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# Theories on Crime Aren't Working

**C**RIME is still increasing, and probably will continue to do so until Oklahoma gets more prisons built and fills them with outlaws. Rehabilitation theories aren't working very well.

Jeff R. Laird, director of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation, reports that violent crimes committed in Oklahoma last year increased 9.6 per cent, compared to 5 per cent for the nation. Property crimes went up 14.8 per cent in this state, compared to 9 per cent for 50 states. Criminals are gaining on us.

It costs money to build prisons, capture law violators, try them and keep them confined, but money alone will not bring the turn-around needed to stop crime. New attitudes are needed.

This was brought out during hearings in Washington concerning appropriations of \$5.4 billion for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. LEAA has spent \$4.5 billion since it was created eight

years ago and its officials call it a success.

Independent studies call it a failure. One research organization said: "Crime has increased and no solutions to the crime problem are on the horizon." LEAA's "high impact" program was described as an "irresponsible, ill-conceived, politically-motivated effort to throw money at a social problem."

The critics' recommendations look like more of the same. They proposed "a high level, scholarly research resource to examine causes of criminal behavior, ways of protecting society from that behavior, and ways of reducing incidence of that behavior."

To stop crime, we need positive, severe action that criminals can understand and which will cause them to consider consequences before they commit more crimes.

Gallup Poll says that crime and lawlessness ranked fourth when people were asked what they consider

the most important problem facing our country. Only high cost of living, unemployment and dissatisfaction with government ranked ahead of it.

In April, when the Oklahoma prison population reached the highest total since 1973, a group of inmates filed a federal suit charging "inhumane warehousing" of convicts.

Perhaps they had read about the luxurious San Diego Metropolitan Correctional Center, one of three new high-rise urban jails built by the U.S. Bureau of Prisons. It is decorated with modern art, red couches and giant ferns.

The new maximum security federal prison at Butner, N.C., has no gun towers, no cell blocks, and no barred windows. The convicts are given keys to their own cells.

What we should do with hardened habitual criminals is to lock them up and throw the key away! As long as there is more concern for convicts than for victims, crime will increase.