

From the evidence presented to the Committee, which is discussed in this report, the members of the Committee are convinced that threats to the safety and security of Canadians will not be abated by hiring more police officers and building more prisons. The following chart sets out the imprisonment rate (adults and juveniles) in several countries. The rate is per 100,000 total population.²

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|-----------------|-------|
| United States | 426.0 |
| Canada | 112.7 |
| United Kingdom | 97.4 |
| France | 80.3 |
| Australia | 78.7 |
| Sweden | 56.0 |
| The Netherlands | 40.0 |

If locking up those who violate the law contributed to safer societies than the United States should be the safest country in the world.

In fact, the United States affords a glaring example of the limited impact that criminal justice responses may have on crime. In 1991, the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee described the U.S. as "the most violent and self-destructive nation on earth." The Committee concluded from FBI data on violent crime that in 1990 "the United States led the world with its murder, rape and robbery rates."³ Every hour, approximately 200 Americans become victims of violence,⁴ despite the fact that United States' annual expenditures on police, courts and corrections exceed \$70 billion⁵ and that the United States imprisons its population at a higher rate than any other country for which data on incarceration rates are available.⁶ Though, admittedly, the Canadian crime situation is not as critical as that of its neighbour to the south, evidence from the U.S. is that costly repressive measures alone fail to deter crime. The Committee unanimously agrees that crime prevention is the best policy choice.

The Committee accepts that crime will always be with us in one form or another, and will require police, court, and correctional interventions. At the same time, it believes that our collective response to crime must shift to crime prevention efforts that reduce opportunities for crime and focus increasingly on at-risk young people and on the underlying social and economic factors associated with crime and criminality. This comprehensive approach involves partnerships between governments, criminal justice organizations, and community agencies and groups. And it situates the crime problem in a community context and sees its solution as a social question.

² Correctional Services Canada, *Basic Facts About Corrections in Canada 1991*, Minister of Supply and Services, Ottawa, 1991.

³ Tim Weiner, "The Most Violent Nation On Earth," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 13 March 1991.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Irvin Waller, *Introductory Report: Putting Crime on The Map*, International Conference on Urban Safety, Drugs and Crime Prevention, 18-20 November 1991, p. 25.

⁶ *Ibid.*