

Supply—Justice

The reason I am pressing this matter is twofold. We should do something for the youth of this country who have been categorized as juvenile delinquents. In the second place, the previous government promised to build a penitentiary at Drumheller worth approximately \$4 million which was to be for young offenders. It was not to be the kind of institution surrounded by walls or fences but the kind that might rehabilitate some of these young boys and girls who have run afoul of the law. This is what the former government promised to do. There has been some suggestion that the previous government said it would not be built until 1964. I am not going to get into an argument with the Minister of Justice because I do not think I have ever had an argument with him and I do not think I can sell him on the idea of building a penitentiary in my riding.

It is quite clear to me that the penitentiary was to go ahead in 1963. There may have been some move made by the commissioner of penitentiaries to shelve the project for one year, but after I have set out additional facts with reference to these juveniles who are in our penitentiaries I should like to hear from the minister when the government intends to start the construction of this institution for young offenders, so they can be kept away from the kind of penitentiary described in the article that was written as a result of the findings of the commissioner of penitentiaries, A. J. MacLeod.

To come back to the point as to where it was to be built, may I say I am quite sure the Minister of Justice would respect the word of the former minister, Davie Fulton, in this regard. After this institution for young offenders had been announced there was a press report in July of 1962 in the *Calgary Herald* headed "Cutbacks Won't Hit Pen Work". It reads in part as follows:

Cutbacks in government spending announced last week will not affect the decision to proceed with the \$4 million Drumheller penitentiary, the *Herald* learned today.

An Ottawa source close to justice minister Davie Fulton said the Drumheller penitentiary and other new institutions are "fairly urgent business" because of crowded conditions in other Canadian prisons.

I do not know whether it is a good or bad thing but I might say Alberta is the only province in Canada that has no penitentiary of any kind. All people sentenced in Alberta to penitentiary are taken to Prince Albert in Saskatchewan. Conditions there are such that that penitentiary is badly overcrowded. Just imagine the overcrowding of men in that penitentiary, and the sending there of offenders 12, 13, 14 or 15 years of age.

I say to the Minister of Justice that this is an urgent matter. It is true that the previous minister was a Conservative minister and

that there was an austerity program for a period of time, but I say to the present minister that he must review the position and consider it again. I have some other facts to put on the record with reference to the children in our penitentiaries, but when he speaks I should like to hear from him when the government plans on going ahead with the institution for young offenders.

Let us look at some of the facts as far as juveniles are concerned in this country. Canada's total penitentiary population was about 4,700 in 1952. In 1962 the figure was 7,100. Statistics indicate a penitentiary growth of 5 per cent per year and at the present rate of growth the population in 10 years will be 12,000. The largest increase of all is in youngsters 16 years and under. There were only 32 such admissions in 1952, but by 1962 there had been a 300 per cent gain. In other words, there were 300 per cent more children in the penitentiaries in 1962 than there were in 1952. To quote the article:

"I'm in a rage when I see these kids," J. C. A. LaFerriere, director of inmate training for Canada, told me when I visited St. Vincent's federal training centre recently.

He goes on to point out what happens at night. This is something that should be placed on the record. It is not a case of handkerchiefs and tears. These are facts.

"They cry at night and it breaks my heart. They have no right to put children in penitentiaries."

That was the recommendation made by the commissioner to the former minister of justice. That government then went to the country and was defeated. You, sir, are now the Minister of Justice and I hope you will do something about this soon.

In 1959, the latest year for which these statistics are available, 11,686 youngsters between 7 and 15 were adjudged delinquent in Canada. Of these, 19 were 7 years old, 92 were 8 and 212 were 9.

Of that number 32, plus 300 per cent, were confined to penitentiaries serving terms of two years or more with hardened criminals. In dealing with the increase of 300 per cent I want to refer to one story. This is the story of a little fellow called Henri and I want to show hon. members what happened to him.

There are many sad stories about children in prison but the case of a 12 year old Chicoutimi, Que., boy who will be referred to as Henri has gone down in penitentiary history as a classic. Henri had all the cards stacked against him.

This is not unusual.

He was the product of a shiftless father and a prostitute mother, who had separated. In his short lifetime he had been in all sorts of trouble. He had been sentenced to reformatories and at one time had been committed to a mental hospital.

Anyone who has had any experience with reference to juveniles who have been placed