

larger parole board. There is a need for more board members to fulfil the larger duties which are being assigned to the board. We support the general intent of the bill and are, therefore, prepared to accept it for second reading. However, because of certain questions that we must ask about the bill concerning what good it will accomplish for the parole system of Canada, we want this bill to go through the normal channels of committee discussion and further House debate.

The minister has said that he would like speedy passage of the bill. I remind him that the bill was introduced in the House on June 6. If the government was so anxious for speedy passage in order to implement its provisions, it ought to have brought it before the House for second reading sooner than today. The fact that the government has procrastinated in bringing the bill forward for second reading is no reason to expect the opposition parties to allow this legislation to pass without proper study and scrutiny.

● (1530)

In light of the needs of the parole system in Canada, I suggest the very character of this bill indicates the need for further debate and discussion by the House of Commons. This bill is simply another example of what has been called, with reference to other actions of the government, ad hocery. It is significant that the bill refers to appointing ad hoc members to the board. Ad hoc members will be appointed by an ad hoc government to implement an ad hoc policy.

There is a real need for a much more thorough review of the parole system as it is implemented in Canada today. The minister admitted that. That is the implication in much of what he said in his address this afternoon. He said this bill offers short-term satisfaction to the needs of the parole system and he looks forward to a more long-term re-organization. We would have expected that by now he would have been in a position to present to this House a much more thorough plan for re-organizing the parole system in Canada.

The Hugessen report to which the minister referred was submitted November 30, 1972. The minister has had almost 10 months in which to study it with the aid of his staff. We believe he should now be acting on it to a much greater degree than he seems prepared to do as indicated by the terms of Bill C-191. I regret very much that in his address this afternoon, the minister did not give us any exposition on the Hugessen report. When he tabled it in the House, he gave no exposition of its message. He has not indicated his thinking on the recommendations of this report.

We are now asked to take a serious and considerable step in re-organizing parole in that we would appoint 10 more members without having an adequate debate on the recommendations of the Hugessen report on the release of inmates from Canadian penal institutions. A great deal of that report was devoted to the parole system. This is certainly another example of the government's ad hocery.

In a press announcement by the parole board only this week, the public was informed that we now have in Canada a new kind of parole called temporary parole. This is a means by which the parole board is granting temporary release to inmates who previously might have

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received temporary absence on a back-to-back basis. It is interesting to note the minister said today that the legality of the system of back-to-back temporary absence, which his government upheld and practiced for several years, is in doubt. I suggest there is reason to believe that temporary paroles, certainly in terminology, have no real status in Canadian law. We recognize that, under the provisions of the legislation the parole board is entitled to provide day paroles, there is no reference to temporary paroles.

When the committee studies the bill, it will be necessary to ask some serious questions of the minister and the parole board authorities to see to what extent temporary parole has not only a pragmatic justification, but legal status as well. I am informed that "temporary parole" is simply a term which the parole board has seized upon as a way of describing, for its own information and organization the kind of leaves which the parole board is now granting to inmates, which I suggest are really not very different from the temporary absences which the penitentiary service was granting just a few months ago.

We have had a change of terminology and a change of jurisdiction, but not a very fundamental change in practice. The old temporary absence on a back-to-basis is gone, but the new temporary parole may not be very different. This is an example of the ad hoc approach which the government is taking on the subject of parole, as it has on so many issues. When confronted by major and complex problems, instead of attempting to solve them with adequate re-organization and imaginative solutions, the government tries to do a patch up job in some way that will get it through another year in office.

Is this really the method we want to follow in attempting the re-organization of the parole service which the Hugessen report recommends? I had hoped this House could have had before it something which would represent a greater effort at improving the efficiency of the parole board as it is now constituted.

According to the Hugessen report, the present board suffers from excessive centralization. In place of the board, the Hugessen report recommends a two-tier system of organization. In a sense, the present bill, accompanied by the announcement of the minister, makes some gesture towards that in so far as the 10 ad hoc members are to be distributed according to regional locations. However, the proposal of the Hugessen report is much more thorough than what is suggested in Bill C-191. For example, the report calls for the formation of local parole boards to serve each institution or group of institutions. Each local board would have three members, one representing the penal institution, one representing the community and one representing the parole service. In that respect, the local board would be comparable to the British system which provides for local review committees to function in addition to the 33 members of the national parole board in Britain.

On the basis of the Hugessen report, and on the basis of the time the department has had to study this matter, there could have been a greater effort made to see what the experience of the British has been. If that experience were positive, recommendations along that line could have been made to this House of Commons. If it were negative,