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world occurred in lower paying professional jobs, such as nursing and teaching. As a result, black professional income actually declined as a percentage of whites' from 91 percent in 1973 to 86 percent in 1980.

Within blue-collar occupations, however, blacks moved from lower echelon jobs to more skilled work. By 1980, 32 percent more blacks worked in the craft trades—carpentry, plumbing, printing—while 15 percent fewer worked as laborers. The black-white income ratio in blue-collar fields was 81 percent in 1980, compared to 78 percent in 1973. Meanwhile, the number of black household workers dropped by 42 percent, and black farm employment fell by 32 percent.

The earnings of black and white women were more nearly equal than those of black and white men. The earnings ratio of black to white women was 92.2 percent overall, compared to 75.1 percent for black and white males. Black and white female white-collar workers earned virtually identical salaries, while the income of black men in white-collar jobs was 79 percent of their white counterparts'.

Overall, the number of blacks in professional and skilled blue-collar jobs increased only about half as quickly during the '70s as during the '60s, notes Westcott; the rate of advance for whites also slowed. Still, between 1973 and 1980, black Americans posted a 68 percent earnings increase, compared to 65 percent for whites. The move up the job ladder slowed but did not stop.

Paranoid Politics

"Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style: Causality and Deceit in the Eighteenth Century" by Gordon S. Wood, in *The William and Mary Quarterly* (July 1982), P.O. Box 220, Williamsburg, Va. 23187.

Several American historians have traced the "irrational" paranoia of 1950s McCarthyism back to a "paranoid style" of politics that took root during the American Revolution. But Wood, a Brown University historian, explains that the Founders' apparent paranoia was not the clinical variety we think of today.

In two 1965 essays, historians Richard Hofstadter and Bernard Bailyn demonstrated that the colonists were constantly on guard against British plots and conspiracies. Thomas Jefferson, for example, complained before the Revolution of London's "deliberate, systematic plan of reducing us to slavery." But Wood argues that such apprehensions were common throughout the West during the Enlightenment. Novelist Daniel Defoe (1670–1731) called it "an Age of Plot and Deceit, of Contradiction and Paradox."

Far from being irrational, the 18th-century conspiracy-watch was "a last desperate attempt . . . to hold men personally and morally responsible" for events caused by chance or such impersonal forces as industrialization and modernization. Leaders of the Revolutionary era lacked the faith of their forebears that "Providence" accounted for the inexplicable. They struggled to believe that men could understand "the

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social order they themselves had made.”

The writings of philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) and others had convinced them that society, “though no doubt ordained in principle by God, was man’s own creation—formed and sustained, and thus alterable, by human beings acting autonomously,” says Wood. Meanwhile, Enlightenment science fostered the belief that causes and effects in human affairs could be discovered, as they were in Newtonian physics. Faced with King George III’s declarations of good will and such shockingly hostile developments as the 1765 Stamp Act, colonial leaders assumed that British officials were conspiring against them.

Ironically, Woods observes, the Founders’ “paranoia” arose out of an optimistic faith in human reason and responsibility.

More Jails Won't Really Help

“Crime and Ideology” by Elliott Currie, in *Working Papers* (May-June and July-Aug., 1982), Trusteeship Institute, 186 Hampshire St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

President Reagan’s Task Force on Violent Crime concluded in 1981 that Washington could do little about the underlying social causes of crime, but could help the states build more prisons. Currie, a sociologist on the California Governor’s Task Force on Civil Rights, argues that simply trying to get criminals off the streets won’t stop violent crime.

The United States, with the highest crime rates in the world, already jails a higher percentage of its population than any advanced country except the Soviet Union and South Africa. Indeed, the U.S. rate of incarceration increased by one-third between 1975 and 1981. Still, crime rates have continued to climb.

Why doesn’t imprisonment prevent violence? A study in Columbus, Ohio, suggests two answers. More than two-thirds of that city’s violent offenders had no previous felony convictions. And Columbus police made arrests for only 40 to 50 percent of violent crimes. (Findings of a Rand Corporation study of repeat felony offenders in California were even bleaker: Only one of 10 robbers was caught.)

The National Academy of Sciences estimates that reducing serious crime by 10 percent would require jailing 157 percent more people in California, 263 percent more in New York, and 310 percent more in Massachusetts. But U.S. prisons are already jammed. Half of all state prison inmates in 1978 were living in overcrowded prisons. Tripling the current prison population of some 300,000 might reduce crime by 20 percent, but the cost would be high: \$40 billion for new prisons and \$8 billion annually for operating expenses.

Is there a better way? Currie believes so. Conservatives, he says, have ignored successful prevention and rehabilitation programs. A Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) project, for example, reduced crime by offering ex-addicts jobs and counseling. According to MDRC cost-benefit analyses, the program saved taxpayers \$4,000 per client. Chicago’s Unified Delinquency Intervention program