

legislate against pictures of that kind, so you have to say "wholly" or "exclusively". The moment you do that, you open up the possibility of evasion, because there could be a magazine, the half of which was devoted to this and the other half to real comics or something of the kind. There would certainly be charges of discrimination. It would be said that we are preventing the publication of this, while we do not prevent the showing of horror features in moving pictures and that sort of thing.

I am merely pointing out the difficulties of drafting effective legislation. I am not making a strong case against the principle of the legislation itself, but I wanted to find out whether it was thought these crime comics actually induced the commission of crime. The representations that we have received in the Department of Justice were practically confined to one province, British Columbia. If we put this legislation on the statute books it will be the responsibility of the attorneys general of the other provinces to enforce it. We shall have to give them a little more time.

The discussion brought up in the House of Commons by the hon. member for Kamloops has brought the matter before the public and there will be some discussion in the other provinces. However I am not satisfied that the matter is at the stage that would justify legislation at the present time particularly, because many persons interested in this matter say there is no evidence, or practically no evidence that the publication of this material does induce the commission of crime.

We communicated with Doctor W. Line, director of the division on research, national committee for mental hygiene, and he sent the following wire under date of June 11, 1948. This was addressed to the commissioner of penitentiaries, because I had asked him to make this inquiry. The wire reads:

Confirming telephone conversation McCulley-Line this date. To handle this problem at the level of legal banning would be to confess that parents educators and others are unable so to raise the child as to make this kind of material from the child's point of view unnecessary and undesirable. Banning serves rather to distract attention from the real problem of how we educate children in our culture. Organized voluntary action contributing to public education is preferable both operationally and ethically to legislative banning.

Doctor Line also enclosed a quotation from Doctor C. M. Hincks, general director, national committee for mental hygiene, who said:

It has never been scientifically established that crime or thrill stories either in movies, radio or comics have contributed to delinquency. Prohibiting publication is an admission of fail-

ure on the part of the family and the educational system in encouraging the development of wholesome and healthy interests.

Some juvenile court judges and some police officers were consulted.

Ex-Deputy Commissioner Meade and Inspector Regan of the R.C.M.P. are both of opinion that crime comics do not contribute to any appreciable extent to the commission of crimes by youthful offenders. They advise me that they have consulted such leading psychiatrists as Doctor Line of Toronto university who is also of the same opinion.

Judge Harley Mott of the juvenile court, Toronto, says he has no evidence that crime comics are contributing appreciably toward the commission of crime. He says he has no doubt, however, that they have a bad effect, but he thinks it is with the class of boy over sixteen, and he is mainly concerned with boys sixteen and under.

Judge Nicholson and Judge Laramee of the juvenile court in Montreal advise me that they have no evidence that crime comics contribute appreciably toward the commission of crime amongst juvenile offenders. They feel, however, that they have a bad effect, and they are in complete agreement with any measures which would be taken to have them banned.

In talking to some of my friends about this matter, they say: "Yes, ban them, they do not do any good". But I, as Minister of Justice, cannot lightly consider introducing amendments to the criminal code on the ground that a certain thing does not do any good and may do some harm. That would not be a responsible course to follow.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): Do not ban my blood spitters; I love them.

Mr. ILSLEY: On the other hand, I have some other letters here which I have not had time to go over. It must be said that very strong resolutions have come in on the other side. I have just received one dated June 7, 1948, from the parents-teachers' association of Victoria, British Columbia, which recites the evils of crime comics and certain other publications dealing with crime, sex, and so forth, and which ends with this:

Therefore be it resolved that we approach the civic, provincial and national authorities of Canada to do all in their power to enforce legislation to stop the publication and distribution of such publications.

The conclusion I come to, in the division of expert opinion and because of the great difficulty of drafting legislation that would not be open to serious objections, is that we should not try to deal with this matter this session. I would not feel like sponsoring any