

a certain term may apply to the National Parole Board for a pardon. Section 4(2) of the act provides that the board shall cause proper inquiries to be made in order to ascertain the behaviour of the applicant since the completion of his sentence.

As I have suggested previously, it is the matter of investigation by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that concerns me. The investigation involved here is not one related to the normal functions of a police force, dealing primarily with prevention and solution of crime, but because the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are utilized the investigation takes on the appearance of a criminal investigation. It no longer has the character of an investigation of good behaviour of a Canadian citizen.

There is also the real and ever present danger of unnecessarily exposing a man's past, which he by his own initiative has kept secret and hidden from public scrutiny, thereby causing him unnecessary embarrassment, difficulty and hardship. In addition, we are running the risk of inflaming old attitudes and resentments, thereby causing more harm than any good we might do to the individual concerned.

In this regard I should like to bring to your attention and place on record certain views as contained in letters written to me by two people who are particularly interested in this act and its administration. The first one is from a Canadian businessman who writes me that he applied to the Parole Board asking for a pardon and on the form they sent him he had to give five references, and the investigation was made by the RCMP. He goes on to say:

I was never visited by the investigator—

Is that not consistent with a criminal investigation where the suspect is never confronted until the investigation is completed?

I was never visited by the investigator but those five people were, and to my knowledge three told me about it and were told about my past which they didn't know. I have been in business since 1950 and I am presently doing over half a million dollars worth of work a year. I am sure I am rehabilitated and would like to have a pardon, but how many more people will find out about my past.

The other letter, from western Canada, is as follows:

The use of the RCMP to investigate people who have made application for pardon in seeking relief from a criminal record is very wrong. I will use my own case as a classical example. Over forty years have past since I was released. I have not been in trouble since, so what can be achieved by any investigation by anybody? I trust you will understand my concern, because I feel that bringing the police into this matter will undo what is trying to be done to give people who deserve it another chance to have a decent life. However, psychologically I find I am still under attack. I am still being forced to walk the razor's edge and I will have to live out the rest of my life with the fear that I might stub my toe. In other words, I cannot feel that society is at long last saying

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to me "All is forgiven, go and sin no more". As a result of the RCMP doing the investigating, I have not sent in my application because I have been afraid to.

I am 61 years of age. I was given a criminal record at 14 for stealing. There was no such thing as legal aid, and as I look back I cannot think of anything that anyone could do that was not done to criminalize a young boy. After getting out, I went east and, with another boy, stole a car and was given two years. I have since had a lifetime to think of all these things, and many more. I have had no further charges since my release the second time. I have raised a daughter and two sons to be good law-abiding citizens. In business I gave a job to a boy to assist in his parole and I have lived an exemplary life within society. I am one of those who has lived a life with a criminal record, and the psychological effect of the name 'criminal' no longer rightfully applies. In the cause of true justice there is much to be desired in the area of legislation on the granting of pardons to make it possible for a smooth transition from an ex-convict to an accepted citizen without the fear of exposure always imminent no matter how discreet an investigation may be.

There is not much left for me now, but perhaps in some way my writing this letter may help prevent what has happened to me from happening to others in the future.

In another case that was brought to my attention, a young man requested in his application that no inquiry should be made of his employer because he was unaware of his past record. His request was respected by the investigator. They did not interview his employer, they interviewed his fellow employees, and now everyone including his employer is well aware of his record. As far as he is concerned, he told me that the board could keep their pardon. The word "keep" is my own, not his. He used a much more descriptive verb—one pertaining to the anatomy.

There is also the case brought to my attention of a young man who seven years ago was arrested and convicted of obstructing a police officer in connection with a student fracas. Today this young man is completing his education in the United States. He is completing his internship, and is about to make application for admittance to a recognized college of physicians and surgeons. In giving consideration to applying for a pardon, he decided not to do so in the knowledge that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police would be brought in to carry out an investigation of his character and activities and would no doubt call in the FBI.

In effect what we are doing and saying to each of these applicants is this: You made a mistake in the past; you have paid for your mistake, and through no fault of ours but by your own initiative and ability you have successfully re-established yourself. We are now ready to wipe the record clean as an indication of your complete and unqualified acceptance as a member of society. But we do not want to make a mistake, and because at one time you