

In short, I wish to make it clear to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the other Members of the House, that we made every effort possible in organizing the meetings, and I would suggest in conducting them, to receive candid, uninhibited testimony.

The first matter raised by the Hon. Member for Burnaby relates to the transfer of a certain inmate, one John Avery, from the federal institution at Millhaven, Ontario, to the federal institution known as Kingston Penitentiary.

I will not repeat the facts as set out in yesterday's *Hansard*, other than to refer to the account thereof of the Hon. Member for York South—Weston (Mr. Nunziata) which can be found at page 11175. Generally, I would adopt that statement as my own, other than to elaborate by pointing out that when it became known to us that Mr. Avery, who is a member of the inmate committee at Millhaven Penitentiary, had been transferred to Kingston Penitentiary two days prior to our arrival, as a group we indicated to the Correctional Services officials present at Collins Bay Penitentiary, on Monday morning that we wished to hear from Mr. Avery, if he was still a member of the inmate committee.

We suggested three alternatives: One, he be transferred back to Millhaven; second, the other members of the inmate committee, and at that point we understand there were two who were then at Millhaven, be transferred to Kingston to join him, if that were a preferable option from a security point of view; and the third option that was suggested was that a telephone conference call occur—when we met with the inmates of the Millhaven Penitentiary on Tuesday that there be a telephone hookup with Kingston Penitentiary to ensure that Mr. Avery could be part of that meeting. In descending order those were the options.

We accepted as a committee—the majority of the members of the committee with the sole dissent of the Hon. Member for Burnaby—that for security reasons we had to defer to the officials of Correctional Services Canada. It was their evidence before us that Mr. Avery posed a security risk and hazard were he to be maintained at Millhaven. I remind Members that for two weeks Millhaven has been in a locked-down situation. The prisoners have been on strike and they are locked in their cells for most of the day. I can assure Members that the situation there is tense.

We accepted the security recommendations of the service and deferred to its recommendation which was made after consultation, at least with their regional office, if not with the head office, that the telephone conference call occur. That conference call did occur the day after as planned, and I would suggest that it worked well. The Hon. Member for Burnaby was not at the meeting other than in the very early part, because he had decided to return to Ottawa at or about noon of that day.

The Hon. Member for York South—Weston took part in the meeting. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, he indicated to you what

took place at that meeting, as found at page 11176 of *Hansard*. I think it is worth quoting, since he expressed it adequately. I wish to quote very briefly what occurred during that telephone conference meeting:

Mr. Avery was on the line from Kingston Penitentiary by way of a telephone hookup. He was able to hear what was happening at that particular meeting. He was able to make submissions. The chairman of the justice committee gave members of the inmate committee every opportunity to make submissions with regard to conditions at Millhaven Institution. Mr. Avery was given every opportunity. I, as a member of the committee, asked Mr. Avery a number of questions. I asked members of the inmate committee a number of questions. Documents were in fact presented to the committee by members of the inmate committee.

In my view, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for you to know that we received from Mr. Avery and the other members of the inmate committee—and I wish to add parenthetically that there were five members in total of that committee, three members having been added to the committee in recent days—what I would regard as full and frank evidence of the state of affairs at the Millhaven Institution at this point in time, as far as they were concerned, what their concerns and particular problems were, not only in terms of the immediate situation, but some recommendations they had to make on the main purpose of our work which, of course, is corrections, parole, and sentencing.

• (1520)

The testimony was not only frank and uninhibited, I would call it brutally frank from time to time. In my respectful submission, were I to be asked for my view, I would say there was no prima facie case of breach of the privileges of the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson) established by the incident referred to relating to the transfer of inmate Avery from the Millhaven Institution to the Kingston Penitentiary.

If I can deal now with the second allegation made by the Hon. Member, found in yesterday's *Hansard* at page 11173, it arises out of events which took place at the meeting, to which I referred in my opening remarks, with parole officials in Kingston. I think it is important for you to know that this meeting occurred *in camera* as well, as did the other meetings. Not only that, at the outset of the meeting there was an indication of concern, if I can put it that way, by representatives of the parole offices, who were represented in part by a member of the union representing them, that their testimony was to be considered confidential. The word "immunity" was used for what they had to tell us. We heard from them in a very full and frank way.

I must say I express some regret that the Member for Burnaby felt that he had to raise an issue that was raised in this confidential manner. I express my disgust that in the Question Period today we heard from the Hon. Member for York South—Weston on other matters raised at that meeting, particularly in light of the fact that yesterday in his remarks, in condemnation of the Member for Burnaby, he pointed out that this was a confidential meeting in which the confidence of the witnesses was to be respected. I find that to be totally