

# TO DECIDE FUTURE OF MURDERESSES Psychiatric Advisers Will be Consulted

Wellington Correspondent

**T**HE decision as to the future of Pauline Yvonne Parker and Juliet Marion Hulme, who have been found guilty of murder, is entirely the responsibility of the Minister of Justice (the Hon T. C. Webb).

The Secretary of Justice (Mr S. T. Barnett), after consulting psychiatric advisers to-day, will tender a report to the Minister, who will then decide where and for what duration the girls will be confined.

As is usually the case in matters of such gravity, Mr Webb will have an informal discussion with his Cabinet colleagues before the decision is announced.

Stating this to-day, Mr Webb said that his responsibility was defined under the Capital Punishment Act, 1950, which is taken as part of the Crimes Act, 1908.

**In Section V it excludes from the death penalty any person under the age of 18 years and provides an alternative, "detention during her Majesty's pleasure."**

Other sections state: "A person sentenced to detention during her Majesty's pleasure shall be liable to be detained in such a place and under such conditions as the Minister of Justice may direct."

## ***Perturbed***

"Any person so detained may at any time be discharged by the Minister of Justice on licence. Every such licence shall be in such form, and shall contain such conditions as the Minister of Justice may direct, and may at any time be revoked or varied by the Minister."

It is understood that officials are perturbed as to whether the existing facilities are adequate for the detention of these girls. The Borstal Institution has been mentioned as a probability, but some official opinion is that Borstal is intended as a corrective institution and that its use for crimes of this character may be outside its capacity.

The problem may be doubled if it is considered desirable to separate these teen-age murderers.

Mr Barnett said to-day that the only other person at present being held in prison for murder committed when a child was James Frederick Dodd.

## ***Facilities***

In a publication issued recently by the Department of Justice, "A Penal Policy for New Zealand," comment is made on the classification of the Dominion's penal institutions. Three have facilities for the detention of women prisoners—Arohata Borstal and Reformatory, Auckland Prison, and Paparua Prison.

**OF AROHATA BORSTAL AND REFORMATORY** the publication states: "This is a women's institution situated a few miles from Wellington. The women and girls detained there are all those sentenced to Borstal training throughout the country, and also other young offenders of a type who are not yet widely experienced in crime, and who might, with individual treatment, be expected to reform. It must, however, be admitted that they present the most difficult penal problem in New Zealand since too many of them constitute moral problems. The average population at any time is about thirty, and the inmates are employed at the laundry and in gardening, and in sewing for other institutions.

**OF AUCKLAND PRISON:** "A small section of the prison is set aside for older women and for young women for whom Arohata is not suitable. They are mainly engaged in laundering and sewing."

**OF PAPAARUA PRISON:** "Near the main institution there is a small prison of the bungalow type to house three or four women on remand or short sentence."

**FOOTNOTE:** The girls are being held at the Paparua Prison. The superintendent (Mr R. Pearson) said that they were in separate cells, but saw each other at exercise periods in the morning and afternoon. He understood that they would be at the prison until the Minister had decided where they should serve their term.

## ***Released***

In the Supreme Court at Hamilton in February, 1947, Dodd, at that time aged 15, together with Cyril James Pascoe, then aged 14, was convicted of murdering Raymond Douglas Brinkman at Te Whakarae, near Taumarunui, on January 12, 1947.

Both boys were sentenced to life imprisonment. Pascoe was released from gaol earlier this year. At the time of the trial, the jury recommended mercy for Pascoe.

The boys were not sentenced to death in 1947, as the Labour Government had abolished capital punishment for murder in 1941.

Before capital punishment was abolished in 1941, all persons who committed murder were sentenced to death. However,

this was not always carried out as the sentence could be commuted to imprisonment.