

Senator Williams, may I first of all welcome you to the committee. Do you have a question?

Senator Williams: My question is broad, and may not qualify. I would like to know the percentage of those who apply for parole from the Métis and Indian population of the penal institutions?

Mr. Street: The percentage of the native population who apply?

Senator Williams: That is right.

The Deputy Chairman: That is the percentage of the total number of applications for parole; it would have to be that.

Senator Williams: Perhaps I should rephrase my question. Is there a fair number of Métis and Indian applicants for parole, in view of the very large population of Métis and Indians?

Mr. Street: Yes, there is senator. Unfortunately, we do not compile statistics according to ethnic background. A considerable number of Indians, Métis and other members of the native population, however apply for parole. We go to some pains to consider them. Our officers in the field are in touch with their councils, tribes and representatives on the reservations in making arrangements for their parole, supervision and welfare.

In addition, two years ago we hired eight parole assistants of Indian origin. Two, unfortunately, have since left our employ and two are on educational leave. Four work in our offices in the west.

Senator Williams: Four seems to be a very small number when possibly 25 per cent of the inmates are Métis and Indians. I have nothing to qualify the percentage of the population.

Mr. Street: This was specially done but Indians and Métis are welcome to apply at any time. However, most of our officers hold the degree of Master in Social Welfare and we have not found too many mature persons so qualified. This was a special project for which we reduced our qualifications. These parole assistants were hired even though they did not have the university education and degrees in social work which are usually required. We do have a high percentage, I know, of Indians, Métis and other people getting parole. Since we do not keep statistics on them I am unable to give you exact figures. However, I will do what I can to get you the information.

Senator Williams: Thank you.

Senator Goldenberg: May I come back to the point that was being discussed when I left the committee to answer a telephone call? Perhaps Mr. Street could elaborate on such co-ordination as there may be of institutional and parole plans for an inmate. If Mr. Street has already answered that question, I will not pursue it.

Mr. Street: Collaboration between our people . . . ?

Senator Goldenberg: What co-ordination is there between institutional and parole plans for an inmate? Is there co-ordination?

Mr. Street: Yes, there certainly is, senator.

Senator Goldenberg: Is it satisfactory co-ordination?

Mr. Street: Yes, I think so. Perhaps Mr. Carabine could comment on that. But, as he indicated to you, there is a classification board which decides on parole. Sometimes our people sit on those boards to decide the program, and when a case is being reviewed our officer interviews them, and then interviews the classification board and they discuss the program.

Mr. Carabine: There was a memorandum directed to both services, from the heads of each service, with respect to a rather different topic, that of day parole and temporary absence. I would like to read a paragraph of this memo which was sent to both the penitentiary and parole services. This was something that was agreed to in principle, but like all developing programs it is somewhat uneven. The basic job was case preparation for parole supervision. Other than that our staff are encouraged to go into new ventures.

The inmate's total sentence offers a total program opportunity with two facets, institutional and community. The parole service representative should be involved in the total planning of individual programs, beginning with classification. Their representatives may attend treatment and training boards if they so wish and offer any advice they may have.

That was written well over a year ago. As I say, the basic job is there, and it depends on other circumstances if officers have time to get into these things. Day parole and temporary absence, and early involvement with the inmate by way of classification boards is a new venture, but several of our staff are new directly involved with the institutional personnel—that is, the classification and others in the penitentiary service—with respect to selection for day parole. Also a few of our officers are actually on the classification board.

I cannot answer the question with respect to classification officers. However, I may point out obliquely that the executive director of the parole service formerly was a classification officer, that our board member, Karl Stevenson, who is at the back of the room, formerly was a classification officer, as I myself was. Perhaps that indirectly answers something.

The other point that I should like to make is with respect to the question of probation. We are now developing—and Senator Hastings might be interested in knowing that it is going well in Calgary and Edmonton—a concept on tentative experimental steps to do, in the absence of a pre-sentence report, a post-sentence report, both of which are, in effect, a community assessment to find out the background, the families, and so on. We are gradually working our way into this. This gives us the type of information that would normally appear in a pre-sentence report.

Senator Hastings: I am always glad to hear that Edmonton and Calgary are in the forefront of penal reform and enlightened treatment of inmates. You have completed the file, and you now turn it over to the board.

Mr. Carabine: Prior to the panel leaving for the hearings the material is normally available to them for study. They