

*Treatment of Drug Addicts*

of non-criminal addicts depends in the final analysis on the co-operation which prevails between the two senior levels of government.

The minister has said that a bill will be introduced this session, when we shall be given an opportunity of examining the details of this proposal. Consideration is to be given to an increase in the penalties proposed for illicit drug addiction. The house will recall that provision was made three years ago for an increase in such penalties. This further suggestion reflects what I think is a general conviction in this country that the penalty for illicit drug trafficking in Canada must be severe enough to discourage people from the practice, having regard to the grave social consequences which flow from such trafficking.

The minister has said nothing about offers which have already been made to the provinces in respect of treatment centres for non-criminal addicts. However, when this matter is discussed in detail and we have a specific bill in our hands, an opportunity will be given to outline the offer which was made some years ago to the province of British Columbia as a pilot case to provide for treatment of non-criminal addicts.

This is a matter of the greatest importance and the minister may be assured, I feel confident, that it will be viewed in that light by all members of the house.

**Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East):** The statement which has just been made by the Minister of Justice is indeed most welcome, and as far as this group is concerned collectively, and as far as I am concerned individually, I have no hesitation in saying that this is a memorable day, made so because of a memorable statement. At long last a logical, reasonable and scientific approach is being made to the serious problem of drug addiction.

There is no doubt that many members of both federal and provincial legislatures, as well as many organizations and individuals outside those bodies, have taken a keen interest in this problem in an effort to obtain recognition by the government that drug addiction is not solely a criminal matter but that it is a matter of sickness, and should be regarded as such.

We are exceedingly pleased that in the statement of the minister emphasis has been placed on co-operation between the federal and provincial authorities, and on prevention as well as cure. A point of particular interest to me is that there will be a definite and comprehensive policy of rehabilitation, an area in which we have failed in the past.

We welcome the announcement of the minister and look forward with interest to

[Mr. Martin (Essex East).]

the introduction of the legislation. We will deal with the subject in detail at that time. We assure the minister and the house that any step toward meeting the problem that has been a curse to the individual and to society will receive our whole-hearted support.

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEETING WITH  
NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION**

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to announce that the first meeting between members of the Kennedy administration and members of the Canadian cabinet will take place tomorrow. The Minister of Trade and Commerce and the Minister of Finance, accompanied by Mr. Ian McKinnon and Mr. Robert D. Howland, chairman and vice chairman respectively of the national energy board, and other deputies and officials will proceed to Washington for the purpose of meeting there tomorrow and of exchanging views with members of the new administration on oil marketing and other matters of mutual interest. The Canadian ambassador will participate in the talks as well.

I think this meeting represents a continuation of that relationship which was so characteristic of the Eisenhower administration with this government and its predecessor. It indicates that the co-operation of the past in the discussion of matters of mutual interest will be continued to the benefit of both our nations.

**Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition):** I am sure hon. members are interested in the Prime Minister's announcement of the first meeting between the members of the Canadian government and members of the new United States administration. We all hope that the frank and constructive co-operation which has existed between governments of our two countries over so many years will be continued with the new administration, as the Prime Minister has pointed out.

I understand that this meeting is to be devoted to energy questions in particular and not to general matters, which perhaps accounts for the fact that the Secretary of State for External Affairs will not be going to Washington. In any event, Mr. Speaker, we on this side hope that there will be useful results for both countries from this meeting and from subsequent meetings.

**Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia):** The announcement made by the Prime Minister speaks well for the Kennedy administration