

*Oral Questions***PENITENTIARIES****ALLEGATIONS BY ESCAPED CONVICT McCANN—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION**

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Solicitor General in the hope that I can provide him with an opportunity to provide an answer that will prevent the penitentiary service from falling into greater disrepute than it is in now. Is he aware of comments, reported to have appeared today in the *Vancouver Sun*, by escaped convict McCann, who escaped from the B.C. penitentiary, to the effect that he spent 25 months in the hole while there, that he waited for four months for a reclassification, and that while in the hole he was able to obtain illicit drugs? Is the minister investigating these allegations and will he say, with respect to the 25 months reportedly spent in the hole, whether they were largely the result of the request of McCann himself?

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am aware of these statements made by inmate McCann to certain newspapermen. I must say, according to the report I have had, that he spent 25 months in the hole because he offered a \$1,000 bribe to the guards. We are now investigating the different statements he made to the press, and I will have a more complete report in a few days.

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HARBOURS**CHURCHILL—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF STUDY ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND STATEMENT ON POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS**

Mr. Keith Taylor (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. In view of the importance of the port of Churchill to the economy of western Canada, is the minister now prepared to table the study just recently completed for the port, as requested by the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, actually I have received the report on the port of Churchill. There are many aspects with which I am not satisfied, and I have returned the report to the marine administration of my department for further details and comments.

Mr. Taylor: As a supplementary question, in view of the fact that the Chairman of the National Harbours Board does not yet know what work will be carried out at Churchill, is the minister prepared to advise the House as to what improvements and up-grading will take place at the port of Churchill for this season?

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): This decision will be made as soon as I have received the second report for which I have asked on the first one.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There are a number of hon. members who wish to ask supplementaries. I will recognize the hon. member for Battleford-Kindersley on a sup-

[Mr. Lalonde.]

plementary, and then the hon. member for Calgary North on a supplementary to the previous question.

INQUIRY AS TO POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW DEEP WATER PORTS

Mr. Norval Horner (Battleford-Kindersley): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that Canada does not now have deep water ports that can handle ships presently being constructed by some of our grain customers, and in view of the recent statement made by the President of the United States when he called for an ambitious program to create new deep water ports in that country, can the Minister of Transport inform the House if any deep water ports are being planned by the government?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

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PENITENTIARIES**ESCAPED CONVICT MERCIER—INQUIRY AS TO MEASURES TAKEN TO BRING ABOUT APPREHENSION**

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that there will be a vote on second reading of the capital punishment bill this evening. I would like to put this question to the Solicitor General. Would he advise the House and the country whether Mercier, who escaped from St. Vincent de Paul penitentiary with three other inmates, has been caught? I know that the three others have been caught, but I ask the question because the last time Mercier escaped he was later found guilty of murdering two game wardens?

Hon. Warren Allmand (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I have no report that he has been caught to this time.

Mr. Woolliams: In light of the fact that Mercier and probably some others with similar records are at large, has the Solicitor General, working in conjunction with the attorneys general of the various provinces, done anything or offered any assistance to the RCMP or others to bring about that kind of administration which would ensure these people will be caught and put back into custody?

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, the Quebec Provincial Police, the Montreal City Police and other police forces in the Montreal area, together with the RCMP, have been doing everything possible since Mercier's escape to capture him.

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AIR TRANSPORT**ADVANCE BOOKING CHARTER REGULATIONS—REQUEST FOR IMPROVEMENT OF REGULATIONS AND AID TO STUDENTS UNABLE TO OBTAIN CHARTER SERVICE**

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Transport. In light of the continuing confusion which surrounds air charter