

### Penitentiaries

short term and long term problems which involve not only the government, the Penitentiary Service and the inmates, but also the Canadian public. In addition to the on-going programmes of the department which the Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs now has an opportunity to examine, I decided two weeks before the recent events in Kingston to appoint a working group composed of outside and departmental sources to look into the Canadian Penitentiary Service rehabilitation approach for maximum security institutions and to recommend the type of new programmes and facilities that should be developed. These appointments will be announced shortly and I will ask that a report be made to me in six months.

So far as Kingston penitentiary is concerned, a decision had been made many months ago to phase it out by September 1971. This plan was already under way with the transfer from Kingston of a number of inmates to the new institution at Millhaven before the recent disturbance.

Inmates of our correctional institutions remain members of our society though temporarily segregated. Programmes which meet the needs of this group in society must be based on the acceptance of the principle that chances of rehabilitation are enhanced if inmates are given an opportunity to socialize, work and participate in activities under conditions as close as possible to what is found in normal society.

The government intends to pursue an increasingly progressive penitentiary program, but this can only be done in an orderly manner. The speed at which changes can be made depends jointly on the co-operation of inmates with the department and on public understanding and support.

With regard to the events at Kingston penitentiary, I have directed that a board of inquiry be established to review the events, to assess responsibility and to report to me.

On behalf of the government and on my own behalf, I would like to express sincere thanks to Mr. Arthur Martin, Mr. Ron Haggart and to the members of the committee for the very important role they played in helping to bring about a solution at Kingston. I should underline the valued co-operation of the Canadian Armed Forces and the police forces at the municipal, provincial and federal level. In concluding, I should like to express my personal thanks to several hon. members for offering to assist in any way they could.

[English]

**Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to open my remarks by thanking the Solicitor General (Mr. Goyer) for his courtesy in providing me with a copy of his statement. I, like him, also, believe that thanks should be given to the citizens' committee, to the officers and staff of Kingston penitentiary, and to the members of the armed forces for keeping their cool in a somewhat critical situation. I wish I could be as effusive in my thanks to the hon. gentleman regarding other parts of his statement. In particular, I wish I could thank him for advising Your Honour, members of the House and the country why this riot took place at all; in

[Mr. Goyer.]

the main, his statement is silent on that point and we are still left with what is a multi-million dollar mystery.

The hon. gentleman does say that there were three minor areas of complaint about the operations of the penitentiary service. We are not told what those three minor areas are; therefore we cannot assess whether, indeed, the adjective "minor" should be used at all.

Most of us have had the advantage of watching Mr. Jack Webster, a very senior Canadian newsman, interview on television last night a person who had been an inmate of that penitentiary. Certain factors were revealed which seemed to shed some light on the events in the penitentiary during the last few days. More specifically, there was the fear or the dread that most of the inmates there had about going to the new maximum security prison at Millhaven. I will return to that point in a few minutes' time or, rather, in a few moments' time; I do not want to wear out Your Honour's patience so quickly after the Easter recess that you lose the benefit thereof.

The point that this inmate made related to electronic snooping on inmates, even when they were engaged in private toilet activities. This was the talk of the inmates at Kingston and might have given rise to what happened. If this was their fear, surely there must have been some means of communication between the inmates and those looking after them so that it could have been dispelled. I suggest that these fears could have been dispelled by taking a few of the inmates to Millhaven and showing them what they would be up against, or films could have been taken and shown to the inmates in order to dispel their fears. Either these fears were justified or there was such an abysmal lack of communication that the whole country now has to suffer a multi-million dollar destruction of one of its institutions. One thanks the citizens' committee for its work, but one would have appreciated learning from the minister what reports, if any, it has so far made to him.

The *Ottawa Citizen* in its Saturday edition, in one of the reports it carried on this continuing story, quoted guards as saying that they were expecting a riot at Kingston. One would like to know what measures were taken to head off that riot. I suggest a similar situation to Kingston prevails at Dorchester, at British Columbia penitentiary and at Prince Albert—in short, at any institution built years and years ago that is being used to try to serve the needs of today. I think the simple answer to the problem is to be found in that fact. As a member of the Justice and Legal Affairs Committee which visited some penitentiaries but not all, I know that the members were impressed by the modern institutions. Hon. members will have noted that these modern penitentiaries have remained free of the disturbances that have racked others such as St. Vincent de Paul which, thankfully, has now been closed.

• (2:20 p.m.)

I suggest to the Solicitor General that the inquiry should deal with the points of criticism in respect of Millhaven. The government is apparently going ahead with its plans for Millhaven come hell or high water or