

Release of Yves Geoffroy from Penitentiary

er his sentence was life imprisonment in the first instance, shall be released from prison permanently or temporarily, under any law or by any authority, without the prior approval of the cabinet. The minister must have given that approval.

How silent he is on this point in this document. Nowhere does he say that he did not have prior knowledge. Why is he silent on this question? I should like to see the minister give evidence before a judicial inquiry. I should like to see men at the bar cross-examine this minister on his credibility in this matter. I should like to see him stand before an inquiry and hear its official report because his statement today will not stand up.

The minister said there was a lack of concrete evidence to justify an inquiry. I recall an incident in this House, in which the same man, Raymond Denis, was involved. At that time the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) made a certain statement in the House and the former minister of justice, the late Mr. Guy Favreau, said it was untrue that Denis had offered a bribe. When the inquiry took place and these people were examined under oath the judge found as a fact that a bribe had been offered and that there was wrongdoing. As a result of that inquiry Denis was charged and by due process of law was convicted. That is what I want to see happen here. Something is wrong—something is wrong. One has to think this way about the Geoffroy case.

I think the minister must be writing a new book, "A Lifer's Honeymoon" or "How to Murder Your Wife and Marry Your Mistress". Why wither in jail when you can go the Goyer way and inherit the murdered wife's children and be released from a dull life sentence?

Where is Geoffroy? Why was no reward offered for his capture? No steps have been taken. Naturally the RCMP cannot tell what they know unless they are brought before an inquiry. Does Raymond Denis know where Geoffroy is? I was surprised to see that he is still a member of the bar. He was the best man behind the scene. He said he never met Geoffroy in jail. Was that the reason he was released? Maybe they are meeting outside the jail.

We want to know the facts. This case smacks of absolute corruption and the worst kind of mismanagement. There is only one solution. I could read and read from this statement. The worst feature of it is that the minister is trying to destroy a deserving program, the temporary absence program, and wrap it up in this kind of alibi. As far as I am concerned the man who is destroying this kind of humanitarian program is the minister and he must take full responsibility.

I ask now that a judicial inquiry be set up because this case is so flagrant and if it were not so tragic it would be humorous.

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, the minister's statement was very lengthy and at times almost comical. However, one thing that it reveals as being absolutely crystal clear is that there has been negligence and gullibility on the part of the penitentiary service. The minister said in his own statement:

In the light of the circumstances, it is clear that a more thorough and careful investigation ought to have been carried out.

[Mr. Woolliams.]

It is early in the week, Mr. Speaker, but I venture to prophesy that this is the understatement of the week.

An hon. Member: Of the year.

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, it is perfectly clear that a concocted, hearsay story was accepted, the word of a convicted murderer who had prominent in his mind the purpose of escaping and fleeing along with his paramour. With all this before the officials this man was allowed out supposedly in order to enable him to marry. Surely if marriage was in mind there would be nothing to stop it within the penitentiary itself without sending him on a trip to Mexico or wherever he is. The minister has given us a great amount of detail but he has not given us any information as to the present whereabouts of this man. Countless misleading statements have been issued from time to time.

One thing I regret more than anything else is that this gross negligence endangers the operation of the temporary absence program under the Penitentiary Act. The minister's figures reveal that it has been a beneficial and useful program but its usefulness is clearly endangered by what has been allowed to happen in this case.

I am never happy when malfeasance is alleged in a department and the only investigation made is an internal one within the department itself. Investigations of that sort usually turn out to be a whitewash. If there is not to be a judicial inquiry, we have in this House of Commons a committee on Justice and Legal Affairs which has shown a sense of responsibility and non-partisanship and I suggest that this committee should hear firsthand, sworn evidence of what took place in this affair.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brewin: If nothing else, this might save a valuable program which has been helpful in so many cases.

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YOUTH

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM—REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO MOVE MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 43 to ask unanimous consent of the House to move the following motion, a motion which, on the face of it, I feel should be accepted by all hon. members.

I move, seconded by the hon. member for Annapolis Valley (Mr. Nowlan):

That in view of fresh reports made public over the weekend of political pressure in the Opportunities for Youth secretariat, problems related to the minimum wage with regard to high school students and others who might gain employment through the program and a serious problem related to morale within the operational secretariat,

That this House do constitute a special committee on youth in order that these problems and any others might be examined and dealt with in such a way so as to achieve both justice and equity for Canadian young people with regard to the programs for summer 1972.