

● (1200)

PENITENTIARIES

ESCAPE OF THREE CONVICTS FROM LAVAL INSTITUTION

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Solicitor General my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister. Yesterday three dangerous convicts escaped from the Laval maximum security penitentiary near Montreal, that is, the old St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary. They escaped by using a forklift and garden hose which somehow were left unsecured, and by taking a female guard hostage and by using her machinegun and revolver.

I know the penitentiary service has announced an internal inquiry, but I ask the Acting Prime Minister if he would assure the House and the Canadian population that at this inquiry all parties will have an opportunity to be heard, particularly the union of guards at that penitentiary, and that the results of the inquiry will be made public? Would he also tell us what steps are being taken to audit and upgrade the security at this and all maximum security penitentiaries?

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I think we should all be relieved that the correctional officer and the other woman hostage who were taken are both safe. We are very thankful for that. I think both of them should be commended for their bravery with respect to the actions that took place yesterday in the hostage taking incident.

As the Member has already indicated, a general investigation is being opened and convened to examine all the circumstances of the escape. I am sure all Members, and anyone who has input into that escape, will have the opportunity to make their views known to that investigation. There will also be an outside member appointed to that review committee.

REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL SECURITY RESOURCES

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, according to certain guards and union officials, the catwalk at the penitentiary, and the control centre, were unsafe and understaffed. It was said it was impossible for the presently authorized staff to survey the situation properly from a security point of view. Therefore, I would ask the Acting Prime Minister, or some Minister who has the authority, if he will immediately take steps with the Treasury Board to get additional resources, not only for perimeter security at these institutions but also for programs which will reduce the tension within the penitentiaries and help prevent this sort of incident.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that with the

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general investigation, recommendations will be made, and if recommendations of that nature are made I am sure they will be taken care of.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Vancouver East on one question, please.

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MARINE TRANSPORT

BRITISH COLUMBIA CRUISE SHIP INDUSTRY

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister who is also a transportation expert. The Minister will be aware of the continuing concern of Vancouver City Council and the B.C. cruise ship industry that the application of Bill C-52, the Coastal Trade Act, seriously threatens the cruise ship industry which brings \$70 million in annual revenues to British Columbia.

In view of the fact that this Bill is now in the other place, will the Deputy Prime Minister personally undertake to secure a government review of the Bill in light of west coast concerns? And will he specifically guarantee that any government regulations that are passed to implement this Bill will not adversely affect this vital west coast industry? Will he particularly ensure a revision of the waiver system from the annual application to a longer term system that will allow more adequate corporate planning?

Mr. Blaine A. Thacker (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, it is too bad my friend opposite could not get on the Question Period earlier, like about last week, because all aspects of this problem have been resolved as of last week.

Ms. Mitchell: It is a different question. You didn't listen.

Mr. Thacker: The Minister of State for Transport handled all the customs part of it.

Ms. Mitchell: No, they have not. You haven't been listening.

Mr. Thacker: At absolutely no time has Bill C-52 impacted upon the cruise industry on the west coast.

Ms. Mitchell: You go to the committee hearing next week and you will find out.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair has received notice of a question of privilege from the Hon. Member for Kenora—Rainy River.