

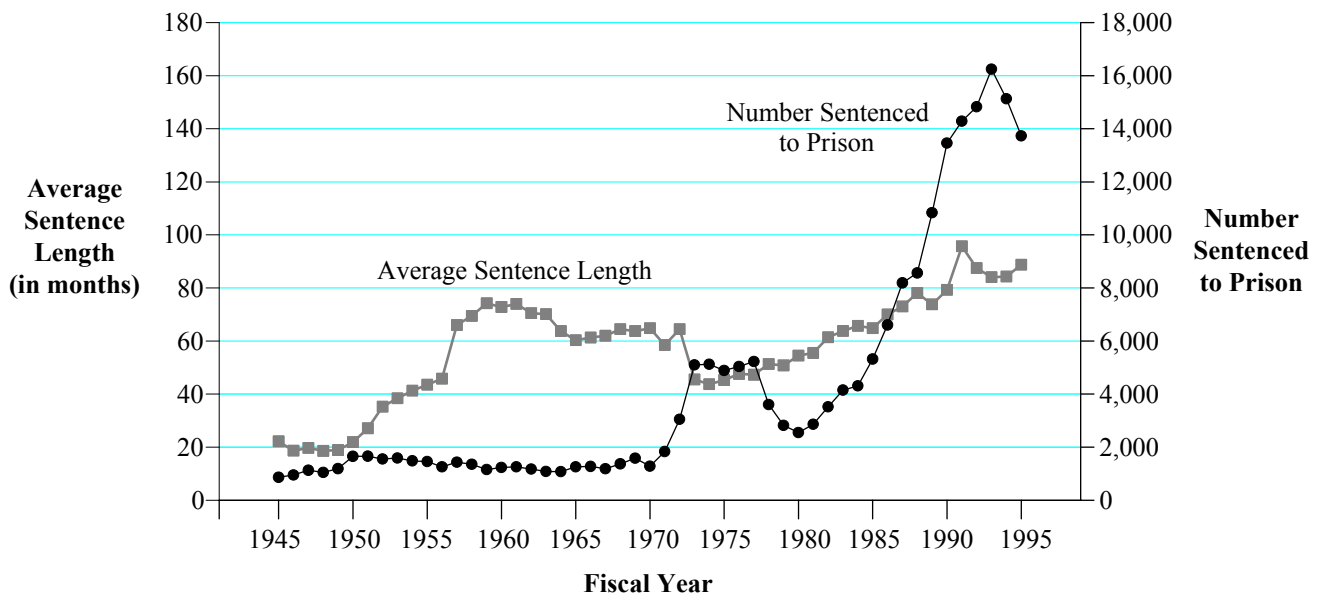
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Number and Length of Federal Drug Prison Sentences May Now be in Decline

Both the number of defendants sentenced to federal prison for drug law violations and the average sentence length for such violations may be declining from the peaks reached in the early 1990s, according to data from the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Since the 1980s, the number and average length of drug law sentences had been increasing, due in part to the effect of legislation that prescribed mandatory minimum sentences for drug abuse offenses. By 1991, the average sentence length had peaked at 96 months. The number of drug law violators sentenced to prison increased even more dramatically over this period, reaching a peak of 16,247 in 1993--more than six times the number in 1980. Since reaching these peaks, the number and average length of drug law sentences have decreased slightly, indicating a possible reversal of previous trends.

Total Number of Defendants Sentenced to Imprisonment for Drug Law Violations and Average Sentence Length (in months), U.S. District Courts, FY 1945-1995*



*Data from 1978-1990 may exclude defendants sentenced to life, split, indeterminate, suspended, or sealed sentences.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics Online*, WWW document; URL <http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook> (accessed 7/16/97).

National Inhalant Conference to be Held August 22-25

The National Inhalant Prevention Coalition (NIPC) is sponsoring a National Inhalant Conference, August 22-25, in Nashville, TN. For more information, contact the NIPC at 800-269-4237. Details on the event are also available at NIPC's web site (www.inhalants.org).

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