PLACE OF MASSACHUSETTS IN NATIONAL
CRIME RATE STATISTICS FOR 1972

(Tables show each state and region rank-ordered by its crime rates for each offense as published in the Uniform Crime Reports)

Massachusetts Department of Correction

Joseph J. Higgins, Commissioner

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Massachusetts continues to have a rate lower than that of the United States as a whole for five of the seven offenses which make up the Crime Index of the Uniform Crime Reports published by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. For the crime of burglary Massachusetts is higher than the national rate. For the crime of auto theft Massachusetts continues to have the worst rate in the country.

If, instead of comparing Massachusetts with national rates, we compare it with the rates for each of the other forty-nine states, we find that Massachusetts ranks better than the median rate for three of the four violent crimes against persons but worse than the median rate for all three of the crimes against property.

Looking at the figures for the entire New England area we find that it enjoys lower rates than all of the other nine sections of the country for two of the four violent crimes against persons and is second or third best for the other two offenses against persons. For the three crimes against property New England ranks better than the median for burglary, is at the median for larceny and ranks ninth (worst) for auto theft.

We can summarize the above by stating that both Massachusetts and New England compare favorably with the rest of the country in regard to rates of murder, rape and aggravated assault and less favorably in regard to rates of robbery, burglary, larceny and auto theft. More detailed information is provided by the tables in the appendices to this paper as well as by the text which comes after the following description of the Uniform Crime Reports.

The Uniform Crime Reports 1972, issued August 8, 1973 by the Federal Bureau of Investigation publishes (as one of many tables) the rates per hundred thousand inhabitants of every state and nine regions of the country for the following selected crimes: murder (including non-negligent manslaughter), forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny (of over \$50) and auto theft (including both unauthorized use and stealing for resale).

It has been the Federal practice to add together the rates of all of these seven crimes to establish its "Crime Index". This index is alleged to show the amount of "serious" crime in the various areas of the country. According to the F.B.I. the seven selected crimes "...are all serious crimes either by their very nature or due to the volume in which they occur." (See Footnote 1).

We disagree with the notion that because an offense occurs in high volume it should be considered a serious crime. If this were really true then traffic law violations would be considered serious crimes. It seems more sensible to regard crimes which occur in high volume as creating serious social problems, but not that high volume makes serious crimes out of comparatively minor offenses.

In our previous "Place of Massachusetts..." annual papers we have discussed in more detail why the Crime Index of the F.B.I. is not a satisfactory measure of serious crime. In essence this is because the Index is heavily overweighted by large numbers of comparatively less serious offenses. Consequently we do not use any overall Crime Index figures.

However, since 1967 the F.B.I. has additionally provided one sub-total (or sub-index) of the rates of the four violent crimes against persons and a second sub-total of the rates of the three property crimes. Although within these two sub-totals the crimes still occur with varying frequencies, the variations are not as extreme as when all seven crimes are combined in one group. Because of the reduced range of frequencies resulting from the dichotomization we do use the two sub-totals in our tables.

To obtain a comparison of Massachusetts with all other states we rank order all state rates for each crime. The state with the lowest rate for the offense being ranked is placed one at the top of the list, the state with the next lowest rate is placed at rank number two and so on. This method, of course, results in the state with the highest rate being ranked fiftieth at the bottom of that offense list. Table

Footnote 1. For the F.B.I. definition of a "serious" crime see page one, paragraph one of the 1972 Uniform Crime Reports.

l shows the resulting rank order for 1972 of each state for each crime and for each of the two sub-totals, as well as providing the rank order of each of the nine regions (See Footnote 2) for each crime and sub-total.

Table 2 shows the trends in the national rates for each crime from 1968 through 1972.

Table 3 shows the yearly fluctuations in crime rates of New England as well as its rankings in comparison with the other eight regions of the United States for the same five year period.

Table 4 provides similar listings of Massachusetts crime rates as well as the ranking of Massachusetts for each crime for each year from 1968 through 1972.

A closer inspection of the regional section of Table 1 shows that in 1972 New England is the area with the best ranking (lowest rate) in regard to crimes of murder and rape. Its rank of third among the nine areas for the offense of robbery and second in regard to aggravated assault drops New England to second best in regard to total offenses against persons.

Footnote 2.

Region

- l. New England
- 2. Middle Atlantic
- 3. East North Central
- 4. West North Central
- 5. South Atlantic
- 6. East South Central
- 7. West South Central
- 8. Mountain
- 9. Pacific

States Included

Conn., Maine, Mass., N.H., R.I., Vermont

New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania

Ill., Ind., Mich., Ohio, Wisconsin

Iowa, Kans., Minn., Mo., Neb., No. & So. Dakota

Del., Fla., Ga., Md., N. & S. Car., Va.,
W. Va.

Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee

Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas

Ariz., Colo., Idaho, Mont., Nev., N. Mex., Utah, Wyo.

Alaska, Calif., Hawaii, Oregon, Washington

Turning to the property crimes we find that New England ranks fourth in burglary, fifth in larceny and ninth (last and worst) in auto theft. When we look at the rankings of individual states we will find that the 49th and 50th ranks of Rhode Island and Massachusetts in auto theft are largely responsible for the poor ranking of New England (seventh) in regard to the property crime total.

The section of Table 1 listing state rankings shows that, in regard to violent crimes against persons, Massachusetts is thirteenth for murder, twelfth for rape, fortieth for robbery and twenty-second for aggravated assault. Adding together the rates of each of these four crimes results in Massachusetts being located in the twenty-fifth rank for the total of all crimes against persons.

In regard to property crimes Massachusetts ranks thirty-eighth in burglary, thirty-second in larceny and fiftieth - as usual - in auto theft. These bad rates result in a rank of forty-third for the total of all of the combined property crimes.

Examining Table 2, which shows changes in national crime rates, we find that in regard to violent crimes the rate of increase fell off in 1972. For robbery there was even a small decrease in this national rate. In regard to property crimes there was a country wide decrease in all three of these offenses.

Table 3 showing the rates and rankings of New England for the past five years presents a somewhat mixed picture. The rates of murder, robbery and aggravated assault increased again in 1972 but the rate of rape decreased slightly. The increases in rates of robbery and aggravated assault were enough to drop New England from the top rank to the second best ranked region in 1972 as regards the total of crimes against persons.

With regard to crimes against property New England's rates for burglary and auto theft decreased but the rate of larceny increased again in 1972. As a result New England remained in seventh place as regards the total of the three property crime rates.

Table 4 shows that Massachusetts continues to increase its rates for feet of the crimes against persons (there was slight decrease in the murder rate) - but these variations were not enough to change the Massachusetts location at the twenty-fifth rank for the total of the violent crime rates. Although Massachusetts actually decreased its rates of all three property offenses, because of similar nation wide decreases Massachusetts did not improve its ranking of forty-third for total property crime rates.

In general it appears that the rate of increase in violent crimes in Massachusetts is slowing down and that the rate of property crimes is actually decreasing. However, because of similar trends about the country there is no significant change in the relative position of Massachusetts in 1972.

STATES and REGIONS RANK ORDERED by CRIME RATES

1972 Rates per 100,000 Inhabitants

Rank CRIMES VS PERSONS and PROPERTY Rank CRIMES VS Murder and Forcible Robbery Aggravated CRIMES VS Ruralety Larceny Auto																																								
	ink der	' CRIMES vs		RIMES vs		RIMES VS		RIMES VS		RIMES vs		RIMES VS		RIMES VS		RIMES VS		RIMES VS		RIMES vs		RIMES VS		RIMES VS		t and I.mane/.	Foto		Ro	bbety		avated ault	CR/	OTAL M#5 12 SPERTY	Bur	glaty		eny ndover)	Auto	eft
			Ateo	Rate	Area	Rate	Area	Rate	Area	Rate	Area		Area		Area	Rate	Area	Rate	Atea	Rate																				
			U.S.	397.7	U, S.	8.9	U.S.	223	U.S.	179.9	U.S.	186.6	U. 5.	2431.8	U.S.	1126.1	U.S.	882.6	u.s.	423																				
	/	,	W.NaGent	216.3	New Eng.	3,3	New Eng.	10.9	E.So.Cont.	77.3	W.So.Cant	105.8	E C. Cont	1520.0	E C C		EC C		EC Cot	43/																				
R	2	ŀ	New Eng		W.No Cont	4.2	1	16.6	W.No.Cant.	89.8		111.5		1864.0	N.No. Carl		1		E.So.Cant. W.So.Cant.	. 236 303.																				
£	3		E.So. Cont		Mountain	7.0	E.So. Gent.	18.1	New Eng.	102.8	E.No Cant			2106.1	E. No. Cent.				W.No.Cent.	306																				
G-	- 4	- 1	Mountain	336.2	E.No.Cent.	7.9	Hid. PHant.	19.1	Mountain	103.7			4	22.60.7		1053.4	Mid Athai		So Atlant.	312																				
I			W. So. Cont	338'.1	Pacific	7.9	E. No Gent	21.7	KSo Cent	107.6	E.S. Cent	185.1	So. Atlant	2276.7	N.So. Cent.	1061.6	New Eng	821-2	Mountain	408.																				
0	_	ľ	E.No.Cent So.Atlant	382.6	Mid Atlant.	8.5	V So. Cent.	22.3	So.Atlant	165.7	4. So. Cent.			2337.7		1000.3	E.No. Cent		E.No.Cent.																					
s			sannen. Pacific		W.So.Cent F.So.Cent	11.6 12.4	So. Atlant. Mountain	22.6 28.6	ENo.Cent.	195.9	Mountain			2556.4		1081.4	So. Atlant.		Mid.Albert.	495																				
	9	- 1			So. Atlant		Mountain Pacific	35 g	Pacific Mid. Atlant	201.6 3 <i>15</i> .2	Pacific So.Atlant.	22 <i>5</i> .7 263.8		2970.7 3794.2	Mountain Pacific	1312.2	Mountain Pacific	1249.5 1382.4	Pacific New Eng	602 681																				
		+						V	Ladhurahar	0.01.	Jg.7/11w.m.	200.0	7 467710	21114	racijio	1004-0	FECIFIC	720 4.1	Leen Trid	651																				
	٠,	را ،	No.Dak.	459	So.Dak.	1.2	No. Dak.	4.9	No.Dak	8.9	No. Dak	3 4 0	WVa:	0277	M- 71- W	2571	Miss	3 H L O	M. D. k	90.																				
5	Z	- 1	Yew Hamp.		No.Da.K.	1,3	N. Hamp.	7.0	Vermont	10.6	N. Hamp.	30,9 41.6	No Dak		No.Dak. W.Va.	357.1 413.6	Miss W.Va	346.8 405.1	No.Dak. A+K.	104.																				
T	3	- 1	Iowa	87.4	R.I.	1.3	Maine	7.8	N.Hamp.	13.4	Wisc.	48.6	Miss	1007.4	So.Dak	472.8	Penn.	437.1	50.Dak	107.																				
Ą	. 4	- I'	Vermont	96,3	N. Hamp.	1.7	W. Va.	8.2	So. Dak	15.6	Iowa	50.3	So Dak	1167.5	Iowa	521,6	Vermont	497.6	W.Va.	109.																				
T	5	١,	Nisc.	96.4	Iowa	1.7	Wisc.	8.3	Idaho	20,6	Maine	69.6	N.Hamp	1314.0	Miss	540.0	No Dak	530.2	Vermont	114.																				
E	G	; <i>/</i>	Maine	103.8	Vermont	1.7	R.I.	8.3	Maine	21.1	Howaii	72.1	Vermont	1350.0	Nebr.	556.7	Ala.	557,8	Miss.	120.																				
~	7	7 5	So.Dak	111.3	Minn.	2.4	Iowa	8.6	Iowa	26.7	Minn	72.9	A+k.	1362.1	Wyo.		Maine	560.8	N,Hamp.	124																				
	8	. 1.	dest Va		Mont.	2.5	Conn.	8.9	W.Va.	31.6	Vermont	73.2	Iowa	1374.0	N.Hamp.	596.6	50,Dak.	587.3	No.Car.	148.																				
	10	. І.	daho		Wisc.	2,8	Vermont		Mont.	33.2	So.Dak	\$3. 2	Maine	/4/4,3	Wisc.	638,5	Tenn.	587.4	Maine	155.																				
	,.	´ [`	Wyo.	148.1	Neb	2.9	Mont.	10,8	Wyo.	33.9	W. Va.	83.2	Penn.	15128	Kenty.	650.2	N. Hamp.	592.6	Iowa	169.																				
	11		Mont.	150.1	Utah	2.9	So.Dak.	11.3	Wisc	36.7	Wyo.	<i>96.</i> 2	No.Car.	15185	Ark.	663.1	A+k.	594.8	Idaho	183,																				
	12	. T	lawaii		Conn.	3,2	MASS.		Miss	39.9	Utah	99.7	Ala.	15290	Maine	698.0	Kenty	609.0	Ala.	195.																				
	13 14	- 1	Vebr. Minn.		MASS.	3.7	Wyo.	/3.9	Nebt.	5 <u>2.</u> 7	Penn.	100.6	Kenty.	1541.0	Mont.	708.2	No Car.	618.3	Wyo.	203,																				
	15	. F	Itah	1	Idaho Kans.	3,8 4.0	Nebr. Del.	13.9 14.2	A+k. Hawaii	54.8 55.4	Ind.	100.9 103.4	Nebt. Wisc	1547.2 1686.7	Vermont Penn	738,3 742.3	Okla. Va.	661.3 678.0	So.Car. Kans	213,																				
		-											W/50		r Bnn.		Į.			232.																				
	/6 17		. "		Wyo.		No.Car.	14.2	Utah	62.3	Mont.	/03.5	Va.		No. Car.	752.0	Iowa	683,3	Wisc	232.																				
	18	- [enty		Wash. Maine		Minn. Penn.	14.7 15.2 i	No.Car. Okla.	62.3 63.6	Nebt. Conn.	/63.5 107.9	Wyo. Mont.		Idaho Ala	754.6	III.	686.7 695.9	Mont Nebr.	247.																				
	19	-1.		232.6	0+e.		Idaho	15.6	50.Car.	66,0	Ohio	111.4	Tenn.	1782.6	Va.	776.1 790.0	So. Car.	699.7	Okla.	261. 264.																				
	20	5 Z	nd.	233.9	Ind.		Kanty	15.7	Alaska	66,5	Kenty.	117.1	Okla.	1868.8	III.	8461	Ga.	702.9	Va.	266.																				
	21	P	irk.	244.7	Penn.	6.0	N,Jers.	16.9	Ala.	68,6	Kans.	119.1	So.Car	1901,5	Ind.	880.9	Ohio	717.8	Utah	177																				
	22	-1		- 1	West Va.	- 1	Ark.	/7.3	Kans.	68.9	MASS	125.2	Kans.	1929.6	Tenn.	8943	Nøbr.	729.0	Kenty	277.																				
	23	V	Vash.	250.6	N.đets.	6.5	Miss	17.5	Conn.	79.1	Wash.	137.0	III.	1975.8	Ohio	901.3	Tex.	768.6	Tenn.	300																				
	24	- 1			Hawaii	6.8	Kans.	17.8	R.I.	81.7	N.Jers.	140,8	Idaho	1990,9	La.	903.1	La.	788,5	Ga.	306.																				
	25	ľ	1455 , ;	295,2	Del.	6.9	Utah	18.3	Kenty	83.2	OK/a.	/43.1	Ind.	2039.9	Kans.	906.6	Kans.	791.0	Tex.	329.																				
	26		/a.	297.6	Okla.	7.0	Ala.	18.8	Minn	84.4	0re.	/56.3	La.	2.048.1	Utah	913,2	Ind.	810.8	Wash	331.																				
	27	1		- 1	Ariz.	7.3	Okla.		Wash.	87.6	R.I.	159.1	Ohio	2061,1	Minn.	927.2	Wisc	815.4	Penn.	333.																				
	28	1		- 1	Ohio	7.5	Va.		Tenn.	101.1	Va.	159.1	Minn		OKIA.					337.																				
	29 30	,		- 1	Mo. Colo.		Ohio Tenn.	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Ind.	106.6 109.4	A+k.	162.2	Ga.	209/.3	Conn.	956.6		821.4	Ind	348																				
								/9.9	Va.	101. T	Mo.	174.0	Mo.	22.70.8	Alaska	970.8	conn.	845.4	La.	356,																				
	3/	1.		3/9.0		. 1	Ind.		Ore.	109.5	Tenn.	186.7				992.3		878.3	Fla.	366.																				
	32 33	Ι.			Calif. Alaska	- 1	Ga. Hawaii	20.8	Tex. N.Mex.	118.2	Nev. Tex.	192.6	Tex.	2304.7		1081.7		881.4	N.Mex.	369.5																				
	34	1		- 1	Va.	- 1	nawasi So. Cat:		N.Mex. A≠iz.	119.0 120.8	Ga.	196.6 204.0	Utah N.Jers.	2358.3 2658.7			N.York Wyo.	923.2 958.0	Ore. Hawaii	386.1 398.1																				
	35			- 1	Kenty.	- 1	Wash.		Del.	130.1	Ala.	211.7	Md.	2728.1			R.I.		Atiz	429.																				
	36	1,			A+k.		N.York																																	
	37		o.Car.		Mich		La.	- 1	La. Ga.	/33,4 /34,3	III. Colo.			274*.4 2756.0	N.Jers. Te×.	1206,7	Del. Tdoka	1035.9	Ohio III.	442. 443.																				
	38			- 1	N. York		III.		Colo.		Mich	225.6	Del.		MASS	- 1		- 1		469.																				
	39	c	olo. 4	+05.4	N. Mex.		Tex.		Penn.	1	Del.		ľ	2856.4				1122.4	Mo.	470.																				
	40	Wo	.Car. 4	H+.5	Tenn.	11.3	Mo.	25,5	MASS	152.8	Miss.	240.0	Wash.	2910.3	N.York	/256.3	Utah	1167.3	Mich.	473.																				
	41	N	Mex.	115.8	Tex.	12.3	Md.	26.0	Ohio	160.6	N.York	243.2	N.Mex.	3001.5	Hawaii	1335.6	Wash.	1197.6	Del.	491.																				
	42	1.		- 1	Md.		Ote.	. (Mφ		Alaska			3017.0					A/aska																					
	43	1 .			Fla.		Fla.	26.4	Fla.	189.4				3096,2			N.Mex.		Md.	534.																				
	44			1	No.Car.		Mich			190.1				3145.6	Ore.)	Atiz.		Nev.	563.																				
		I.		508.1	La.	/3.2	M.Mex	32,7	N-Jers.	210.1	Calif.	253.7	Mich.	326#3	Colo.	1580.1	Alaske	/287.1	N.York	565																				
				540.7			Ariz.			238.6	So, Car	281.6	Atiz.		Mich.		Ore.	1290.2	N.Jets.	586.																				
				54.5			Nev.		III.		Atiz.				Fla.		Fla.		Colo.	589.																				
	48 49				Miss		Colo,			289.3			Colo.		Ariz Nav		Calif			681.																				
				144.1	So.Cat Sa	16.8	Calif	39.7	/"I CL.	36T.1	IN, LOT,		Nev. Calif	3807.0		1151.0	LO/0 .	1777.1	R.I.	896.																				

TABLE 2 CRIME RATES of the UNITED STATES 1968 through 1972

AREA	TOTAL CRIMES VE PERSONS	MURDER	RAPE	ROBBERY	AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	YOTAL CRIMES VS PROPERTY	BURGLARY	LARCENY	AUTO THEFT
YEAR	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rata	Raie	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate
United States 1968	294.6	6.8	15.5	131.0	/4/.3	1940.2	915.1	636.0	389.1
U.S. 1969	324.4	7.2	18.1	147.4	151.8	2146.7	965.6	749.3	431.8
U.S. 1960	360.0	7.8	/8.3	171.5	162.4	2380.5	1067.7	859.4	453,5
U.S. 1971	392.7	8.5	20.3	187.1	176.8	2514.0	1148.3	909.2	456.5
U.S. 1972	397,7	8.9	22.3	179.9	186.6	2431.8	1/26.1	882.6	#23,1

TABLE 3 CRIME RATES and RANKINGS of NEW ENGLAND 1968 through 1972 among the Nine Regions of the United States

AREA and		TOTAL CRIMES M		MURDER		RAPE		ROBBERY		ASSAULT		TOTAL CRIMES		BURGLARY		LARCENY		AUTO THEFT	
	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	
1968 1968	1	131.6	1	2,9	1	7.9	2	52,6	1	68.2	6	1909.5	5	831.0	3	512.6	9	565.9	
N.E. 1969	1	152.2	1	3.0	1	8.8	2	65.6	1	74.8	6	2166.9	6	920.5	#	637.0	9	609.4	
N.E. 1970	1	170,7	1	3.1	1	9.7	2	74.2	1	83.6	6	2383./	5	1013.6	3	727.4	9	642.1	
N.E. 1971	1	209.4	1	3.2	1	11.0	4	97.8	1	97.3	7	26588	6	1128.0	#	813.8	9	7/6,9	
N.E. 1972	2	228.5	1	3.3	1	10,9	3	102.8	2	111.5	7	2556.4	#	1053.4	5	821.2	9	681.8	

TABLE 4 CRIME RATES and RANKINGS of MASSACHUSETTS 1968 through 1972 among the Fifty States

AREA		TOTAL CRIMES		MURDER		RAPE		ROBBERY		AGGRAVATED ASSAULT		TOTAL CRIMES				LARCENY		AUTO THEFT	
YEAR	Rank	Rote	Rote Ronk Rate		Rark Rate		Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	ink Rate	Rauk	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	
massachusetts 1968	20	164.0	16	3,5	16	9.5	30	74.3	/8	76.7	41	2220.6	33	868.3	29	545.7	50	806.6	
MASS. 1969	23	187.9	16	3.5	/3	10.8	33	90.6	17	82.9	38	2552,3	36	1032.6	27	661.0	50	858.8	
MASS 1970	20	202.9	/3	3.5	18	12.0	32	99.5	16	87,9	#1	2801.1	37	//34.1	27	788,9	50	878.1	
MASS 1971	25	266.0	16	3.8	/3	12.4	39	140.1	18	109.6	¥3	3221.2	38	/339.8	31	896.6	50	984.4	
MASS 1972	25	295.2	13	3,7	12	/3,5	40	152.8	22	125.2	+3	3096.3	38	1242.3	32	881.4	50	972.4	

Source of Tables 2,3, and + UNIFORM CRIME REPORTS 1968 Harvy 4 1972 Tables by M.M. Cochrane