

Inquiries of the Ministry

would have the answer regarding his department's position within a day or so. In view of his interest in combating inflation, I wonder whether the Prime Minister has an answer for the House today?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): No, Mr. Speaker. Had I been given notice of the question, I might have.

PENITENTIARIES**SASKATCHEWAN—COMPLAINTS CONCERNING FOOD—INCIPIENT UNREST**

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): I direct my question to the Solicitor General, Mr. Speaker. It has to do with the aftermath of a visit by three Members of Parliament—members of the New Democratic party—to a Saskatchewan penitentiary. Following their visit they offered strong criticism. In view of the fact that the warden and the officials of this penitentiary have an excellent reputation, and since this criticism has been followed by incipient unrest among those who are confined in the institution, would the minister be prepared to tell the House what the situation is and whether there was any foundation for the criticism concerning food and the insufficiency of meat for the inmates?

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, when I heard on the radio the day after the two-day visit of three members to the penitentiary the allegation concerning food, I immediately had the matter investigated and found that the allegation was contrary to the fact.

As to the other part of the right hon. gentleman's question, I do not admit, first of all, that there is incipient unrest, but I will look into that situation. In any event I would not want to admit at this stage, certainly on the basis of any information that I have, that if such condition existed it was caused by the visit of the three members.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the minister himself has visited this institution, is he not prepared to say that following his visit in September he gave to that institution a first rate and excellent reputation both as a training unit and as a penal institution?

Mr. McIlraith: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is true. I have on several occasions since that visit made reference to some of the training

[Mr. Saltsman.]

facilities in that institution, and in that respect put it forward as the best example in the country of institutions of that kind.

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, as one who visited the institution, unlike the gentleman who asked the preceding question, could I ask the Solicitor General whether he would not agree that the so-called food strike of last Christmas and the one that preceded it about a month before were not reflective of the condition of the food but of other conditions in the institution, which is usually the case with such strikes?

Mr. McIlraith: Mr. Speaker, I had that matter investigated at the time and I found that it reflected the fact that certain persons who had been working as kitchen staff had been removed from that task and given other duties, and the demand arose that they be returned to kitchen duty. That seemed to be very closely related to the cause of any trouble at the time of that so-called strike at Christmas time which related to dining facilities and the unwillingness of the prisoners to take their trays when they were issued in the usual way.

[Translation]

SHIPBUILDING**AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF "MARGAREE"**

Hon. Théogène Ricard (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

Could he tell the House why the government has granted the contract for the construction of the *Margaree* to a company other than the Davie Shipbuilding, of Lauzon, in spite of the fact that it had submitted the lowest bid?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I was not aware of that particular fact. I will inquire and report to the hon. member.

[English]

GRAIN**WHEAT—ACREAGE REDUCTION PROGRAM—
PAYMENT OF EXPENSES OF INSPECTORS—
ENFORCEMENT OF BULLETIN PROVISIONS**

Mr. A. P. Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister without Portfolio in charge of