

We have a free will which at times seems to overcome the most terrible hazards and obstacles. In this connection, I think of one example: I had intended to catch a plane at Peterborough, but as is often the case, the plane never arrived at Peterborough airport. As a consequence of this, at about 6 o'clock in the morning I had to drive from Peterborough to Malton to catch the plane to Ottawa. It was a cold, wet summer morning and, in the company of four or five other men, I was travelling along a lonely stretch of road. Ahead I saw a police car's lights flashing at the side of the road. As we drew nearer we saw a young man hobbling along the road. As we passed him we recognized that one of his legs was a stump and saw the pain seared on his face as he struggled on. The young man was Terry Fox on his run across Canada. You may ask, "What on earth has Terry Fox to do with this study?" I say, "Everything."

During the committee hearings the emphasis was on those who had failed—why they had become criminals. In my view we overlooked the raw courage and steel determination which are the main ingredients of characters who fight obstacles. We should learn how they achieve that. Almost all the evidence presented to the committee concerned children who had become twisted criminals. There was no evidence of what enables some children to surmount the hazards of genetic, psychological and environmental disadvantages.

In this connection I had to go to the United States in order to see some studies. Very few have been done. However, studies have been done in Berkeley and Minnesota, and I would refer to one of those case studies. Michael, aged 10, had a schizophrenic mother who had been in and out of institutions; a father who was in prison; and an older sister who lived in a home for the mentally retarded. Yet, his teachers described Michael as charming, bright, a good student, a natural leader and loved by everyone in the school. The extraordinary contradiction of the human species is such that our theory of a series of calamities stunting growth and leading to crime is so often refuted by the will of the individual. Frankly, I get great encouragement from that.

Another study done in Berkeley concerned 403 eminent people, and demonstrated that three out of ten had childhoods in which they were despised, rejected, abused, abandoned, ignored or brutalized. Their parents were cruel, cold, bizarre, insane or alcoholic; yet, these children succeeded and became prominent, eminent people in the United States. The question I ask is: Why? How do they overcome these hazards that seem to hold back so many?

The committee readily admits that it did not have a chance to study all aspects and provide all the answers. That is why we want to set up an institute to study these matters. Frankly, my belief, honourable senators, is that we will never know how to grow people. Having said that, I do not want to mislead you into thinking that our committee felt that good, responsible parents would want to expose their children to hazards over which so many are stumbling. No level of government should ignore the elimination or diminution of such hazards when it is possible, collectively, to raze them.

Honourable senators, we rely on the family as a centre of warmth, caring, nurture, and a citadel for our young, but let us face the reality of some facts in this Canada of ours. All of us at some time feel smug about the care of our children even as we recognize that 15 million children in the world will die this year. We think how fortunate our children in Canada are. Many of us still live in the myth of the Victorian days where the father returns home from work, is greeted by his wife, and reads bedtime stories to his children. I am reminded of Longfellow's "The Children's Hour" where it says:

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

Honourable senators, Canadian fathers are not returning home. A 1976 census showed that there were 464,000 single-parent families headed by a woman. One-third of the working mothers had children under three years of age. There are almost 900,000 Canadian children living in single-parent families, many in poverty.

On the subject of pregnancies, statistics show that there were over 50,000 pregnancies in Canada between the ages of 15 and 19; of those about one-third were aborted. Although we have this idealism about children in Canada, there were over 62,000 abortions in 1978.

With regard to the care of our children, in 1977, there were 2,268 admissions to mental hospitals of children between the ages of 10 and 14 and, between the ages of 15 and 19, the number of admissions was 6,371.

There are 600,000 children under the age of seven with no access to any kind of professional, assured daycare. Many are sitting watching television because their parents are pressured to go out to work. It is not uncommon to see 10 or more children in some apartment sitting watching television while their parents are at work. There are one million so-called "latch-key" children in Canada.

The family unit is under enormous strain and bombardment, not only in Canada but in all of North America. This is more obvious in urban centres than in rural areas, and yet we recognize that in the 1990s 80 per cent of Canadians will be living in urban areas.

With stress comes violence. I am not talking about watching violence on television in the home. God knows, that is something that should be looked into, and Senator McElman constantly pushed that during the hearings. It might interest honourable senators to know that children between five and fourteen could watch the violent destruction of more than 13,400 characters within a period of ten years. Many of our children are exposed to that.

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I am talking of the violence in the home, real life violence, the screams of terror as a child witnesses its mother being battered and beaten by her husband or common-law husband. Last year 12,000 women in Canada sought refuge in emergen-