

But surely it is right that the judge who first sentenced a person should not be the man or woman to whom is entrusted the later assessment of that person's development after that person has been in prison for some time. It is surely right that the Parole Board consist of people independent of the judicial system, but it has to consist of people who are sensitive to the needs, who have the courage to follow a consistent policy and who have the courage to say no as well as to say yes.

It has not been my experience, and I am certain I have had just as much experience as the Conservative member who preceded me, that the Parole Board has gone hog wild with paroles. Indeed, I have had many cases coming over my desk which, from the information I had, appeared to me to deserve the consideration that the Parole Board refused to afford those people. As I say, it is not my impression that they have gone hog wild about freeing people.

I hope this motion will pass. I understand there is an agreement to that effect. I think it is important that the committee goes into all the aspects which the motion covers; but I plead with the committee, as I plead with the Solicitor General, not to permit the rednecks to prevent programs and policies that are genuinely rehabilitative and which genuinely try to bring back into society people who have committed crimes. That should be the objective of our prisons and penitentiaries. It should not be our objective merely to punish people, to incarcerate them forever, as has been suggested, but to put them into an environment where those who are capable of becoming decent citizens in society are given the training and the opportunity to be rehabilitated. So far as I am concerned, if one good person gains rehabilitation as a result of that kind of policy, then all the mistakes that may have been made are well worth while.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a few words on the motion that is being proposed to the House, in view of the number of escapes that are happening now. The government seems to have a number of crises to face in Canada, and I wonder which of them will lead to its defeat. Will it be the crisis in the prisons? Or will it be that of unemployment, or again that of the cost of living?

In any event, the one before us is pretty serious. For the last two or three years at least, the government has been trying to apply certain reforms to the prison system with a view to helping criminals to be rehabilitated, and it seems to have had the desired effect only in a few cases. But in spite of all the leniencies which the government has introduced into the prison system, it seems that those who stand to gain the most from them are working hard to offset the beneficial effects of these reforms.

Attempts are now being made to find the causes of the many escapes that have happened, especially since the beginning of the year. It is reported that in Quebec federal prisons alone, there have been 26 escapes since the beginning of the year. And this morning's papers report that the Quebec provincial police have had to organize a special corps of 60 policemen just to track down individuals who have escaped from penitentiaries.

### *Penitentiaries*

This is a sign that the situation has become very serious, and I wonder if the relaxation of prison regulations in Canada is really the solution to this unrest. I wonder whether, after trying two or three times to rehabilitate certain individuals, we should continue to waste our time on them.

● (2030)

The former Solicitor General had tabled a comprehensive program during the last session; he had even mentioned that golf courses would be built in some penitentiaries. I think that was going a little too far! And the way we treat criminals in our prisons is the envy of lots of honourable family heads who have to toil to earn a living.

Nowadays, we notice that bandits indicted on a charge of murder are travelling throughout the province with a private chauffeur. I would not be surprised to realize before long that they get free world-wide trips. And in spite of all that, they are not satisfied.

Therefore, I believe Mr. Speaker, that a rehabilitation system should be introduced in prisons where the inmates are mainly juvenile delinquents. I think we should give all our attention to that aspect.

As to the individual of a certain age who has ignored the laws of society for 15, 20, or 25 years, I think it is a waste of time to try to rehabilitate him and make of him an honest citizen like everybody else. But if it is a first offense on the part of a young man or of a young girl and if there is a lack of institutions for juvenile delinquents, that should be the object of our attention and I believe that in that case, chances are that those young people could be rehabilitated before it is too late.

Certain reasons were given these last few days that could have been of some help in the escapes we know about. We heard that the guards may have aired grievances which were not taken into consideration or whose examination was delayed for many months and that they do nothing to prevent such escapes because they do not care or shut their eyes to the behaviour of certain prisoners.

Mr. Speaker, unrest exists among prison guards, there is no doubt about that; it was mentioned on a few occasions. It was even discussed here in the House of Commons. If those men whose task is most difficult do not enjoy working conditions and wages comparable with those available elsewhere, I think we are making a gross mistake.

If a commission is appointed by the Solicitor General (Mr. Allmand) to study this problem, it should start right there and would surely achieve something.

Anyway I think that the situation is serious and should be studied immediately. If a commission is appointed as stated by the Solicitor General, its reports and recommendations should come forthwith; otherwise the situation will get worse before measures are taken. I am not sure that the government is unable to take action now or that it has to wait for the report of such a commission.

I therefore ask most seriously to the Solicitor General to take action quickly in those cases. The individuals now at large are dangerous; those who have escaped from prison are dangerous individuals; they are a danger to the life of people who have to live in freedom and safety and also