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Blenkarn Federal raps board

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People who know the harsh realities of life are needed on the parole board, not "people who come from the goody-goody side of society," says Mississauga Member of Parliament, Don Blenkarn.

The "goody-goody" people "really do not know what it is all about," says Mr. Blenkarn. "They have studied, they have gone to university, and they know something about penology. Maybe they were good police officers.

"Maybe they were fine lawyers at one time. But what do they know about sticking a knife in somebody's back, or how to make a zip gun in a penal institution, or how to sneak heroin, marijuana or cocaine into that institution?" asks Mr. Blenkarn.

"What do they know about imposing discipline in a penitentiary? They are goody-goodies and they cannot really analyse whether a person has reformed and is able to get back into society."

The Mississauga M.P. says that some highly intelligent people are criminals. They know how to fill out forms and how to cultivate possible good references. But they aren't fit, in many cases, to be free. They just know how to manipulate the system, Mr. Blenkarn stated in an address in the House of Commons.

Mr. Blenkarn cited the fact that persons out on weekend passes have been caught in further criminal activity. He noted that, in one case, a convict free on a weekend pass killed the daughter of a prison guard.

"We have all had experience in our constituencies of people allowed out on parole or probation," said Mr. Blenkarn.

"Recently, in my riding, one young man was allowed out on parole. It was said that he was going to get a job and do all sorts of wonderful



DON BLENKARN

things. He got out in June. He had 12 offers of jobs from the Manpower organization. He has not taken one of them."

Mr. Blenkarn said he wasn't sure how this young man was living "but I am sure he does not live only on welfare. When will he be back in the institution? He will be back probably as soon as the police catch him."

Mr. Blenkarn said he was in favor of the suggestion to have more people on the parole board — if it would serve a worthwhile purpose. He feels, however, that quality, method, should be looked at just as hard as quantity.

"If adding ten new members to the parole board will help, that will be great. But first the board itself must look seriously at how it is operating ..." said Mr. Blenkarn. "it should see that it gets a judge's report at the time of original sentencing, make sure that there are proper in-depth interviews, that there are good psychiatric reports and ensure the prison system is encouraging the proper attitude among inmates so they are ready for work again."

If a more practical policy isn't adopted, society will suffer the same type of problems it has in the past, predicts the Mississauga M.P.