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Crime Grows as Morality Declines

CRIME rose 22 per cent in Oklahoma City during the past year. Except for murder, officials attributed the increase to the "the economy."

With more people at work in the city and state than ever before, with wage rates the highest ever, and employers begging for people to come in and do productive work, this is hard to correlate as the major cause of more people turning to criminal pursuits.

Two other trends in society seem to be far more likely fundamental causes of the steadily growing lawless element.

These are the widely recognized decline in public ethics and private morality, and the small proportion of criminals who are captured, tried, convicted, and kept out of circulation for a long period.

By no means have all Americans abandoned religious precepts and moral standards. Most still adhere to principles of right and wrong they learned at home, in church or at school. However, moral instruction is being challenged or subvert-

ed wherever it is taught.

Libertarians, atheists, entertainment figures and others have instilled the notion in millions that they have a right to do as they please. Moral or legal limitations are regarded as infringements of rights.

Use of alcoholic beverages and drugs is being exploited as a "right." Addicts often turn to crime to support these costly habits.

The same is true of pornography, gambling, prostitution and other so-called "victimless crimes". Promoters want to destroy all moral and legal bars to plying their trades. Their concern is profits.

Infiltration of public offices by crooks, self-serving interests and subversives discourages honest citizens from seeking such positions. If elected, negative forces often make it impossible for them to do effective work. Weak laws and poor enforcement are common problems.

Police, of course, are not to blame for this decline in morality, but they should recognize it as a major cause of increased crime.

Police and other law enforcement

officers are not to blame, either, for court rulings that handicap their investigative work and limit uses of evidence to prove criminal charges.

Nevertheless, they undoubtedly are aware that the low rate of convictions, frequency of suspended sentences, and easy paroles allow many guilty thieves and robbers to be back on the streets in a matter of days or weeks after they have arrested them.

Lawmakers and courts are responsible for this situation, especially federal judges who hold that criminals must be provided with posh motel accommodations while they are kept as prisoners.

As long as there is more concern about "rights" of felons than about the "rights" of their victims, crime will flourish.

As the criminal element grows, ability of police to combat it diminishes. They are outnumbered, outgunned and the law is on the side of the outlaw. Crime pays, and we have reached a stage when no person and no property is safe. Only public demand can stop the trend!