

RATE OF INCREASE IN CRIME DECLINES

F.B.I. Finds Lower Figures in
Cities, Higher in Suburbs

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 29—

The rate of increase of serious crimes declined in the first six months of 1965 compared with last year, the Federal Bureau of Investigation announced today.

Crime increased 5 per cent during the first half of this year over the same period in 1964, the report said. But in the first half of 1964 it increased by 15 per cent over the previous year, and in 1963 it was 9 per cent higher than in 1962.

The leveling off of crime growth resulted in part from a lower crime rate in the large cities, with a decrease of 3 per cent in the volume of robberies and 1 per cent in aggravated assaults in cities of more than one million inhabitants.

But crime continued to boom in the suburbs. There was an over-all increase of 9 per cent, paced by a 17 per cent increase in robberies and a 12 per cent growth in larcenies.

Crimes increased by only 1 per cent in rural areas, with decreases of 3 per cent registered in robberies and 11 per cent in auto thefts.

Cold Winter Cited

F. B. I. statisticians were unable to explain the flattening out of the crime increase, other than to note that it was improbable that the high increases in 1963 and 1964 would continue.

They said the unusually cold winter in some major cities, such as Rochester and Chicago, could explain their declines in crime. Also, the figures from January through June do not include the racial violence of the last two autumns.

Since the figures reflect an absolute increase in offenses, not related to population growth, the higher volume of crimes in the burgeoning suburbs and the lower rates in rural areas might be expected.

Also, the improved record could be due to the fact that many communities have increased their police forces since 1963, an F.B.I. spokesman said.

The national statistics showed forcible rape up 7 per cent, murder up 6 per cent; robbery up 5 per cent; and aggravated assault up 3 per cent. In the area of property offenses, burglary and larceny increased 6 per cent, and auto theft was up 4 per cent.

Statistics on individual cities showed impressive reductions in most crime classifications in Chicago, Houston, Rochester and Atlanta. Chicago strength-

No comment by J. Edgar Hoover, nor mention of ~~xx~~ his name, usually found in stories of this kind.