

"Assaults on children (euphemistically called 'lickings') are an outward manifestation of an unhealthy attitude that North Americans have toward children. A child cannot be raised in an environment of hate and in one in which he is denigrated by beatings without later reacting against others in a violent manner."⁴⁹

One of our witnesses quoted a convincing passage from the works of a well-known criminologist and student of the roots of violence:

"Whence comes this impulse to hurt something defenseless, something smaller and weaker than we are? . . . Whence comes this impulse to hurt a child from slight inconvenience, irritation, impudence, or annoyance? Just what is this phenomenon of whamming things, little things, like puppies and children? They're not baseballs; they're not golf balls; they're not rugs; they're not mad dogs or wolves. They're just defenseless little human beings.

And look what comes of it. I'm convinced that most of the violence that develops in the lives of young people who become miscreants of one kind and another — thieves, bullies, even rapists and murderers — can be ascribed to the aggressive behaviour these same individuals received as children. Every clinical letter I get, every prisoner I interview, every case history I come across seems to begin by describing the beatings that came along regularly but failed to reform the boy as a child — the cudgeling or kicks or strappings from drunken, angry, worried parents."⁵⁰