

Penitentiaries

advisory committee into something like an elected board or appointed board.

With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, and that of the House, I would like to cite two more quotations which support this philosophy that we must recognize in order to have peace in our institutions, namely that of effective public input. The five-man board recommended in recommendation No. 24 will be a policy forming board. A similar board or committee at the institution level will implement the policies made at the top. There are lots of precedents in our school jurisdictions to show that this system functions effectively.

In the course of our hearings we listened to Professor Grygier from the department of criminology, University of Ottawa. Part of the question I asked him read this way:

—do you feel that by involving the public more directly in the administration and planning of our prison systems that we would then have a better educated public? Is this a valid sort of conclusion or not?

The reply of Dr. Grygier was this:

I think so, yes. I think the public should be more involved than it is here.

When he said "here" he meant Canada.

Finally, as recently as this morning in the editorial in the Toronto *Globe and Mail* commenting on Mr. Maloney's report on the prison system in Ontario, the last main paragraph reads:

One of Mr. Maloney's major recommendations, however, is that there should be a local advisory body, made up of senior correctional personnel, judges, lawyers, crown attorneys, police and members of the legislature, wherever there is a jail. These local bodies should meet regularly with a similar provincial body to discuss common problems.

● (1532)

Mr. Maloney's suggestion here is just what we suggested in our report, that there should be a committee at the top involving a cross-section of our society, and a committee at the institutional level involving a cross-section, both having effective input in the formation of policy. I would prefer not to use the term "advisory", because that seems to imply it can be ignored. I think it should be a committee that has some power to form policy.

Again I want to thank the House for its indulgence in allowing me to continue. May I just conclude by saying we have appreciated this opportunity today of being able to discuss from all sides of the House this very important issue. We want to welcome the new minister to this portfolio, and suggest to him we will be looking forward quite eagerly to the first time he appears before what we hope will be the reconstituted committee as suggested in recommendation 65.

Mr. Art Lee (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, it is, indeed, a pleasure and honour to participate in this debate. I say this because it is very appropriate and timely that the House, and particularly the members of the subcommittee, discuss the progress of our report. Later on I will lay the groundwork for the reasons that I accept the motion in principle.

I accept the principle of the motion as it stands in the name of the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) because I feel

[Mr. Halliday.]

certain events that have developed since the tabling of the report clearly indicate we must act quickly, and I would urge the Solicitor General (Mr. Blais) to do so.

As has been clearly pointed out by the hon. member for Yukon, the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Leggatt), the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert), who spoke on behalf of his party, and the hon. member for Oxford (Mr. Halliday), the subcommittee was a very non-partisan one. It saw that we were clearly facing a crisis situation within our penitentiary system. Because of that we buried very quickly our partisanship.

We were truly parliamentarians in the sense that we saw the problem, and this transgressed any political philosophy. This was a problem that required the collective wisdom of different people from different backgrounds. On the one hand we had my colleague, the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt), a reporter for some 30-odd years doing the crime beat and being very involved with the whole issue of the penitentiary system; a number of us were lawyers who added that dimension of knowledge to the subcommittee; and the hon. member for Oxford (Mr. Halliday) who is, as well as being a member of parliament, a physician and surgeon. I remember that every time we went into a penitentiary he would examine the medical facilities.

I remember at Millhaven particularly, which has created a lot of problems, and still does today, the members of the subcommittee pooled our resources and in fact shared information. We split up our time in order to get a proper cross-examination of the witnesses who appeared before us. I can remember giving information to the hon. member for New Westminster, and he in turn did likewise.

That sort of spirited co-operation and non-partisanship was never demonstrated to the public at large because at that time we did not have television following our committee system. This is why I think it is appropriate and timely here today clearly to demonstrate to the public that the committee system can work, and that when there is a very serious problem parliamentarians come to the fore, bury their partisanship and truly attack the problem on that basis.

I think it even more clearly demonstrated that the spirit of this non-partisanship should continue that the hon. member for Yukon before tabling his motion went around the House yesterday giving notice to everybody of what the motion would entail, and he sincerely expressed the hope that it would not destroy the unanimity and spirit of co-operation which we had developed.

I think I can speak for all my colleagues on this side of the House in saying that we agree with the hon. member; this motion he has presented will not destroy that unanimity and spirit of co-operation. As I have indicated, I accept the motion in principle.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lee: What has happened in respect of the sub-committee's report? On August 5, 1977, the former solicitor general