

store windows, he will commit another offence and this is how he will relapse into crime. How many probation officers are there? What are their qualifications? What are the qualifications of those who work in the court of Montreal?

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, in a rehabilitation and crime prevention system, we should above all put all our efforts, all our attention, all our energy in crime prevention and this, from the very first years.

Do we do anything to detect crime at the school level? How many probation officers are acting, are able to act and really follow a young offender? Mr. Speaker, I am inclined to believe that it is practically nothing. He is simply released and, as I said earlier, he relapses into crime; finally, he grows older, and instead of being judged by a welfare court, he goes to criminal court under criminal law. It is at that point, Mr. Speaker, that he becomes a professional in his trade. He is put with other criminals more hardened than him, older than him, in rotten prisons, the best crime schools.

Mr. Speaker, for one—and I think my colleagues share this view—I believe in rehabilitation and, above all, in crime prevention. If one looks at crime statistics in Canada one finds that the crime index is on the rise. When, for example, a youth is found in possession of narcotics he immediately winds up with a criminal record; he is immediately catalogued. What does this same system that condemns that youth, do about the pusher? Is the youth guilty or is it the one who gave him the drug?

Mr. Speaker, this youth caught using drugs—influenced by those older than him—has a criminal record. He is sent to jail or released on bail if his father has the means to pay, and as I said earlier not everybody has the means. Thus he becomes a criminal. This youth will rot in a prison because he does not have the necessary contacts or possibility to get out, because our system of rehabilitation and prevention is clearly inadequate; that is how he becomes a hardened criminal.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that the minister should issue new directives, and maybe even recall the new Parole Act, not the one that simply provides for increased membership on the board but that which sets out the duties of that board so that Parliament can instruct it to review the scope of that act so it will apply first and above all to those who are really rehabilitable, who are better potentials anyway, namely young people rather than confirmed criminals relapsing into crime for the tenth or fifteenth time.

Some hon. members might not believe it, but I urge them to read *Hansard* for May 5 ou 9, 1969. There is a question dealing with the number of relapses among parolees. Statistics on that are quite unbelievable.

The scandal of our century, in the application of justice, is that crime is systematically created by completely rejecting young people being victimized by a sick society.

• (1650)

Mr. Speaker, when a family is penniless, when the father takes to drink and the mother leaves, the children are left without any family environment and I say to myself if I did not have a good family background, I would

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probably not be here today as well as many other members.

Mr. Speaker, those young people must not be penalized on account of their age; as we know, they do not come under that legislation. This is why I urge the minister to reconsider his position so that we may hope that the young people may be granted parole much more easily than at the present time and that especially the necessary funds will be earmarked for the services of qualified, serious and honest personnel in the probation and rehabilitation fields.

Mr. Speaker, to get an efficient parole system it is not enough to pass an act, to appoint a number of civil servants and say: Go across the country, search prisons, try to find inmates likely to rehabilitate and free them. I know that the real object of the parole system is to prevent crime and leave the parolee every chance to return to society as a normal citizen. This person was sentenced because he broke the laws of society.

Mr. Speaker, when a prisoner is released he must have every chance to return to society in a normal way. Consequently, for this system to be operative, efficient and really satisfactory, it is essential that the government invests more in the probation system by creating a department or a school or whatever to train more and better qualified probation officers in order to meet the demand.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I hope that the minister will listen to me and that he will answer at the end of this debate.

[English]

**Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-191 has the support of the members of the New Democratic Party. The hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Leggett) set forth in a very clear and convincing way some of the problems that we face today with regard to parole.

All this bill does is appoint additional ad hoc members to the National Parole Board. I think we have reached the end of our research and study with regard to the question of parole. We have to start framing legislation which will deal more adequately with this problem. As the minister said, this is a response to a pressing need. It is only one step on the road to finding the complete solution.

Parole is one of the important matters in the area of the criminal justice system. May I review just a few of the steps we have taken. We made some amendments to the Criminal Code. These had some effect. We have the Hugessen report on the release of inmates. The Senate is now studying parole. An ombudsman has been appointed to study some of the grievances of inmates.

When I listened to the hon. member for Scarborough East (Mr. Stackhouse) speaking on behalf of the Progressive Conservative party, I had the feeling his remarks could be summarized by saying, you put people in prison, throw away the key and leave them there. That may be a rather harsh criticism. However, he gave details of some of the cases that have been failures without giving the details of some of the cases that have been successful. He did not set forth the high recidivist rate we have when we keep inmates too long in our penitentiaries.