

The Chairman of the Parole Board should be responsible for the coordination of the Sectional Boards but should not be charged with responsibility for the parole service which should function under the Executive Director and supply support services and case presentation and supervisory services to the Parole Board. The relationship of the Sectional Boards to the parole service staff in their regions would have to be carefully defined to avoid any conflict with the administrative responsibility of the Executive Director of the parole service.

It seems evident however that such a proposal would bring the decision makers regarding parole closer to the inmates concerning whom they are making these decisions. In addition, the parole service officer who has been interviewing the prospective parolee and developing his case file would be present to collaborate with the decision makers and to add his views in cases in which there is not a unanimous affirmative decision by the Sectional Board.

This form of organization would also bring members of the Sectional Board into closer relationship with local service and treatment personnel, both in the federal penitentiaries and provincial institutions. It would allow for the establishment of close relationships with after-care agencies and other inter-related services. It would allow for the Sectional Board to interpret directly to the community concerning the work of the parole board and service and to establish good relationships in the community. It would provide opportunity for quicker consideration and decision of revocation and suspension and such subsequent action as might be involved in these matters and would enable a face to face discussion between the parole service officer concerned with the matter and the members of the Board so that fully integrated consideration of the problem and the resulting decision could be anticipated.

Even with the reduction of the decision making load on the Parole Board which would occur if the suggestions regarding jurisdiction are followed, there would still be too few members on the present Board to carry out the responsibilities suggested above and give adequate time to the interviewing and consideration of the more difficult cases. In addition, regionalization is desirable to reduce the constant long range travel by the Board members involving extensive separation from family, friends and community activities. They are at present transients in the areas of the community in which they perform their functions. They are restricted to relatively short interviews and often work late into the night to the detriment of their own effectiveness and that of the parole and institutional staff and the inmate applicants. The Board members do not at present visit Provincial institutions nor would they be required to if the following proposal is adopted except for the establishing of cordial working relationships and interpretation.

#### FEDERAL PROVINCIAL JURISDICTION IN PAROLE

A strong case can be made either way for giving the federal Parole Board responsibility for all parole including that from Provincial institutions or in reverse giving the Provinces the right to deal with all parole from their institutions. The arguments pro and con are outlined in the Report of the Canadian Committee on Corrections (Ouimet) and need not be repeated. On balance we agree with the recommendations of the Ouimet Committee that parole from Provincial institutions should become the responsibility

of the Provincial authorities as an extension of the institutional programming for the inmate. The major consideration against this would be the developing of ten different parole systems in Canada in addition to the federal system. It would be difficult to secure coordination of policy and practice; but if parole is to be developed as an extension of the institutional program there would appear to be no other adequate solution despite the obvious shortcomings due to lack of equality of treatment and integration between provinces.

#### PAROLE PANELS IN INSTITUTIONS

The general affect of the panels of the Parole Board visiting the institutions and interviewing the parole applicant face to face has been good. The potential parolee feels that he has had an opportunity to make his case in person with the decision makers. Though it is now standard practice to give reasons for deferral or denial these are usually very general and are not always clearly interpreted to or understood by the inmate.

The inmates do not seem to hear what they are told in this regard. It is still a common complaint that they do not know why they have been turned down on their application for parole. They ask, "What is it that I am supposed to do?" They say, "I am willing and anxious to cooperate and to make the best of my situation while in the institution but I am left without any knowledge as to why my parole has been refused and without any understanding of what I can do about it." It is realized that this is a touchy question, as inmates may fasten on any statement and rationalize around it in keeping with their own purposes and attitudes. In addition, some decisions may be so heavily personality loaded that it might be threatening and damaging to an inmate to give him a complete analysis perhaps involving psychiatric evaluation. Following a refusal by the parole panel, the parole service officer should see the inmate and discuss his failure to make parole with him, giving him such reasons as the parole panel is prepared to divulge. This would require close integration with institutional staff for its treatment impact but would be very helpful not only to the inmate but to the aftercare agencies who may have been working with the inmate in the pre-parole planning stages of the process. It is very rarely that the after-care agencies are given any reasons for a negative decision concerning parole.

Some feeling is expressed by institutional workers that the parole panel comes to the institution and, in a relatively short interview, decides the inmate's fate often contrary to the recommendations made by the institutional staff who feel they really know the inmate. Sometimes the decision is also against the recommendations of the parole service staff who have had lengthy interviews with the inmate and have a substantial knowledge of his community. The staffs begin to wonder what special attributes of prescience are possessed by the parole panel and what function the Parole Board should really be performing. If the suggestions previously made for transfer to staff of the decision making power in the case of two year sentenced inmates and for regionalization of the Parole Board with a much closer relationship to the inmates and the institution were put into effect a different relationship with staff might well be expected to develop.