

Senator Lapointe: You keep referring to "the fellow who behaved so!" . . . You never refer to women?

Mr. Thomas: Because we are working with men.

Senator Lapointe: Does this mean that only men are criminals—that there are no lady criminals?

Mr. Albert: We are simply saying that due to circumstances, we work exclusively in men's prisons.

Senator Flynn: Excuse me, Senator Lapointe. Perhaps, do you mean that it is more common for a man to assassinate his wife, than the other way around.

Mr. Thomas: The thing is, that so far as we're concerned, we in fact work only with men. Should others have forwarded reports—regarding women's institutions—that might be equally interesting.

Senator Lapointe: Yes, but are there psychologists working in women's prisons; that's what I wish to know? Yes?

Mr. Thomas: Yes. I know it from hearsay, but I have no personal knowledge on the matter.

Mr. Albert: Yes. I know of one in Kingston through personal experience.

[English]

The Acting Chairman: In your remarks, Mr. Thomas, according to a note I made, you indicated that the Board was taking an honest risk due to a lack of information. You suggested the members were making arbitrary decisions based on useless reports.

Mr. Thomas: Yes.

The Acting Chairman: Would you care to elaborate on that statement again, please?

[Translation]

Mr. Thomas: Let me tell you how we obtain information regarding an inmate. Very often, we do not know just what he is doing in that milieu. So, an officer, an instructor explains this to us; and, actually—the institutions are such that we must find our personal contacts, ourselves. The inmate arrives—we see him only in our office—he essentially answers to social workers or classification officers; they see the inmate and perform what we call: case history. The inmate serves his term. Oftentimes, many incidents occur within the institution. When he becomes eligible for parole, the Parole Officer consults the Classification Officer—and the former personally sees the inmate inside the institution, during one or two interviews. Then, depending upon the case, he will request that an inquiry be made regarding his family. In view of the shortage of parole officers and of the great number of delinquents, they are prevented from making a thorough study of the information received from there. Hence, the inmate will often say: I did this, I did that, and things went very well with my employer. Should you, at times, have time to contact their previous employers, you might make worthwhile discoveries—he had not shown up in the morning because he had been drunk—but kept insisting that he was not the drinking-type. That, we do not know. He certainly does not drink within the institution. So, what takes place, is that we do not obtain certain facts.

Insofar as the offender is concerned, this alcoholism problem is quite important. For example, we must know whether the offender really consumes alcohol, or whether he doesn't. To us, he says he does not drink, but we do not really know. Another thing is that oftentimes, we do not have the court or proceedings records. It costs a fortune; it costs \$1.00 per page for court proceedings, and some make up three volumes, that thick. It might cost the institution \$500. in order to have them—which is prohibitive. But, highly valuable information may be had from court proceedings records, in order to discover who has really known the fellow—perhaps at the time the offense occurred, or parents or friends—who know something—and there we might have testimony or information of greater validity than that uncovered from simple interviews. Police authorities have certainly dealt with the case; the judge conceivably elicited certain facts; the Crown prosecutor drew out information; the Defense attorney also—all this has been discussed. This does not mean that the trial has been necessarily just: we have recently had an example involving Mr. Roux who has been freed after nine years and declared innocent. But there nevertheless remains that we have there a gold mine of substantial information, to which we have no access—except for certain occasions—should we have contacts with the Defense Attorney willing to lend us his notes.

Senator Lapointe: Then, you say that it is far too costly, first of all, to obtain the documents, and secondly, due to the fact that you do not have a sufficient amount of time to assemble all these documents, or to study, analyse, and synthesize them?

Mr. Thomas: That's exactly it. There exists such institutions as the Philippe Pinelle Institute in Montreal, where people take the time to do that. A psychiatric appraisal is tantamount to a police inquiry. We evidently visit with the victims—I am not saying that we ought to do this in all cases. Let me say that there, we obtain information as a whole, the validity of which is far greater than that obtainable within our institutions—when we are overburdened with work—and furthermore, at times, we might have to make widespread contacts that would necessitate much time. Whenever the family resides the Abitibi area, a social worker of that region may be asked to investigate, I think; but oftentimes, only a brief resumé of what has transpired, is sent us: could you explore this? He is not too, too sure as to what we want, but he proceeds to visit with the family and, as a general rule, he sends us a two or three page report. But he does not always reply to questions that have arisen at the institution, since we have seen things, since we have been in contact with the inmate's problem. One asks: I would certainly like to know what goes on. Let me give you a specific example: recently, a fifty-year old family man had indecently assaulted six of his daughters. The Quebec City Social worker—the family lives in Quebec City area—investigated that case. I myself had been in the process of making a psychological appraisal. I urgently required that investigation. He in no way replied to the questions arising from my psychological appraisal—How had the wife reacted to her husband's acts? He had in no way explored that aspect, except for the fact that an unfortunate incident had occurred—and that I think things should go well, from now on. I feel that there is more to it than that. A wife will just not accept such an incident.