allow itself to be pressured into handling the case on any other basis.

That is a hope which many people across this country clutch with some despair because of the record of the Parole Board. I should also like to quote from a collection of case studies by Judge A. L. Bewley of British Columbia. I cite the example of a person granted parole after more than one instance of criminal activity and who committed an offence while on parole:

> This man began his criminal career in Quebec in March, 1960, with the theft of an auto.
>
> Between then and June, 1968, he was convicted of 20 separate criminal offences, including theft, escaping lawful custody—twice—assaulting a guard on escape, possession of stolen goods, possession of an offensive weapon.
>
> On May 5, 1967, at New Westminster, he was sentenced to 12 years for breaking prison by violence and other crimes committed during that escape. He appealed, and the Appeal Court reduced his sentences to seven years on February 28, 1968.
>
> Eleven months after being sentenced thus by the Court of Appeal, he was released on parole—June 18, 1970. His sentences were due to expire in 1976.
>
> Less than one month after being released on parole—on July 6 and 16, 1970—he committed three robberies. He was convicted of these and sentenced on August 24, 1970, and November 26, 1970, to 15 years on each charge.

This kind of thing has been so widespread in the record of the National Parole Board that according to one survey conducted during the administration of the former solicitor general, 40 per cent of those who were released on parole broke that parole by crime or some other violation. So we must ask, when we are requested to appoint ten more members to the Parole Board, whether it is just to have more of the same, or can we expect that there will be a more reasonable, common sense and responsible administration of the parole system so that there are not released on the public of this country people who are still a danger to the safety of ordinary citizens.

On the other side of the coin we must ask ourselves whether this will also mean there will be more of the same in the way in which frequently the Parole Board has mismanaged its responsibility by being rigid, and even repressive, in depriving parole to people who could act in the way in which it is intended they should act. A good example of the Parole Board applying the last letter of the law rigidly and repressively is the case of Rhonda Murray, the 17-year old girl who was convicted of an offence in New Brunswick, sent to prison, paroled and then came to Toronto in contravention of her parole. There she was arrested and placed in the Don jail. She was held there, according to the letter of the law, for violating the letter of the law. She was penalized by being kept in that institution. What a danger she was! Certainly we must wonder at the thinking of a Parole Board which will release on parole men who have committed serious and dangerous acts of violence, not once but twice or three times or more and have been given parole, and who treat this girl as if she were public enemy number one. This is not an exceptional case. Would that it were!

In this debate we have heard about the situation in some of our institutions, particularly by Saskatchewan penitentiary and the Drumheller institution, both of which I have visited. An inordinate number of native people are confined in these institutions. In the Drumheller institution

[Mr. Stackhouse.]

perhaps 25 per cent of the inmates are Indian people. I would hazard a guess that the percentage in the Saskatchewan penitentiary is comparable. These people, as an ethnic group within Canada, represent a very small percentage of our people but an extraordinarily large proportion of the penitentiary population.

This must raise a question in our minds concerning the way in which the Parole Board is being administered. We must wonder, are all the Indians so dangerous that so few of them can be released on parole? Are they such a threat to public safety that we must have so many of them confined behind bars? Do we really take seriously the implication that the rest of the country produces people who can be released onto the streets after committing an offence, but not the native people?

It is for such obvious reasons we must ask, are we to have more of the same, more of the maladministration of the parole system? The minister may, defensively, point out how many successes the board has achieved. I would hope, on the contrary, that he would take seriously this kind of criticism which is directed, not against him personally or against his record as a minister so much as against the way in which over the years the board has administered or misadministered its mandate, and that he would direct his attention more to making those reforms which will make this board a responsible institution, because certainly its opportunity is great.

The people of this country want parole to be managed and distributed in such a way that those who are not a danger to citizens will have an opportunity to be released from the penitentiary in order to gain experience in preparation for full freedom. Most people believe in the principle of parole. What disheartens me is not that parole is being granted, but that it is being misused in the way it has been, in a Canadian sense. We would therefore hope that the minister would begin to enunciate in this House some reform policies more than the meagre promise that is contained in this bill. He has suggested to us he intends to appoint this kind of person and that kind of person who will greatly improve the quality of the Parole Board. We hope he is right. But really the kind of bill to which he has committed himself is far below the need of the parole system in the country as a whole.

● (2150)

I can, therefore, have a great measure of sympathy with the amendments that have been suggested because their motivation is to recognize that Parole Board reform, in the limited way that the bill calls for, is not enough and that we must have much more extensive and profound reform of the board and of the parole system. However, like other hon. members I would question the validity of the particular amendments that have been put before us. There are obvious weaknesses in them, suggesting that there ought to be two members from one group and two members from another group. If one were to continue this logically, one would have to bring in representatives from various groups in the populace. But notwithstanding that weakness, I certainly share with the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) and others the concern that there be adequate reform of the Parole Board and of the parole system so that we will not simply have more of the same, which is the great fear that many people have across this country.