

speaking they are fairly easy to recognize. Some of them are extremely clever, as you probably know from your earlier interest in these affairs. Yes, that happens, but he would have to fool many people to get by.

Senator Fergusson: Are there any social workers on your staff, and do they make reports at the time of the hearings?

Mr. Street: We have about 250, all with master's degrees. We have the highest qualified branch in the government service.

Senator Fergusson: Do they make reports?

Mr. Miller: Social workers, psychologists, criminologists and sociologists are hired by us as parole service officers. They are not specifically psychologists, social workers and criminologists. It is a broad field. They do a report for us, with their various trainings and backgrounds.

The Deputy Chairman: Perhaps we could have a file with us for our information, giving the type of qualifications you establish for a person who makes application for employment as a parole officer, without going into it too broadly. Is it agreeable to the committee that we have that information?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

The Deputy Chairman: Of course, we can get the Parole Board witnesses back at any time if we want to ask more questions.

Senator Thompson: You mentioned psychiatric reports, but I gather employment opportunities are something you are keen on trying to get. I can see that in some cases it is very tough to be constantly working to get enough opportunities in the community for ex-offenders. Do your people meet with trade union officials in order to try to get their support?

Mr. Miller: I could not answer that in detail. I have read reports and comments and talked to officers who have done this. It is part of the community contact, as would be service clubs, after-care agencies, manpower and so on. It is a collective thing. To answer your question specifically, they do not have instructions in that sense, but they automatically do it; and would certainly also be in touch with major employers in the community. There is that constant contact.

Senator Thompson: Are government departments contacted for job opportunities?

Mr. Street: You mean to get a job in the government service?

Senator Thompson: Yes.

Mr. Street: Yes, we have tried, and we have some of our people working in the government service. We investigate every source available. While it is sometimes difficult for people coming out of prison to get a job, in the study we did only last June for this year, which is not the best year for employment in Canada, as you know, of the about 3,000 parolees, which is set out in the brief, 78 per cent were working.

Senator Buckwold: This may be a somewhat difficult question for you to deal with. In coming to a decision, as the Parole Board, what is the relationship of the seriousness of the crime committed, or the severity of the sentence, to the social rehabilitation possibility of the man and his social acceptance in the community?

Mr. Street: If it is a serious crime, in the sense that violence is involved, we are naturally a little more careful than we would be if it were just a simple theft, fraud offence, passing worthless cheques or something like that. Naturally, we are very careful because of the consequences that could follow if the man did it again. We are not concerned with the length of the sentence or the propriety of the conviction; that is none of our business. We are obliged to review at the eligibility date, and our job is to decide whether he can safely be released on parole. Certainly we have to consider the seriousness of the offence, especially if violence is involved, and the community acceptance of him—in other words, is he ready to be paroled, and is the community ready to accept him?

Senator Buckwold: In other words, a model prisoner, with good rehabilitation possibilities who has committed a serious offence, might have a better chance of release than a difficult prisoner who has committed a lesser offence?

Mr. Street: If he was a model prisoner with, do you say, good community acceptance?

Senator Buckwold: Yes, he has a better chance of rehabilitation.

Mr. Street: I would say he would be better off. Even though the crime were serious, if all the reports and the assessments made of him indicated that he was not likely to do it again, and if he had a lot of support on the outside, I would say his chances of getting parole would be fairly good. We are paroling two out of three of those who ask for it now, which is one of the reasons we are criticized. Does that answer your question, senator?

Senator Buckwold: I am a little concerned about this. I am speaking now from the community point of view.

Mr. Street: We have to think about the question of community acceptance. As you know, there was a case mentioned yesterday which we thought was ideal for parole, and we received a certain amount of criticism because the offence was considered to be serious.

Senator Buckwold: Perhaps I could ask you what you mean by "community acceptance".

The Deputy Chairman: Yes, perhaps we should have that term defined, as it is being used so much.

Mr. Street: I guess there are two different things. I was referring to a certain amount of criticism from the public in this particular case. Generally speaking, by "community acceptance" I mean: Does he have a place to live? Does he have a family, do the family welcome him back, and will they support him and help him? Does he have a wife and, if so, does she want him back and will she help him? Does he have a job to go to? Does he have friends, people willing to help him? It was community acceptance, in that sense, that I assumed you were referring to, and that is very important. But there is the other feature, of course.