

*Penitentiaries Committee*

I was disturbed by a speech the minister made some days ago in this house in which he said, and I am speaking from memory, that the present penitentiary population is 7,000 and something, and the predicted penitentiary population in the early 1970's probably would be over 10,000. I think that was a disastrous speech for the minister to make, and a disastrous approach for the minister to have. It indicated to me a shocking situation. Nothing the minister has said since that would indicate that it is his feeling that we can do something to change this.

A committee is being appointed to look at our present penitentiaries, which are a disgrace. That committee will bring back reports which will contain recommendations for parliament. Many people know the kinds of penitentiaries we have. The situation in St. Vincent de Paul is a disgrace in a modern society. What is it proposed that the government should do? It is proposed that the government spend somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$200 million in the next ten years, to build new penitentiaries.

Anybody who has any kind of heart at all will agree that even if people do commit crimes, they should not always be put into penitentiaries. They should not be put into the kind of buildings we have here, the kind of buildings of which St. Vincent de Paul is an example. By building better buildings we shall have accomplished nothing in solving the kinds of problems which make people commit crimes. I know that this is not the place to discuss jails, but we are talking about the spending of \$200 million to build buildings. I think it would be better if the minister would come forward and say, "We know on the basis of experience that probation works. Probation keeps 85 to 90 per cent of the people who are handled by the probation service in the province from committing a second crime, and from going to prison possibly a second time."

Surely the minister and the department, instead of talking about spending a tremendous amount of money on buildings to house people who have committed a first, second or third crime, might do better by saying to this house: "We are going to propose to the provinces an expenditure of several millions of dollars which, if they are prepared to match that, would mean that they could expend very large sums on probation services." Certainly probation is the responsibility of the provinces at this time. If the suggestion I put to the house were carried

[Mr. Orlikow.]

out, it would keep people out of the penitentiaries, and that is what I would like to see.

Another thing we are going to propose, Mr. Speaker, is that people with better than grade 10 or grade 11 education be employed at penitentiaries. These people will not just be guards. I am not being critical when I say this, nor am I being critical of people working in our penitentiaries. We have the kind of people there we want, and that we are prepared to pay for.

I hope the minister in the very near future, if he cannot do so tonight, will say, "We are going to raise the standards required for a person to get a job in our penitentiaries, and we are going to increase the salary range to get the kinds of people who will not just be guards, but who will be able to do rehabilitation work. We are going to allocate enough money so that we will not just have a few part time psychiatrists."

I happen to know the psychiatrist who works at St. Vincent de Paul. I know his reputation in the field of correction. I am not being critical of him, but a psychiatrist for three half days a week cannot possibly do the job he is supposed to do.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, instead of spending money on buildings, we should be coming forward with a program to take on psychiatrists, psychologists, and teachers who are aggressive and dynamic, who would make prisoners enthusiastic to learn so that they could upgrade their education. If prisoners upgraded their education they might be able to get a better job when they come out, so that they would not have to commit crimes and go back to penitentiary again.

It is not my intention to make a long speech, or to hold up this resolution. I say tonight, as I said during the last session when this resolution was being debated, that we are putting the cart before the horse and we are going in the wrong direction. We do not need a committee to tell us that we need better buildings. We know that. The Archambault report and the Fauteux Report have already told us that. Experts have looked at the whole question of correction. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the whole point of this committee is superfluous. It seems to me wrong to think in terms of large expenditures for buildings. If we are going to have as many people in the penitentiaries as the minister predicted, the situation is hopeless