

ment; I stated it in the house on a former occasion. Provided that they are first offenders, that their prison conduct has been good, and that the crime was not one of violence or of assault on women, they will be given favourable consideration when half their time is served. I cannot speak as to the recent conduct of any of the five communists who are still there because I have not looked into it lately, but if they can meet that test the rest of them will be liberated when half their time is served.

Let me go on with this letter from Smith. The two men who were liberated last week were not liberated on account of ill health. Oh, they complain their health was bad. In one instance we allowed the man's own doctor to visit him; he gave me a certificate, as well as one I suppose to the prisoner's wife, and there was nothing to alarm me in that certificate; I could find no cause for releasing him on the ground of ill health. Representations were made in regard to another of them by an hon. member who is not here to-day. I could not find anything more than occurs to any person in an institution of that kind, but they were liberated because their conduct had been good, because they were first offenders and had served half their time. The letter continues:

Sam Carr is seriously ill.

That is not true. He was liberated last week.

But sick parole is denied him.

That also is untrue.

Popovich has been in the hospital some time.

Each of the prisoners has been in hospital, and under the statute hospital time is not computed in the days the prisoners are allowed for good conduct; however I waived Popovich's hospital time in this case and did not count it against him.

Tom Hill suffers from arthritis;

Not seriously; he seems happy.

Bruce is almost completely crippled with a broken back.

I believe he had some trouble with his back, and in this case I gave him a special hospital bed, as good as any you will find in the Ottawa hospital.

Tom Ewen complains of very bad headaches—

I fancy he may have had headaches; a good many of us have. But this letter would lead one to believe that we are keeping these men in there to their death, that although they were almost ready to go we would not hear the prayers of themselves or their wives for release before death was upon them.

That is the kind of letter that has been circulated by this man Smith throughout Canada. Based on that, petitions come to me, telegrams come to me; I got two to-day. Three hundred Ukrainians from Calgary sent me one, and a number of people from northern Ontario the other; I do not know what their nationality is. All there is in the petitions is a demand that at once I release the seven communists; they do not even know that two are out now. Well, they will be treated just as were the others.

One other matter mentioned particularly by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, is that in regard to the shooting of Tim Buck. I made a statement on this in the house earlier in the session, and at that time I think perhaps I made a misstatement because I said that ten or eleven shots had been fired into his cell, into the ceiling. The truth is that there was a rifle shot and a pistol bullet fired there, and a shotgun containing buckshot; and the total number of bullets which made marks in the cell was eleven. I believe the evidence discloses that there were three shots. Tim Buck has made a statement, and I do not think he takes any exception to that in his statement. He was on the fourth tier in the prison, so that he would be about thirty-five to forty feet above the ground. The cells are arranged in tiers, back to back, and in front of each cell is a steel door or barrier, and in front of that again across a narrow corridor is a window. During the riot which took place on the twenty-second of the month—not the first riot; we shall call it the second—towards evening when it was growing dusk, about one hundred and fifty or one hundred and sixty convicts were not then in the cells—indeed we did not have cells for them and they were sleeping in dormitories. They congregated below the cell block, ripped up heavy planks from some building and started knocking off the locks of some of the cells with them. They had liberated quite a large number of prisoners. Buck was above this. He would come to his cell door and incite the prisoners to continue the riot "and get their rights." The guards had been armed with rifles and pistols for the purpose of meeting any emergency and suppressing it. The guards being on the ground, forty-five or fifty feet down, looking up could see Buck only when he came and shouted from his cell door. Shots were fired for the purpose of frightening him or stopping him, or, as I said when I was speaking on the matter before, cowing him—not with the idea of injuring him. As I said on a previous occasion, if anyone had wanted to shoot Tim Buck or to injure him it would not have