

I suspect that Senator McGrand at the conception of this committee, when it was formed, felt something like a putative father—he did not have official sanctification for his creation. Indeed, the prenatal period in the formation of this offspring seemed to suggest that it was indeed a child at risk. I also know that he hoped that every page of the report would ring out with a clarion call, a good lusty cry, from this little red-cheeked baby. I think that he probably feels that I and several others tried to mute that to some extent, but I hope he is satisfied that I still think it is a formidable and substantive effort, and I hope its vigorous cry will be heard in the corridors of power.

Certainly, as Senator McGrand has said, it has been heard as far away as New Zealand because the Parliament of New Zealand is interested in looking at this report, which I think is a credit to the Senate, and I know from Senator Bonnell, the overall chairman, that he has received many letters from provinces and individuals all across Canada concerning the report.

I would like to focus, if I might still on the author and, as far as I am concerned, the genius and the inspiration of the report.

Senator McGrand, I don't know how many children you, as a doctor, have brought into the world, but I do know from some of your colleagues from New Brunswick that you were a legend as a country doctor in the 1920s and 1930s; that no matter how cold and chilly the night or how harsh the blizzard, if there was a cry of desperation from some lonely farmhouse for help, your sturdy figure would get out the horse and sleigh and start through the clogged roads, and, when the horse stumbled and faltered, you put on your snow-shoes and still gamely pushed through to answer the need.

I would say as well, Senator McGrand, that as Minister of Health you have also been a pioneer in your province, in immunization, in preventative programs, and in building hospitals.

In fairness to Dr. McGrand, honourable senators, it was not his intention that this should just become a theological study on the origins of sin or a philosophical discussion on the nature of man, or even that it should be a discussion of astrology and the influence of stars towards criminal tendencies. But certainly for me, as I looked at the original term of reference, which is to examine "such experiences in prenatal life and early childhood as may cause personality disorders or criminal behaviour in later life" I felt, somewhat like Senator Macdonald, that this was perhaps a wee bit too esoteric and too mystical an adventure. If I might quote King Lear:

This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune—often the surfeit of our own behaviour—we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion;

And I wondered if we were not trying, in going back to prenatal circumstances, to make ourselves provide an excuse for criminals—"fools by heavenly compulsion".

[Senator Thompson.]

But, in fairness to Dr. McGrand, it was never his intention even to study the chromosome composition or the DNA code of life. Indeed, I know that Dr. McGrand subscribes, as I understand all reputable geneticists do, to the conviction that acquired characteristics are not inherited. The Soviet geneticist, Professor Lysenko, was discredited even in the Communist bloc, as David Suzuki said in referring to him, "Lysenko's mumbo jumbo held back Soviet generics for many years." In other words, he was emphasizing—that is, Lysenko was—that acquired characteristics are inherited. What Senator McGrand wanted to study and examine were the hazards in prenatal life, at birth and early childhood, a series of physical and emotional assaults, which can begin to lead towards a pattern of susceptibility towards withdrawal, resentful frustration and on towards antisocial behaviour.

Because of my own past interest in the corrections field, I have read a number of the reports—the Stewart Report, the Archambault Report, the Fauteux Report and the Ouimet report. I am also very impressed with the MacGuigan report. There has been a mountain of volumes on treating the offender, and I think the penology profession as a whole would agree with Alexander Pope's remark: "As the twig is bent, the tree inclines." But Dr. McGrand—and I know he admires René Dubois and I suspect he also admires Thoreau—agreed with Thoreau when he said, "There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root."

What I learned from the committee, first, was that there is a large constituency all across this country and internationally, many disciplines and professions, who are digging down to examine sometimes one and sometimes more of the entanglement of roots and fibres to see what has led towards a life of crime. We were not alone in our study by any means, or in our interest. Other speakers have talked about a recommendation for a Canadian institute for the study of violence in society, and its purpose, as well as initiating and promoting research, would be to co-ordinate and evaluate research.

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From the testimony of witnesses, from the press, and from research papers, our committee recognized that some roots in the entanglement had become twisted and deformed, causing a malformed outcrop—the violent criminal. If I can be so bold as to use agricultural terms about which I know so little, there may be too much acidity in the soil, too little sun or too much buffeting by rain and storms.

At this point I wish to thank the two very able research personnel from the Library of Parliament, Helen McKenzie and Grant Purves, for their diligence and talents in co-ordinating the committee's findings.

The committee recommends the development of preventive resources—to enrich the soil—to assist the fetus, the infant and the young child in order that it will not develop the weakness of later susceptibility to crime—stunted growth.

Having described in terms of plant life the dangers of deformity, let me add that, in my eyes, there is a glorious, magnificent contradiction on the part of the human species.