

give us details of the offence, the background, and so on. When we get reports, generally speaking they are helpful, but when we first started, we started asking judges for reports, and we even had a form to make it easier for them. Even then, many of them did not fill in the form, and even if that was all they did it was not all that helpful. The form was designed to give a maximum of information with a minimum of inconvenience. But since so few of them did this, we changed the policy some years ago and we just sent them a letter saying that we would be glad to hear from them if they wished, and so they will feel that we are trying to work with them in trying to fulfil the purpose they had in mind in giving the sentence they did. Quite often their reports are very helpful, but we do not get very many reports from judges.

**Senator Hastings:** But when your officer goes out to carry out his community investigation, why does he go to the police?

**Mr. Street:** We want to know about the circumstances of the offence and we want to know whatever information the police have about the man's background, if any.

**Senator Hastings:** But you have that on file at the start of his incarceration.

**Mr. Street:** That is what I am talking about.

**Senator Hastings:** I am speaking of the community investigation before he goes up for his hearing. Why go to the police at that stage when all they have are bad memories of the man three, four or five years ago?

**Mr. Street:** That is not a regular thing. Perhaps it has happened in some cases, but it is not part of the regular community investigation report. In some cases it may have been done because it was thought that the police might have useful information about the man. I do not know why they did it, but it is not the usual thing to consult the police when making a community investigation report.

**Senator Hastings:** I wish you would convey that information to your officers in the field.

**Mr. Street:** Do you have any comments on that, Mr. Carabine?

**Mr. W. F. Carabine, Chief of Case Preparation, National Parole Board:** I believe it is stated in the brief, sir, that the main emphasis regarding community assessment is on the family and the close relationship of the family, but there may be collateral interviews with the police. It can be extremely useful to have interviews with the police regarding an individual returning to a community. They are an integral part of the community. The police could very well have information regarding the community situation to which the inmate is to return. This is particularly useful in smaller areas.

**Senator Hastings:** I disagree with you, but, nevertheless, you say this is a minor matter.

I am reading from the Kingston *Whig-Standard* of November 13, 1971, where one of your officers said:

It might require four months to prepare a case to present to the board as it entails gathering information

from the police, judges and other bodies, as well as checking home or community conditions.

He turns it around by starting with the police, the judge and other bodies. I feel that it is probably issues such as this that contribute a great deal to the misunderstanding on the part of inmates.

**Mr. Street:** Is he not talking about the general preparation of a case? We get police reports on all of these cases.

**Senator Hastings:** That is at the beginning.

**Mr. Street:** Yes, but it is not part of the community investigation report.

**Senator Hastings:** He says that it might require four months to prepare a case to present to the Board, as it entails gathering information from the police, judges and other bodies. If there is anything that will disturb an inmate it is to tell him that you are gathering information from the police.

**Mr. Street:** It is true that they do not like it, but we have to work with the police and we need to know what the police know about the man and the circumstances of his offence. We get that information; that is part of the work we do before we decide to grant parole. It is not part of the community investigation report to decide where an inmate is going to go in the community. We have police reports on almost every case.

**Senator Hastings:** He has said it is part of the community report to decide where a person goes.

**Mr. Carabine:** I feel that what Mr. Phelps (District Representative National Parole Board, Kingston) was referring to unquestionably was the normal four-months period we feel it takes to prepare a case. His comment regarding the police report was unquestionably in that context; it was not in the context which we are discussing now. As I have said, some of our staff, particularly in the smaller areas, contact the police as part of their investigation to gain an understanding of the community as it exists now, or perhaps, nine months or two years later.

**Senator Hastings:** Is the city of Calgary a small community?

**Mr. Carabine:** Perhaps by your definition, sir.

**Senator Thompson:** It is, in comparison with Toronto.

**Senator Goldenberg:** I do not feel that the quotation from the Kingston *Whig-Standard* necessarily says that. If an officer looks at a police record in preparing a case, that does not necessarily mean he would go to the police and ask for it. As I understood Mr. Street, that record is available and you have it as part of the Board's files.

**Mr. Street:** Yes, we can obtain the record from the records department of the RCMP. We get a report from the local police as to the circumstances of the offence.

**Senator Goldenberg:** When do you get that report?

**Mr. Street:** We get it right at the beginning.

**Senator Goldenberg:** That is what I mean.