

Supply—Justice

I know that the further incentives that will now be given as a result of the minister's decision to undertake the establishment of the institution in the area, in the near future will add further to the forward look of the people of this area.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Fulton: May I just deal with the questions asked by my friend the hon. member for Cumberland. Perhaps it might be more convenient if my remarks appeared at this point. First of all I want to agree with everything he has said about the people of Springhill. I am able to confirm that on the basis of the visit I paid there, as he has himself reminded the committee. I found them to be a people determined not to let disaster overcome them but to take their own initiative in meeting and overcoming the situation with which they were confronted. My visit there also confirmed the interim report which I had obtained from the correctional planning committee that that area is in every way a suitable area within which to locate a new institution for the maritime provinces. I regret that I cannot be more specific at the moment as to the exact location because, as I have said, we are in process of acquiring options now. We have two officers down there at the moment. I expect that those negotiations will be completed within a week or ten days at the most. I shall then be glad to make the appropriate announcement.

With regard to the type of institution which it is intended to establish there, the final decision must await the over-all report of the correctional planning committee. However, the committee itself in its interim report not only recommended that this was a suitable area for a new institution in the maritimes which already the indications show is going to be necessary, but that it was also a suitable area in which to establish an overflow or satellite institution for Dorchester penitentiary. So the first function of this institution will be to take care of the removal from Dorchester of those persons who should be taken out of there because of the overcrowded situation of that institution.

The Springhill area is capable of development in one or both of two ways; first, as a prison farm type operation and, second, as an industrial vocational training operation. We are fortunate in having an area which can be developed in one or both of these manners. The ultimate choice will, of course, be a matter for the long term decision and it may be we will pursue both types of development. In any event, we will have acquired, when our present plans are completed, a site which

[Mr. Coates.]

first of all can take care of the overflow from Dorchester and which, secondly, is capable of being developed to meet the needs of, preferably, a minimum security type of institution development along the lines of farm training or industrial vocational training.

The first construction which will be carried on will, of course, be of a departmental nature, because until we establish our over-all plan we are not going to build permanent buildings. We shall, of course, keep the hon. member's request in mind that we should employ, both in the initial and final stages, as many as possible of the local population.

Mr. Howard: On this particular item I should like to begin by making a reference to the arrival and present visit of Her Majesty the Queen. Some hon. members may wonder what connection there is between that and the question of penitentiaries but I can assure you that there is a connection. There has been some comment recently by a young television artist, Joyce Davidson, about the indifference of Canadians in so far as the visit of Her Majesty is concerned. I say at the outset that I rather agree with Miss Davidson in this regard, but there is a group of people in Canada who look upon the visit of Her Majesty on this occasion, as they did on the last occasion, with a great deal of interest, and this group consists of the inmates of our penitentiaries, because when royalty visits Canada it is usual for the King, or the Queen, to exercise the royal prerogative of pardon and to grant remission of sentence to some of the inmates in the penitentiaries. I am sure that this is pleasing both to the inmates who are released earlier than they thought they would be and to the minister and his officials in the Department of Justice, because they will have to suffer less headaches on account of overcrowding and so on.

With respect to the operation of our penitentiaries and the changing attitude which has been developing in this and other countries for a number of years, I thought it might be interesting if we looked back just 100 years and noted the comments made by a warden of a particular penitentiary and compared them with our general attitude today. The Kingston penitentiary inmates publication "The K. P. Telescope" for March contains excerpts from what is called the warden's diary of March, 1859, and I should like to read a few of the things which were written in this diary 100 years ago by the warden of that day, because they certainly indicate his attitude and, I am sure, the attitude of many other people at that time toward prisoners in penal institutions. Here are some of the entries in that diary written 100 years ago, and they may lead us to reflect on how our attitude has changed since that time.