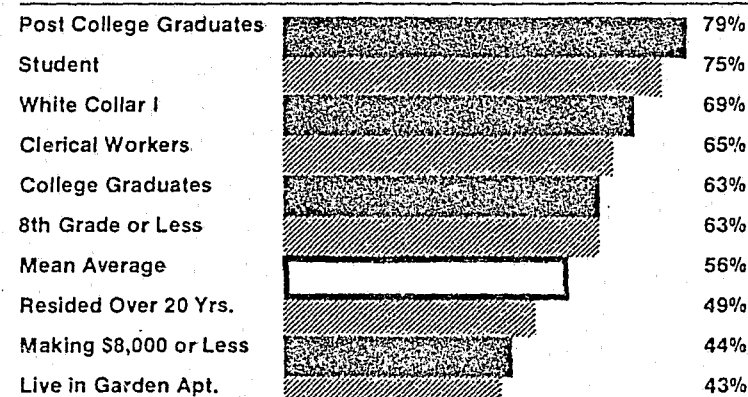
Knowledge of the existence of a crime prevention

program is *not* influenced by the following:

1. Whether citizens are victims or non-victims of crime.
2. Whether citizens feel limited or are not limited by any fear of crime.
3. Whether citizens feel safe or unsafe in their neighborhoods during either the day or the night.
4. The respondent's sex or race.

There were some significantly higher and lower "Yes" responses. These are compared to "No" responses only, as in Figure #12.

FIGURE 13



Question: Have you ever participated in the (local crime prevention) program?

This question was only asked of the 305 respondents who had indicated that they knew of a local crime prevention program. Of these 12%, or 34 people, had participated. This is too small a number to partition further with any degree of reliability in itself. However, lower levels of participation may be noted in three classifications which are lower on a number of other items in this Survey:

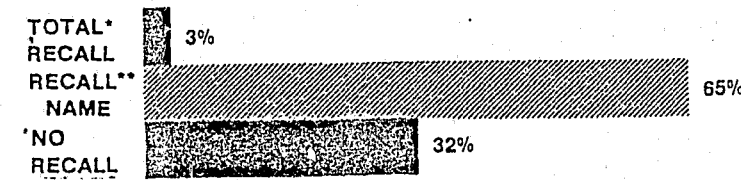
CLASSIFICATION	% RESPONDING "YES"
8th Grade & Some High School	2.4%
Retired Persons	5.0%
Aged 60 and up	6.8%

Question: Many people can't recall the name of Ohio's crime prevention program. Can you recall the name of that program?

Many people tell us that, but actually the program is called Operation Crime Alert. Do you ever recall hearing or seeing that title?

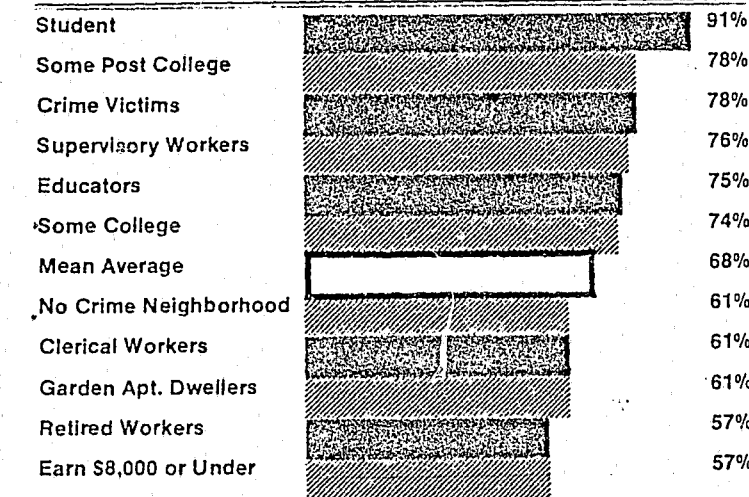
Several steps were used in a series of questions in order to identify whether respondents could remember the name of the statewide program or recall having heard it even though they could not remember the name on their own. Responses were as given below:

FIGURE 14 Recognition of OCA



The following graph shows higher to lower levels of recognition. "Recognition" includes TOTAL RECALL and RECALL NAME.

FIGURE 15 Recognition of OCA



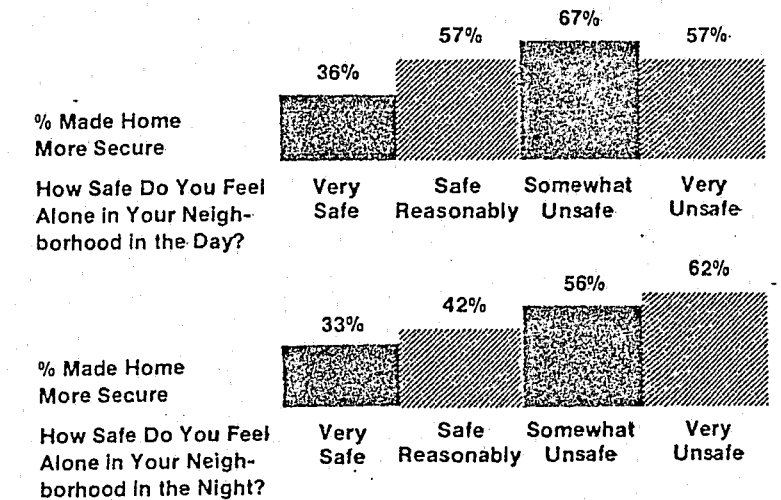
Question: During the past year have you taken any measures to make your home more secure?

Forty-two percent (42%) responded "Yes" to this question. Some variation in this response will be due to "natural" explanation. We might assume that those newly occupying a residence will be more likely to have made it more secure during the past year. We might also assume that long-time residents would be more likely to have made improvements in security over previous years, and thus be less likely to have done so in the immediately preceding year. Thus the Survey reports that 47% of those in their homes less than one year responded "Yes." Thirty-two percent (32%) of those in residences over 20 years responded "Yes."

A cross comparison to citizen attitudes on safety in their neighborhoods is shown below. The percentage is of those who have made their homes more secure in the past year.

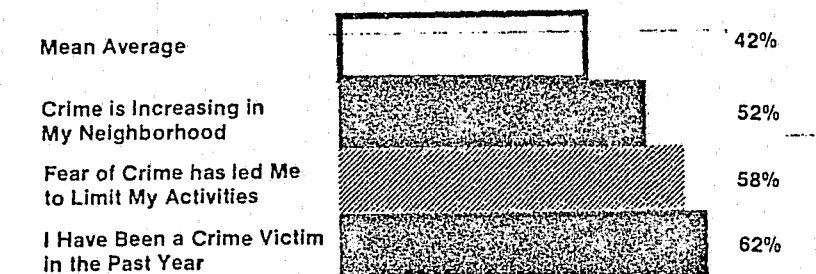
\*TOTAL RECALL=Remembered name Operation Crime Alert without assistance.  
\*\*RECALL NAME=Remembered hearing or seeing the name when given to them.

FIGURE 16



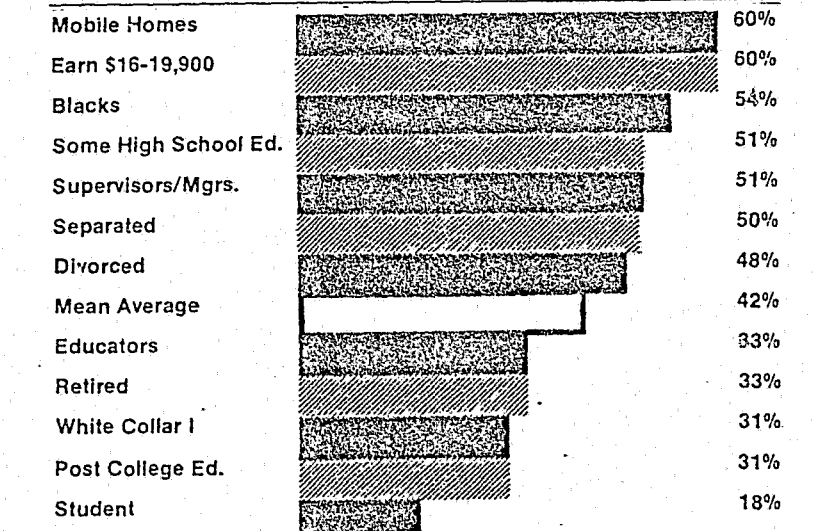
Perceptions of the "personal" effects of crime are associated with increases in the percent of those making security improvements.

FIGURE 17 % Made Home More Secure



Other classifications in which there is some variation are noted below.

FIGURE 18 % Made Home More Secure





Question: Do any of your valuable possessions have permanent property identification markings?

Forty-four percent (44%) responded "Yes" to this question. Feelings of safety had little effect on whether individuals had property markings on their possessions. Limitation of activities because of fear of crime also had no effect. There was an increase in markings as crime was seen to be increasing, as noted below.

FIGURE 19 % Property Marked

No Crime Neighborhood	18%
Decreasing Crime Neighborhood	41%
Mean Average	42%
Increasing Crime Neighborhood	50%
Crime Victims	53%

There appear to be two clusters of respondents on property identification markings. One cluster is slightly higher than the mean average, at 50%, and consists of the following:

- Those with some college
- Those who are single
- Those with income from \$12,000 to \$15,900
- Those who have occupations: skilled labor supervisor/manager white collar II

The second cluster is more diffused, spreading from 30-38%, with one group at 18%. These include:

- Those with 8th grade education or less (18%)
- Those with some high school
- Those who are widowed
- Those earning less than \$8,000
- Those who have occupations: white collar I retired

Blacks (51%) and males (59%) tend to mark property more frequently.

Question: Do you think private business and industry should be doing more to prevent crime or do you think they are already doing enough?

Do you think local governments should be doing more to prevent crime or do you think they are already doing enough?

And now about State government: should they be doing more to prevent crime, or are they doing enough?

Responses for doing more: ...68% on private business ...and industry ...80% on local government ...85% on State government

On all three questions there was a general pattern that the more unsafe the respondent felt, day and night, the

more the respondent wanted business and government to act to prevent crime. The following shows responses in support of more crime prevention efforts.

FIGURE 20 Business, Local Government, and State, do more Crime Prevention

Day				
Very Safe	B			65%
	LG			77%
	S			80%
Reasonably Safe	B			75%
	LG			87%
	S			88%
Somewhat Unsafe	B			79%
	LG			95%
	S			100%
Very Unsafe	B			93%
	LG			100%
	S			85%

FIGURE 21 Business, Local Government, and State, do more Crime Prevention

Night				
Very Safe	B			59%
	LG			71%
	S			75%
Reasonably Safe	B			70%
	LG			83%
	S			86%
Somewhat Unsafe	B			83%
	LG			88%
	S			83%
Very Unsafe	B			69%
	LG			88%
	S			91%

There were some inconsistent and mixed findings on other classifications for business doing more to prevent crime. In general, those who might be viewed as owning or managing a business tended to drop in support, though not below 50%. Those working for a business tended to want more efforts, though the increases were slight.

Stronger support for increased local government efforts was found among blacks, crime victims, lower wage and education levels, students, and those in supervisory/manager positions. Those who live in types of housing generally rented are also quite high. The only group which appeared to be significantly lower was white collar I workers.

Stronger support for state government efforts was found among blacks, crime victims, those who feel their activities are limited by crime, those with an 8th grade education or less, college graduates, and those who work in supervisory/management positions. Support weakened

somewhat among the separated and divorced, white collar I and educators, and those living in high rise apartments and mobile homes.

Question: In your opinion, should State taxes be used to support a State office for the development and promotion of crime prevention programs?

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of the respondents said "Yes." Variations in levels of support were small and mixed in the various categories. This suggests that there is a generalized support for the use of tax dollars for this purpose regardless of population characteristics, citizen attitudes on other subjects, or their experiences with crime. No group or classification is found which is opposed by a majority of its members.

## PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Eleven personal characteristics were recorded for each respondent ("zip code" and "occupation" are not included in this report), and aggregate totals for these variables are found in Tables 26-33. In addition to the traditional background variables the Survey also attempted to determine the victimization status of the respondents (Tables 24 and 25 below). More than 14% stated that they had been the victim of crime during the past year, a figure by no means high for victimization data. However, these few questions do not constitute a full victimization series and any "victim" interpretations of the data should be made cautiously.

Most of the personal characteristics appear to be representative of the Ohio population at large. Blacks are slightly underrepresented in the Survey but still fall within the error range and, furthermore, demonstrate attitudes which are consistent with six separately administered

surveys in the six largest counties in Ohio. "Income" appears to have been slightly overreported but the variable was, at any rate, a rather weak predictive variable.

TABLE 26 AGE

AGE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
18-30	272	33.9	33.9
31-45	204	25.4	59.3
46-60	188	23.4	82.7
60+	128	15.9	98.5
REFUSED	10	1.2	99.8
N/A	1	.1	100.0
TOTAL	803	100.0	100.0

TABLE 24 VICTIM OF CRIME

(QUESTION:) During the past year, have you been a victim of crime?

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
YES	116	14.4	14.4
NO	681	84.4	99.2
N/A	6	.7	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

TABLE 25 DID YOU REPORT CRIME

(QUESTION:) (If "YES" to the above) Did you report that crime/those crimes to a law enforcement agency such as the police?

RESPONSE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
YES; ALL REPORTED	86	10.7	10.7
NONE REPORTED	27	3.4	14.1
DON'T KNOW	3	.4	14.5
N/A	687	85.6	100.1
TOTAL	803	100.1	100.1

TABLE 27 RACE

RACE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
WHITE	731	91.0	91.0
BLACK	53	6.6	97.6
OTHER	8	1.0	98.6
REFUSED	6	.7	99.3
N/A	5	.6	99.9
TOTAL	803	99.9	99.9

TABLE 28 SEX

SEX	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
MALE	402	50.1	50.1
FEMALE	400	49.8	99.9
N/A	1	.1	100.0
TOTAL	803	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 29 FAMILY INCOME**

INCOME LEVEL	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
<THAN \$8,000	82	10.2	10.2
\$8,000-11,900	98	12.2	22.4
\$12,000-15,900	110	13.7	36.1
\$16,000-19,900	103	12.8	48.9
\$20,000-25,000	139	17.3	66.2
>THAN \$25,000	159	19.8	86.0
REFUSED	52	6.5	92.5
DON'T KNOW	59	7.3	99.8
N/A	1	.1	99.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>99.9</b>

**TABLE 30 EDUCATION**

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
8th GRADE OR LESS	33	4.1	4.1
SOME HIGH SCHOOL	93	11.6	15.7
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	314	39.1	54.8
SOME COLLEGE	170	21.3	76.1
COLLEGE GRADUATE	112	13.9	90.0
SOME POST-GRADUATE	23	2.9	92.9
POST GRAD DEGREE	42	5.2	98.1
SOME VOCATIONAL	6	.7	98.8
GRAD OF VOCATIONAL	8	1.0	99.9
N/A	2	.2	100.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 31 MARITAL STATUS**

STATUS	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
MARRIED	562	70.0	70.0
SINGLE	140	17.4	87.4
DIVORCED	55	6.8	94.2
SEPARATED	6	.7	94.9
WIDOWED	37	4.6	99.5
OTHER	1	.1	99.6
REFUSED	1	.1	99.7
N/A	1	.1	99.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>99.8</b>	<b>99.8</b>

**TABLE 32 LENGTH AT PRESENT ADDRESS**

LENGTH	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
LESS THAN 1 YRS.	120	14.9	14.9
1-3 YRS.	203	25.3	40.2
4-10 YRS.	158	19.7	59.9
10-20 YRS.	173	21.5	81.4
MORE THAN 20 YRS.	143	17.8	99.2
REFUSED	3	.4	96.6
N/A	3	.4	100.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 33 TYPE OF HOUSE STRUCTURE**

TYPE	NO. OF INTERVIEWS	% OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE	639	79.6	79.6
TWO-FAMILY HOUSE	40	5.0	84.6
HIGH-RISE APARTMENT	31	3.9	88.5
GARDEN APARTMENT	36	4.5	93.0
MOBILE HOME	15	1.9	94.9
OTHER	37	4.6	99.5
REFUSED	3	.4	99.9
N/A	2	.2	101.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>101.0</b>	<b>101.0</b>

## SURVEY BACKGROUND/METHODOLOGY

The Citizen Attitude Survey was jointly sponsored and administered by the Division of Crime Prevention and the Statistical Analysis Center (Office of Criminal Justice Services), within Ohio's Department of Economic and Community Development. The Survey attempts to compliment previous but fragmentary survey efforts in Ohio, such as the National Crime Survey, but most of the questions were independently developed with Ohio's unique needs in mind.

The actual execution of the Survey was contracted to the Polimetrics Laboratory of the Ohio State University Research Foundation, one of seven institutions submitting bids for the project. The Polimetrics Lab staff conducted 803 randomly selected telephone interviews of respondents in 52 counties. The only variable controls were for age (limited to 18 and over) and sex (50%-50%). The interviewing process ensured that residents with unlisted telephone numbers were as likely to be contacted as those with listed numbers, given the ratios of those numbers. The sample size provides an error factor plus or minus 4% at the 90% level of confidence.

In addition to the Statewide study the Survey included seven other independent cohorts not addressed in this report. These separate surveys, which included most of the same questions, were conducted for Rural Ohio (49 non-SMSA counties) and six major metropolitan counties including Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lucas, Montgomery and Summit. The error factor for these seven cohorts is also plus or minus 4% at the 90% level. Results of these studies are not in report form but are extant in the Office of Criminal Justice Service's data base.

The actual interviewing was done between August 18 and October 15, 1979, and included some 3,400 interviews among the eight cohorts (including oversampling). The interviews were not done in any particular sequence, this to minimize the possible impact which any "extraordinary event" might have on citizen attitudes about crime and criminal justice.

Several of the response categories were recoded after completion of the Survey in order to facilitate data display and manageability. Two of these, "age of respondent," (Table 26) and "percent of persons who commit crimes after released from prison," (Table 6) were simply regrouped into larger numeric units. A third, however,

"cause of crime," required some interpretation of the various responses (see p.4). The individual responses fell quite "cleanly" into three of the five generic categories used for the recoding. These three were Economic Causes, Physical Causes (mostly drugs) and Criminal Justice System Causes (lenient judges, soft prisons, etc.). The two other cause categories, "Social/Cultural Causes" and "Moral/Religious Causes," were more difficult. As a rule, "Social/Cultural Causes" included any statements which directed judgements against society as a whole (eg., "leisure time," availability of pornography, etc.), while "Moral/Religious Causes" included judgements against "human nature" (eg., "Man is basically violent, greedy, etc.). This latter category also included any specific statements about religion, church attendance, prayer, etc.

Several of the data presented in this document, particularly those displayed in the graphics, are based on adjusted rather than absolute frequencies (i.e., the non-responses have been apportioned among all of the response categories). This was only done for questions for which the non-responses were negligible.

Data from the Survey have been converted to magnetic tapes programmed for SCSS, and is stored in the Statistical Analysis Center's computerized data base. Because of potential problems in interpretation, copies of the tapes will not be made available to public or private sources, but printout requests will be honored when limited to one copy per requestor.

Any questions concerning execution and administration of the Survey should be addressed to:

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P.O. Box 1001  
Columbus, Ohio 43216  
(614) 466-5011