

Senator Buckwold: I was referring to community acceptance by the greater community.

Mr. Street: That is the other part of it that I referred to. Sometimes you run into what we call a cause célèbre.

Senator Buckwold: The kind of thing that worries the community at large on occasions.

Mr. Street: Yes, that is a problem.

The Deputy Chairman: With permission, may I ask a question. "Community acceptance" is so broad a phrase that it is subject to all kinds of interpretation. I am thinking now of a case where a person might have been convicted of a crime in, say, a small community, and the community was really upset about it. To send him back to that community would mean that he just would not get a chance. Do you have any procedure whereby in such a situation you decide that maybe the fellow should go to an entirely new community to get started?

Mr. Street: Yes. That is one of the types of things we find out in a community investigation report, especially if it is a small town. We find what sort of acceptance there will be, and whether everybody will be up in arms about this man going back there. We have to think about that, and sometimes we recommend that he change his parole centre and we set him up somewhere else where he will not run into that community criticism. Yes, that situation arises.

The Deputy Chairman: It could be a family prejudice.

Mr. Street: It could be, yes.

The Deputy Chairman: Now we have got the fellow paroled.

Senator Hastings: Before we leave parole, I should like to pursue another question.

The Deputy Chairman: We are having trouble getting this fellow out!

Senator Hastings: Probably the worst decision you can give is a reserve decision. I will not quote statistics, but if you look at them you will find that the province of Quebec has an unusually large number of these decisions. This is about the worst decision to give a man. He has built himself up over the years to meet this Board, he gets this decision and goes back to wait. It is an agonizing period for him. He does not know whether he is in or out. The men have a term for it, "hanging on the gate".

Mr. Street: Yes.

Senator Hastings: They go through a terrible psychological experience. This precipitated my inquiry to you, sir. I just took 40 who were reserved at Leclair Institute and you probably have my letter in front of you. Out of the 40, 26 did not have the community report.

Mr. Street: We are dependent on people outside our organization to get these reports for us. I do not know how many of those were done by us and how many by other people, but we have to wait until we get them.

Senator Hastings: I appreciate that.

The Deputy Chairman: But you had four months?

Senator Hastings: This is only a month in advance, I think. Even some of those cases did get paroled in time, did they not?

Mr. Street: Yes, some of them did get paroled in time, but some are still waiting for a decision because we had to ask persons outside our organization to get this information for us and, as they are busy, they did not get it done.

Senator Hastings: Do you have adequate staff in the province of Quebec?

The Deputy Chairman: You mean his own staff?

Senator Hastings: Yes, his own staff.

Mr. Carabine: I think it is fair to say that we do.

Mr. Street: Mr. Miller, how would you answer that?

Mr. Miller: I think we have adequate staff there, as compared with the country as a whole. We have been in an expanding period and in certain areas a backlog has built up, for a variety of reasons, more than in other areas. It is a fact that in the Laval office they had a turnover of staff rather rapidly, for a number of reasons, and the new staff had to fit in. To get the work done has not been as easy as we would like it to be. We are in the process of adding staff all across the country.

Senator Hastings: Again, from the inmate's point of view, this is about one of the worst decisions you can give a man, except an outright denial. It is a terribly agonizing period. We set the dates and we know, on a murder conviction, nine years ahead of time that this man will be appearing on a certain date; and you know, Mr. Street, he is going to be faced with reservations and reservations. The worst feature of it all is that you reserve it three months and then you can reserve it in Ottawa for three and for three and for three, and he knows nothing about those reservations that you are making here in Ottawa. He is sitting in the penitentiary. There was a case in Manitoba of a man who sat 18 months.

Mr. Street: A murder case?

Senator Hastings: Yes.

Mr. Street: It takes a long time for it to go through, with all the processes it has to go through; but I guarantee that all those delays were not caused by us.

Senator Hastings: I am not accusing you. I know it is because you could not get your psychological or psychiatric reports; but I say that you know nine years ahead of time, on a murder conviction. Then when the man comes up it seems that there is an automatic reservation until you get further reports.

The Deputy Chairman: May I make a suggestion, Senator Hastings, which I think might be useful? You are dealing with two things. One is a murder conviction, and the decision of the Board has to be reserved because it has to go to the Cabinet. Can you break it down to the type of reservations that are required because of the statutory provision that the Board's decision is subject to approval