

If these amendments are passed is the minister in a position to tell the committee what salary he will pay the man whom he appoints, and generally the type of man he has in mind who can qualify to take a position such as this? Anyone accepting this very responsible position will require not only experience but a degree of tolerance that certainly would not be possessed by one whose only qualification is membership in a disciplinary organization.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: In my view the chairman of this commission, or the sole commissioner if there be only one member of the commission, will hold a position of deputy minister rank, equal in importance to the deputy ministerial position of any department. So far in the past appropriations the salary which has been voted from year to year for the chairman of the commission has been \$9,000. When they started in 1939 I think there were only two deputy ministers with salaries of more than \$9,000. Whether that will be sufficient or not I would not care to state definitely at this time. But I will say that I look upon the work which would have to be done there as equal to that which devolves upon any deputy minister, and that this officer should be dealt with accordingly.

Mr. DIFENBAKER: Can the minister give the committee any idea with regard to the personnel now holding positions in the various penitentiaries? How many are there? How many guards are there? How many guards are simply holding temporary positions, because of having been appointed within the last two years? I agree with the minister when he says that the staffs have done as good a job as they could reasonably be expected to do, having regard to the fact that in certain cases enlistments were permitted; but if press reports are correct I do think that care has not been exercised in the appointment of some of these men. I know of one western penitentiary where, if my information is correct, they advertised for guards, and they got a couple of fellows who said they had had experience in penal institutions; they were on the staff for six months, and then it was ascertained that they actually had been prisoners at one time, so they were acquainted with the inside of a penitentiary anyway. This indicates to me there was not the care exercised in those appointments that there should have been. I think the minister knows the penitentiary to which I refer; an investigation was held within the last year, and it was definitely stated as a result that the problem in that penitentiary was more or less traceable to the circumstance I have mentioned.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

I wonder if the minister would be prepared to give some indication with respect to the method whereby these employees are appointed, and a general statement with regard to conditions of discipline in the various penitentiaries throughout the dominion. There have been difficulties in one or more of them within the last year; that is generally known. What has been done to investigate any disorder that has taken place, or any breaches of discipline en masse; and what course is being followed to prevent the repetition of such things?

Mr. ST. LAURENT: All I can say to the hon. member is that there have not been many changes in the personnel of the penitentiaries during the last four years. Whenever we have had to obtain additional staff it has been with considerable difficulty that we have done so, because of the existence of these freezing orders in relation to the amount of remuneration that has been payable not only throughout the civil service but generally throughout the nation. There was some suggestion yesterday that these were political appointments. That may have been true in other times, when these positions were looked upon as desirable, but it has not been my experience that there is any competition to obtain them. Of course we were further hampered by the fact that we could not make permanent appointments to fill the positions of those who had obtained leave of absence to join the armed forces. So on the whole the complexion of the staffs has not changed much in the last four years.

There have been occasions when unrest has developed. I remember one instance in which one of the grievances was the manner in which the food was prepared and served to the inmates, though I am not sure the disturbance was entirely attributable to that. There was no suggestion that we were not buying good provisions, but there was a suggestion that they did not reach the inmates in attractive form. That was taken care of by the appointment of a steward, who is still with us though I have not yet been able to find any method by which his position may be made permanent, and he is quite uncomfortable because of that situation. But the improvement brought about in the fare provided for the inmates coincided with a better spirit in the institution. In another case an improvement in the form of entertainment provided by radio or movies coincided with better morale in the institution. I say it coincided; these did not seem to be very important things, but after they were attended to the feeling was better.

One thing we had to do which was very distasteful was to ask the broadcasting cor-