

persons who apply. If this is not done most people will be very reluctant to make application. Again I hope the committee will go one step further than the member has recommended and will substitute some method of adjudication for that of the parole board.

The parole board under its present leadership is a total failure. At the present time 25 per cent people than should be are in jail because of the failures of the parole board. I suggest that if we add the provisions in this bill to the work of the parole board, we will be adding insult to injury. Therefore, I sincerely hope that a special branch will be set up in the parole board to handle this particular field. Many of the convictions in provincial courts, because of the length of the sentences involved, find their way to the offices of federal members of parliament. Therefore I hope that this special committee might give some consideration to the part members of parliament can play in this matter.

It seems to me this might involve a totally new field and one which has not been previously handled by the parole board. This bill lends itself very much to the support of this House the development of an agency to handle parole in a much more expeditious manner than is now possible.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Marie Boisvert (Drummond):** Mr. Speaker, since the bill under consideration has been introduced by a member and not by the government and that if in 25 minutes the question has not been put, it will be put off indefinitely, I will only make some brief comments so that the House may vote.

I entirely agree with my colleague from Simcoe North (Mr. Rynard) on the contents of the bill. Indeed, it is abnormal in our modern society to make someone bear during his entire lifetime the burden of a minor offence which in many cases has no effect on the remainder of his life but which as a result of the frequent application and interpretation of the legislation, would contribute to have him make a bad start.

A criminal record often involves a vicious circle. If a person has a criminal record and loses his job, he will become discouraged, which will lead him to despair and often he will see only one solution—relapse into crime, which he would not do if he did not have a criminal record.

As it happened, I found out about a case last week. While an individual was working on a construction job, a policeman did the "good" deed of warning the boss that this man had a criminal record. He lost his job and was saying: Listen, I want to live right, I want to assume my responsibilities as a citizen, and the first time I find a job, what with all this unemployment, I am fired because I was guilty of committing a small crime in my life.

Consequently, I suggest that a period of two years' of probation be granted to an ex-prisoner, which would be wiser because after all, we must have time to find out if the person who committed a crime really intends to change his behaviour. At the end of two years, a person without reproach and who, as cited by the member for Simcoe North, was, for instance, found guilty of smoking a marijuana cigarette after two years, if he has not relapsed into crime, should not bear all his life the stigma of a

### *Criminal Records*

criminal record, as if he were a criminal, a paid killer. In practice, very often there is not much difference.

Furthermore, we find that often highly spirited young people are involved who, in fact, become later most remarkable men. It is quite rare to see a young person unable to come out of his shell become later a prestigious man. Often, the spirited young, precisely because of this spirit, are led to go over the limit, but they should not, just for that, have to carry to the end of their days the stigma of their mischievousness.

I close my remarks in wishing that this bill be referred to the committee and amended, if need be, to allow the young of 1973 to be dealt with fairly, for if we consider present procedures, although society needs to protect itself, the fact remains that it must also be just.

[English]

**Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak for a few moments in this debate. I intend to make a very few remarks because I hope it is the intention of the House to allow this bill to go to the committee.

I wish to congratulate the hon. member for Simcoe North (Mr. Rynard), my colleague, who for years has championed this cause. I first heard of it in his name before I came to this House. I do not think any of us in this House have not at some time or other said what most lawyers say when they appear in court with a young person—"There but for the grace of God go I". Because of the compassion of a policeman or school teacher or because of compassion on the part of some good person in a community, it is often recognized that a young person may not have had the judgment of an older person and that his act or offence at that stage under the Juvenile Delinquents Act should not mean that this indiscretion would be placed on the record in his name.

In the course of the experience I have had as a member of the bar of Ontario, I have stood in courtrooms and prosecuted young people and older people for offences. I also had occasion to be an assistant crown attorney in this province. But more often I have had the privilege of defending people charged with offences. I have often looked at young people and wondered why they were in court. I have found in many cases, particularly juvenile cases, that it is thought smart to smoke a reefer, just as it was smart to smoke a cigarette in earlier days. It is also thought smart in certain cases to take a drink. These people who are acting smart are trying to be leaders and to stand out in their own particular way. Although they get into trouble they really are not bad. Perhaps they are misguided.

This bill would ensure that those people, particularly young people who are first offenders, do not have to carry the burden of that record for a period of time, and this is a worthy provision. There have been advances in the whole system of penology in Canada and in the world, and I think this amendment proposed by the hon. member for Simcoe North is a further advance to which this House should give every consideration.

● (1640)

One of the things that concerns me about the present situation is the fact that section 7 puts a person who has