

a daily basis, and who know a tremendous number of things—should we be enabled to work with them, since this may be one of the most important source of information issuing from institutions—ordinary guards, and, at the same time, instructors—and we would like them to become involved in this so that their observation traits might become enhanced, thereby enabling them to give their opinion, so that they too might be able to tell us: in my case, I saw his behaviour in our workshop, he did this, or he did that; that is quite important. Such that the word “specialist” is to be deleted from our submission, and is to be replaced by a nomenclature designating all the people, who in one way or another, are involved in the administering of treatment within an institution. I think that a workshop instructor is as much a type of practitioner, within his means, as we might be.

Senator Lapointe: In any case, he may be an important witness?

Mr. Thomas: Extremely important, and even more than that.

Mr. Belanger: This is why we can hardly envision the participation of all these people seated around a table—involved in the decision-making process—which would include a great number of people, while discussing a case. We tend rather to envision all these members as stationed within the institution, as part of a continuous interaction with guards, instructors, etc., for somewhat exchanging information on a continual basis—that type of things—regarding the inmates under our supervision. When at certain times, this is not done, irresolute situations result,—what does a guard think, or what does an instructor think; it is quite difficult to put those things on paper, due to the fact that these are daily occurrences, or small daily details, at times. That is the reason for a more emphatic wish on our part that decisions be made by people from within the milieu, who live on location—not necessarily on a continuous basis—but who might be more directly involved in the daily activities of inmates.

Senator Lapointe: But, who be responsible for the preparation and compilation of this record?

Mr. Belanger: The parole officer, as is presently the case; we do not wish to change his role, in that sense.

Senator Lapointe: Then, he would have to be on the inside, so as to compile all this—or else, he would have to make prolonged visits?

Mr. Belanger: For example, two or three day stays within the institution.

[English]

The Acting Chairman: I wish to return to the second part of the institutional report. When inmate “X” is going before the Board, do the institution staff, including the people you have just mentioned, the instructor from the shop, the psychologist—the inmate training board, I presume this is what it is called—not sit down and evaluate this man in compiling the second part of the report? Who compiles the second part of the institution report?

[Translation]

Mr. Thomas: No, in fact, all the staff members that you have just mentioned do not actually meet together, in order to evaluate. The parole officer sees the inmate during an interview. He frequently asks for the opinion of the classification officer, who, oftentimes, has seen the inmate once a month,—sometimes less often than that—and he requests a psychological report, should it be necessary; he requests for an inquiry into family relationships, should it be necessary; and that is all. We do not know what really went on at the institution. The classification officer is often posted in the administration building, and, once in a while, he is informed as to what goes on inside—unless it be very noticeable, such as when the inmate has broken things, assaulted someone, or other things; otherwise he is left uninformed concerning the prisoner; neither does he have time to go and get all such information, and institutions are not organized so as to permit the natural communication of such information, on a regular basis.

So, what occurs is that whenever a parole officer prepares his dossier without having first contacted instructors or guards, or taken other such steps—should he then present this to the commissioners who are to evaluate the data—some things are missing, for example, they are not sure enough, and they will request other evaluations that have not been made—and the decision is awarded.

Senator Lapointe: Don't the workshop guards, as you were saying a while ago . . .

Mr. Thomas: Yes, the instructors.

Senator Lapointe: Don't they make weekly reports regarding the conduct of each inmate—a report that one might obtain from the files, and affix to the testimony of the psychologist?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, in fact, you are bringing up what is presently going on.

Senator Lapointe: Yes, yes.

Mr. Thomas: What occurs, in fact, is that every three months, they make up what is called an evaluation sheet. This includes many items, such as: attitude towards authority, attitude towards rehabilitation, work output, or the attitude of the prisoner toward his work—things of that nature. They will score them: A, B, C, and D. Only in cases where the inmate demonstrated a truly special attitude, will a so-called observation report be made. These are our information sources—we do not contact the instructor—but he, he really knows many things.

Mr. Cyr: The A, B, C, D, of the evaluation process is evidently a personal interpretation of each of the evaluators. B, means a certain thing to one evaluator, while it may mean another thing to another man. Hence, it is not, to a great extent, valid as a source of information.

Mr. Albert: The rationale for what we have discussed during the morning session—has been that one must live with a person in order to know him—that is what counts. But, without truly being the critic in regard to adopted decisions leading to parole, I personally feel, and I mean, personally—I believe that the individual on location is the best judge toward making a decision. I think that the treatment dispensers, that includes classification officers,