

Supply—Solicitor General

department in this regard. I concur wholeheartedly in his view that any action taken in parliament will really not get to the core of the problem facing ex-inmates. However, I believe we should make every effort to reduce areas of injustice, and although the advance may be small this should not be an excuse for not giving this matter very serious consideration.

The hon. member for Vancouver East asked me to give him an assurance that we would not proceed with any more maximum security institutions of the present design following the completion of the institution at Millhaven. I am pleased to give that undertaking. The ten-year plan is subject to review. We have now reached the half way point, so it seems to me that this is a reasonable place to stop and take a look at our designs and our program in the light of our experience and anticipated needs in the next five years.

● (3:40 p.m.)

I do not quarrel with the hon. member's suggestion that we have not yet provided the answer to the problem of recidivism. However, I feel we have made some progress. It is no comfort to me or to the officials in my department to point out that the United States and Great Britain are facing increased rates of crime greater than that being experienced in Canada. In his 1966 message to congress, President Johnson expressed concern by calling for an increased effort to end the self-defeating cycle of imprisonment, release and re-imprisonment.

Recently I visited the maximum state security institution at Atica, New York, and I was surprised to learn that the institution houses 2,100 inmates and that plans are being formulated to build an addition for 400 more inmates. I am sure the committee will be pleased to learn that under our ten-year plan accommodation in our new institutions will not exceed 450. The three new medium security institutions will be opening this year and this will permit us to transfer a large number of inmates from our present maximum security institutions to medium security institutions.

The hon. member for Kings, in a very sincere speech, made a plea for more adequate provision for the short-term offender in the county jails. He will be interested to learn, I am sure, that we have recently had discussions with the attorneys general of two of the maritime provinces with a view to transferring some of the so-called long term offenders in county jails to our new minimum and

medium institutions where we feel we can provide better training for them.

The hon. members for Lafontaine and Lotbinière raised a matter that has exercised my mind for some time, the question of capital punishment. I do not propose to say anything further on that subject at this time except to assure them that I listened with a great deal of interest to their very thoughtful suggestions.

The hon. member for Skeena touched on some very important problems that face the penitentiary service. He cited the difficulties surrounding the introduction of trade and technical training into our penal institutions. He mentioned the nub of the problem when he said it is compounded by the age of the offenders and by their lack of education. It seems to me that we can perhaps perform a most useful service by putting more emphasis on academic training of our inmates while they are in these institutions rather than trying to concentrate entirely on technical and trade training.

The hon. member for Skeena pointed out also that we might have some difficulty in moving forward with industrial training and that we would have to have consultations with the various trade unions. This is a fair and reasonable suggestion. It was brought home to me most forcibly last week when I received a letter from a merchant in my own constituency complaining that the products resulting from our trade training program were competing with his products for wood-working in schools. I recognize the force of his argument, and it should cause us to review all our trade and technical training programs in institutions.

I believe I have dealt with the salient points that were raised during the course of the debate. Perhaps at this time I may point out to the committee that a reference to the blue book of estimates would appear to indicate there is a reduction in the appropriation for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. It is only fair to alert members of the committee that the apparent reduction of some \$11,210,071 is brought about by the fact the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have, at the request of Treasury Board, introduced what is known as net voting. In other words, the appropriation being requested now is an amount less the revenues received from contracts. This is a new system which the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are pioneering this year. Actually there will be an increase this