

## **F. Preamble to Criminal Justice Statutes**

Witnesses before the Committee advocated various legislative amendments to emphasize the importance of crime prevention and to demonstrate Parliament's commitment to the objectives involved. In their brief to the Committee, the John Howard Society of Alberta suggested "the inclusion of a statement of principles reinforcing prevention as a goal in all federal legislation." (p. 7) Irvin Waller's brief also suggested that provisions in the *Criminal Code* and other relevant legislation be used to identify crime prevention as a government priority and "to clarify the responsibility of different actors for crime prevention." (p. 14)

The Committee notes that a number of federal acts currently include general policy statements of that nature. For example, s. 3 of the *Young Offenders Act*<sup>43</sup> contains a declaration of principles that enunciates a "policy for Canada with respect to young offenders." Similarly, the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act*,<sup>44</sup> provides statements of purpose and principles to guide both the Correctional Service and the National Parole Board in carrying out their respective mandates. Bill C-90, An Act to Amend the *Criminal Code* (Sentencing),<sup>45</sup> also attempts to provide clear policy guidelines for sentencing, again in the form of a statement of purpose and principles.

The Committee agrees that the various actors within the criminal justice system should be offered guidance in the exercise of their respective roles and responsibilities and that such guidance can best be provided in the form of appropriate statements of legislative intention. The Committee also believes that official recognition of the importance of crime prevention will serve as a useful reminder to those responsible for policy development and the administration of programs within the criminal justice system.

### **Recommendation 6**

**The Committee recommends that Parliament's commitment to crime prevention be given clear expression in principles contained within the *Criminal Code*, the *Young Offenders Act*, the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act*, the *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act* and related criminal justice statutes.**

## **G. Victimization Surveys**

The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) is a division of Statistics Canada responsible for developing Canada's system of justice statistics. In its brief to the Committee, the CCJS states that the current system of justice statistics is inadequate to address policy development issues in the area of crime prevention. The methods used to collect data on the justice system are not capable of providing detailed information to evaluate crime prevention programs or community-based policing, or to understand the experience of crime victimization from the perspective of victims. The CCJS notes that the federal government currently conducts a victimization survey with the potential for addressing emerging policy issues related to crime prevention. However, it states that

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<sup>43</sup> R.S.C. 1985, c. Y-1.

<sup>44</sup> S.C. 1992, c. 20.

<sup>45</sup> First reading, 23 June 1992.