

*Supply—Solicitor General*

was transferred from St. Vincent de Paul, where he had got into further difficulty, to Kingston where he got along fairly well. In my opinion, once he had been transferred to Kingston and had got along fairly well for a period of time he should have been released. But the parole board did not think so—good heavens, no. That would not satisfy the public.

● (5:30 p.m.)

This young man is not too smart. There are many things he will never accomplish. On the other hand, the psychiatrists have indicated there are many things he will not do on the other side of the ledger. I have talked to the warden and to the classification officers. They say he is a person who becomes belligerent now and again. If the neighbour's dog were to come on his property he might kick the dog. I think this would describe some members of parliament too, but we get along fairly well.

The parole board cannot see this. They have to wait. What has happened to this man? After a while he went to work in a shop upholstering chairs. With the scraps that were left over he made himself a briefcase. Don't ask me why he did so. I could not find out. He was not going anywhere and he had nothing to put in it. But he made one out of scraps and the material he used was, of course, not his. So he was punished. The next time I heard about him he had been involved on the periphery of a sit-down strike which took place some time ago. Later I was informed he had decided to go back voluntarily into segregation and stay there until his sentence had been served when he would walk out.

If the parole board is content to allow this sort of thing it might as well jump into the lake. It did nothing to help this young lad at the time he was obviously worth helping. I remember offering to help supervise his parole and act as an adviser. My hon. friend from Skeena made a similar offer. I know he had a job waiting for him. We arranged a job with Dominion Steel who also believed he was worth helping. His mother and father were both good citizens. His mother scrubbed floors to keep the family going. But did the parole board consider these things? Good heavens, no.

If it is our intention to build more and more prisons we shall no doubt fill those prisons. But if the minister wants to do something constructive with regard to the parole board he will ensure that they pay attention to the recommendations of the classification officers and grant parole when these officers think

parole has a good chance of succeeding. Six months later the chances might be far less favourable.

Gaston Nicholas is not as good a risk for parole today as he was three years ago. I think even the stupidest member of the parole board would agree with that. Eventually, of course, they will let him out. I remember talking to a man serving his sentence at St. Vincent de Paul who told me: "I am due out in three months and you may be sure I shall do nothing to jeopardize my chance of getting out because when I do I am going to kill three people." If we are supposed to be protecting society, how can such things be allowed to happen? the parole board would say, of course, "We had nothing to do with it; the man's sentence ran out."

I know the Solicitor General fairly well. I have dealt with him on a number of occasions and found him to be an exceedingly competent person as well as most humane. I plead with him to make sure that the chance of parole is given to those who meet the requirements. Consider what it costs to build jails and staff them with custodians to look after people who are shut up with little opportunity of improving their situation. Then compare this with what it costs to provide parole officers and others in sufficient numbers to supervise parole properly. There is no doubt where the advantage lies.

I realize some people will take a different attitude. A number of chiefs of police told me some time ago that I was being soft on prisoners. What they want to do is collect their pound of flesh. They would like to see the stocks reintroduced. They would like to turn back the calendar for a century despite the fact that conditions today are not in the least comparable, in my opinion, because of the greater opportunities which are now available. I know the minister agrees personally with the view expressed by the hon. member for Leeds that there is need for an increase in the use made of the parole procedure.

Gaston Nicholas will eventually get out. He may serve every day of his seven-year sentence which in my opinion he did not deserve. The man who led that riot got one day. He is now free and to the best of my knowledge he is living a most respectable life. He has got married, and the last time I saw him he told me that after spending 27 years trying to beat society he had decided to join it. This man received a sentence of one day from Judge Wagner who as attorney general of Quebec was as tough as they come.