

minister would make a statement on motions. The question would be acceptable in those terms.

Hon. Robert Stanbury (Minister without Portfolio): In those terms, Mr. Speaker, the answer is no, because a statement has already been made by the Prime Minister explaining this matter. It has also been explained to the parliamentary committee in which the estimates of Information Canada were examined. Unfortunately, the members of the hon. gentleman's party have apparently not conveyed this information to him.

An hon. Member: There is an information gap.

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PENITENTIARIES

PRINCE ALBERT—INVESTIGATION OF CONDITIONS BY STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the President of the Privy Council. About a week ago, my hon. friend from Regina East asked the President of the Privy Council whether he was prepared to introduce a motion in the House authorizing the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs to conduct an inquiry into the riot and other disturbances at the Prince Albert penitentiary. The minister replied that he would confer with the chairman of the committee about this matter and give his answer later. Is he now in a position to make a statement about the intentions of the government?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I am afraid I am not able to reply directly today; I want to talk to the Solicitor General and consider this possible reference and any other reference which might be made to the standing committee dealing with such matters.

PRINCE ALBERT—RESULTS OF INQUIRY INTO ESCAPES

Mr. Rod Thomson (Battleford-Kindersley): Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Justice, or whoever is in charge of the Solicitor General's department, care to make a statement to the House on the situation at the Prince Albert penitentiary regarding the escapes and, as I understand it, a hanging—a suicide—there and other troubles in penitentiaries in British Columbia?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member seems to be asking for an extensive statement and I would think a general statement of this kind ought to be made on motions, unless the minister can answer very briefly.

Hon. John N. Turner (Acting Solicitor General): I think I can answer the question very briefly, Mr. Speaker, as it applies to the Prince Albert penitentiary. The hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley put this question to me, as Acting Solicitor General, on Friday last, as did the hon. member for Skeena.

The proceedings of the board of inquiry convened to inquire into the escape of 11 inmates from the Saskatchewan penitentiary during the early evening hours of November 25 have now been completed. Following these

Inquiries of the Ministry

proceedings, six staff members on duty at the time of the escape have been found negligent in the pursuit of their duties. The inquiry found also that their negligence contributed directly to the undetected escape of the 11 inmates. As a result of these findings, the six staff members have been suspended from duty and appropriate disciplinary measures are to be taken. All 11 of the escapees have been recaptured.

The proceedings of the board of inquiry into the fires at the penitentiary, which were referred to by the Solicitor General when he was in the House, are still in progress and consequently I am not yet in a position to make a statement or reply to questions as to the origin or cause of these fires.

Mr. John Burton (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, can the Acting Solicitor General tell us whether any further action has been taken as the result of a suicide in the form of hanging which took place, I understand, at the penitentiary on Monday last?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I think I had better wait for the report before making any statement to the House.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Would the minister be prepared to table the report of the board of inquiry into the escapes and consider tabling the report of the board of inquiry into the riot itself when he receives it?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I should like to look at all aspects of that request, Mr. Speaker.

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PRICES AND INCOMES COMMISSION

SUGGESTED ELIMINATION BY TRANSFERRING DUTIES TO BUREAU OF STATISTICS

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Mr. Speaker. Since the facts which the Prices and Incomes Commission will be recording in the future as its main reason for continuing to exist are either being recorded at the present time by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics or can be added to its list at very little extra cost, is the hon. gentleman giving consideration to having this job done in the future by the Bureau of Statistics, thereby enabling the government to end the existence of this commission and save Canadian taxpayers several million dollars a year?

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, knowing the hon. member's interest in facts, I am sure he will be glad to learn that in fact the Bureau of Statistics does not carry on any such inquiries as are envisaged by the Prices and Incomes Commission. Therefore, the premise upon which his question is based is quite incorrect.

Mr. Hees: Is it not a fact that the job that will be done is a fact-recording one and that the Bureau of Statistics already does this work in connection with the prices of all products? If the government is unwilling to take the action I have proposed, is it not evident that economy is