

*Adjournment Debate*

It has the effect of cutting the costs of looking after prisoners. For instance, it has been estimated that it could cut costs down from \$70 per day to a mere \$10 per day. It also reduces the overcrowding which we have in many prisons.

People scoff at the idea of electronic arm or ankle bracelets. When I asked the question of the Solicitor General (Mr. Kelleher) in the House not long ago, opposition Members actually laughed at the idea. They said it was a ridiculous idea and that people could be excused from parole violations perhaps by a battery failure.

Some members of the Opposition oppose the concept. The John Howard Society in Toronto actually opposes it as well. It feels that it would be a violation of personal freedom. Many other civil rights groups and prisoners' groups feel that it would be a violation of civil rights, perhaps a violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and a violation of the freedom of movement concept. Ole Instrup, the Chairman of the National Parole Board, says that he is fundamentally opposed to the concept. However, we know that the concept is in fact in use in 20 different jurisdictions in the United States.

● (1825)

Presently there are some 900 prisoners who are released with this sort of electronic surveillance which the Americans call an electronic leash. As well, British Columbia is starting to experiment with this system. Just this very month, the Province of Ontario says it is considering putting an experimental model into use by the end of this year. Fortunately, our own Solicitor General has indicated that the Canadian Correctional Service's mind is not closed to the concept and that it is going to be watching these other experiments very closely.

I do not know whether this idea will work or not. I cannot help but think of the case that I brought to your attention before, Madam Speaker, of Leander Savoury. You will remember that he was the prisoner who was released on parole back in October, 1984. Before he was killed in a police shoot-out in January, 1985—he was three short months on parole—he had committed nine armed robberies and killed one man. While he was on parole he apparently was in contact with his parole officer once in person and he spoke to him twice on the telephone. Of course, he was warned to stay in regular contact with his parole officer, but in spite of all of that, he committed nine armed robberies and killed one man.

Would electronic monitoring by way of an electronic leash or bracelet on the ankle or the wrist have prevented those armed robberies? Would it have prevented the killing or the

death of Leander Savoury himself in the police shoot-out? I do not know, Madam Speaker. You probably do not know right at this stage but I think it is worth trying to find out. I think it is worth trying this experiment.

I hope the Parliamentary Secretary will tell us tonight that he agrees and that the Canadian Correctional Service will be getting involved and utilizing this experiment to see if it will improve our parole system and help to solve this sort of problem.

**Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada):** Madam Speaker, I would like to speak further to the question put to the Solicitor General (Mr. Kelleher) by the Hon. Member for York East (Mr. Redway) concerning the possible use of electronic bracelets to help supervise federal inmates on parole.

The Correctional Service of Canada has at this time no plans to introduce such a program. However, it will be monitoring those in the United States and in British Columbia to see whether they yield any positive results.

While there may be potential applications of this concept to federal inmates, the Correctional Service would first want to satisfy itself as to all of the various ethical and legal ramifications of using monitoring technology. Moreover, it would not consider using this type of system for high risk offenders or those not willing to wear the device. It also would not view electronic supervision as eliminating the need for the continuing face to face contacts that parole officers have with offenders.

On balance, the Correctional Service of Canada is not currently in favour of implementing an electronic monitoring program and the Parole Board shares this position. However, the Solicitor General and his agencies will be keeping an open mind on the issue and for that reason will be watching to see what emerges from the various initiatives now under way, including that in British Columbia, so that we can ultimately decide if and how the federal jurisdiction should proceed in this area.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 3(1).

The House adjourned at 6.29 p.m.