

FIRST-HALF 1967 DRUG ARRESTS IN CALIFORNIA

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY

The data given in this report are provisional and will be augmented by arrest information received later in the year. This will cause final figures to exceed those presented in this report.

ADULT ARRESTS

Adult drug arrests reported to the Bureau of Criminal Statistics in the first 6 months of 1967 totaled 20,134. In 1966, the comparable figure was 12,787. The annual increase amounts to 57.5 percent. In relative terms, the greatest components of this rise were marihuana offenses, up 94.3 percent; and dangerous drug arrests, 30.6 percent higher. Arrests for narcotic addiction or use, though up 28.1 percent, are still below the 1961 level. Heroin and other narcotics arrests increased by 14.9 percent over those reported during the same period in 1966.

For the first time preliminary data on LSD offenses are available. Unfortunately it is not in pure form because of the requirement that the gravest offense be given precedence in coding. Thus, marihuana, heroin, and some dangerous drug offenses would automatically assume the first position on the coding schedule while LSD would be shown as an element only. The cases in which LSD was apparently the sole grounds for arrest accounted for 1.1 percent of the total. The data indicate that LSD involvement, without regard to the drug offense for which arrested, was reported in 3.4 percent of adult drug arrests. The drug seems to be less available in Los Angeles County than in the State. Only 1.4 percent of the Los Angeles County arrests had LSD as an element, as compared with 5.7 percent in other areas of the State.

The first-half 1967 statistics indicate that Los Angeles County's share of the drug arrest total continues to decline. In the first half of 1966 Los Angeles accounted for 60.3 percent of statewide adult arrest; in the same period of 1967, for 52.8 percent.

Counties reporting 1,000 or more adult drug arrests were Los Angeles, 10,640; San Diego, 2,193; San Francisco, 1,568; and Orange, 1,094. Alameda County, with 977 arrests was only slightly less.

Of the 20,134 adult arrests, 12,203, or 60.6 percent, involved offenders who were previously unreported. In 1966, for comparison, there were 12,787 arrests involving 6,980 (54.6 percent) new offenders. The greatest proportions of new subjects for first-half 1967 arrests entered the study files via marihuana (71.7 percent new) and dangerous drugs (64.8 percent new).

The majority of the arrestees (approximately two-thirds) were not under any form of probation or parole supervision at the time of arrest. This was particularly true as regards marihuana (74.8 percent) and dangerous drug offenses (68.6 percent). In contrast, only 40 percent of addict-users were not on parole or probation.

JUVENILE ARRESTS

Juvenile drug arrests rose to 5,735 in the January-June period of 1967 from 2,146 in the like period of 1966. These totals represent an increase of 167.2 percent. Marihuana offenses were up 181.2 percent, and dangerous drugs 89.1 percent. Heroin and addict-user offenses bulked larger than in 1966 but were still of a minor order of magnitude, with an increase from 33 arrests to 113.

For the first time in the history of the study, Los Angeles County contributed less than half of the juvenile arrests—48 percent. In 1966, this figure was 66.8 percent. All metropolitan areas of the State show remarkable increases over 1966—Orange County from 87 to 452 (up 419.5 percent), Alameda County from 158 to 437 (up 176.6 percent), San Diego from 93 to 378 (up 306.5 percent), San Francisco from 44 to 229 (up 420.5 percent), Santa Clara from 71 to 275 (up 287.3 percent), and Ventura from 23 to 230 (up 782.6 percent). Los Angeles rose from 1,456 to 2,750, or 88.9 percent, while the balance of the State taken as a unit