

PREFACE

The crime statistics and selected analytical findings presented in this report derive from victimization surveys conducted early in 1974 under the National Crime Survey program. Presenting more comprehensive survey results and additional technical information, the report succeeds *Criminal Victimization Surveys in 13 American Cities*, published in June 1975.

Since the early 1970's, victimization surveys have been designed and carried out for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for the purpose of developing information that permits detailed assessment of the character and extent of selected types of criminal victimization. Based on representative samplings of households and commercial establishments, the program has had two main elements: a continuous national survey and surveys in various cities. Although the overall objective of the program is to provide insights into the impact of crimes that are of major concern to the general public and law enforcement authorities, it is anticipated that the scope of the surveys will be modified periodically in order to address other topics in the realm of criminal justice. In addition, continuing methodological studies are expected to yield refinements in survey questionnaires and procedures.

The victimization surveys conducted in Miami and 12 other central cities in 1974 enabled measurement of the extent to which city residents age 12 and over, households, and commercial establishments were victimized by selected crimes, whether completed or attempted. For those committed against individuals, the offenses covered were rape, robbery, assault, and personal larceny; for households they were burglary, household larceny, and motor vehicle theft; and for commercial establishments they were burglary and robbery. The chapter entitled "The City Surveys" includes a detailed discussion of the crimes and of classification procedures. In addition to gauging the extent to which the relevant crimes happened, the surveys have permitted examination of the characteristics of victims and the circumstances

surrounding criminal acts, exploring, as appropriate, such matters as the relationship between victim and offender, characteristics of offenders, extent of victim injuries, economic consequences to the victims, time and place of occurrence, use of weapons, whether the police were notified, and, if not, reasons advanced for not informing them.

The surveys in Miami were carried out in the first quarter of 1974 and covered criminal acts that took place during the 12 months prior to the month of interview, a reference period roughly comparable with calendar year 1973. Information was obtained from interviews with the occupants of 10,040 housing units (21,473 residents age 12 and over) and the operators of 1,566 businesses. Respondents furnished detailed personal and household data (or information about business firms) in addition to particulars on any criminal acts they incurred.

The 103 data tables in this publication are arranged by sectors, that is, by crimes against persons, households, and commercial establishments. Within each sector, the tables are further divided along topical lines. These topics are reflected in the analytical statements compiled in the section entitled "Selected Findings," which highlights certain basic survey results. The statements illustrate the types of empirical data being produced under the National Crime Survey program.

All statistical data in this report are estimates subject to errors arising both from the fact that they are based on information obtained from sample surveys rather than complete censuses, and from the fact that recording and processing mistakes invariably occur in the course of a large-scale data collection effort. As part of the discussion on reliability of estimates, these sources of error are treated in Appendixes II and III. It should be noted at the outset, however, that with respect to the effect of sampling errors, estimate variations can be determined rather precisely. In the report's selected findings, categorical statements involving analytical comparisons met statistical tests that the differences were equivalent to or greater than two standard

errors, or, in other words, that the chances were at least 95 out of 100 that each difference described did not result solely from sampling variability. Qualified statements of comparison met significance tests that the differences were within the range of 1.6 and 2 standard errors, or that there was a likelihood equal to at least 90 (but less than 95) out of 100 that the difference did not result solely from sampling variability. These conditional statements are characterized by use of the term "some indication."

Four technical appendixes and a glossary of terms have been included to facilitate further analyses and other uses of survey results. The first appendix contains facsimiles of the questionnaires used for the household and commercial surveys, whereas the second and third have tables for determining estimate variances, as well as information concerning sample design and estimation procedures. The fourth appendix consists of a series of technical notes, paralleling the topics covered by the section on selected findings and designed as guides to the interpretation of survey results.

In relation to crimes against persons, survey results are based on either of two units of measure—victimizations or incidents. A victimization is a specific criminal act as it affects a single victim. An incident is a specific criminal act involving one or more victims and offenders. For reasons outlined in the technical notes, the number of personal victimizations is somewhat greater than that of personal incidents. As applied to crimes against households and commercial establishments, however, the terms "victimization" and "incident" are synonymous. Although "crimes against commercial establishments," "commercial crimes," and other similar terms refer chiefly to victimizations of businesses, a relatively small number of offenses committed against certain other organizations also are included in results of the commercial survey, usually under the category "other"; the types of entities concerned are discussed in the introduction to Appendix III.

Attempts to compare information in this publication with data collected from local police by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and published in its

report *Crime in the United States, Uniform Crime Reports—1973* are inappropriate because of substantial differences in coverage between the surveys and police statistics. A major difference arises from the fact that police statistics on the incidence of crime are derived principally from reports that persons make to the police, whereas survey data include crimes not reported to the police, as well as those reported. Survey data reflect only those crimes experienced by residents and commercial establishments of Miami, even though some acts took place outside the city; they exclude criminal acts committed within the city against nonresidents, such as visitors and suburban commuters. On the other hand, police statistics for Miami include all reported crimes occurring within the city limits, irrespective of the victim's place of residence, and exclude crimes experienced by city residents in other jurisdictions. Personal crimes covered in the survey relate only to persons age 12 and over, whereas police statistics count crimes against persons of any age. The surveys did not measure some offenses, e.g., homicide, kidnaping, white-collar crimes, and commercial larceny (shoplifting and employee theft), that are included in police statistics, and the counting and classifying rules for the two programs are not fully compatible. Similarly, the correspondence between reference periods for results of the city surveys and published police statistics is not exact.

Unlike crime rates developed from police statistics, the personal rates cited in this report are based on victimizations rather than on incidents and are calculated on the basis of the resident population age 12 and over rather than on all residents. As indicated earlier, personal victimizations outnumber personal incidents. National Crime Survey rates of victimization for crimes against households and commercial establishments are based, respectively, on the number of households and businesses, whereas rates derived from police statistics for these crimes are based on the total population. A technical note entitled "Victim characteristics," Appendix IV, gives additional details on the manner in which the victimization survey rates were computed.