

FBI Lays Rise in Crime to Juveniles, Failure of Correctional Measures

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All the words at the two national conventions about crime in the streets, police brutality, law and order, peace and justice have skipped over the two problems that tower above all others as the keys to the Nation's crime crisis. These two were spelled out in stark from last week in the annual report of the Federal Bureau of Investigation on crime in the United States:

• The great increase in crime in the Nation since 1960, (up 89 per cent) seems largely attributable to juveniles. Arrests of those under 18 years of age increased 68.5 per cent during those seven years while arrests of those 18 and over increased slightly less than 1 per cent. In 1967, one out of every two persons arrested for "indea crimes" murder, rape, robbery, assault, bur-

glary, larceny, auto theft — was under 18, one out of every four was under 15, and one out of every 29 was under 11. In fact, more youngsters under 11 were arrested for that group of crimes than were adults 50 and over. More youths under 15 were arrested for those crimes than were adults over 25.

• The Nation's penal and correction mechanisms, institutional and otherwise, are not performing the task assigned to them. In a special study of a cross-section of those arrested in 1966 and 1967 for murder, rape, assault and robbery, the FBI discovered 75 per cent had been previously convicted of some crime and 49 per cent of these had served jail sentences. The study also showed that the average criminal career of those who were arrested a second time

consisted of six arrests, three convictions, and two jail sentences within ten years.

This study, like any statistical study of crime, has built-in limitations. Not all crimes and not all arrests are reported to the FBI. Not

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all police departments make honest reports even when they do file. Record-keeping practices vary widely from one place to another and from one year to another in the same place. Arrests do not necessarily correlate with the commission of crimes; many of those arrested are never formally charged and the chances of an ex-convict's being arrested and released without charge are greater than those of one who does not have a prior record.

Nevertheless, the FBI's report is the best measure available of what is actually going on in the Nation's streets. It is particularly useful when its statistics show such clear trends that the yearly variations cannot all be the result of statistical and reporting errors.

The FBI's report on juvenile arrests, based on figures from about half of the Nation where comparable 1960 data is available, show that the number of juveniles arrested for aggravated assault, fraud, handling stolen property and violating liquor or drug laws more than doubled in the last seven years. Arrests for murder went up 55 per cent, for rape 38 per cent, for robbery 96 per cent, for burglary 41 per cent, for larceny 66 per cent and for auto theft 54 per cent.

Nationally, juveniles make up one of every ten arrested for murder, one of five arrested for rape, one of six arrested for assault, three of ten arrested for robbery, one of two arrested for burglary or larceny, and three

of five arrested for auto theft.

In sheer numbers, reports from police agencies covering 75 per cent of the Nation's population show that, of those arrested for the crimes used in the FBI's index, 230,000 were under 15 years of age, another 258,000 were 15, 16 or 17, another 154,000 were 18, 19 or 20, another 108,000 were between 21 and 24, and 246,000 were 25 or older.

The great bulk of juvenile (under 18) arrests were for property crimes—374,000 were arrested for burglary or larceny and another 73,000 for auto theft. But 830 were arrested for murder, 2500 for rape, 19,000 for robbery and 18,000 for aggravated assault.

Comparisons Lacking

The FBI provides no data on which comparisons can be made with 1960 in terms of race. It does, however, show that six out of every ten juveniles arrested for violent crimes (murder, rape, robbery, assault) are Negro and seven out of ten arrested for property crimes (burglary, larceny, and auto theft) are white. It points out that while one of every four arrests nationally involves a juvenile, one of every three arrests in the suburbs involves a juvenile.

The heart of the Nation's crime problem, of course, is

in the cities and generally speaking, the bigger the city, the higher the crime rate. But crime went up as fast in the suburbs last year as it did in the cities.

Four cities—Newark, Baltimore, Detroit and Miami—had a crime rate in 1967 of more than 5000 per 100,000 residents. Eight more—Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Oakland, Washington, St. Louis, Phoenix, and Boston—had between 4000 and 5000 crimes reported per 100,000 residents.

When metropolitan areas as a whole are considered, only Los Angeles stayed above the 4000-per-100,000 rate while New York, San Francisco, Miami, Baltimore, Detroit, Phoenix, Atlantic City, New Orleans, Fresno, Stockton (Calif.),

Jacksonville (Fla.), Bakersfield (Calif.), and Tampa fell in the 3000 to 4000 category; Washington had an area crime rate of 2840 per 100,000.

Aided by Computer...

The FBI's report on "careers in crime" is harder to deal with than the statistics. This study began in 1963 when it programmed into a computer the records of 17,876 persons who had been released from custody that year. Subsequent reports show that 60 per cent of these persons were rearrested within four years.

Of those released after conviction in 1963 with a fine and probation, 33 per cent were rearrested within four years, but 71 per cent of those only fined and not put on probation were arrested. Of those released from prison, 71 per cent let out on parole were rearrested and 72 per cent of those released at the end of their terms were rearrested.

Ninety-one per cent of those who were acquitted of criminal charges were rearrested.

The trouble with the figures is that a man on parole or an ex-convict is likely to be rearrested if a new crime with characteristics like the one he committed occurs. Nevertheless, the incomplete report on convictions bears out to some extent the FBI's conclusion that the high degree of recidivism raises "serious questions with respect to the effectiveness of rehabilitation." It determined that 40 per cent of those released in 1963 and arrested before the end of 1966 had, in fact, been convicted a second time during that interval.

Percentage Given.

The relationship between the kind of crime a person has committed and his chances of being rearrested also is quite clear. The following table indicates the percentage of those who were subsequently rearrested after being released in 1963 on probation, parole, or after serving a full sentence for particular crimes:

	Pro- bation	Pa- role	Full Sen- tence
Auto theft	78	72	83
Burglary	74	68	80
Narcotics	71	60	59
Assault	66	61	74
Forgery	63	61	74
Robbery	58	47	60
Larceny	51	58	76
Liquor laws	39	36	56
Embezzlement	19	22	...

The relationship of age to crime again becomes clear among this group of criminals. Seventy per cent of those who were under 20 when they were released in 1963 were rearrested in the next four years. This dropped gradually to 61 per cent of the 30-to-39 age group, then fell to 51 per cent of those 40 to 49 and to 38 per cent of those over 50.

All of these figures are incomplete in the sense that only a small percentage of the crimes reported to police are solved and many experts feel a large number of additional crimes are never reported. The FBI says that the solution rate in 1967 were as follows: murder, 88 per cent; rape, 61 per cent; assault, 69 per cent; robbery, 30 per cent; burglary, 20 per cent; larceny, 18 per cent, and auto theft, 20 per cent.