

the board should be of Scottish origin, or of French origin; that there might be French-Canadians or English Canadians, or people whose origins were Ukranian or German. I cannot accept that. Surely, we are all Canadians. That is the very basis of the Bill of Rights and the hon. member's amendment would fly in the face of the Bill of Rights.

● (1640)

I hope that the Solicitor General (Mr. Allmand) and his department will make sure that one or two board members are native people, that is, representatives of the first Canadians. Perhaps the matter could be remedied in that fashion. Discriminating, and saying that we should have two from this group and two from that would divide the nation, not into two parts but into many parts. I have never subscribed to that idea. We are all equal as Canadians, and all equally citizens of Canada. If the Bill of Rights means anything, it means that.

The hon. member, in his second amendment, suggests that there might be some sense in appointing to the board two people who have served time whether in federal or provincial institutions, as they may be better able to understand the situation with which the Parole Board would be dealing than some other people could understand it. I cannot accept that suggestion, either. The next step might be to say that the judges in our criminal courts should be men who have served some time in these institutions to which they are sentencing people appearing before them. I do not think anybody in his right mind would accept that theory. On the other hand, bearing in mind our advance in jurisprudence and understanding, the fact that someone has served time but has rehabilitated himself should be no bar to his serving as an officer of the Parole Board. If the authorities were to consider that suggestion, we might go some way towards what the hon. member for Skeena is trying to do. Nevertheless, I cannot accept what he is proposing. The best I can suggest is this: When new officers are to be appointed to the Parole Board, consideration might be given to some of the proposals the hon. member has made. On the other hand, I cannot, and I am sure the Canadian people cannot, accept the hon. member's suggestion with regard to the personnel making up the board.

In Canada, of course, we work under two programs, that of the Parole Board, and that of temporary releases. As I said at second reading, most failures in this area have occurred under the temporary release program. Although I did not vote for abolishing capital punishment, Parliament abolished that penalty. We should not slide back in this area. The minister has said that back-to-back absences and temporary releases would be abolished. In those cases involving people who have committed murder, cases in which capital punishment does not now apply, surely the whole board should decide whether that kind of person should be released.

In this regard I need only refer to the Head case. That man committed a second murder while out on temporary absence in British Columbia. I also refer to the Swearngen case. He was sentenced for murder in 1963. He was released for a Christmas holiday, and duplicated the crime for which he had been originally sentenced. I mention merely these two examples; there are dozens of other examples. I hope that when the Solicitor General sets up

Parole Act

the enlarged board, and brings in rules and regulations under the new act, he will specify that the whole board must sit in review before anyone who has been sentenced to life is allowed to go free, without supervision. Otherwise, we will run into the same difficulties we experienced with the temporary release program.

The *Globe and Mail* took the skin off George Street for certain mistakes he is alleged to have made. Those mistakes had nothing to do with the Parole Board; they had to do with the temporary release program, over which the Parole Board has no jurisdiction whatsoever. The Parole Board was given a black eye for those things which had happened under the previous solicitor general, who practically ruined the way in which the system had been operating for a number of years.

We have in Canada approximately 9,000 people in federal penitentiaries. In 1962-63, it cost, on average, \$3,380 to keep one person in prison, for a total cost of \$23.9 million. In 1971-72, the cost per inmate was \$9,325, almost double the 1962 cost, for a total national bill of \$79.8 million. It has been suggested that in Canada more people, proportionately, are in federal and provincial institutions than in any other nation. I, therefore, support progressive and, indeed, aggressive parole programs under which inmates can be released from various institutions in order that they may rehabilitate themselves and join the stream of society.

On the other hand, in cases where people have been convicted of violent crimes, there should be no release from an institution until there has been a hearing by the full parole board, backed by reports of psychiatrists, psychologists and all those whose work is necessary if an adequate decision is to be made. That should be done before violent criminals are allowed to return to the street, to the main stream of society.

Having said that, I do not think there is much more I can say about the hon. member's proposals. As I said on second reading, this bill is a move in the right direction. Nevertheless, I must oppose the amendment, for reasons which I mentioned in my opening remarks.

Mr. Alex Patterson (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, I have listened with interest to this debate and heartily agree with some of the suggestions and comments which have been made. I also disagree with some other aspects of this debate. We are dealing with something that is of extreme concern to all people of this country. I think, as well, that we are dealing with an issue that is not easy of solution. The answer will be difficult to arrive at. In the final analysis, I think we will find that there are many differences which will still be unresolved at the conclusion of the debate. I am thinking particularly of the parole system.

In thinking of parole, I am also reminded of other problems which have arisen in connection with the administration of justice. Recently, a feeling of insecurity has been created in this country as a result of what happened under certain programs involving penal reform and the administration of justice. The people have felt in some cases, while recognizing the problems involved, that there has not been adequate concern or recognition of the importance of the safety of the citizens of Canada.