

parole in 1971 he was arrested on 41 charges of false pretenses and forgery committed while he was out on conditional liberty.

These are some of the cases from the west coast to which attention has been drawn. Let us turn, now, to an article which appeared in *Weekend Magazine* on November 25, 1972. We read that between 1963 and 1971 Dwight Allan Swanson was sentenced to 11 prison terms in respect of charges ranging from car theft and possession of stolen property to robbery and breaking and entering. During this period he was paroled not once but five times and on each occasion he committed one or more offences while on parole. His last conviction, on November 24, 1971, was for indecent assault of a female. I think it is evident that about one third the number of people released on parole commit crimes again. Because of that we must ask very searching questions about the way in which the parole service is being administered in this country. We are not persuaded that parole is being granted always to those who will act with the proper intent. Very often parole is utilized by those who see it as another opportunity to be released from jail and return to crime.

● (1550)

We do not suggest for a moment that the solution to this is simply a reduction in the number of paroles granted. This may be the thinking of the minister and of the parole board, because there seems to be a certain satisfaction taken in the way in which the statistics indicate it is now more difficult to obtain parole than previously. We are not impressed by that kind of statistical justification. We are not saying that fewer people should obtain parole, but we are saying that there must be a much more thorough search of applications for parole and that we should take much more serious steps to help avoid the kind of mistake the parole board has made during the past several years.

We feel we can support Bill C-191 to the extent that it involves the appointment of additional parole board members, even on that ad hoc basis, to serve that end. We welcome the appointment of additional parole officers to make the system more effective, but we are not convinced, until there has been further study, debate and discussion of the various aspects of this complex question, that the parole board itself will carry out its duties in such a way that we will avoid the kind of thing from which Canada has suffered during the last decade. There is simply no justification for the fact that a person, having committed a crime, having been sentenced to prison and having been given parole, is able to go out and commit another crime, then come back and receive a second, a third or even a fourth parole. Very often that person is one who, by his record, has shown that he is dangerous to society.

We, therefore, believe the parole board must reorganize its work and its thinking so that we may be satisfied that parole will be used for the purpose for which it was intended. We must ask questions, for example, about the effectiveness of the board's surveillance and whether the parole officers acting in the name of the board are competent to carry out their duties. I have already referred to the way in which one person on parole could be seen 22 times in the company of known criminals, and that when this was reported to the parole board nothing was done about it. Those reports were sent in, not by the parole

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officers but by the local police. Too often it is the case that this kind of information is provided, not by those whom one would expect would obtain the information first, but by the police who do not have a primary duty for the supervision of parolees.

One reason for this situation is that the parole supervisors have had too many parolees under their supervision. The police chiefs, in appearing before the Senate committee dealing with parole, said that the bulk of parole violations are only brought to light as the result of police investigations into other incidents. They go on to say that the number of violations which the police report are only a small percentage of the actual number of violations. We, therefore, must ask ourselves some very serious questions about the efficiency of the surveillance program. We must satisfy ourselves as a parliament that the proposals the minister is making in this legislation are adequate, because if the kind of surveillance which is being carried on is not adequate to provide supervision of those who are potentially dangerous, further recommendations must be made.

It is simply inexcusable that we should go on in this ad hoc fashion at a time when we have seen the growth of crimes of violence cause the average citizen to pause and wonder what steps are needed for his own protection. I would point out in this connection that I should like to see much more attention directed toward the value of half-way houses or after-care hostels. It seems to me we ought to be ready to take a much more positive step in this direction than the minister so far has encouraged us to think the government is prepared to take. In dealing adequately with the problem of surveillance of parolees or the transition of an inmate from jail to life we need half-way houses. In this regard we should study the experience other jurisdictions have had.

For instance, in the 1969 report of the British Parole Board, we see the following statement:

In a number of cases it has only been possible to recommend parole because an 'After-care Hostel' or 'Half-way House' has been prepared to accept the prisoner at the time of his release.

It seems to me that until we are prepared to couple an adequate supervision program in terms of a sufficient staff with an adequate program of after-care or half-way house facilities, we will not even begin to think seriously about meeting the needs of the parolees and of society. If we really mean what we claim to mean when we speak about parole and the value it has to inmates and to society, surely we must be prepared for whatever is involved in setting up an adequate half-way house system across this country. The few hostels that are now available are largely maintained by voluntary agencies which depend for much of their financing on contributions. These agencies simply cannot adequately meet the challenge of the times. So, I would hope the kind of discussion we have in committee, and the kind of future debate we have in this House, would prompt the government to re-think its present program, its lack of initiative and action in this respect.

There are other changes we need to consider very carefully along with those to which I have referred. One change we need to consider involves the whole question of whether the parole board should have the right to act, as someone suggested, as kind of a substitute judge, because