

Mr. Faguy: Yes, I certainly will. I will be absent for some time, but you may communicate with Mr. Braithwaite or Mr. Surprenant, and this information will be supplied you.

As chairman of this committee and as a senator, you are certainly entitled to uncensored correspondence from prisoners, and I will be pleased to co-operate. Could I remind you, though, not to believe everything you read.

The Chairman: You will have to take us on faith in that respect. I can say that in my years of practising criminal law, after I had interviewed my client I always knew I had at least half the story.

Senator Hastings: Could we just turn for a moment to the matter of lifers, Mr. Faguy? You indicated earlier that the lifers were your best risks for temporary absences and also better risks for parole. I wonder if you would care to comment on the conduct, and so forth, of the lifers in the institution?

Mr. Faguy: We have found, through statistics and experience, that lifers are very good inmates: they co-operate and participate in the programs; many of them participate in university courses or other educational courses in an attempt to improve themselves, thereby becoming better citizens. We have had, as you will see in our reports, many lifers out on temporary absence and have encountered very few problems. Also lifers have a very small rate of recidivism, whereas, when we talk about our own people, with regard to the 43 per cent coming back who have been in federal institutions, the rate is I think, about two per cent. So the recidivism rate for lifers is very low.

Senator Hastings: May I point out that the two per cent who come back do not come back for murder.

Mr. Faguy: That is right. This is again an indication that these people are willing to participate. We have some figures we must be sure to include in our report to the Senate. Out of a total of 220 inmates serving life, indefinite sentence, and classified as dangerous sex offenders, granted 5,986 absences, there were 12 negative incidents. Some were inebriated, another inmate remained at large, another was involved with an ex-inmate and there was a bit of a problem there. Another failed to adhere to regulations, another was apprehended in a city other than where he was supposed to be, another was just a minor incident. Then there was an inmate found in a beer parlour where he was not supposed to be; then another was unlawfully at large, and returned late. All these 12 were negative incidents, and there was nothing serious.

Senator Hastings: That is out of 5,000?

Mr. Faguy: Out of 220 inmates and 5,986 temporary absences granted to these 220 inmates. These are lifers, indefinite sentences, or dangerous sex offenders.

Senator Hastings: Would you say they qualify for parole?

Mr. Faguy: Please, I am not on the parole side. It is unfair to ask me. I am afraid I do not know. I would leave that to the parole side.

Senator Hastings: From your description of their conduct, do they seem to be exemplary?

Mr. Faguy: In the case of these people, where there were 12 incidents, these are minor, they are more violation of regulations and rules, than anything else, because we have to protect ourselves.

The Chairman: We can ask the witness a question on the figures, but I do not think we should ask him to comment on the meaning of the figures. This is something we could put later on to someone else.

Senator Thompson: Could I come back just to parole and the application for parole? If an inmate wanted books or some other background to prepare his application for parole, are these provided for him?

Mr. Faguy: We provide all the literature they want, except subversive literature; otherwise, we are free with our literature. We also provide the legislation. For instance, we make sure that the Penitentiary Act is available, also the Parole Act and the Criminal Code. If in any case these are not there, it is through some inadvertence, but these are available to the inmates.

Senator Thompson: So the right to apply for parole is safeguarded?

Mr. Faguy: Oh yes. It is up to the inmate to apply for parole, and then it is up to the parole side to refuse or reject; it is not for us.

Senator Thompson: But he is free?

Mr. Faguy: Yes, he is free to ask for parole. As you know, some of them would want parole earlier than when they are eligible for it. This goes on all the time. Some of them write to me because they have been rejected, and I have to remind them that I am not a parole person and that they must turn to the parole side.

Senator Thompson: Assuming that Parole turns a man down because he has to get some further training, how does that relate to the custodial staff? How is it implemented?

Mr. Faguy: It is referred to our people, specifically to the classification officer for that inmate. Then, if we agree that this type of training is needed and it is available, we will do it. If it is not available, there could be a question of transfer to another institution. This could come into consideration. We try to fit the needs of the inmates, and more and more so.

Senator Thompson: I think we have asked this question before, but I would like to ask what is the attitude of the custodial staff to the Parole Board.

The Chairman: That is not fair, senator. You cannot ask that question; you cannot ask one service under the same head to comment on another. It would put him in an impossible situation.