

Life-Time Criminal Record Shouldn't Saddle Youths

People who commit crimes under the age of 21 should not be saddled with a criminal record for the rest of their lives, said lawyer Kenneth A. Langdon when interviewed.

Youths, by committing one foolish and immature act, can be stuck with a criminal record for life," he said.

Langdon, new president of the Halton County Law Association, was expanding on the view of juvenile age limits held by his father, Judge Kenneth M. Langdon.

TOO YOUNG

The judge has several times refused to convict 16 year old youths in the criminal court, claiming this is far too young an age for an offender to go down on record as a criminal, and, if the case warrants it, be sentenced to prison along with the older and hardened criminals.

Ken Langdon, the lawyer agrees with Judge Langdon that the juvenile age limit in the courts should be raised to at least 17.

But then he took his thought further—"Why should you be saddled with a criminal record all your life for something you did under the age of 21?"

Twenty one is generally considered the age of adulthood and legality in many areas, he suggested; perhaps it would be the appropriate age for a person's criminal record to begin.

CRIMINAL RECORD

He termed it a "disaster" for a young person to be stuck with a criminal record all his life for some foolish and regrettable act in their youth.

An extension of this thought, the Georgetown barrister went on to say would wipe out a person's criminal record after five years if during that time he has been clean.

Langdon said he figures five years would be a sufficient length of time to make a judgment on the continuing criminal tendency or otherwise of a so-called criminal.

FIVE YEARS

If after the five years the person has kept clean, gone straight, behaved himself, and generally inspired the trust that he will henceforth keep on the right side of law and order, his criminal record should not continue to be held against him. The record should be obliterated, giving the reformed person another chance in life free of the mark of criminal, Langdon said.

Persons who have a natural criminal tendency will invariably commit their next crime before five years is up, he added. The lawyer cited the examples of four men all of whom went up before Judge Alan B. Sprague during the last criminal sitting of Halton County Court.

Each of these men had a string of crimes, with little more than a few months between each offence.

One man for instance, was released on parole from Kingston Penitentiary June 8th of last year after serving about half his ten year sentence for manslaughter.

About three weeks later, on June 27th, he was smashing his way into a Burlington gas sta-

tion and taking off with the cash register.

There's little chance a person like this could conceivably have his record obliterated, noted Langdon. Such criminals are back at it way before five years.

SINGLE CRIME

When he talks about wiping out a criminal record, Langdon is referring to the person who perhaps commits one crime in his life.

His open minded attitude in this regard does not suggest, however, any degree of leniency for offenders of the public law and order.

"Violent crimes, for example, must be dealt with severely," he said.

"When people aren't safe in the streets," that's when the Georgetown lawyer starts calling for severe penalties.

Commenting on capital punishment, the present state of the law in Canada to be suitable and satisfactory. The death penalty for the killing of police officers and prison guards is a desirable deterrent to those criminals, "who have nothing to lose," he said.

LAW AND ORDER

Comparing the state of law and order in Canada and that in the USA he said, "Canadians generally have a great deal more respect for law and order than the average American."

Gun control laws in the U.S., leave a lot to be desired, he went on. "Americans think it's their God-given right to carry guns. But no one, in my opinion has any business walking around with a gun in his pocket."

Salmon Planting Are New Feature For Credit River

Ninety thousand coho salmon will be placed in the Credit River as part of a Dept. of Lands and Forests program to plant 150,000 coho smolts (yearlings) in tributary waters of Lake Ontario and Lake Superior this spring.

The fish, to be introduced on a limited experimental basis, will be the first coho salmon plantings undertaken by the province. They will also place 20,000 in the Huber River, 20,000 in Bronte Creek. One planting of 20,000 will be made in the Gravel River in the Nipigon Bay area of Lake Superior.

In addition to coho, lands and forests will plant 10,000 rainbow trout yearlings in the Gravel (Lake Superior), Humber (Lake Ontario), and in Lake Huron's Saugeen River. The first plantings of 35,000 highly selected splake yearlings will also be made in Georgian Bay this spring, probably in the Meaford area.

The new 1969 programs involving coho salmon, rainbow trout and splake are in addition to the department's previously established plantings of lake trout yearlings in Lake Superior and Georgian Bay and kokanee and splake in Lake Ont.

Langdon, at 31, has a tradition of law surrounding him in the form of grandfather, father, uncles and cousins, all of whom were or are themselves in the legal profession.

THE GEORGETOWN HERALD
THURSDAY, FEB. 13th, 1969
PAGE 6

thing stepped in and the young Langdon switched to law.

"I'm a lawyer by default," he quipped, "but I'm quite happy."

WAS MAGISTRATE

His grandfather, M. K. Langdon, began the tradition. One of his uncles, W. O. Langdon (the 'O' stands for Osgoode) was until his death a Sault Ste. Marie magistrate. Another uncle, C. V. Langdon, is a practicing Q.C. in Toronto. Yet another uncle, T. R. Langdon, was a North Bay solicitor until recently.

W. H. Langdon, the Georgetown lawyer's cousin, is with the attorney general's department in Toronto. (It was this Langdon who acted as special crown attorney at the December sitting of Halton Criminal Court).

Another cousin, Robert Langdon practises law in Toronto. Also in Toronto is H. D. Langdon, Q.C., a cousin of the lawyer's father, Judge Langdon.

"People do tend to associate the name of Langdon with the law," understated the youthful Georgetown barrister.

Osgoode Hall

Married with two daughters, Ken Langdon practised for a time in Toronto after graduating from Osgoode Hall and prior to moving to this north Halton town with the firm of Nelson, Latimer, Baines and Langdon.

The Georgetown-born Langdon, rather than being encouraged to enter law by his father, the judge, was discouraged by that jurist.

He began studying languages at the University of Toronto but fate or tradition or some-

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