

## PENITENTIARIES

### ARCHAMBAULT RIOT AFTERMATH—REQUEST FOR PUBLIC INQUIRY

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Solicitor General. I believe that Canadians have had a feeling of shock, almost revulsion, caused by disclosure of the Amnesty International report with respect to the Archambault riot, which concluded that there exists at least a reasonable ground to believe that there was torture, or other cruel and inhuman or degrading treatment of prisoners after the July 25, 1982, incident.

Canadians have been under the impression that this only occurs in countries where tyranny reigns, or in some banana republic. How can the Minister say that there has been no torture, no other cruel and inhuman or degrading treatment within the federal institution, Archambault, when he is still waiting for his own in-house report? If he has nothing to hide, why does he not proceed with an open inquiry, a judicial inquiry which will be open to the public, so that they can see precisely what is going on in our federal institutions?

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, I indicated that, with the evidence that I had, and I, of course, followed the matter very closely and examined every shred of possible evidence of extreme incidents of torture which were alleged, I was not convinced by them.

I also took account of the fact, and I would ask the Hon. Member to take account of this as well, that the inmates in Canada's federal penitentiaries are not like the inmates in some tyrannical country or banana republic as he mentioned. They have very strong available recourses. They have the right to sue the Solicitor General and the Correctional Service of Canada. I encouraged them, week after week, if they had allegations of the sort they were making, to take that course. After all, there are a number of lawsuits outstanding right now against the Correctional Service of Canada, against the Solicitor General, that prove that the inmates do have that available recourse.

The fact is that they have not done so. The fact is that these allegations have become retroactively more and more serious. At the beginning, shortly after the incidents when lawyers first began making statements on behalf of their client inmates, no suggestion at all was made of the kinds of serious incidents that were alleged to the investigators of Amnesty International.

These are all the reasons why I prefer to encourage the inmates to proceed as I have indicated, and why I continue to believe that a public, open judicial inquiry would not be appropriate.

## Oral Questions

Amnesty International asked for a "full, independent, and impartial investigation". The correctional investigator is an officer who is qualified to undertake such an investigation, and he is doing so.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** That will come as news to Amnesty International.

### INMATES' ACCESS TO DRUGS

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Saskatoon West):** Today the coroner for eastern Ontario disclosed a recent report in which he said security in the prisons is so loose and correctional employees feel so impotent that they cannot prevent drug abuse within the prison system, and that this has led to a substantial increased degree of murders and assaults within the institutions.

What is going on within the institutions when inmates apparently have unlimited access to marijuana, hashish, valium, home made booze, and a number of other drugs? Are these institutions out of control? What does the Minister propose to do to stem this tide of illicit drugs within, of all places, federal penal institutions?

● (1440)

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, we live in a drug-infested society. It should not be surprising to Members to find that an institution like a correctional institution, a federal penitentiary, has very serious limitations on the degree to which entry of drugs can be prevented. Hundreds of people visit these institutions every week. Dozens of the inmates are out in the street for periods of time during the week. In spite of that, a high degree of control is maintained, and the drug problems which I can see do exist in the institutions are controlled as much as possible.

I read the report with a lot of interest. It is worth reading. I think a broader perspective needs to be taken before changes in policy can really be adopted. To move to a system that would have the amount of repression, investigation, and inspection that is called for in that report would raise its own problems. I think I would want to give a lot of account to the kinds of problems that would result from extreme measures of search and isolation of inmates, which are the recommendations in that report, and what the consequences would be before moving from a more balanced position than the one we presently have.

I am interested to have the Amnesty International report on the one hand, which finds repression in our institution, or allegations of it, and then this report on the other hand which says we are too soft on inmates. The policy that we try to follow is somewhere between the two.