

system. I am also deeply concerned about women in the prison system, women offenders, and whether the programs are adequate. I do not think they are in many cases. I hope that this bill, through amendment, will have a positive impact in this category.

We are also going to have to do something about increasing the number of experts in the whole system itself. We just do not have enough trained people to work with severely disturbed inmates, severely handicapped inmates and the violent offenders.

I know that in psychiatry and in medicine and in psychology this part of their regiment and this part of their professional field is one that most shy away from. There is not much glamour and money in it and many of them treat it as an almost hopeless dead-end kind of professional practice. It does not have to be that way. We have to encourage more and better people to become involved in the correctional service and also with the National Parole Board itself.

Those are some of my concerns about this bill. I simply want to conclude by saying that there is much more I would like to have said but I do not want to indulge on the time of the House because I know my time is up. All one has to do is watch the American TV programs. Every state prosecutor and every judge who is up for re-election in New York state says: "I am tough on law and order. I put x number of people away behind bars. I kept x number of people behind bars for 20 years or 50 years or whatever it is".

Keep in mind that politicians can very easily stand up at election time or just before an election or in a pre-election period and preach the virtues of being tough with offenders in society and yet if you look at the reality and, as I said at the beginning of my speech, at the real causes of crime in our society, it is little wonder that we are really emphasizing the wrong thing.

We are not really getting to the causes of crime before it is committed. We are not trying to do something about poverty, about slums, about lack of education, violence on television, violence in the home, sexual molestation in the home. All of these things are what ultimately lead to the prosecutor, the defence attorney and the judge. We are left, we meaning the Correction Service of Canada and the Parole Board, with finding a way of

Government Orders

trying to deal with these people so that we can bring them back into society as law-abiding, useful citizens.

Longer sentences, the absence of parole, supervision and no release before expiry, are not going to reduce the crime rate. I do not have any divine knowledge on the subject, all I have to do is look at the facts and figures before us in the media day in and day out to know that in the United States and in other countries that is not the case. You can be tough on law and order in the courts and in the jails and yet the crime rate continues to increase.

In conclusion, one of the profound ironies of the 20th century is that Europe, which gave the world two great world wars in which millions of people lost their lives, innocent civilians lost their lives, is a far safer place to live at night on the streets no matter where than the western world which has been at relative peace in the political sense, in terms of war. Violence on the streets is increasing, violence in some areas of the United States is virtually out of control and now there are indications that in our larger cities in particular in Canada, violent crime is not out of control, but it is certainly on the increase and causing the citizens of our country grave concern.

Our number one concern is public safety, but we are also very concerned that this bill does not mislead the public, certainly at second reading, into thinking that by simply passing it we are somehow going to reduce the crime rate. It is going to take a lot more than that.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, the member seemed to misrepresent my position with regard to parole and the whole issue of whether parole should be abolished altogether. I should remind the member that the Law Reform Commission of Canada and a number of other groups in the criminal justice area have debated and discussed the idea of the abolition of parole. A number of prominent criminal lawyers have recommended the abolition of parole. Inmate groups have also supported the abolition of parole. The inmates do not like the uncertainty that is associated with lengthy sentences and the uncertainty of when they might be released on parole.

To accompany the abolition of parole, I am sure the member will agree, and he is not misrepresenting my position, you would have to reform sentencing at the same time. Let me just take a hypothetical situation. If