

Criminal Code Amendments

Mr. Keeper: I have a question, Mr. Speaker, for my colleague. He was saying in his address that prisoners are often just dumped in the community without any adequate supports and, by way of contrast, that we spend a great deal of money and resources on prisoners when they are incarcerated. I wonder if he could elaborate a bit on what he sees as the needs in the community if we are to have prisoners in the community?

Mr. Cassidy: Mr. Speaker, that is a matter which the new Minister, who does not come with any of the baggage of the previous Government or of being a Minister previously, has to seek to resolve.

It is clear from what I am learning, and I confess I am learning in this area, that the parole service needs to be adequately staffed, that we need to do more than is being done now in terms of finding employment opportunities for former inmates, that we need to ensure that community resources are available so that a prisoner who is determined to try to go straight does not get sucked back into the kind of environment or the kind of life that he or she had before.

I mentioned as well, and the Hon. Member for Burnaby-Coquitlam mentioned it also, that men or women who are imprisoned in the prime of their life, in their twenties most often, and are imprisoned for ten or 15 years under circumstances where they are not working, find it very hard to come out and take a job in a factory at \$4 or \$5 or \$6 an hour, and to be at an enormous disadvantage because of the fact that society continues to exact a cost from such people, even if they have paid their debt to society.

The Hon. Member for Burnaby-Coquitlam suggested quite strongly that prisoners should be required, wherever possible, to work while they are in penitentiary and, for that matter, while they are in provincial institutions as well. They should be required to work because that is a way of cutting some of the costs and because in performing work they can qualify themselves to be more capable of surviving in society when they come out and maybe be able to do better. They can also demonstrate to the Parole Board or other authorities their capacity for rehabilitation and betterment other than the fact that they did not knife a fellow prisoner or mouth the prison guards in the time that they were sitting idle over years of enforced imprisonment and unemployment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate.

Mr. Jim Manly (Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to make a few comments in this very important debate which affects the entire future of corrections in Canada. We know that this debate is not only taking place in the House of Commons but also in the streets of our communities, and often in a very emotional manner. People have good reason to be emotional about this issue. As an example from my riding which I am sure many Members will remember, four years ago a 15-year-old girl was brutally murdered by Paul Kocurek who was a known sex offender who

was out on mandatory supervision. He had been released barely six weeks earlier.

Quite rightly, the people of my community got very angry and very upset. They demanded changes. They formed an organization called "Citizens United for Safety and Justice" which was organized by parents and neighbours of the murdered girl. They have been persistent advocates of change in the law regarding mandatory supervision.

The details which came out in the trial of Paul Kocurek raised some very disturbing questions about the whole way in which mandatory supervision has been handled in the past. I think they have to be looked at in this debate.

Generally speaking, I agree with my colleagues who have pointed out that there are no adequate methods of predicting future violence on the part of a criminal who is being released but it is important to note that in the case of Paul Kocurek psychiatric reports indicated that if he did not receive proper treatment he was likely to kill someone. He was subject to fantasies of a sado-masochistic nature; he liked to choke women during sexual intercourse; he had a very disturbed personality and background. He had a history of molesting young children and in 1979, following the unlawful confinement of three young girls at which time he impersonated a police officer and attempted to handcuff them, he was given a two-year suspended sentence.

While on suspended sentence, one month later he was arrested for indecent assault on a four-year-old. As a result of that he was given a two-year sentence.

• (1220)

Under mandatory supervision, Kocurek was legally entitled to be released after serving two-thirds of his two-year sentence. It is interesting to note that two days before he was eligible for mandatory supervision release on June 20, 1981, he informed his parole officer that he was seriously considering waiving his right to mandatory supervision release in order to get further treatment at the regional psychiatric centre. In other words, he himself knew that he was a disturbed and unhealthy human being. His parole officer and the centre staff urged him to do this, but at the last moment he changed his mind and went through with the mandatory release program.

The conditions for his release included, among others, regular visits to the local mental health unit. However, he did not show up for his very first appointment. When he failed to show up for that appointment, nothing was done about it. No contacts were made with him. The parole supervisor was not notified and there was no real concern that this very disturbed human being who was at large in the community and had been told as a condition of his release that he should report to the mental health unit had not done so.

During the time that Kocurek was at large, he had in his possession a starter pistol and a pair of handcuffs. As I mentioned earlier, the handcuffs were part of the equipment that he had used earlier in the unlawful confinement of three young girls. He used these handcuffs and the starter pistol at the time of the assault which occurred on August 2. Six weeks