

Supply—Solicitor General

director, a psychologist and a social worker said they could not stay because the kind of work they wanted to do, the kind of approach they took toward the women inmates and their thinking on the problems of correction were being undermined by the person who had newly been put in charge. If they were right, and I believe they were, then certainly there needs to be a complete change in the organization of the correctional system. But we have heard not a word of this from the minister. I presume he is satisfied with what happened.

• (4:10 p.m.)

Mr. Pennell: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member because he was very courteous in allowing me to make my remarks without interruption. But the hon. member will recollect that six months after the previous superintendent had left—and I make no reflection at all on the previous superintendent—the hon. member for Vancouver East asked me to give an undertaking in the house that I would not remove any of the 21 inmates convicted of offences arising from drug addiction at Kingston penitentiary without their consent. I gave that undertaking. This was six months after the change in the administration. Eighteen of them asked that they should be allowed to remain at Kingston. We fulfilled that undertaking. I would merely point out that we have not abandoned many of the procedures which had been carried on there prior to the appointment of the present superintendent.

Mr. Orlikow: I am not certain what that decision by the inmates themselves had to do with the treatment they were receiving. It may well be that the inmates find themselves happier and more at ease in an authoritarian institution where they know precisely what is expected from them, become accustomed to the discipline which is maintained and so on. It may be easier for inmates to accept orders without question while they are confined in an institution. But it does not follow that after they get out there will be any basic change in their outlook on life or that they will be less likely to get into trouble than they were when they committed the offence for which they were sent to the institution.

This is precisely the point which qualified people have been trying to make. I am not an expert in this field and I have never pretended to be. I wish, however, I could feel that the minister and his department were listening to and reading the submissions made to them by organizations which are staffed by the few

professionals we have in this country and whose boards comprise the people who are most interested in having the correctional system operate in a way as different as possible from the present system which has proved to be such a dismal failure.

I have in mind submissions made by organizations such as the Canadian Corrections Association, the John Howard Society and the Elizabeth Fry Society. I appreciate that this is not the first day upon which we are dealing with these estimates and that there is an agreement, to which I subscribe, that we should finish the business of the house, including consideration of these estimates, with reasonable dispatch. But surely the minister is aware of the representations which have been made to him by the Elizabeth Fry Society in connection with the women's institution at Kingston. I submit that the criticisms and the suggestions which were made have not been answered or followed by the minister or by anybody else in his department. Nothing in the situation has changed.

I shall not go into detail again because this ground has been covered many times not only by myself but by other hon. members including, I suppose, the minister himself before he became minister. I refer to those matters dealt with in the reports of the Archambault commission and the Fauteux commission. We must also be prepared to consider the recommendations which I hope will be made by the committee headed by Mr. Justice Ouimet.

I am disturbed at the speed with which the government is proceeding in its program of putting up buildings which will be with us, I suppose, if we go by past experience, for the next 100 years. The minister told us on June 6 that during this fiscal year three more medium security institutions for young offenders and selected male adults will be opened at Springhill, Nova Scotia, Warkworth, Ontario, and Drumheller, Alberta. He also said that provision has been made to establish five community release centres in various cities across Canada. Later he talked about the construction of four reception centres, one each in the Atlantic region, Quebec, Ontario and western Canada, and the purchase of a site for a new modern institution for the treatment of female offenders in eastern Canada.

Can the minister tell the committee how this building program squares with the memorandum presented to the Solicitor General on March 18, 1966 by a host of organizations interested in the question of correction? I will not read the whole of this impressive list but