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CANADA'S LAWS BROUGHT UP TO DATE

The Minister of Justice, Mr. Otto Lang, recently announced amendments to the Criminal Code of Canada, which became effective on July 15.

The proclamation of Bill C-2, the Criminal Law Amendment Act, extends Canada's judicial authority to Canadian and inbound aircraft in flight, applies the breathalyzer test to boat-operators, makes men and women equally responsible for jury duty, abolishes corporal punishment, allows jail sentences under 90 days to be served at night and on weekends, and amends the charge of obstructing or assaulting police sometimes brought against persons guilty of civil disobedience - with the result that the maximum penalty is increased and the minimum reduced.

New rules make possession of a motor vehicle

with altered serial numbers evidence of possession of a stolen vehicle. However, being in possession of tools that could be used for house, vault or safe-breaking no longer necessarily oblige the accused to prove that his intention was not criminal. The latter change was the result of Supreme Court criticism of that part of the existing Act.

JURY RULES

Under new trial rules, men and women become equal in eligibility and responsibility for jury duty; jurors may be discharged if the judge is satisfied that they can no longer carry out their responsibilities, for mental as well as physical reasons; jurors may be prosecuted if they disclose what took place in the jury room; and newspapers may be prosecuted if they print what happened in the court room while the jury is excluded.

WHIPPING WIPED OUT

Major and significant changes in sentencing came into effect on July 15. On the recommendation of many groups and individuals, beginning with the 1956 report of a special joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons, followed by the Canadian Committee on Corrections, the Canadian Bar Association and the Canadian Correction Association, and as laid out in private Members' bills, the use of the cat-o'-nine tails and all other forms of whipping is ended. Another amendment to sentencing will affect cases where the accused pleads guilty or is found guilty but where no positive value to society could be had by sentencing; in such cases a judge may discharge the accused either absolutely or conditionally (e.g., a term of "probation"), the result being that he will never be convicted of that of which he was guilty. In such cases, the trial will have had the desired remedial effect. In cases however, where an individual receives a sentence of less than 90 days, the judge

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