

South China Morning Post

July 9, 1975

Attorney General and public opinion

I AM overjoyed to read the Attorney General's statement (S.C.M. Post, July 3) that public opinion has been expressed most vociferously in recent months in relation to publications aimed at juveniles.

As one with some knowledge of social-science research methodology, I would be intrigued to have Mr Hobley reveal both criteria according to which a representative sample of the "public" was defined, and the precise means he employed to secure reliable and valid information from his respondents.

I am even more delighted that Mr Hobley has also, apparently, utilised the same sources of information to provide cause for his further statement that there is "deep concern" felt about pornographic matter generally and that there is "no doubt that by and large

our community makes no concessions to the liberal attitudes which have prevailed elsewhere."

Again, I keenly await details of Mr Hobley's methodological techniques inasmuch as my own, alas, modest observations seem to disclose, with respect, a state of affairs somewhat at variance with that stated so categorically by Mr Hobley.

For what it is worth - and I confess I have neither the advantage of divine guidance nor the gift of being at all times both dogmatic and right - my own impression, based on not inconsiderable field research, is that a significant cross-section of "our community" takes a lively interest in what can only be described as an impressively broad spectrum of sexual

diversions, including the reading of material which some choose, as is their right, to regard as offensive.

What transports me to the greatest levels of delight, however, is Mr Hobley's clear willingness not only to feel, on behalf of the rest of us, the pulse on which his finger must maintain a lonely vigil, but also to be thus guided by his exclusive diagnosis of public opinion.

I am now happily confident that, at Mr Hobley's urging, there will be an immediate reconsideration of Government policy on the issues of capital punishment, contraceptive pills on prescription, a PAYE system of taxation, ex gratia compensation for Oi-lan, and elective seats on the Legislative Council.

B. R. L. LOVEGROVE