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A STUDY OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM
TRENDS AFFECTING THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS POPULATION FROM 1980 TO 1984,
WITH PROJECTIONS THRU 1990

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This section reviews the incidence of reported crimes and arrests for the years 1980 through 1984. The analysis is based on the incidence of Crime Index offenses and adult arrests (including drug arrests) in the District of Columbia.

Table I indicates that the total number of reported Index crimes has declined steadily since 1981; Prior to that year, the trend had been upward. Between 1981 and 1984, reported crimes Index offenses declined from 67910 to 53857, a decrease 20.0%. This declined is expected to continue at the rate of about 6% annually through 1990.

As the incidence of reported crimes declines a corresponding reduction in adult arrests for Crime Index offense occurs. Table I shows that adult arrests for Crimes Index offenses declined gradually between 1981 and 1984. During this period, adult arrests declined by about 9%, and are expected to continue to decline at the rate of about 1% annually through 1990. However, the strength of this projection is relatively weak (r =.29), given the short time period on which the projection is based. Other estimates using a longer base period indicate a gradual upward trend for this factor.

The ratio of reported Crime Index offenses to adult arrests fluctuated slightly, ranging from a low of 6.2 in 1984 to a high of 7.5 in 1982. However, this ratio is only a crude indicator of crime clearance, since it does not consider the final dispositon status of the arrests. Our data indicates that about one of four arrests for serious felony offenses result in a guilty dispositions and about 50% of all guilty dispositions result in incarceration.