

respect ought to be changed is for the consideration of this House. Until now I had certainly not heard any complaint about it, and until now I had thought that we were not dealing inhumanly with our prisoners when we gave to them what I have described—the option of shelter and maintenance until the winter is over. If it is thought that there ought to be something different done, or something more done, that is a matter in regard to which, while I perfectly concede that the principal responsibility rests upon myself, still I do submit that a responsibility rests also to some extent upon each and every individual member of this House.

Just one word with regard to the allusion which was made to the cost of the overcoats which the guards wear. I do not know whether or not it was intended to suggest that because these coats cost \$2.50 apiece they were insufficient for the purpose, or that the guards were compelled to be upon duty in bitter winter weather insufficiently clothed. No complaint has come to my knowledge from any guard in any of our institutions upon that subject, and I cannot think that there is any complaint. The price of the garment which has been stated seems, of course, the merest bagatelle, but hon. gentlemen should remember that with regard to all of our penitentiary supplies which we are able to manufacture within the walls of the institution, the cost to the public is simply that of the material used. I heard the figure \$2.50 with a little mild astonishment, I must admit. I should not have supposed that the mere cloth contained in the outer garment could be produced for that figure, and I think there is probably some mistake in supposing that overcoats can be supplied for that cost, although I have no doubt, as such clothing is certainly made in the penitentiary by convict labour, that the cost to the country of each overcoat for the guards is a comparatively small sum. But, with regard to the question of prisoners clothing I have only to repeat what I have said already that the warden is governed by the Penitentiaries Act and that in so far as I am able to see he has not, in the matters referred to in this case at any rate, been in any degree to blame.

Mr. SPROULE. I understood the observations of the minister yesterday to have been made in defence of the conduct of the warden in sending out in winter time this prisoner not properly provided with clothing to keep him comfortable. The Minister of Justice said that the man had been supplied, not only with an extra suit, but with \$5 in cash, and, therefore, he considered him well provided for. In answer to the observations made to-day by my hon. friend in regard to several prisoners who

have been discharged in winter without having been provided with an overcoat, the hon. minister said that they had the option to remain in the penitentiary for the winter, and, therefore, there was no reasonable ground for complaint. Now, it is natural to suppose that a man who has been incarcerated in the penitentiary for a considerable length of time would desire to obtain his liberty at the earliest possible moment, for two reasons: One is the unsatisfactory situation in which he is placed, and the other is the fear that his detention for a few days longer might result in his being kept there for many months longer. Therefore, he would take the option of going out, even though the conditions of the weather might be such that it would be almost inhuman to send him out. We are told that the overcoats supplied to the officials cost only \$2.75. At that price it might be much more economical to give a discharged prisoner an overcoat than to keep him in the prison for a month or two longer, until he could go with lighter clothing. It seems to me that it is a penny-wise-pound-foolish policy that is being pursued. There is another point that appeals to my mind. A discharged prisoner is going out to the world with a brand on him, which makes it very difficult for him to get either employment or shelter, especially in the winter time, when labour is not plentiful and many are unemployed, unless he denied his previous history, and the small amount of money given to him on leaving the penitentiary would soon be used up. Therefore, it does seem to me that there is a little more inhumanity in sending out a discharged prisoner without sufficient clothing to keep him warm than the Minister of Justice tries to make out.

THE WASHINGTON NEGOTIATIONS.

Mr. FOSTER. Can the Prime Minister say when he expects the Minister of Finance back again?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I have no positive information, but I think he will leave Washington to-morrow.

Mr. FOSTER. I would like to ask the Minister of Marine and Fisheries to explain a little more definitely than was done yesterday the point in the tentative arrangement between Canada and the United States as to the licensing of American fishermen and Canadian fishermen using trap nets for cod and herring. In what cases are licenses not required and therefore the licensing system is not kept up?

Mr. BRODEUR. As my hon. friend is aware, by the former regulations concerning the Gulf of St. Lawrence it was provided in all cases licenses were required for cod trap and herring trap nets. By the amendments which have been