

Rock seeks views on violence

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OTTAWA — Canadians are being asked by Justice Minister Allan Rock if Canada needs a criminal law to regulate excessive violence in the media and on the information highway.

He released a discussion paper yesterday called the *Undue Exploitation Of Violence* that invites Canadians to present their views on gratuitous violence in society in written responses to him by May 31.

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"Many Canadians believe that our society is becoming more violent," the paper says.

"Whether or not this perception is accurate, it is true that graphic portrayals of violence, including sexual violence, have become numerous and increasingly accessible through a wide variety of media (movies, television) and communications technology."

One of those is the information highway, which has parents concerned about what their

children may be seeing when they log on with their home computers.

"It has been established that offensive content such as pornography and hate propaganda is being communicated on the information highway through the Internet and computer bulletin boards," the paper says.

There is no specific prohibition in the Criminal Code to deal with materials which gratuitously or unduly exploit violence.

The federal government has been wrestling with the issue and the possibility of enacting a law because of the perception of many people that Canada is becoming more violent

The House of Commons justice committee recommended in November, 1994, that the existing law be amended or that a new statute be enacted to prohibit the "undue exploitation or glorification of horror, cruelty or violence."