

*Criminal Code Amendments*

sentences bitter, alienated from society, not knowing what is happening, and under no obligation to maintain touch with a residential centre, a parole officer, or anyone else when they get out. We all know that if you give someone a cheap suit and a few hundred dollars at the most when they come out, having had very little contact with the community or their family, probably having lost contact with anyone with whom they had an affectionate relationship because of the time they had been locked up, as well as having been surrounded by prisoners and talking about things you learn in prison for maybe up to 10 or 20 years, the chances of that inmate going back to a life of crime are extraordinarily and tragically high. That is one reason we have said that we intend to oppose this Bill.

I now want to talk about some of the specific problems we became aware of in Ottawa-Carleton as a result of the death of Celia Ruygrok. The facts surrounding that tragic death tell us that there are very serious weaknesses in the current system of mandatory supervision and parole, much less rehabilitation. Much to my amazement I have yet to discover whether the house in question, run by the John Howard Society, was intended to be an unstructured or a structured program. I think it is clear it was not meant to be a specialized program. Even if it was to be a structured program, under the standards laid down by Corrections Canada little or nothing was really required in the way of interaction between staff and parolees apart from the fact that there would be a staff person on duty at all times of the day and night. The staff was instructed to lend a sympathetic ear and direct prisoners to resources available in the community. The standards put down by Corrections Canada indicate that if there is to be a monthly meeting or regular meetings with the residents, they should be told about it. But it is not a requirement in a structured program that there be intense work with each prisoner in order to work out a plan of action for re-establishing themselves in the community. In the case of Kirkpatrick House, something as simple as whether or not the house would deal with prisoners who went out and got drunk had not been worked out. The people in Corrections Canada had an understanding of the policy in that particular home different from that of the staff who were there.

Although Corrections Canada was responsible for administering the contract, although parole officers were there—seldom, I think, but at least once every couple of weeks—it appears that no one raised any alarm bells over the fact that the full-time professionally qualified staff, who were adequately paid, I presume, were only there during the week. They worked around the clock from Monday to Friday but on the weekends, part-time staff, and in the case of Celia Ruygrok and perhaps others, inexperienced and underqualified part-time staff, were on their own. Even those residents who were working were likely to be free on the weekends. Those who were taking training programs at community college or manpower training were likely to be free on the weekends. Everyone has the habit of relaxing a bit on the weekends and if it is your habit to go and have a drink or two on a Saturday night and you finally get out of prison where you could not do that, I

would think it is a natural tendency for prisoners to want to do it even if the conditions of their parole do not permit it. So here you have inexperienced staff left on their own, part-timers, a duty officer available at the end of the phone but basically saying: "Listen, don't call me unless you have to", and a tragedy occurs.

This particular house did not have any training for its part-time staff. They worked one shift under supervision and then they were on their own. Communications with the part-time staff were negligible. The director of the house was not aware that most of the residents had violent criminal records. In theory the staff should have had access to the dossier on each prisoner but the dossier was in the office of Corrections Canada somewhere in downtown Ottawa. Therefore, in practical terms, they were not accessible to the full-time staff, and even less accessible to the part-time staff. Had this home been located in Quebec City, Moose Jaw or Vancouver, I would assume access to the records of the prisoners would even be less than it was in theory at this home. Part-timers were not involved in staff meetings, from what I could establish. Records of meetings with the prisoners were not kept. It was all very informal.

Those things, Mr. Speaker, speak to weaknesses in the program of the house. Communications were obviously inadequate and there are certainly statements in the audit, which was done after the death, which indicate that the director and the John Howard Society seemed to lack interest in the operation of this home even though it was a \$260,000 contract with Corrections Canada, a very major contract. In addition, the audit of the home in November, 1984, indicated:

Since the evaluation completed in June 1984, CSC has continued to express concerns about the level and quality of service delivery provided by the CRC under the structured program agreement. No additional staff have been hired as anticipated, and the CRC program content continued to be seen as limited. Most recently at a JHS Board of Directors meeting 84-11-21, the concerns of CSC and NPB in this regard were expressed. The Agency indicated a commitment to respond to the problem by hiring an additional staff person... A structured program will be developed and implemented with the assistance of additional staff resources, and by consultation with the CSC Ottawa area office.

That evaluation came out 7 to 8 months before the murder took place. What happened in the intervening time? It is hard to see what happened. Yet Corrections Canada was within a mile of this particular halfway house. Now I ask myself, if Corrections Canada, given the proximity of this particular house, was unable to get them to clean up their act and this death occurred, and if, as the report stated, common sense alone would have said you should not have left this young woman there on her own, inexperienced as she was, in the middle of the night, quite apart from any other factors about what should or should not have been done, then what about the halfway houses and community residential centres which are located at much greater distance and which, therefore, do not have the benefit of easy and quick communication with Corrections Canada staff?

In addition to that, this report was prepared on behalf of the Parole Board and Corrections Canada. It went quite thoroughly into a number of matters. I have only had an expurgated version because of the Freedom of Information Act. Much of