

SENATORS TO SCAN VIOLENCE IN FILMS

Dodd Hearings to Coincide
With Commission Study

By JOSEPH A. LOFTUS
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WASHINGTON, June 7—Violence in the movies and on television will be examined as a possible seedbed of social problems by the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency when it resumes hearings later this year.

The subcommittee's chairman is Senator Thomas J. Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut.

The hearings are expected to run concurrently with, and perhaps complement, the proceedings of the 10-member commission that President Johnson named Wednesday night to "look into the causes, the occurrence and the control of physical violence" in the nation.

The Dodd subcommittee also plans to study institutions for juveniles and how they function, a staff source said.

No date has been set for the start of hearings, but it is possible that they will be delayed until after the November election because of the usual difficulty of commanding a quorum during political campaigns.

Doubts Expressed

The President's commission has not assembled yet. The chairman, Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, however, president-emeritus of Johns Hopkins University, had commitments that will prevent his coming to Washington for at least a few days.

Among seven commission members who were interviewed, there was noticeable doubt, not always plainly articulated on the record, about the worth of the commission itself, or the individual's assignment to the commission.

"Oh, you know, a commission is a commission," one member commented forlornly.

That expression reflected a widespread reaction in Washington to the appointment of commissions as an approach to public problems.

Another member twice began sentences in tones of utter futility, then decided that was no way to talk for publication.

A third said: "I don't know how much good we can do. I can see some good. It's an opportunity to dramatize the problem and make people aware of the urgency."

One member is now serving on three committees or commissions looking at various aspects of the same problem. He is Senator Roman L. Hruska, Republican of Nebraska.

He is a member of the Dodd subcommittee, the Commission for the Reform of Federal Criminal Laws, created by act of Congress, and the newly appointed Presidential commission.

Judge A. Leon Higginbotham Jr. of the United States District Court, eastern Pennsylvania, is also a member of the two latter bodies.

Senator Hruska was one of the leading opponents of firearms control legislation and often articulated the view of the National Rifle Association.

He, like several others on the President's commission, felt that specialists in the behavioral sciences would have to be assembled as staff members, or as consultants, or as witnesses.

The Nebraska Senator said: "There is a great need for research to analyze behavior and motivation, to see if something in the way of diagnosis can be done early."

Two Factors Noted

Judge Higginbotham thought the effectiveness of the commission depended on two factors: "whether the commission focuses precisely and thoroughly on the problem and produces a rational solution, and second, the receptivity that the country gives the commission's work."

Mrs. Patricia R. Harris, professor of law at Harvard University and a former Ambassador to Luxembourg, cautioned against an expectation of easy answers, or even "an answer."

"We must not make the mistake of thinking that there is an answer," she said. "I can almost say that there is not an answer. We will have to face the wish for a simple solution. The simplistic approach may be the belief of some people that the simple solution is to get a gun and shoot a person they believe to be the source of a problem."

"In a complex world problems are complex and solutions are equally complex. Perhaps we can find, or suggest, directions in which we as a people can move."

Senator Philip A. Hart, Democrat of Michigan, said: "It would seem we've been given an assignment to update man's knowledge about himself. I would anticipate that we haven't made any breakthroughs, comparable to the physical sciences, in man's understanding of himself."

Representative Hale Boggs of Louisiana, Democratic whip of the House, who was a member of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, said the selection of a competent staff was the most important step the commission could take. He said he thought Congress would readily provide the necessary budget and authority. The commission should have subpoena power, he said.