

Criminal Code Amendments

him back because we think there is a danger that he will commit a violent crime, we should establish a correctional service which predicts this a little more correctly and does something about it.

● (1250)

If you look at the history of the Prime Albert institution, Mr. Speaker, you will find it has done very well in involving the parole service, the John Howard Society and surrounding communities in helping inmates prepare themselves for release. That should be included as part of the solution. Any Bills which aim at restricting the use of mandatory supervision, if you are not going to do anything else, are probably acceptable. But there is no reason to restrict the use of mandatory supervision, and you could increase its effectiveness by putting into place services which are aimed at rehabilitation rather than incarceration.

What would be the effect of these Bills if they are passed exactly the way they are? Again I refer to the Prince Albert institution. Right now it has close to 500 inmates, but it is considered to be full when it has 375 inmates. If they fill every cell in the institution they can push it up to about 425. That is stretching it but they can do it. However, at the moment, with approximately 500 inmates, over 120 of them are double-bunked. Those of you who have been interested or paid attention to the effect of double-bunking over the last few years will recognize that that adds to the potential for problems in an institution. If we pass Bills such as these two, we are going to increase the number of inmates in those institutions. That adds to the frustration and volatility in the institution. It increases the possibility of violence. That, of course, affects every person in the place, and not only inmates. It affects every individual who works in the prison. If you speak to people who work with the inmates on a daily basis, you will find that tension can increase greatly over very small incidents. Therefore, double-bunking has a direct effect on the tensions within an institution, tensions which might eventually lead to riots and violence.

What effect do these two Bills have on the Parole Board? The Bills do not give to the Attorney General or the courts the right to gate prisoners. That is given to the Parole Board. The prison service can refer to the Parole Board those cases which they think need to be reviewed, cases of mandatory supervision which are coming up.

That will have the effect of considerably increasing the workload for the Parole Board. If you speak to members of the board, you will find they sometimes feel they are not spending enough time on individual cases and they are forced to make decisions before they are ready to do so. They often require psychiatric or psychological reports on inmates before making a decision, and then the correctional people in the institutions quite often come to the conclusion that the reason for requesting psychological reports on inmates is to give them a little more time to talk to the inmate to make sure he is ready for parole. If they have to start doing this on mandatory supervision cases as well, their workload is going to be

increased tremendously. That means we have to increase the number of people on the board and increase the amount of services. In some ways that makes sense because if the money we spend on keeping a man in prison was instead spent in areas such as mandatory supervision, then the return would probably be much greater than it is now.

We have been told many times, I am sure, that mandatory supervision is not as effective as parole. But we have to recognize that under those circumstances the cream, if you want to put it that way, has already been skimmed off and given parole and the mandatory supervision inmates are the ones who have been rejected for parole. So you have already started with, and I hesitate to use the term, a lower quality of inmate than you had before. So the amount of time the Parole Board must spend or should spend on mandatory supervision should be a great deal more than is presently spent on parole, and the members of the board think they are not spending enough time even now. So the effect on the Parole Board will be much more work, a requirement for much more staff, and possibly much greater insight into the effective use of mandatory supervision. This has a good side and a bad side. The good side is that if the services are provided, they will do better work. The bad side is that if they are not provided, they will not be able to spend enough time on each case.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being one o'clock I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this day.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 22

[English]

FITNESS AND AMATEUR SPORT
RESIGNATION OF COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, I was dismayed to learn that Mr. Fernand Faucher, Chairman of the National Advisory Council on Fitness and Amateur Sport, has tendered his resignation.

In a letter to fellow board members, Mr. Faucher declared:

The lack of interest on the part of the Minister and of the Branch people regarding the activities of the Council prompted this reaction.

I view Mr. Faucher's resignation as an extremely serious and most unfortunate setback in the area of fitness and amateur sport. It is abundantly clear that the Minister has been and continues to treat this Council solely as window dressing and has been guided only by his political and bureaucratic masters.