

*Criminal Code*

educate our people against the evils of over-indulgence in liquor. We have to do something by way of legal control in order to keep as many as possible of our younger people away from it at least until they have reached the age of self-control and restraint. So I say it must be a double-barrelled approach; and for that reason I am congratulating the hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton) on his courage and responsible citizenship in bringing forward this bill, which we as a group intend to support.

**Mr. J. A. Byrne (Kootenay East):** It was not my intention this evening, Mr. Speaker, to add my voice to what seems to be the unanimous opinion of the house, but during the last few minutes of the debate a different note seems to have entered the discussion, a suggestion that our present system does not provide sufficient entertainment for our children and that this is probably why they carry on the reading of these crime comics in a quiet way, while not under the supervision of their parents.

That is an opinion with which I disagree wholeheartedly, and I am going to try to prove that such is not the case. I shall take as an example one child whom I know intimately; I refer to my daughter, who is ten years of age, and who has a number of companions of the same age. In the town in which I live I think it would be safe to say that from the beginning ninety to ninety-five per cent of the youngsters have had all the toys they could possibly play with, going from three-wheel tricycles until they reach high school and ride bicycles. They have had at their disposal swimming pools in the summer time and skating rinks in the winter; they have gone skiing and have had every other conceivable type of pastime. If they should be given any more entertainment you would have to take them by the hand and force them to play.

However, I have found it necessary to maintain a certain degree of censorship on the comic books that come into our home by the trading method. A child buys a book for ten cents; in a month he may buy twenty books, and all are circulated. The majority of them are entertaining and easy to read, but we have encountered some that certainly should not be seen by children of that age. The minds of these children are naturally wholesome, but if that type of material is continually shown them they are bound to read it some time or other, even if they have the strictest supervision in their homes. It is very unlikely that they would commit any of these crimes, but certainly it is good neither for their souls nor for their bodies to have this sort of stuff presented to them. Whatever our supervision may be, if a trap

[Mr. Low.]

is set on the lawn our children are very likely to fall into it. I believe the people who are setting these traps should be either put behind bars or given some other severe penalty.

**Mr. J. W. Noseworthy (York South):** I rise to support this bill, Mr. Speaker, and to congratulate the hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton) on introducing it. I sincerely hope it does not meet the fate of the other private members' bills that have been introduced so far this session. Not being a lawyer, I do not know whether some bright legal light on the government side will find that this bill interferes with property and civil rights, or with other provincial rights. It may even be found that the federal government will have to spend some money to enforce this legislation when it becomes law, and it may be ruled out of order on that ground. Seriously, however, I hope it will receive the careful consideration of every hon. member of the house, that it will be considered on its merits, and that the government, if it is not prepared to accept the bill, at least will not do anything to bring about its defeat.

As has been stated already, I recognize that legislation in itself is no substitute for education, for good libraries or good literature. It is no substitute for healthful recreation or for good home training. I agree with everything that has been said with regard to the positive approach to this question. I think much more can and should be done by way of a positive approach; but the fact is that in a great many homes it is just about impossible for a child to get the sort of training some hon. members have mentioned, to which no doubt children are entitled. We have to accept conditions as they are. We do not have good libraries everywhere. There is a dearth of good reading material for boys and girls of the adolescent age.

I think we should bear in mind that every church organization, every educational institution, every cultural organization and as a matter of fact every organization interested in building good citizens is concerned with this problem; and I am quite sure this legislation will have the support of all those groups. While we may accept the fact that legislation is not a substitute for all those other things I have mentioned, while we may accept the fact that legislation without enforcement is useless or worse than useless, still I see no good reason why we should deplore the possibility of obtaining enforcement of this legislation. I am quite sure public opinion against crime comics in this country is sufficient to warrant the application and enforcement of such legislation as we have before us this evening.