

*Supply—Justice*

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** Just for the last fiscal year. Are they up or down?

**Mr. Fulton:** I understand we go by the calendar year. There was a total of 3,218 bankruptcies reported to the branch in 1958.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** That is an increase over the previous calendar year?

**Mr. Fulton:** It is actually a decrease from 3,486.

Item agreed to.

## B—Penitentiaries—

159. Administration of the office of the commissioner of penitentiaries, including \$75,000 for grants to recognized prisoners' aid societies, as may be approved by the treasury board, \$572,678.

**Mr. Roberge:** This item has to do with penitentiaries. On item 150 the minister said that he would take advantage of this item to answer the first question put by the hon. member for Hochelaga. I would not press that point but I should like to say this. The Fauteux report made a certain number of recommendations with regard to the general reform of penal institutions. I noted also that last October the attorneys general of the provinces met in Ottawa with the Minister of Justice to discuss at least one or possibly several aspects of these reforms. I should like the minister to bring the committee up to date as to how far advanced these reforms are, what has been done so far and what is contemplated to be done during the coming fiscal year?

**Mr. Fulton:** Mr. Chairman, in answer to the question asked by the hon. member for Hochelaga last night and the expanded question just put to me by the hon. member for Megantic, I should first remind the committee, of course, that one of the main recommendations of the Fauteux committee has in fact been implemented completely by the establishment of a national parole board. A Parole Act was passed at the 1958 session of parliament and was proclaimed on February 15, 1959, and the national parole board, composed of a chairman and three members, took over the granting of parole as of that date.

The complete staff of the former remission service of the Department of Justice, with the exception of the former director and his secretary, was transferred to the staff of the parole board. The former remission service had six regional offices, at Moncton, Montreal, Kingston, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver. It is proposed to add three new regional offices this year at Quebec, Prince Albert and Edmonton. In addition there are to be ten persons added to the staff of the field offices, six of whom will be for the new offices and four will be additions to the existing offices.

There will be ten persons added to the staff at headquarters in Ottawa to take care of the increased work. These include one parole officer, one principal clerk and eight clerks and stenographers.

One of the reasons for these increases in staff, it will of course be obvious, is the opening of new regional offices and the extra work which will come from those offices. Another reason for the increase in the staff, and a very important reason which I am sure the committee will agree fully justifies the increase, lies in the fact that the parole board will automatically review all sentences of two years and over without any application from the inmate. This was a very important and fundamental recommendation of the committee and one which we have accepted fully. I have some preliminary figures on the numbers of files reviewed. From January 1 to May 31 this year there were a total of 596 paroles granted. Parole certificates were granted in 32.6 per cent of the applications received. In 1958 the percentage of favourable grants was 25.6 and in 1957 it was 30.4 as at this time of the year.

As the facilities of the institutions and in the field offices for obtaining reports are increased it is expected that more paroles will be granted and that the board should be able to obtain the various reports earlier than has been the case in the past. The board has taken steps to have the regional officers do more extensive briefing of the inmates in the various institutions with respect to parole.

With respect to the other particulars of the implementation of the Fauteux committee recommendations, I must refer the committee in general to the appointment of the correctional planning committee and the studies which that committee has undertaken. I placed on the record last year a summary of the terms of reference of the committee showing the specific subjects which were committed to the committee for investigation and report. The committee has in the interim visited a number of countries outside of Canada, including a visit to the director of the bureau of prisons at Washington, Mr. Bennett; visits to other specific institutions in the central and eastern part of the United States; and as well an inspection tour overseas to the United Kingdom where they inspected a number of penal institutions.

Then, individual members of the committee studied the penal systems in Scandinavia, France, Holland and Belgium. Following the trip to the United Kingdom and Europe the committee returned to Canada and in the interim has studied the situation in the maritimes, Quebec and Ontario. After they returned from overseas they went to western Canada where they attended the