

Mr. Street: Three: one in January and two in December.

Senator Hastings: I understood there were five in November alone.

Mr. Street: I am sorry; I did not have the complete information before me. Yes. I think the total would be more like eight or nine. In any event, it is the law of the country now, but the reason I am in favour of it is that we are concerned primarily with the protection of the public and we think the public is best protected by rehabilitation of inmates. Moreover, if the people we select for parole need the guidance, counselling, treatment, advice and surveillance that go with good parole supervision, then the people who do not get parole and who are not under our selective system need it even more. I believe that is why it has become the law. Moreover, it also has the deterrent effect. Eighty-three per cent of the men in prison have been there before. Some of them are very vicious, dangerous men, and they are going to come out eventually, whether we like it or not. So we think it is desirable for them to come out under as much control as possible, especially when they are not good risks for parole in the first place. The deterrent effect is there because they know that parole will be revoked if they do not behave.

Senator Hastings: Is not the protection of the public really the duty of the police force, Mr. Street?

Mr. Street: Yes, but we are as much concerned with that as the police. We do not parole people if we think the public is not going to be protected from them. We do not parole people if we are sure they are dangerous, vicious or violent. It seems that there has to be some risk involved, but we assess it pretty carefully. Part of the reasoning is that we know they are going to come out anyway, whether anybody likes it or not, and perhaps it is better to give them parole so that they will come out under control and will be given some assistance, which I am sure they will need, rather than have them staying in until the end of their sentence and then being free and clear of any restrictions at all.

Senator Hastings: Is not the purpose of the Parole Board or the parole service rehabilitation?

Mr. Street: Yes, it is, but we are also concerned with the protection of the public. If there has to be a choice between the welfare of the individual and the protection of the public, then, in our view, the protection of the public must come first.

Senator Hastings: Would you not be better off using your additional staff in serving, assisting and guiding, as you have indicated, the men whom you have considered worthy of parole than chasing around trying to control men to whom you have refused parole?

Mr. Street: I think we have to do both. I think the public needs to be protected from the people who were not considered to be good risks for parole, and at the present time we are paroling perhaps too many people. We are paroling two out of three. We are slowing down a little now, but we had been paroling two out of three.

Senator Hastings: Why not bring all these resources to bear on these people that you are paroling?

Mr. Street: We do. But we have to do the best we can, and the law says that there shall be mandatory supervision and it says that we shall be responsible for it, so we have to do the best we can. I think the one-third who do not get parole are of more concern to the general public than the two-thirds who do. It is just as important that they should be under control and should be given as much help as we can give them, and that they will accept as the two-thirds who volunteered for it. Furthermore this has the effect of getting people more interested in parole and having a more positive attitude. I cannot give you any statistics on it, but some prisoners do not want to apply for parole because this seems to be playing into the hands of the administration. I think perhaps such a prisoner may want parole but he does not want the other inmates to think that he wants it. If it is given to him he will take it, but he does not want to put himself into the position of applying for it. Furthermore he does not want to put himself in the position of hoping that he will get it when he knows that he does not have a good chance of getting it.

The Chairman: Is it not the case that a great number of people do not ask for parole because they do not want to have anybody looking over their shoulders, and they justify it to themselves by saying, "I will do my time and then I will be on my own when I get out"?

Senator Hastings: Do you think that a parole officer or parole supervision will help that kind of individual?

The Chairman: I am not in a position to answer that question.

Senator Hastings: Mr. Street, do you think your parole service is assisting the individual who does not want supervision?

Mr. Street: I take it that it assists some of them. They are not going to be easy cases. But if we have nothing else left, at least we have the deterrent effect when a man knows that if he does not behave or if he commits another offence he will lose that time. I think "good time" ought to mean what it says. If the court has sentenced him to five years, then, if he is going to get any reward, it should be based on the fact that he has behaved himself for that five years and not just for a part of it. He has nothing to fear from mandatory supervision or parole supervision unless he intends to commit a crime, and they are the people who should be brought under control, I think. Apparently, that is what the government thinks or it would not have passed the law.

The Chairman: Let us take the case of the fellow serving six years. At the end of four years, by getting one-third of the time off, he would be ready for release. So he gets out at this stage and he goes on mandatory parole or mandatory supervision. Then let us say that after he has been out for one year he does something. Can this parole be revoked and can he be put back in?

Mr. Street: Yes.

The Chairman: For how long?

Mr. Street: For two years.