

## Crime's causes

SPRINGFIELD—Steven Whitman's article, "The Crime of Black Imprisonment," was powerful, compelling and true. I have made it a point to have the article distributed to colleagues in the House and Senate, in the hope that some general education may come of it.

All too often, so-called law and order legislation is passed that is calculated to warehouse the black poor in prisons. Whether out of failure or inability to see and understand the ramifications of their actions, many of our colleagues are in dire need of the perspective Mr. Whitman so eloquently presented.

Perhaps our approach in Illinois to criminal justice will begin to recognize that crime does not occur in a vacuum and that education, employment and economics have as much, if not more, to do with crime as does individual character or malice.

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## Blacks in prison

CHICAGO—Steven Whitman's article (May 28) about the discriminatory imprisonment of blacks is a classic example of the adage that "figures don't fool, but fools figure."

None of the studies he quotes, adjusted for demography, leads to the conclusion that blacks go to prison because they are black. The reason more blacks go to prison than whites is that they commit more crimes.

We need more research into the causes of the high incidence of black urban crime. The problem will not be solved by a denial of its existence.

**James R. Rumbaugh**