

presented a very short brief. On page two, the association asks to be allowed to appear in order to give us the benefit of the years of experience of its members both on the bench and at the bar. The Canadian Bar Association points out the difficulty under our constitution of bringing in an omnibus bill which would solve most of our problems. As I pointed out last evening, it would be very difficult to accomplish many of the things proposed in this bill unless we have the necessary plant. We need more proficient magistrates and policemen, and we need the physical plant. Anyone who has visited the jails, the penitentiaries, the industrial schools or the shelters which I believe they are called, for young females, knows these institutions leave much to be desired, not only in respect of the physical plant but also in respect of the personnel.

Members of this House would be shocked if they were aware of some of the corrective methods employed in these institutions. I wonder how many members know that in the industrial schools it is not uncommon for corporal punishment to be inflicted upon children ranging in age from eight years to 16 years. Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to imagine anything worse than a so-called official spanking being administered to a boy eight years of age who has no home, no friends and so far as he can see no future. It is bad enough for a boy to be locked up and deprived of his liberty, but it is even worse when someone who cares little for him, or if he does care does not understand him, inflicts corporal punishment upon him. Surely, it is not necessary for me to labour this point. When we add the suggestions contained in this bill in respect of indeterminate sentences and no final disposal of a case until the person reaches age 21 or perhaps age 18, as I hope will be the case, it is obvious that the accused person will suffer the worst kind of agony, mental agony.

Again I make the appeal that large sums be set aside for proper research in respect of all these matters. I know this bill is not yet law and, therefore, I appeal to the House and the minister to see that it is not rushed through. Although some of the provisions in this bill are needed very badly, the bill should be given full scrutiny. We should hear from such experts as there are in these fields. The John Howard Society, which has proven itself to be a friend of those on the wrong side of the law, with whom it comes in contact, wishes to appear. That society has many progressive ideas but it is pitifully short of funds to do the research work and provide the necessary personnel even for the jobs it is undertaking. At the present time, the John Howard Society is endeavouring to keep in contact not only with the young people but also the older citizens who are incarcerated in our institutions.

I do not think I am soft when I suggest that everyone connected with these unfortunate people should avoid using harsh treatment as much as possible. It is bad enough to be on the wrong track without also being called a criminal. I suggest that the preamble to the bill is very progressive, and I go along with it 100 per cent. I even go further. I say we must generate not only in our institutions but also in the minds of all Canadians the humanitarian approach, the progressive approach and the

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civilized approach. This will require a good deal of cooperation with our provincial authorities. Here, I might mention Alberta. An experiment is being carried on in Alberta at the present time. That province is experimenting with minimal security institutions. Rather than concentrating on any form of punishment for its own sake, or for the sake of revenge on the part of society, from the moment a young person or older person becomes involved with the law the accent is now placed on rehabilitation.

• (4:10 p.m.)

Under this Alberta program, as soon as possible the young person is put in healthy surroundings, working out in the fresh air with progressive minded people where the emphasis is on teaching him the joy of labour, which is surely an entirely new approach. Instead of sentencing a man to hard labour, he is given an opportunity to work, to learn something, to become progressive and to go out into the society of other young men. Instead of using work as a punishment, it is used as a road back.

I recommend to the committee that they invite some members of the corrective institutions in Alberta to come and tell us of the success they are having with these young people. The percentage of repeaters is dropping very remarkably and rapidly under this sort of treatment, which proves that the humane attitude is the only one which society can afford to take.

This is the only sensible approach, because anything short of this positive attitude is a waste of human beings. I agree with one of the previous speakers who said that he had never known anybody who came out of jail the better for having been in jail. In other words, the punishment of being locked up never did anybody any good at all. It may be that you have given the young offender time to think things over and hopefully steered him in the right direction, that you have put him into contact with people even in jail who really had his best interests at heart, which puts him on the right track. It is this contact with someone who cares that turns him back toward being a useful member of society. It is only the positive approach that does him any good. It is not the jail but it is the hand of friendship put out to him, perhaps by some member of the John Howard Society or by the magistrate who sentenced him to the loss of his freedom in the first place, that rehabilitates him. I am convinced, having had some experience in the enforcement of law, that in so far as the policeman who arrests him and the magistrate who sentences him are concerned, if they can convince him that they have faith in him he will start back on the road back to a normal life.

In many cases a person who has broken the law has not done anything worse than many of us who have never come to court. As soon as we can convince him that we are charitable and that we recognize he is not that much different from the rest of us, as soon as we show that we have faith in him and that people do change, that people can live down the mistakes of the past, he will start back on the road to a normal life almost before sentence is passed upon him.