THE NATIVE INMATE IN ONTARIO



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The Ontario Native Council on Justice is composed of the following member organizations:

- *Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians
- *Grand Council Treaty #9
- *Grand Council Treaty #3
- *Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres
- *Ontario Metis & Non-Status Indian Association
- *Ontario Native Women's Association
- *Union of Ontario Indians
- *Native Law Student's Association

In addition, through the temporary absence program the Council endeavours to arrange the participation of two Native inmates from provincial correctional institutions as full voting delegates at Council meetings.

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COVER DESIGN

Born in Miniota, Manitoba on July 24, 1946,
Maxine Noel (Ioyan Mani) creates in gouache on paper, stone
lithography, etching, and serigraphs. With the exception of
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in three shows at the Northland Galleries, the 1980 International
Art Fair in Toronto, and in commercial galleries across Canada,
in the United States, and in Europe.

Of her design for the cover of this publication, she says:

The image is designed to resemble a shield - a circular shield. The circle being a very important part of our existence and that of all living creatures and life around us. Affixed to the bottom of the shield are 10 feathers, one for each of the 9 Native constituencies represented on the Council and one for the Ministry of Correctional Services. The bars obviously represent the institutions. Lastly, the most important of all is the figure with uplifted pipe which needs absolutely no interpretation whatsoever.

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ADMINISTRATIVE ABSTRACT

This report tries to determine the problems faced by Native persons serving time in the Ontario Correctional system. The majority of the Natives were serving a sentence when they were interviewed. The sample was made up of 66 females and 447 males. In this group, 272 people normally lived on a reserve. Most of the male Natives had been charged with property offences, public order offences or assault while the women were most often charged for liquor offences, property offences or public order offences. Over a third of the inmates were serving sentences of less than 90 days while another third were serving sentences of up to a year. The remainder were serving sentences up to two years in length. The majority of the offences were committed in a city or town rather than on a reserve. Most of the Natives were under the influence of alcohol or drugs when they committed their offences.

Less than half of the inmates had a lawyer at their first court appearance. A large proportion asked for and got Legal Aid at a later date. In fact, the lawyers provided by Legal Aid seemed to be the most important contact that the Natives had during the entire trial process. Many of the Native inmates had been convicted prior to their present sentence. Over a third had first been convicted as juveniles. The report shows that most of the Natives had a lengthy history of trouble with the law. There were 224 Finger-Print Service (F.P.S.) reports on the institutional files which listed a total of 2,116 convictions. A check of Ministry records showed that since April 1, 1975, 496 of the inmates had served an average of 586.3 days for a total of 7,117 counts.

The study found differences associated with sex when looking at marital status, family responsibilities, dependents, employment background and usual means of support. Differences were also noted when looking at the Natives' economic plans and prospects following release. The men were usually single with no dependents. If they did have children, they were usually being cared for by a spouse or ex-spouse at the expense of the state during their term of imprisonment. Although the Natives reported that their usual source of income was some form of work, it was often temporary or seasonal employment. The unemployment rate during the year preceding their incarceration was approximately 3 times the National Average. Very few Natives had permanent jobs. Most planned to return home to a reserve or city following their release. Few of the inmates had specific plans.

A little over half of the female portion of the sample were single. Most had dependents - often two or more. During their incarceration their children were mostly in the care of their mothers or the Children's Aid Society at public expense. Their unemployment rate was very high - over 8 times the National Average. If they did have a job, it was almost always temporary. Many of the women were dependent

on some form of Welfare assistance. Most planned to go home to a reserve or a city following their release and to depend on the same source of income that they had before their incarceration.

Due to the special and well-known role which alcohol abuse usually plays in offences committed by Native people, attention was given to this problem in this report. This study tried to determine the extent to which alcohol abuse directly accounted for the charges against the Native inmates, and how alcohol abuse was involved in the criminal activity which led to their earliest conflict with the law. The survey also tried to learn about the type of drinking which took place prior to the criminal acts and the extent of drug abuse as well. Finally the study tried to determine the degree to which inmates had used institutional and community-based treatment, counselling and self-help programmes.

The results of this survey show that many of the charges against the Native inmates were connected to liquor violations. The number of alcohol offences for the female Natives was twice the number for the males. Most of the inmates themselves admitted that the use of alcohol was involved in the crimes for which they were jailed. The drinking activity, in which mainly beer, liquor and combinations of more than one alcoholic beverage were consumed, was largely conducted outside of licensed public bars. Almost one-fifth of the sample had been using drugs, mainly marijuana, at the time they committed their offence(s). Over 3 times as many women as men had been sniffing a solvent. Over three-quarters of the inmates believed alcohol was the reason why so many Native people end up in jail. The same percentage also believed that alcohol had contributed to their first clash with the justice system.

In spite of the wide use of alcohol prior to criminal behaviour which led to their current incarceration as well as their first conflict with the law, almost 2/3 of the inmates had never taken part in an alcohol treatment programme of any kind, and over 3/4 of them were not participating in any such programme while in jail. This lack of participation was true for both males and females. None of the alcohol treatment programmes in the community or in an institution are perceived to be effective by a large number of Natives - male or female.

The Native inmates in the sample were seriously isolated from their families, the Native community and each other. Although Native women were visited a little less often by their families than Native men, and their families seemed to face higher public transportation costs in order to visit, the study found no major differences between the males and females when looking at the degree of isolation.

The results show that the distance, time and expense involved in family visits probably added to the

isolation but did not entirely explain it. A breakdown in family relationships and communication was also an important reason. The isolation was much greater for Northern Native inmates, for they were visited less often than the Southern Natives and the distance, time and cost involved in visits by their families were also higher. The results of the study also show that contact with outside Native community groups and people who could help inmates learn about their culture and traditions is insufficient but is considered by the inmates to be helpful when it does occur. Participation in Native inmate self-help groups is also seen as helpful but at the present time is only available to a small minority of the inmates.

The study tried to find out if there were any problems which a lawyer or anyone else could help Native inmates with. Over 3/4 of the sample reported that there were none. One-quarter of the inmates did state some current problems for which they wanted help. Legal problems followed by institutional problems, problems dealing with release and problems to do with the family were mentioned most often. The men were more concerned with problems dealing with release while the women considered family problems to be more important.

The Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services and the Ontario Native Council on Justice and its member organizations - such as some of the Indian Friendship Centres in the Province - have tried to develop community service order projects, fine option programmes and community resource centres as alternatives to the traditional types of sentences used by the courts such as imprisonment. One purpose of the study was to determine how attractive such options would be to the inmates.

The results of the survey show that over 3/4 of the Native inmates would prefer to do Community service or make restitution instead of going to jail. If they were sentenced to a term of imprisonment the inmates would prefer to serve their sentence in a community-based resource centre or attend a halfway house or community centre as part of parole supervision. Slightly over 1/2 of those who would prefer to be in a community resource centre or a halfway house would rather be supervised by Native staff, although many of the Natives had no preference. Almost 2/3 of those inmates who did not have the choice of paying a fine instead of going to jail reported that they would have liked to have had a chance to do so. Almost 2/3 of those who were jailed for not paying a fine said that they did not have the money to pay the fine. Over 3/4 of the inmates who were serving time because they were unable to pay the fine said that they would have liked to do community service. A higher number of Native women than men were given the chance to pay a fine instead of going to jail, but a higher number of the Native female inmates defaulted in paying the fine because of a lack of funds. Although over 3/4 of the inmates were recidivists, almost 2/3 of them were not considered to be security risks during their trials. Over 1/2 of the recidivists were sent to a

jail the very first time they were found guilty of an offence. Slightly over 1/3 of the inmates were serving sentences of less than 90 days.

The survey asked the Natives the following questions. Why do so many Native people end up in jail and what can be done to prevent their conflict with the law? Alcohol abuse, unemployment and poor living conditions were considered by the Native inmates in the sample the top three causes of Native trouble with the law ending in imprisonment. The leading suggestions for prevention had to do with alcohol abuse programmes, employment opportunities and services, on-reserve culture and recreational programming and services and programmes directed to the needs of Native young people. Over 1/3 of the suggestions emphasized on-reserve programming. Over twice as many Native men as women stressed the need for on-reserve cultural and recreational programming.

During the summer of 1981 a follow-up record check was carried out. The results showed that 63% (N=310) of the Native inmates received a further 2,088 convictions. The majority of these convictions (N=1,951) resulted in terms of incarceration. In all, these ex-inmates were to serve a total of 75,862 days of incarceration.

The study shows that Native people who have been jailed in Ontario's Correctional system do have special problems which separate them from the rest of the inmate population. If special efforts were made to solve these problems, the number of Native inmates incarcerated in Ontario could be reduced.

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I INTRODUCTION

The present study was conducted jointly by the Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services and the Ontario Native Council on Justice. The purpose of the study was to determine the problems faced by Native persons incarcerated in the Ontario Correctional system. It is hoped that the results of this survey will assist in the development of positive interventions with the problems of the Native offender.

The information was gathered primarily from a structured interview administered to each Native inmate in the sample. The interviews were administered by three Native women researchers in the employ of the Ontario Native Council on Justice.

All inmates who could be identified as being Native were interviewed. Two different time periods were used for the interviews. This was done for two reasons. One was to ensure a large sample size. The other was to increase the number of short sentenced inmates and female inmates. The two time periods were the summer of 1979 and the winter of 1980. An attempt was made to interview every Native inmate who was in the institution when the researchers visited. Care was taken on the second round of visits to avoid sampling persons who were included in the first sampling.

In total 513 usable interviews were collected. The sample consisted of 66 females and 447 males. In Table 1, we present the institutions in which these inmates were held at the time that they were interviewed.

The majority of the sample was made up of status Indians (74%, 377). The remainder were 104 (20%) non-status Indians and 23 (5%) metis. The status of 9 persons could not be determined. However, a total of 272 persons normally lived on a reserve.

Except for data compiled from the inmate records, most of the findings of this report are based on the inmates' opinions and perceptions as expressed through their answers to the interviewer's questions. No attempt was made to verify the accuracy of the inmates' responses.

At the request of the Ontario Native Council on Justice, the authors have refrained from making editorial comments on the findings of the survey from outlining the implications of the data, and from submitting recommendations. The Council has decided to recommend that a Task Force on the Native Inmate in Ontario be convened upon publication of this report to be composed of representatives of Native inmates, Native inmate liaison workers, the Council and Ministries of the Attorney General and Correctional Services. The functions of this task force will be:

*To develop recommendations based on the report.

TABLE 1

*To hold a conference on "The Native Inmate in Ontario" to discuss the report and recommendations for follow-up.

*To priorize recommendations from the conference.

*To monitor the follow-up to the report and the recommendations from the task force and the conference.

THE LOCATION OF NATIVE PERSONS

AT THE TIME OF THE INTERVIEW

INSTITUTION	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Brantford	17	0	17
Brampton A.T.C.	2	0	2
Brockville	2	0	2
Burtch C.C.	18	0	18
Elgin-Middlesex D.C.	9	0	9
Fort Frances	6	. 0	6
Guelph C.C.	38	0	38
Hamilton-Wentworth D.C.	20	5	25
Kenora	74	33	107
Maplehurst C.C.	20	0	20
Millbrook C.C.	8	0	8
Mimico C.C.	1	0	1.
Monteith Complex	22	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	22
Niagara D.C.	9 .	0	9
North Bay	3	1	4
O.C.I. Brampton	10	0	10
Parry Sound	1	0	1
Perth	1	0	1
Peterborough	1	0	1
Rideau C.C.	2	0	2
Sarnia	16	0	16
Sault Ste. Marie	12	1	13
Sudbury	19	· 3	22
Thunder Bay Jail	30	3	33
Thunder Bay C.C.	61	2	63
Toronto Jail	8	0	8
Toronto East D.C.	4	0	4
Toronto West D.C.	14	4	18
Vanier Centre for Women	0	13	13
Pistol Lake C.R.C.	2	0	2
Red Lake C.R.C.	8	0	8
Lake Hope C.R.C.	4	0	4
Kawartha House	1.	0	1
Kairos Centre, Thunder Bay	4	1	5

II RESULTS

A. THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE EXPERIENCE

OVERVIEW

The majority of the inmates who were interviewed were serving a sentence at the time when they were interviewed. The men had been charged with offences dealing mostly with Property, Public Order and Assault. The women were more likely to be charged with Liquor, Property or Public Order offences. Over a third of the inmates were serving aggregate sentences of less than 90 days. Another third were serving sentences up to a year. The remaining third were serving up to two years. A large number of Natives were serving time in default of paying a fine. Almost three quarters of the offences were committed in an urban setting as opposed to a reserve setting. The majority of inmates were under the influence of alcohol or a psychotropic substance when they committed their offence.

Less than half of the inmates were represented by legal counsel at their first court appearance. Ultimately, a large proportion asked for and got Legal Aid. In fact, the lawyers provided by Legal Aid seemed to be the most important contact that the Native inmates had during the entire trial process.

A very large proportion of the Native inmates had been convicted prior to their present incarceration. Over a third of the inmates had been first convicted as juveniles. The degree of conflict with the law was extreme. There were 224 F.P.S. reports on the institutional files which listed a total of 2,116 convictions.

1. <u>Current Situation</u>

At the time that they were interviewed most of the Native inmates were serving a sentence:

*89% (N=406) sentenced,

*15% (N=78) remanded in custody,

*5% (N=27) sentenced, with outstanding charges.

Virtually all the remanded inmates (76+23=99) were males. Fewer women (44%, 29) than men (63%, 280) were held in custody prior to sentencing. Moreover, women were held for shorter periods of time (average = 13 days) than were men (average = 45 days).

The Native inmates reported that they were convicted of or were charged with a total of 1,064 charges. A detailed

description of these charges is presented in Appendix A. In Table 2 the number of charges by category are outlined. Two percentage figures are given. The first is the percentage that the number of offences in that category represents of all the offences. The second represents the number of persons receiving a charge in that category. Since there were a large number of persons charged in more than one category, the latter percentage exceeds 100%. For example, there were 169 liquor offences. So 15.9% of all offences were for liquor, yet 29% of the persons were charged with a liquor offence. It must be noted that a large proportion of the inmates (57%) were charged with at least one property offence.

In terms of charges, just under half (45%) of the charges against males involved property offences. Only 14% of the charges against males involved liquor offences. On the other hand, 31% of the charges against females involved liquor and only 24% involved property. Clearly, there were strong differences in the pattern of offences which contributed to the imprisonment of males and females.

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF OFFENCES ASSOCIATED WITH CURRENT INCARCERATION

OFFENCE TYPE	COUNT	% OF OFFENCE	PERSONS HAV	ING CHARGI CATEGORY
			N	8
PERSON	118	11.1	98	19.1
PROPERTY	456	42.9	294	57.3
PUBLIC MORALS	17	1.6	17	1.3
PUBLIC ORDER	258	24.3	185	36.1
DRUGS	7	0.7	7	1.4
LIQUOR	169	15.9	150	29.2
TRAFFIC	36	3.4	29	5.7
OTHER	3	0.3	3	0.6

There were a total of 433 inmates serving sentences at the time of their being interviewed. They reported the following aggregate sentences:

DAYS	NUMBER	PERCENT
1 - 30 31 - 60 61 - 90 91 - 365 366 - 729	89 52 21 151 88	20.6 12.0 4.8 34.9 20.3
>730	29	6.7
No answer	3	0.7

Just over a third of the inmates were serving sentences of 90 days or less.

Ninety-six of the inmates reported that they were serving time in jail in default of paying a fine. A larger proportion of females (33%, 22) than males (17%, 74) were in this situation. The reasons given for not paying the fines were:

no money 60
just did not pay fine 24
already serving time 6
other 6

The views of the inmates concerning fine option programmes are presented elsewhere. It is evident that there is a need for such a programme.

2. Factors Related to the Offence

Even though the most common offences, for which the interviewed inmates were charged, were related to property, alcohol was a significant factor in the commission of the offence. From the data, one can assume that the lives of the Native people were marked by instability caused by a transition from a reserve to an urban setting.

The majority of both the male (72%) and the female (71%) inmates committed their offences in a town setting rather than on a reserve. Moreover, most of the inmates were living in the vicinity of the location of their offence. The 397 inmates who lived in the area of their offence could not be counted as long time residents. The vast majority (87%, 345) had lived there less than a year. Of this group, over half (55%, 189) were at that location less than six months. The lack of stability of residence is also marked by the fact that just over half of all the inmates reported that their normal place of residence was on a reserve (51%, 262), yet clearly they were not in residence on the reserve.

The dynamics of the situation in which the crime was committed seems to be quite complex. The majority of the inmates reported that they committed their offences in the company of at least one other person (56%, 288) yet, in only offence.

3. The Trial Process

One of the concerns which prompted the study was whether Native inmates understood the legal process by which they were incarcerated. Another concern was whether the level of services offered at the time of the trial were adequate.

Only 44% (228) of the Native inmates were represented by legal counsel at their first court appearance. A larger

proportion of men (47%, 209) than women (29%, 19) were represented by counsel. This could reflect the differences in the nature of the offences for which they were charged.

In the majority of cases, (62%, 141) the lawyers were chosen by Legal Aid. In 53 (23%) of the cases the lawyers were chosen by the inmates or their families. Of the remaining cases, 16 were duty counsel and 8 were chosen by the Native court worker.

In total, 352 Native inmates applied for Legal Aid. Of the remainder, 109 reported that they did not apply for Legal Aid. The reasons given for not applying mostly centered on lack of interest or to the summary nature of the offences (56%, 61); or that the inmate rendered a guilty plea at the first appearance (8%, 9). However, 11 (10%) inmates were of the opinion that the process of obtaining Legal Aid took too long.

Of the 352 persons who applied for Legal Aid, 312 (89%) got the services requested. Only 7% (23) reported that they did not get Legal Aid, but of these 4 had not yet had their application processed.

When asked whether there was any help given the inmate in preparing for the trial, 57% (292) responded in the affirmative and 29% (148) answered in the negative. In most cases, the assistance came from lawyers (87%, 255). In 9% (27) of the cases the assistance came from the Native court worker.

When the inmates were asked whether anyone explained the court process to them, 47% (243) gave a positive response and 34% (174) responded negatively. Characteristically, in most of the cases (84%, 204) it was the lawyers who explained the court process. In 10 cases it was the judge and in another 18 cases it was the Native court worker. The inmates were also asked if they understood the court process. Most of the Natives who responded to this question (88%, 373) reported that they had at least some understanding of the situation. However, 11% (48) did not understand the process.

An important part of the court process is the initial plea of 'guilty' or 'not guilty'. The inmates were asked if anyone suggested how they should plead. Of the 405 inmates who answered this question 51% (207) answered that a plea had been suggested. In 93% (192) of the cases the suggestion concerning the plea came from their own lawyer.

When asked how they pleaded, only 397 inmates responded. Of these, 75% (297) registered a plea of guilty, and 12% (47) pleaded guilty to some charges but not guilty to others. Only 11% (43) gave a plea of not guilty.

Several questions were asked concerning bail, pretrial release and remand status. The responses to these questions were subjected to a careful examination to determine the course of events that had transpired. The response pattern of 30 inmates was unclear and their situation could not be determined. A small proportion (N=27) were not present in court when their case was dealt with. A further 18% (91) were sentenced

on their first court appearance. The majority of inmates 76% (N=392), were remanded at some point during their court process. A large proportion 79%, (N=309) were held in custody at some point during their remand. The majority (N=255) were remanded in custody for the entire remand period. A total of 137 inmates were released on bail on their own recognizance.

The 309 persons who spent some time remanded in custody were held for an average of 44 days by their own report. However, 213 (65%) were held for period of less than 30 days.

It would appear that a total of 255 (50%) Native inmates were held in custody during the entire judicial process. The inmates were asked why they felt they were not released on bail. A small number, 11% (29) gave economic reasons. This would indicate that bail may have been set but that inmates were unable to meet the financial or community conditions. Seven inmates actually did refuse to be released. Just over a third (97) stated that their past or current criminal involvement precluded bail being set. Almost an equal number (96) did not know why they were not released on bail. Only 8 had not at the time of the interview been to a bail hearing.

There were several opportunities where the interviewed inmates could have responded to the question by naming a Native court worker. These were questions to which a spontaneous answer was required. It was found that in three of the cases the court worker suggested a plea, in 18 cases explained the trial process and in 8 cases found a lawyer.

There was a series of questions which were specifically directed at the court worker issue. When asked if they had talked to a Native court worker, 178 inmates (34.7%) admitted that they had. Another 290 inmates (56.5%) said that they had no contact with a court worker. When asked why there had been no contacts, the following responses were recorded:

	<u>N</u>	8
Court worker did not contact inmate	98	(33.8)
Inmate unaware of court worker programme	52	(17.9)
No court worker available	82	(28.3)
No need for court worker	49	(16.9)
No time	7	(2.4)
Court worker laid charges	2	(0.7)

The details of these responses are presented in Table 3.

The services offered by the court worker to the 178 inmates who had a contact were as follows:

*	arranged for lawyer	49
*	assisted in trial	30
*	assisted with bail	6
*	assisted during sentencing	2
*	assisted with family	Ì
	contacts	14
*	general advice	26

TABLE 3

INSTITUTION WHERE INTERVIEWED BY

CONTACT WITH NATIVE COURT WORKER

INSTITUTIONS	SAW	COURT	WORKER	RE	ASO	is n	OT S	EEN
				Contacted	. ⊠	ted		
		Yes	No	Not Con	No N.C.W	Not Wanted	Unaware	Other
			NO -	<u>z</u>	Z	<u>z</u>	D.	
JAILS								
Brantford		4	13		10		3	
Brockville		0	2	1				1
Elgin Middlesex		5	4	1	3		1	1
Fort Frances		2	3	1 1 2			1	
Hamilton		12	13	3	3	4	2	1.
Kenora	•	15	60	22	. 6	12	13	6
Niagara		4	5 2	3			1	1
North Bay		2	2	1			1	
Parry Sound		1	0					
Perth		1	0					
Peterborough		0	1		1			
Sarnia		0	16	15				1
Sault Ste. Marie		3	10	6	1	2	2	
Sudbury		12	9	6	2	3		
Thunder Bay		12	16	6	2	4	4	
Toronto		5	3			1	1	1
Metro East		3	1				Ţ	
Metro West		4	11	2	2	1	4	1
CORRECTIONAL CENTRES								
Brampton		2	0					
Burtch		7	11	5	6			
Guelph		19	19	9	6	3	1	
Maplehurst		9	11	1	4	4		3
Millbrook		1	7	3	3	1		
Mimico		0	1			1		
Monteith		9	13	7	2	1	3	1
O.C.I.		4	6	1	2 3 2	2		
Rideau		0	2					
Thunder Bay		26	37	12	7	7	12	
Vanier		6	4	1	2	2		
C.R.C.				_				
Pistol Lake		0	1	1			_	
Red Lake		2	6	5			1	
Lake Hope		4	0	1				
Kawartha		0	1	1		_		,
Kairos		3	2			1		1

In addition, 38 inmates felt that the court worker was not helpful in any way, and a further 4 inmates did not know what the court worker did for them.

Only 26% (133) of the inmates had contact with, and received some assistance from the Native court worker. What is also telling is that 91 inmates did not think that they needed a contact with a court worker or perceived no benefit from a contact with a court worker. It must be noted that the Preliminary Survey indicated that 9% of that sample had a contact with the court worker programme. In the current sample 35% had a contact.

4. Prior Experience with the Criminal Justice System

Altogether 84% (433) of the inmates reported that they had received convictions prior to the present experience. The average age at first conviction was 16.5 years. In fact 37% (156) of the recidivists were first convicted as juveniles. The reported dispositions of these first convictions were as follows:

- 41 suspended sentence
- 32 fine
- 121 adult probation
- 33 juvenile probation
- 160 adult incarceration
- 61 training school

Given that so many had early experience with the courts, it is not surprising that a large number of these inmates have an extensive history of difficulties with the law. What is surprising is that 80% of the inmates admitted that alcohol contributed to their first difficulty with the law. Clearly, the current experience is a continuation of a previously established pattern. A pattern which for many was set at a very early age.

TABLE 4

AGE AT FIRST CONVICTION

	MA	LE	FE	MALE	TO	TAL
	<u>N</u>	용	N		N	8
Under 12	34	8.9	1	2.3	35	8.2
12 - 15	109	28.5	12	2.7	121	28.3
16 - 18	179	46.7	20	45.5	199	46.6
19 - 24	41	10.7	5	11.4	46	10.8
25 plus	20	5.2	6	13.6	26	6.1
Total	383		44		427	

When they were at the institution the researchers checked in institutional files for current F.P.S. reports. These reports would be present only for those individuals who were charged with an indictable offence, and had a record of indictable offences. Data were recorded from 224 (43.7% of sample) F.P.S. records. These records show that in the past:

- 98 persons were convicted of 229 charges against the person,
 - 190 persons were convicted of 1,332 property offences,
- * 17 persons were convicted of 24 'morals and decency' offences,
- 142 persons were convicted of 419 public order offences,
- * 31 persons were convicted of 52 traffic offences,
- 20 persons were convicted of 27 liquor offences.
- * 18 persons were convicted of 33 other offences.

In total the 224 persons with past records of indictable offences were convicted of 2,116 offences. This represents an average of 9.4 convictions.

These convictions resulted in the following dispositions:

- * 88 persons were fined 204 times,
- * 138 persons were given 355 fine/time options,
- * 99 persons were given a suspended sentence 201 times,
- * 2 persons were given an intermittent sentence each,
- * 17 persons were ordered to pay restitution 38 times.

In addition to these sentences there were a large number of incarcerations:

- * 159 persons received 552 sentences of less than 30 days,
- * 121 persons received 359 sentences of 30 days to 3 months,
- * 135 persons received 511 sentences of 3 months to 1 year,
- * 71 persons received 177 sentences of 1 year to 2 years less a day,
- * 13 persons received sentences of over 2 years.

There were altogether 1,143 different court processes involved in all these activities. The vast majority (87%, 194) of the persons covered by the F.P.S. reports were involved in 2 or more processes.

A check of Ministry of Correctional Services computerized records was carried out. These records include all information on inmates since April 1, 1975, and information on inmates since April 1, 1978. Matches were made for 510 of the 513 Native inmates in the study. Prior to the study 496 of the 510

(97%) inmates had served an average of 586.3 days for a total of 7,117 counts. The largest number of inmates were charged with property offences whereas the largest number of charges were alcohol related.

The details of the charges were as follows:

OFFENCE CATEGORY	INM	ATES	COUN	ITS
	N	용	_ <u>N</u> _	<u> </u>
Person	187	38	370	5.2
Property	377	76	2,293	32.2
Public morals	20	4	40	0.6
Public order	325	66	988	13.9
Liquor	299	60	2,675	37.6
Drugs	20	4	57	0.8
Traffic	104	21	369	5.2
Other	126	25	325	4.6

These charges resulted in a total of 5,611 sentences to incarceration. There were 129 Native inmates who received or more sentences of under 90 days and 105 received 5 sentences was 11.3.

The volume of these activities may seem to be overwhelming. However, the large number of convictions is not reflected in the total time that was served. Almost half (46%) of the Natives served in total a year or less. The details of the total time served are as follows:

TOTAL TIME SERVED FOR ALL INCARCERATIONS	INMATES N %	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
1 - 90 days	70 14.1	14.1
91 - 180 days	51 10.3	24.4
181 - 1 year	109 22.0	46.4
+1 - 2 years	125 25.2	71.6
+2 - 3 years +3 - 4 years	62 12.5	84.1
+4 - 5 years	44 8.9	93.0
+5 years	15 3.0	96.0
<u> </u>	<u>20</u> 4.0	100.0
	496	•

B. SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION

OVERVIEW

An objective of this study was to obtain information about the socio-economic situation of Native inmates: their marital status, family responsibilities, the care and support

of their dependents during incarceration, employment background, usual means of support and their economic plans and prospects following release.

There were no major north-south differences in our findings. Significant differences based on sex, however, emerged in the socio-economic profile of Native inmates in the survey. The men were usually single with no dependents. If they had dependents, their offspring were normally being cared for by a spouse or ex-spouse at the expense of the public treasury during their term of imprisonment. Although their usual means of livelihood was some form of employment, it was frequently temporary or seasonal. Their unemployment rate during the year preceding their incarceration was roughly 3 times the national average. Very few had permanent jobs. Most planned to return home to a reserve or city following their release. Few had specific plans.

A little over half of the female sample were single. Most had dependents - often two or more. During their incarceration their offspring were mostly in the care of their mothers or a Children's Aid Society at public expense. Their unemployment rate was extremely high - over 8 times the national average. If they did have a job, it was almost always temporary. Many of the women were routinely dependent on some form of welfare assistance. Most planned to go home to a reserve or a city following their release and to sustain themselves economically in the same way as before.

As compared with a Native man in prison, the results show that a Native woman in jail is more likely to have dependent children who are in turn more likely to be in the care of a Children's Aid Society. She is more likely to be unemployed or relegated to unstable, periodic employment. She has a greater likelihood of being dependent on some type of welfare or on the generosity of parents, husbands, friends or relatives and finally, of returning to the same economic dilemma following her release as she faced before her arrest.

The average Native inmate in Ontario is single with no dependents:

- * 61% (313) of the sample were single.
- * 27% (140) of the inmates were married or living common-law,
- * 8% (40) of those interviewed were separated or divorced from their spouses,
- * 66% (337) of the Native incarcerates had no dependents. A higher proportion of the male inmates (70%, 311) as compared to the female inmates (39%, 26) had no dependents,
- * 34% (176) of the inmate sample had 1 or more dependents. The proportion of females with dependents was twice as high as the rate among males-(61%, 40) of the women as compared to 30% (136) of the men,

* Of the inmates with dependents, 68% (119)
reported having 2 or more dependents.
The ratio of female inmates with 2 or
more dependents was higher than that of
the male inmates - 38% (25) of the women
as compared to 21% (94) of the men.

The majority of Native inmates with dependents indicated that during their period of imprisonment their children were being cared for by a spouse, and close to half said they were being supported through some form of public assistance:

- * 52% (91) of the inmates with dependents revealed that their children were in the care of a spouse or ex-spouse. The proportion of male inmates whose dependents were being looked after by a spouse or ex-spouse was considerably higher than that of the female inmates 65% (88) of the men as compared to only 8% (3) of the women.
- * 10% (18) of the inmates with children reported that their offspring were in the care of a Children's Aid Society. The proportion of female inmates whose children were in the care of the Children's Aid Society was over 4 times as high as that of the male inmates 25% (10) of the women as compared to only 6% (8) of the men.
- * The proportion of female inmates whose children were being cared for by their mothers was markedly higher than that of the male inmates 28% (11) of the women as compared to only 2% (3) of the men.
- * 45% (79) of the inmates with dependents identified some form of public assistance such as welfare, Mother's Allowance or Children's Aid as the source of financial support for their families during their incarceration.

The economic background of the Native inmates prior to their incarceration is characterized by high unemployment and dependency on family, friends and the state:

- * 43% (226) of the inmates did not support themselves
- with work during the year before incarceration.

 * For only 57% (287) of the inmates was the usual source of income during the previous year some type of employment. The proportion of women whose usual means of livelihood was some form of employment was much lower than that of the men only 18% (12) of the Native female inmates as compared to 62% (275) of
- * Of those who did support themselves with employment, 60% (172) had only temporary or seasonal work. The proportion of employed women who were dependent on temporary or seasonal jobs (83%, 10) was higher than that of the men (59%, 162).

* Less than a quarter of the inmates in the sample (22%, 115) had supported themselves with a permanent job during the year prior to their incarceration. Only 2 female inmates (3%) had held a permanent job as compared to 25% (113) of the male inmates.

* Almost half of the inmates (45%, 233) had never enjoyed a period of uninterrupted employment

for longer than 6 months.

- * If one makes a conservative estimate and fully includes those inmates who were seasonally or temporarily employed as well as those who were permanently employed in order to support themselves during the year prior to imprisonment and if one deducts those who were unavailable for work as a result of illness, school or incarceration, the minimum rate of unemployment among Native inmates was 32% (166). The minimum rate of unemployment among Native female inmates was almost 3 times that of the Native male inmates 74% (49) among the women as compared to 26% (117) among the men.
- * For 19% (97) of the sample, the usual source of support during the previous year had been some type of public assistance such as welfare, unemployment insurance benefits or a pension. The proportion of female inmates in this category was over twice that of the male inmates 39% (26) of the women as compared to 16% (71) of the men.
- * 13% (68) of the Native incarcerates were dependent on parents, spouses, friends or relatives for support during the previous year. The proportion of women who fell into this category was almost 4 times that of the men 38% (25) of the female inmates as compared to 10% (43) of the male inmates.

Our findings instill no confidence that the bleak economic past experienced by the Native inmates will not be repeated after their release:

- * 63% (325) of the inmates reported that they intended to return home following their release.
- * For 37% (190) of the inmates, 'home' was a reserve and for 36% (183) 'home' was a city.
- * 39% (201) of the sample disclosed that they expected to be doing the same thing for a living following their release as they were doing before their arrest. Only 31% (159) said that their means of support would be different and 20% (102) were unsure.
- * Only 5% (25) of the Native incarcerates had definite employment to return to upon release. Not a single female inmate had a definite job to go to. 12% (61) of the inmates indicated that they would try to work at something specific while 15% (78) said that they would generally try to work. 8% (43) stated that they planned to go to school when released and 6% (32) were

resigned to living on some form of public assistance. The proportion of women who expected to be dependent on public sources of support was over 3 times that of the men - 17% (11) of the female inmates as compared to 5% (21) of the male inmates. Almost one-quarter of the surveyed inmates (24%, 122) had no plans or were unsure of their plans following release.

The following table provides a summary of the significant male-female socio-economic differences uncovered by the survey.

TABLE 5
SIGNIFICANT MALE-FEMALE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS			FEMALE	
	CASES	% OF CASES	# OF CASES	% OF CASES
No Dependents	311	70	26	39
1 or more Dependents	136	30	40	61
2 or more Dependents	94	21	25	38
Offspring in Care of Spouse or Ex-spouse	88	65	. 3	8
Offspring in Care of			3	0
Children's Aid Society	8	6	10	25
Offspring in Care of Inmate's Mother	3	ź	11	20
Usual Source of Income is Employment	275	62		28
Of the Employed, those with Temporary or Seasonal Work	162	59	12	8
Of the Employed those with	102	59	10	83
rermanent Jobs	113	25	2	3
Estimated Unemployment Rate	117	26	49	74
Usual Source of Support is Public Assistance	71	16	26	39
Dependent on Family and Friends	43	10	-	
Expect to be Dependent on Public Assistance		r e	25	38
Following Release	21	. 5	11	17

The 1979-80 survey of Native inmates tended to confirm the findings contained in the 1978 study. For example, in 1978 we learned that 62% of the Native inmates were single and 24% were either married or living common-law; in 1979-80, 61% of the sample were single and 27% were married or living common-law. In 1978, 61% of the inmates were unemployed prior to incarceration; in 1979-80, at least 44% of the sample were usually unemployed during the year prior to imprisonment. In the 1978 survey 29% of the inmates were dependent on some form of public assistance prior to imprisonment; in the 1979-80 study, 19% were relying on some type of public support. There is one interesting difference in the results of the two surveys, however; the proportion of inmates' dependent families who were receiving some form of public assistance during their incarceration dropped from 75% in the 1978 study to 45% in the 1979-80 study. Also, in 1978 63% of the inmates' dependent families were on welfare during their imprisonment; whereas in 1979-80, the proportion dropped to 19%. A comparison of the results of the two surveys concerning the socio-economic situation of Native inmates is shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6

COMPARISON OF 1978 AND 1979-80 SURVEY FINDINGS

CONCERNING SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION OF NATIVE INMATES

FINDING	% OF CASES 1978	% OF CASES 1979-80
Single	62	61
Married/Common-law	24	27
Unemployed	61	44
Receiving Public Assistance Prior to Incarceration	29	19
Dependent Families in Receipt of some form of Public Assistance	75	45
Dependent Families on Welfare	63	19

ALCOHOL ABUSE AND TREATMENT

Overview

In view of the unique and well-documented role which alcohol abuse usually plays in offences committed by Native people, special attention was given to this issue in the present survey. This study endeavoured to determine the extent to which alcohol abuse directly accounted for the

specific charges against Native inmates and was implicated in the criminal activity which led to their earliest conflict with the law and that which resulted in their current incarceration. This research project also sought to learn about the mode of drinking which preceded the commission of offences and the extent of drug abuse as well. Finally, our survey attempted to ascertain the degree to which inmates had used existing institutional and community-based treatment, counselling and self-help programmes.

The results of this survey show that a significant number of charges against the Native inmates related to liquor violations. The proportion of alcohol offences among the female sample was about twice the rate among the male sample. An exceedingly high proportion of the inmates themselves admitted that the use of alcohol was involved in the crimes for which they were incarcerated. The drinking activity, in which mainly beer, liquor and combinations of more than one alcoholic beverage were consumed, was largely conducted outside of licensed public establishments. There were no major differences based on sex in the degree to which alcohol was implicated in the crimes for which the inmates were incarcerated or the mode of drinking prior to the commission of offences. Almost 1/5 of the sample had been using drugs, mainly marijuana, at the time they committed their offences. Over 3 times as many women as men who were using drugs at the time of their offences were engaged in solvent sniffing. Over 3/4 of the inmates cited alcohol as the reason why so many Native people end up in jail. Over 3/4 of the interviewees also believed that alcohol had contributed to their first clash with the non-Native justice system. There were no important variations of opinion between Native men and women as to the role played by alcohol in early and subsequent conflict with the law. In spite of the overwhelming prevalence of alcohol use prior to the criminal behaviour which led to their current incarceration as well as their first conflict with the justice apparatus, almost 2/3 of the inmates had never taken part in an alcohol treatment programme of any kind, and over 3/4 of them were not participating in any such programme while imprisoned. This lack of participation was true of both male and female inmates. Finally, the results of the survey demonstrated that no existing alcohol programme in the community or in an institution - whether it be counselling, treatment or Alcoholics' Anonymous - nor any other programme not specifically geared to drinking problems is perceived to be effective by a substantial number of Native inmates male or female.

The factual base describing alcohol abuse which is demonstrated by the current survey should be put into a broader perspective. Ministry wide admission statistics for the 1979/80 fiscal year are presented in Appendix B. It must be noted that the rate of incarceration for Natives is 1,951 per 100,000 of estimated Native population. The incarceration rate for non-Native persons is 460 per 100,000 of non-Native population. Both of these rates are based on persons entering the system during the year. Rates dealing with admissions would be much higher. The salient feature of these data is

that the rate of incarceration of Natives is 4.24 times the rate for non-Natives. The main features of the data are that:

- 21% of all liquor convictions against males were registered against Natives,
- 70% of all liquor convictions against females were registered against Natives,
- 52% of the convictions against Native males were for liquor offences,
- 72% of the convictions against Native females were for liquor offences,
- 55% of the convictions against Native persons were for liquor offences.

In the present survey results only 16% of the offences were related to liquor. In all, 29% (150) of the sample had a liquor related offence in the current admission set. The discrepancy between the Ministry wide statistics and the discrepancy between the Ministry wide statistics and the sample statistics can be related to the relatively short stay associated with liquor offences. As a consequence, liquor offences would be under-represented in any snap-shot sample.

The fact that relatively few of the inmates in the current sample had liquor related offences does not decrease the problem. The majority of inmates (84%, 430) reported that they were consuming alcohol just prior to their offences. they were consuming alcohol just prior to their offences. Moreover, 94% (408) of the persons who had previous convictions reported that alcohol contributed to their first difficulty with the law.

The drinking activity of the inmates who were consuming alcohol at the time of their current offences generally occurred outside of licenced public establishments (see Table 7). However, in only 21% (92) of the cases the venue of the drinking could be considered as inappropriate.

The alcoholic beverages used by the Native inmates preceding their current offence are listed in Table 8. The degree of substance abuse exhibited by the sample of Native inmates is complicated by the use of drugs and solvents. In the important percent (102) of the sample admitted using drugs and/or solvents prior to their current offence.



LOCATION WHERE NATIVE INMATES

REPORTED THEY WERE DRINKING

	<u>M2</u>	ALE	FE	MALE	TC	TAL
	<u>N</u>	9	N	9	N	용
Bar	98	26.0	14	23.3	112	26.0
Home	55	15.0	14	23.3	69	16.0
Friend's home	86	23.0	14	23.3	100	23.0
Street	57	15.0	14	23.3	71	17.0
Bush	9	2.0	2	3.3	11	3.0
Car	10	3.0	0	0.0	10	2.0
Other	7	2.0	1	1.6	8	2.0
Several places	48	13.0	1	1.6	49	11.0
100%	370		60		430	

TABLE 8

ALCOHOL BEVERAGES USED BY NATIVE INMATES

	MA	LE	FE	MALE	TO	TAL
	_ <u>N</u> _	96	N	- 8	_N_	용
Beer	146	40.0	12	20.0	158	37.0
Wine	33	10.0	11	18.0	44	10.0
Hard Liquor	70	19.0	22	37.0	92	21.0
Other	8	2.0	1	2.0	9	2.0
More than one	112	30.0	14	23.0	126	29.0
100%	369		60		429	

As with the use of alcohol, there was multiple use of drugs/solvent. The substances used are listed in Table 9.

TABLE 9

DRUGS/SOLVENT ABUSE BY NATIVE INMATES

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Marijuana	76	5	81
Solvents	6	2	8
Pills	15	1	16
Acid	17	1	18
Other	8	0	8

The pattern of alcohol and drug use prior to committing the offence which led to the current incarceration is shown in Table 10.

TABLE 10

SUBSTANCE ABUSE BY

NATIVE INMATES

		ALCOHO	L USE	
		Yes	No	
	Yes	80	22	102
DRUG USE	No	347	64	
		427		

It must be noted that only 12% (64) of the sample did not abuse some sort of substance prior to committing their current offence.

The personal experience of the Native inmates was reinforced by their perceptions of Native problems in general.

*77% (396) of the Natives cited alcohol as the reason why so many Native people end up in jail.

Not only have the Native inmates experienced the problem but they also perceived it as a major social issue. In view of the actual and perceived role of alcohol in the criminalization of the Native people, it is surprising that few if any solutions were sought.

*63% (324) of the Native inmates had never participated in any alcohol treatment programme of any kind at any time.

*23% (116) of the Native inmates were in an alcohol

abuse programme at the time of being interviewed. *23% (119) of the Native inmates indicated a desire to participate in such a programme.

The inmates who were not in a programme were asked why they did not attend. The inmates gave a variety of responses, the most important are:

	N	용
Not interested in programme	95	30
No drinking problem	104	32
Unaware if programme exists	46	14
Programme available soon	28	9
Length of stay too short	14	4
Other	34	11
	321	

The lack of commitment to alcohol related programmes is probably a function of the perceived effectiveness of such programmes. The vast majority of the Native inmates (83%, 426) did not feel that any programme helped with their drinking problems.

The findings of this study underline some of the major ones concerning alcohol abuse and treatment contained in the 1978 preliminary survey. For example, in 1978, 86% of the inmates admitted that the use of alcohol was involved to some extent in their present convictions; in 1979-80 84% of the sample stated that they had been consuming alcohol just prior to committing their most recent offences. In the 1978 study, 78% of the inmates were not taking part in any alcohol treatment programme while incarcerated; in the 1979-80 survey, 76% of the inmates interviewed were not participating in any alcohol treatment programme while in jail. Finally, in the 1978 preliminary survey, 37% of those who chose not to engage in treatment did not feel that they had a problem, and 33% were apathetic or just not interested in a programme; in the current study, 27% of those who were not involved in an alcohol programme while in prison did not think that they had an alcohol problem and 24% were not interested in a programme.

D. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ISOLATION

OVERVIEW

The Ontario Native Council on Justice and the Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services have for some time been concerned about social and cultural alienation among incarcerated Native citizens. Partly for this reason Native inmate liaison projects were recently inaugurated in Kenora, Thunder Bay, Toronto and Cochrane. Also, Native inmate self-help groups have been officially recognized by the Ministry and traditional Native spiritual practices, such as sweetgrass, tobacco and sweatlodge ceremonies, have been allowed within some correctional institutions. These new initiatives were taken during or following the data collection phase of this research project.

This study sought to determine the extent of isolation of the Native sample and the degree of involvement with institutional self-help organizations and contact with outside community groups.

The Native inmates in the present sample were seriously isolated from their families, the Native community and each other. Although Native women were visited a little less frequently by their families than Native men and their families seemed to face higher expenses for public transportation in order to visit, for the most part there were no significant differences based on sex in the degree and extent of the isolation. The results indicate that the distance, time and expense involved in family visits probably contributed to the isolation although these factors did not entirely account for it. A breakdown in family relationships and communication was also an important reason. The isolation was markedly greater for Northern Native inmates, for they were visited less frequently than their Southern counterparts and the distance, time and cost involved in visits by their families was significantly higher. The findings also show that contact with outside Native community groups and individuals who can assist inmates to learn about their culture and traditions is currently insufficient but is considered by the inmates to be helpful when it does occur. Participation in Native inmate self-help groups is also described as a positive experience but at the present time is only available to or engaged in by a small minority of the inmates.

In all 160 Native inmates received visits from family members. The inmates reported receiving visits from the following family members:

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Parents	89	8	97
Siblings	73	6	79
Spouse	34	7	41
Children	7	1	8
Other	18	1	19

The frequency of receiving these visits was reported to be:

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Twice a week	28	4	32
Once a week	52	3	55
Less than once a week but more than once		J	33
a month	18	1	19
Once a month	18	6	24
Less than once a month	154	66	182

The results indicate that the majority of the Native inmates (68%, 348) had received no visits by the time they were interviewed. The predominant reasons given for the lack of visits are shown in Table 11.

TABLE 11

REPORTED REASONS FOR LACK OF FAMILY VISITS

REASON						
	MAI	<u>LE</u>	FEN	IALE	TOT	ral.
Distance	N	용	N	8	N	8
	142	47	36	55	168	48
Transportation problems	19	6	0	0	19	5
Family related difficulties	54	18	3	6	57	16
No family	9	3	0	0	9	_ •
Short sentence or family unaware of incarceration						3
No time to visit	49	16	12	26	61	17
	9	3	4	9	13	4
Inmate did not know	20	7	2	4	22	6
Total	200					
	302		47 —		349	

Distance and transportation problems accounted for a large proportion (53%) of reasons cited for lack of visits. Another major cause of lack of visits were family related difficulties and that the family was unaware of the inmate's incarceration.

Several questions were asked to clarify the nature of the visitation difficulties faced by all the families. Distance, time and cost were the major difficulties.

- *The average distance families would have to travel was 285 miles (one way).
- *The average duration of the return trip would be 24 hours.
- *The families of 198 (39%) inmates would need some form of assistance to make the journey.
- *The families of 266 (52%) inmates would have to travel by some form of public transit.

The nature of the assistance required by the families of Native inmates was reported by the inmates. Most of the assistance required can be interpreted as being economic. Clearly poverty can be seen as a major problem which impedes family visitations. The nature of the assistance required is shown in Table 12.

TABLE 12
ASSISTANCE REQUIRED BY FAMILIES OF NATIVE INMATES

	MALE FEMALE TOTAL		PER	CENT OF	
			N	CASES	RESPONSES
Accommodation near		•			
institution	88	13	101	52	21
Money to finance the					
trip	93	19	112	58	23
Use of vehicle	58	6	64	33	13
Child care	33	3	36	19	7
Get time off from work	60	6	66	34	13
Escort to assist during trip	47	4	51	26	10
Special visiting privileges	53	5	58	30	12
Other	4	0	4	2	1

It would appear that Native inmates from the northern part of the province are more isolated socially and culturally than those from southern Ontario. For example, 74% (236) of

the northern inmates as compared to 55% (92) of the southern inmates reported that they had not been visited at all by members of the family. Also, 57% (180) of the northern sample as compared to 34% (57) of the southern sample stated that they had not been visited by anybody. For the northern inmates distance was perceived as a more common obstacle to visits from their families - 48% (152) of the northern inmates as compared to 19% (31) of the southern inmates had families living 200 miles or more away. Time was also considered a more important impediment to visits by the northern inmates -57% (180) of the northern immates as compared to 24% (40) of the southern inmates believed that it would take their families 24 hours or more in order to visit them. Finally, a decidedly higher proportion of the northern inmates (44%, 141) than the southern inmates (25%, 41) felt that their families would require some type of assistance such as accommodation or money in order to visit them.

It is apparent that the majority of Native inmates did not receive visits from members of their family. It would also appear that they had little if any contact with outside

*13% (66) of the inmates reported contact with agencies external to the correctional system.
*Proportionately twice as many women (23%, 15) as men (11%, 51) had external contacts.

The agencies with which the inmates had contact are listed in Table $13. \,$

TABLE 13

EXTERNAL AGENCIES WITH WHICH NATIVE INMATES

HAD CONTACTS

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Friendship Centre	11	6	17
Church	4	3	7
Nelson Small Legs Jr.	18	1	19
E. Fry, O.N.W.A.	0	2	2
Salvation Army	4	1	5
Native Court Worker	2	1	3
A.A. 	22	1	23

It must be noted that just over half of the contacts with external agencies were with Native oriented agencies. Nevertheless only 62% (41) of the inmates considered their contact with the external agencies as being useful.

There can be no doubt that the Native inmates were anxious for more contacts with external agencies. The majority of the inmates (77%, 397) believed that it would be of help to them to have some contacts with persons or groups oriented at discussions of Native culture, beliefs and spirituality.

Isolated from their families and community groups and individuals, the Native inmates in our survey were also isolated from each other. Both the Ontario Native Council on Justice and the Ministry of Correctional Services have supported the existence of Native inmate self-help groups. Yet 70% (361) of the present sample were not participating in an inmate self-help group such as the Native Sons at Guelph Correctional Centre, Ontario Correctional Institute at Brampton, Millbrook Correctional Centre or Monteith Complex. 77% (95) of the 123 inmates who had been involved in such a group, however, concluded that they had been helped by the group. They reported that such groups had helped them to understand their own culture and spirituality, to obtain psychological support from other inmates, to pass the time, to build confidence, to gain access to outside information, to acquire a sense of belonging and to engage in cultural and craft activities.

There are several Ministry programmes designed to assist the inmate to integrate himself into the community. The Temporary Absence Programme and the Board of Parole have the mandate to place inmates into the community. Under normal circumstances it is hoped that through these activities the inmate can be effectively returned to the community.

The inmates were asked if they understood how to apply for a Temporary Absence Pass. Just under half, (48%, 246) of the sample indicated that they understood how to apply for a pass. The inmates were then asked to describe the process as they understood it. Only 35% (179) of the inmates described a procedure that would ultimately lead to a consideration for a pass.

The inmates were also asked if they knew if they were parole eligible. The answers indicated that 28% (141) were parole eligible, 53% (273) were not eligible and 19% (99) did not know or did not answer. In fact 103 inmates had already appeared before the Board of Parole. Of these 11% (11) were granted parole, 44% (45) were rejected, 31% (32) were deferred and in 15% (15) of the cases the inmate refused parole. Only 67% (30) of the inmates who were rejected understood that they had to re-apply to the Board of Parole to be considered once again.

The results of this study conducted in 1979-80 reveal that the degree of social and cultural isolation experienced by Native inmates has not significantly diminished since our preliminary survey was done in 1978. For example, in the 1978 survey it was reported that 65% of the inmates were not receiving any visits from their families and that less than half of the sample had received any visits at all during their incarceration. In the present survey 68% (348) of the inmates stated that they were not being visited by their families and

49% (252) of the sample complained that they were not being visited by anybody. One cautious note of optimism, however: in 1978 13% of the inmate sample had been involved in a Native inmate self-help group within an institution but in 1979-80 the proportion who had been participating had risen to 24%.

E. CURRENT PROBLEMS

OVERVIEW

The present study attempted to find out if there were any problems which a lawyer or anyone else could help Native inmates with. Over three-quarters of the sample reported that there were none. One-quarter of the inmates, however, did specify some current problems for which they desired assistance. The most frequently mentioned were legal problems followed by institutional problems, problems concerning release and problems related to family. Problems centering on release were more important to men than women but problems associated with family were more vital to women than men. There were no significant north-south differences in the findings.

The great majority of the sample reported no current problems with which they desired assistance. For example, 82% (422) of the inmates indicated that they had no problems which they thought a lawyer could assist them with and 77% anyone else could help them with.

26% (131) of the inmates, however, did mention a wide variety of specific problems with which they wanted help. Of the 152 problems named, 40% (60) related to legal problems concerning such matters as bail, trials, appeals, outstanding charges, police and personal affairs; 30% (45) focused on institutional problems concerning such issues as transfers, counselling, sentences, parole hearings and temporary absence passes; 15% (23) centered on problems surrounding release such as a place to live, parole supervision, employment and education; and finally, 6% (9) referred to problems concerning family matters. The proportion of problems focused on release was twice as high among the men as the women - 16% (22) identified by male inmates as compared to 8% (1) cited by female inmates. The proportion of problems centered on family matters, however, was three times as high among the women as the men - 17% (2) of the problems singled out by women as compared to 5% (7) of those specified by the men. A summary of the problems most often mentioned by the inmates is shown

TABLE 14

LEADING PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY NATIVE INMATES

TYPES OF PROBLEMS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	% OF RESPONSES
Legal	60	40
Institutional	45	30
Release	23	15
Family	. 9	6

F. ALTERNATIVES TO IMPRISONMENT

OVERVIEW

The Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services and the Ontario Native Council on Justice and its member organizations - especially some Indian Friendship Centres - have endeavoured to develop community service order projects, fine option programs and community resource centres as alternatives to the traditional types of sanctions used by the courts such as imprisonment. One of the purposes of this study was to determine how attractive these alternatives are to Native people in conflict with the law. Do Native offenders prefer to be in jail?

The survey results show that over three-quarters of the Native inmates would prefer to do community service or make restitution instead of going to jail or, if sentenced to a term of imprisonment, would prefer to serve their sentence in a community-based resource centre or attend a halfway house or community centre as part of parole supervision. On this question there were no significant male-female or northsouth differences. Slightly over half of those who would prefer to be in a community resource centre or halfway facility would rather be supervised by Native staff, although a substantial number had no preference. Almost two-thirds of those inmates who did not have the choice of paying a fine instead of going to jail reported that they would have liked to have had such an opportunity. Almost two-thirds of those who were incarcerated for defaulting on payment of a fine attributed their default to economic reasons. Over three-quarters of the inmates who were serving time because they were financially unable to pay the fine stated that they would have preferred to do community service. A higher proportion of Native women than men was given the option of paying a fine or going to jail; however, a higher proportion of the Native female inmates defaulted in paying the fine simply because of lack of funds. Finally, although over three-quarters of the inmates in the survey were recidivists, almost two-thirds of them were not considered to be security risks during their trials. Over half of the recidivists were sent to an institution the very first time they were found

guilty of an offence. Slightly over one-third of the inmates were serving terms of imprisonment of less than 90 days.

The results of the survey clearly demonstrate that the great majority of Native inmates would prefer alternatives to imprisonment if they were given the opportunity to take advantage of them. For example, 78% (399) of the Native incarcerates reported that they would prefer to do community service instead of serving a term of imprisonment. 79% (406) of going to jail if they had been given the opportunity to do so. 82% (422) of the inmate sample indicated that they would have preferred to serve their sentence in a community-based that they would be willing to attend a halfway house or community centre as part of parole supervision.

Of those inmates who preferred to be supervised in a community resource centre or a halfway facility, over half (56%, 249) stated that they would rather be supervised by they had no preference.

Our findings also show that almost two-thirds (62%, 231) of the inmates who did not have the option of paying a fine instead of going to jail would have preferred that choice, and that 63% (60) of those who did have the alternative of paying a fine instead of serving time confessed that they were serving the time in jail because they did not have the funds to pay the fine. Moreover, of these inmates who were serving time because they were financially unable to pay a fine, 77% (46) reported that they would have preferred to do community service. Finally, the survey results reveal that the proportion of female inmates who were given a choice of paying a fine or serving time was twice that of the male inmates - 33% (22) of the women as compared to 17% (74) of the men - but a higher proportion of the Native women (78%, 18) who were serving time for defaulting on payment of a fine than the Native men (58%, 42) declared that the reason was

The expansion of alternative programmes to orthodox sentences of imprisonment would therefore not likely be hampered by a shortage of willing volunteers. But are these volunteers' dangerous offenders who need to be locked up for the protection of society? Apparently not. For instance, against persons. Only 1% (17) of the sample were imprisoned for offences related to public morals or drugs. Also, 27% recognizance during the trial. Moreover, 62% (161) of the than security. Finally, 37% (162) of the sentenced inmates were serving terms of imprisonment of less than 90 days.

While it is true that 84% (433) of the Native inmate sample had previous convictions and therefore might not

appear to be prime candidates for community-based alternatives to jail, 51% (221) of them were sent to an institution such as a training school or prison the very first time they were found guilty of an offence. Have alternatives therefore been tried? And has imprisonment really proved to be an effective deterrent for the majority of Native offenders - or even a necessary sanction for the protection of the public?

The results of the present survey of Native inmates re-inforce those of the preliminary survey conducted in 1978. For instance, in 1978,94% of the inmates indicated a willingness to perform community service as an alternative form of sentencing: in 1979-80, 78% of the sample reported that they would prefer to do community service instead of going to jail. In 1978,72% of the inmates said that if they were to go on probation, they would prefer to be supervised by Native staff; in 1979-80 a slightly lower proportion, 56% of those interviewed, stated that if they were to be supervised in a community resource centre or halfway facility, they would prefer to be supervised by Native employees. In 1978, 93% of the sample were recidivists, yet 28% of them were released on bail during their trial; in the 1979-80 sample, 84% of the inmates were recidivists yet 27% of them were released on bail or their own recognizance during trial. A comparison of the 1978 and 1979-80 survey results pertaining to the issue of alternatives to imprisonment is found in Table 15.

TABLE 15

COMPARISON OF 1978 AND 1979-80 SURVEY RESULTS

PERTAINING TO ALTERNATIVES TO IMPRISONMENT

	% OF CASES	% OF CASES
SURVEY RESULTS	1978	1979-80
Recidivists	93	84
Those Released on Bail	28	27
Those Willing to do Community Service	94	78
Those Preferring Native Supervision	72	56

G. PREVENTION

OVERVIEW

This study sought the views of Native inmates themselves on two questions which have long been debated by governments and Native organizations: namely, why do so many Native people end up in jail and what can be done to prevent their conflict with the law?

In the opinion of the Native inmates surveyed, alcohol abuse, unemployment and poor living conditions were the top three causes of Native conflict with the law culminating in imprisonment. These causal factors were consistently reflected in their suggestions for prevention. The leading suggestions related to alcohol abuse programmes, employment opportunities and services, on-reserve culture and recreational programming and services and programmes directed to the needs of Native young people. Over one-third of the suggestions emphasized on-reserve programming. Over twice as many Native men as women stressed the need for on-reserve cultural and recreational programming. There were no other significant male-female or north-south differences in the

Alcohol abuse was singled out by the highest proportion of Native inmates (77%, 396) as a cause of Native incarceration followed by unemployment, poor living conditions, lack of education, influence of friends, lack of legal counsel and lack of a home. A breakdown of the leading causes identified by the inmates is shown in Table 16.

TABLE 16

LEADING CAUSES OF NATIVE INCARCERATION IDENTIFIED BY INMATES

CAUSES OF NATIVE INCARCERATION	NUMBER OF CASES	% OF CASES
Alcohol Abuse	396	77
Unemployment	204	77
Poor Living Conditions		40
Lack of Education	172	34
	166	32
Influence of Friends	161	31
Lack of Legal Counsel	137	27
Lack of a Home	131	- •
	TOT	26

Of the 282 inmates who made specific suggestions as to how to prevent Native people from getting into trouble and ending up in jail, the highest proportion suggested alcohol counselling followed by those who urged employment, those who are ending up in jail, the highest proportion suggested alcohol counselling followed by those who urged employment, those who are commended on-reserve cultural and recreational activities, Over twice as many Native men as women favoured on-reserve cultural and recreational programming - 16% (39) of the male inmates as compared to 6% (2) of the female inmates.

Of the 412 suggestions offered by inmates as to how to prevent Native people from getting into trouble with the law, a significant proportion (39%, 159) specifically related to on-reserve programmes and services for Indian people. The suggestions tended to adhere to the previous pattern with the highest proportion of suggestions directed at alcohol abuse, closely followed by those concerned with employment, those referring to on-reserve cultural and recreational programming and finally, those focusing on programmes and services to young people. A breakdown of the most popular suggestions for prevention is outlined in Table 17.

TABLE 17

LEADING SUGGESTIONS FOR PREVENTION FROM NATIVE INMATES

SUGGESTIONS FOR PREVENTION	NUMBER OF CASES	% OF CASES	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	% OF RESPONSES
Alcohol Counselling	66	23	88	21
Employment	58	21	83	20
On-reserve (ultural and Recreational Activities	41	15	72	18
Counselling for Young People	15	5	55	13

H. POSTSCRIPT - A FOLLOW UP

During the summer of 1981, the Ministry of Correctional Services' computerized records were scrutinized to determine the fate of the 513 Native inmates. A match was made in 510 of the cases. The status of 9 of the inmates could not be determined. At the time the records were scrutinized, 67% (338) of the Native ex-inmates were not involved with the justice system. Only 16 were still serving the same sentence that was associated with the study. Of these 16, 11 were on probation and 4 were on parole. The status of the remaining 147 ex-inmates were as follows:

*	serving new sentence of incarceration	64
*	remanded in custody	8
*	in penitentiary	20
*	awaiting trial	18
	on parole	. 7
	on probation	28
*	AWOL	1
*	dead	1

That 338 ex-inmates were currently not involved with the courts or corrections in any way does not imply a diminished involvement. During the period following the interview the Native persons in the sample accumulated a total of 2,435

charges, 2,364 with known dispositions and 2,088 convictions. In all 310 (63%) of the sample were convicted during the follow-up period. The details of the charges are presented in Table 18. It would appear that traditional patterns were maintained. The largest number of inmates were charged with property offences. Yet the most charges were for liquor offences. The disposition of these charges are presented in Table 19. A total of 310 inmates received convictions during the follow-up period, all of which involved some term of incarceration. These inmates were sentenced to a total of 75,862 days. On the average, the time to be served would be 244.7 days. In fact, only 65 of the Native persons were to serve more than 1 year. Of these, twenty inmates received aggregate sentences of over two years. The inmates who received penitentiary terms accounted for almost a third of the time to be served. Therefore, the average time to be served in provincial institutions was 177.8 days.

Given the past history of the Native inmates, it is evident that incarceration has had little effect in modifying behaviour patterns. It is also evident that a very small group of individuals account for a very large number of institutional admissions.

TABLE 18

CHARGES REGISTERED AGAINST INMATES AFTER STUDY PERIOD

OFFENCE CATEGORY	NUMBER OF	NUMBER OF	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Person	69	107	A A
Property	189	589	4.4
Public Morals	6		24.2
Public Order & Peace	-	10	0.4
Liquor	145	352	14.5
_	175	1,187	48.7
Drugs	9	21	0.9
Traffic	34		
Other		54	2.2
	56	115	4.7
Total		2,435	

TABLE 19

DISPOSITION OF CHARGES

RECORDED DURING FOLLOW-UP

DISPOSITION	NUMBER OF INMATES	NUMBER OF
Withdrawn/acquitted	112	276
Sentenced, under 90 days	263	1,649
Sentenced over 90 days	127	302
Total convictions	310	2,088

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APPENDIX A

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LIST OF OFFENSES

OFFENSES	CONVICTED	MALE OUTSTANDING	TOTAL	CONVICTED	FEMALE OUTSTANDING	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL % OF RESPONSES	% OF CASES
Assault/Wounding	6	3	9	1	1	2	11	1.0	2.1
Assault Peace Officer	12	0	12	0	0	0	12	1.1	2.3
Common Assault	21	2	23	3	0	3	26	2.4	5.1
Assault C.B.H.	23	7	30	3	0	3	33	3.1	6.4
Murder	2	6	8	0	0	0	8	0.8	1.6
Attempted Murder	2	7	9	1	1	2	11	1.0	2.1
Conspiracy-Murder	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.1	0.2
Manslaughter	5	ı	6	0	0	0	6	0.6	1.2
Rape/Attempted	2	4	6	0	0	0	6	0.6	1.2
Criminal Negligence Causing Death	3	1	4	0	0	0	4	0.4	0.8
Arson/Attempted	4	2	6	2	0	2	8	0.8	1.6
Break & Enter/Attempted	88	24	112	5	1	6	118	11.1	23.0
Break, Enter Theft	31	9	40	1	0	1	41	3.9	8.0
Attempted Theft	14	4	18	1	0	1	19	1.8	3.7
Theft under \$200	30	13	43	7	1	8	51	4.8	10.0
Theft over \$200	38	15	53	ı	0	1	54	5.1	10.5
Robbery/Attempted	30	9	39	3	0	3	42	3.9	8.2
Armed Robbery	4	6	10	2	0	2	12	1.1	2.3

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LIST OF OFFENSES (Continued)

	MALE				FEMALE			TOTAL		
OFFENSES	CONVICTED	OUTSTANDING	TOTAL	CONVICTED	OUTSTANDING	TOTAL	TOTAL	% OF RESPONSES	% OF CASES	
Poss. Dangerous Weapon	26	7	33	4	0	4	37	3.5	7.2	
Pointing Weapon	3	0	3	0	0	0	3	0.3	0.6	
Parole Violation	10	3	13	1	0	1	14	1.3	2.7	
Escape/U.A.L.	12	3	15	2	0	2	17	1.6	3.3	
Obstructing Police	5	0	5	0	0	0	5	0.5	1.0	
Impersonating	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.1	0.2	
Vagrancy	2	0	2	1	0	1	3	0.3	0.6	
Public Mischief	11	8	19	6	0	6	25	2.3	4.9	
Cause Disturbance	4	3	7	. 1	0	1	8	0.8	1.6	
Breach U.I.C. Act	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.1	0.2	
Impaired Driving	21	3	24	0	0	0	24	2.3	4.7	
Drive Over .08 mg.	10	2	12	0	0	0	12	1.1	2.3	
Intoxication	47	2	49	29	1.	30	[*] 79	7.4	15.4	
L.C.A./Other	43	5	48	6	0	6	54	5.1	10.5	
Poss. Rest. Drug	5	1	6	0	0	0	6	0.6	1.2	
Drug Trafficking	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.1	0.2	
Dangerous Driving	5	1	6	0	0	0	6	0.6	1.2	
Crim. Neg. Motor Vehicle	4	О	4	0	0	0	4	0.4	0.8	
Drive Licence Susp.	10	5	15	0	0	0	15	1.4	2.9	
Fail to Remain	1	0	1	О.	0	0	1	0.1	0.2	



LIST OF OFFENSES (Continued)

OFFENSES	CONVICTED	MALE OUTSTANDING			FEMALE			TOTAL	
	CONVICTED	COISTANDING	TOTAL	CONVICTED	OUTSTANDING	TOTAL	TOTAL	% OF RESPONSES	% OF CASES
Poss. Stolen Property	30	16	46	0	0	0	46	4.3	9.0
Poss. Housebreaking Instr.	4	3	7	o	0	0	7	0.7	1.4
Fraud, Forgery, Uttering	8	2	10	1	1	2	12	1.1	2.3
Theft Auto	13	1	14	0	0	0	14	1.3	2.7
Theft Credit Card	Ó	2	2	0	0	0	2	0.2	0.4
False Pretence	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	0.2	0.4
Wilfull Damage	18	2	20	1	0	1	21	2.0	4.1
Trespassing	5	1	6	0	0	0	6	0.6	1.2
Explosives	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.1	0.2
Keeping Bawdy House	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.1	0.0
Prostitution	0	0	0	2	1	3		0.1	0.2
Indecent Assault	8	3	11	0	0		3	0.3	0.6
Indecent Exposure	0	1	1	0	_	0	11	1.0	2.1
Other	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.1	0.2
		~		O	0	0	1	0.1	0.2
Breach of Probation	23	4	27	1	0	1	28	2.6	5.5
Breach Recognizance	6	3	9	0	0	0	9	0.8	1.8
Breach Undertaking	2	1	3	0	0	. 0	3		
Breach Immig. Act	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0.3	0.6
Breach Indian Act	16	0	16	10	0	10		0.1	0.2
Fail to Appear	42	17	59	6	4	10	26	2.4	5.1
Carry Rest. Weapon	5	3	8	0	0	0	69 8	6.5 0.8	13.5

LIST OF OFFENSES (Continued)

OFFENSES	CONVICTED	MALE OUTSTANDING	TOTAL	CONVICTED	FEMALE OUTSTANDING	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL % OF RESPONSES	% OF CASES
H.T.A./Other	5	3	8	0	0	^			
Dang./Imp. Operation	2	0			U	0	8	0.8	1.6
of a Vessel	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	0.2	0.4
Juvenile Off.	0	0	0	0	1	1	1		
Set Fire by Neg.	2	0	2			-	1	0.1	0.2
- •	_	J	2	0	0	0	2	0.2	0.4
TOTALS	729	221	950	101	13	114	1,064	100.0	207.8

APPENDIX B

* The Native population in Ontario in 1979 was estimated by the Department of the Secretary of State to be 162,385. According to the 1976 census, the total population in Ontario was 8,264,465. Thus, the status and non-status Indian and Metis population in Ontario is approximately 2% of the total. Native admissions in these statistics include status, non-status and Metis.

1979/80 ADMISSION STATISTICS

BY APPARENT RACE

MALE				TYPES OF CRIME*		FEMALE				
Native	Other	Total	% Native of Total		Native	Other	Totál	% Native of Total		
341	4,368	4,709	7.2	Person	46	269	315	14.6		
1,365	24,359	25,724	5.3	Property	158	751	909	17.4		
428	9,222	9,650	4.4	Public Order and Peace	44	262	306	14.4		
14	599	613	2.3	Public Morals and Decency	3	48	51	5.9		
3,706	13,914	17,620	21.0	Liquor	1,022	443	1,465	69.8		
63	4,529	4,592	1.4	Drugs	2	261	263	0.8		
579	29,394	29,973	1.9	Traffic	25	1,447	1,472	1.7		
692	5,253	5,935	11.7	Miscellaneous	128	78	206	62.1		
7,188	91,628	98,816	7.3		1,428	3,559	4,987	28.6		
										

^{*} Offences for which persons have been convicted and there may be more than one per admission.

1979/80 ADMISSION STATISTICS

BY APPARENT RACE

MALE		SENTENCES OF IMPRISONMENT	FEMALE					
Native	Other	Total	% Native of Total		Native	Other	Total	% Native of Total
2,010	18,137	20,147	10.0	Under 30 days	515	1,003	1,518	33.9
553	5,017	5 , 570	10.0	30 days to under 60 days	94	226	320	29.4
145	1,993	2,138	6.8	60 days to under 90 days	30	98	126	23.8
118	2,307	2,425	4.9	3 months to under 4 months	23	99	122	18.9
64	887	951	6.7	4 months to under 5 months	8	39	47	17.0
20	207	227	8.8	5 months to under 6 months	1	10	11	9.1
101	1,399	1,500	6.7	6 months to under 9 months	7	56	63	11.1
49	676	725	6.7	9 months to under 12 months	4	29	33	12.1
57	631	688	8.3	12 months to under 15 months	4	20	24	16.7
30	328	358	8.4	15 months to under 18 months	0	6	6	0.0
11	155	166	6.6	18 months to under 21 months	0	3	3	0.0
7	69	76	9.2	21 months to under 24 months	0	4	4	0.0
48	1,040	1,088	4.4	Penitentiary	0	28	28	0.0
3,213	32,846	36,059	8.9		686	1,619	2,305	29.8

1979/80 ADMISSION STATISTICS

BY APPARENT RACE

MALE				AGE AT ADMISSION FEMALE				
Native	Other	Total	<pre>% Natives of Total</pre>		Native	Other	Total	<pre>% Natives of Total</pre>
14	42	56	25.0	Under 16	13	4	17	76.5
128	2,294	2,422	5.3	16 years	30	231	261	11.5
237	3,787	4,042	5.9	17 years	42	304	346	12.1
262	4,116	4,378	6.0	18 years	40	303	343	11.7
1,219	18,100	19,319	6.3	19 to 24 years	218	1,203	1,426	15.3
1,317	12,566	13,883	9.5	25 to 35 years	266	922	1,258	21.1
917	7,401	8,318	11.0	36 to 50 years	185	438	623	29.7
473	3,197	3,670	12.9	51 to 70 years	105	118	223	47.1
32	104	136	23.5	Over 70 years	1	2	3	33.3

END

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