

FACTS ABOUT PRISONS AND PRISONERS

The Growing Corrections System

- The number of inmates in state and federal prisons has increased more than six-fold from less than 200,000 in 1970 to 1,387,848 by yearend 2003. An additional 691,301 are held in local jails, for a total of nearly 2.1 million.
- The state and federal prison growth from midyear 2002 to midyear 2003 (40,983) was the largest since 1999 and exceeded the growth in 2000 and 2001 combined.
- As of 2003, 1 of every 140 Americans was incarcerated in prison or jail.
- The number of persons on probation and parole has been growing dramatically along with institutional populations. There are now 6.9 million Americans incarcerated or on probation or parole, an increase of more than 275 percent since 1980.
- One in eight (12.8%) black males aged 25-29 was in prison or jail at midyear 2003, as were 1 in 27 (3.7%) Hispanic males and 1 in 63 (1.6%) white males in the same age group.
- Nationally, 62 females per 100,000 women were serving a sentence in prison; 915 males per 100,000 men were in prison.
- The 2003 United States' rate of incarceration of 714 inmates per 100,000 population is the highest reported rate in the world, well ahead of the Russian rate of 584 per 100,000.

Who is in our Prisons and Jails?

- 93% of prison inmates are male, 7% female.
- 44% of prison inmates in 2003 were black and 19% were Hispanic.
- 68% of state prison inmates in 1997 had not completed high school.
- 61% of jail inmates were unconvicted and awaiting trial, compared to 51% in 1990.
- 64% of jail inmates in 1996 had monthly incomes of under \$1,000 in the month before their arrest.
- 81% of those sentenced to state prisons in 2000 were convicted of non-violent crimes, including 35% for drug offenses, and 28% for property offenses.
- 1 in 4 jail inmates in 2002 was in jail for a drug offense, compared to 1 in 10 in 1983; drug offenders constituted 20% of state prison inmates and 55% of federal prison inmates in 2001.
- Black males have a 32% chance of serving time in prison at some point in their lives; Hispanic males have a 17% chance; white males have a 6% chance.