

Supply—Justice

meeting of the Canadian congress of correction in Vancouver. Then the committee proceeded to California, where they made a detailed examination of the penal institutions in that state. Then individual members proceeded to various other institutions in the western United States.

They have now returned to Canada and have completed a study of the situation in British Columbia, Alberta and I believe are now in Saskatchewan. They will then proceed to Manitoba and return to Ottawa. This concludes their travels and their studies, both within and outside of Canada. From this time forward they will be preparing their report. I expect to receive a number of interim recommendations and the final report by the end of this year.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Did the committee go to Lansing, and Jackson, Michigan?

Mr. Fulton: So far as we know they have not been to those points.

With respect to the actual changes in the institutions themselves, I may say they are closely related to the Fauteux committee report and the studies we have been making. The commissioner of penitentiaries and his staff have instituted a number of experimental changes. I refer particularly to the opening of a new institution—perhaps I should not call it a new institution—what we term satellite institutions at William Head, British Columbia, and Valleyfield, Quebec. It is true that, in part, the decision to open these institutions was dictated by the fact that our present institutions in British Columbia and at St. Vincent de Paul—indeed everywhere else in Canada with the possible exception of Manitoba—are seriously overcrowded. Nevertheless, we felt that we should combine the necessity for relieving the overcrowding with which we are faced with the opportunity to establish some institutions on an experimental basis.

Both William Head and Valleyfield are new types of penitentiaries altogether. They are both what we might call open institutions. The experiment is succeeding remarkably well. They are small institutions now, what you might call overflow institutions, and both accommodate about 100 prisoners. In addition, we have taken a decision to open a new institution in the maritimes in the Springhill area. I announced, I think last March, that a site had been selected in the general area of Springhill. My hon. friend from Cumberland has been pressing me to make an announcement of the details as to the site, and I am sure that he and members of the committee generally will be interested to know we are now in the process of acquiring options for property near Springhill. We

[Mr. Fulton.]

expect that these negotiations will be completed shortly. I shall be able, then, to make an announcement of the exact location where the institution is to be established.

In addition, I should say that generally we have continued our staff training program within the penitentiaries branch. We have taken steps, with the approval of treasury board, for the establishment of an expanded program of inservice staff training at the various institutions across Canada.

I think that is a fairly general summary of the approaches we are making toward the implementation of the Fauteux committee report. We are consciously and deliberately avoiding stepping out too rapidly until we get the final report of the correctional planning committee. It would be, I feel, very unwise, and an unfortunate thing, if we committed ourselves to expansion or experimental programs in certain directions which might have to be modified when we receive this report. Then we would find we had committed the public to considerable expenditure to do what we had done and then, when we got the final report, we might have to undo it. The final decisions on the program must therefore await the committee's final recommendations and the government's decision on them.

Mr. Roberge: I wish to thank the minister for giving as complete a summary as possible. This was very interesting to us, and we do agree with him that this is a long range affair and that it takes time to implement the recommendations of the Fauteux report.

I believe the minister overlooked one part of the remarks I made. I made a reference to the conference that was held in October between the attorneys general of the provinces and the Minister of Justice. If I remember correctly there was a question of whether or not those Canadians who received sentences under one year would be committed to penitentiaries instead of common jail. Is there any further comment the minister might make on that?

Mr. Fulton: No, not at the present time, Mr. Chairman. The recommendation of the Fauteux committee was that all persons serving sentences of six months and over should be the responsibility of the federal penal system. We accepted that recommendation in principle but it was our view and still is our view, expressed to the attorneys general at the time, that if the federal penal system becomes one in which the emphasis is placed on reform, it would not be sensible for us to accept prisoners who have only been sentenced to terms of six months. When you get automatic remission, time off for good behaviour and so on at