

poration to refrain from including in its broadcasts information about disturbances in any of these institutions, because when they heard over the radio of a disturbance somewhere it created unrest in all the penitentiaries. The broadcasting corporation was reluctant to eliminate reports of these incidents in such institutions, and I confess that I was reluctant to have to insist that it be done, but the alternative would have been for us to eliminate radios from the penitentiaries. That kind of news created unrest with which we were not prepared to cope.

On the whole the administration of penitentiaries is not easy. The hon. member for Calgary West was quite right in saying that the inmates are not all Sunday-school children. There are many bad men in these penitentiaries. We are taking care of a population of about three thousand with a relatively small staff, and the staff has to be firm but just, and must have tact in order to avoid difficulties.

Mr. COLDWELL: I was going to ask the minister what qualifications are required now for appointment. What I have in mind is this. I know the rates of pay are very low, and I realize that these men have been doing as good a job as could be expected of them. But in the past it usually has been considered that a man of good physique and some little knowledge was able to act as a penitentiary guard. On several occasions I have had the great honour, as I regard it, of discussing penitentiary affairs with one of the outstanding authorities in the world, I believe; and again and again he has impressed upon me that those qualifications are insufficient.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: I think they are.

Mr. COLDWELL: To-day you need a particularly trained type of individual; and if we are to get that type, he has also impressed upon me, you have to pay much more, and provide them with decent conditions of security. When this commissioner is appointed for the purposes which the minister has outlined this afternoon in all probability he will make some recommendations.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: I hope he will.

Mr. COLDWELL: And I hope this will be one of the matters with which he will deal. I agree with what the hon. member for Kindersley said last evening, that the Canadian penitentiary system is in a bad way. It is not up to date; it is out of date. I am hoping that with the report which was mentioned last night by the hon. member for Muskoka-Ontario, and the later reports which were also mentioned last evening, we may

have a real inquiry by a competent person, who understands penitentiary matters, who is a penologist, into what is needed; and that then we may be able to see Canada with a penitentiary system which will not be regarded, as it is now by so many of the outstanding penologists of the world, as being very backward indeed, to say the least. I am hoping that situation will be remedied within the near future. I think that was the general tenor of the debate last evening; and if I may be permitted to say so, Mr. Chairman, I think that debate on this matter was a credit to the House of Commons.

Mr. REID: As one who has visited penitentiaries frequently, and in whose constituency, that of the city of New Westminster, is located a penitentiary, I was interested in what was said last night, and particularly what was said about dealing with younger criminals, and their segregation. Speaking to older criminals, warders and prison attendants in the last four or five years during some of my visits, their statements to me have been—and these are their words, not mine—that they want protection from the younger criminals who are coming in, and that the situation is not as it has been described, namely one in which the younger criminal should be protected from the older. Some of these men have said to me, “Mr. Reid, we never saw young men like these; we do not want to be classified with them.” And yet statements are made in the house and throughout the press that it is unfair to place these young fellows alongside the hardened criminals. The fact is that the hardened criminals are standing back almost in a state of horror at the attitude and the mentality of the youth. I agree with the hon. member for Calgary West when he says that many of these young men are not youth: they are men between the ages of 17 and 23.

When on one occasion I visited the penitentiary and watched a line of convicts walking past for their meal, I was struck by the fact that in that line one would find perhaps a man who had been a bookkeeper, who in a weak moment had embezzled some funds, for which he was serving a term of two or three years. Behind that man would be another who had been convicted four or five times for brutality and was at that time doing a long sentence for murder. My view in the matter of segregation is that the convicts could be segregated in the penitentiaries for the benefit of the various classes who are incarcerated. However I have risen particularly to say a word on behalf of the older criminal, for whom I believe no one has spoken.

Might I refer briefly to what was said by the hon. member for Kindersley, who placed