

Honourable senators will remember that Senator Roblin discovered a discrepancy between a press report on this question and the answer that I had given earlier. As it turns out, the press report appears to have ignored the second part of the information because the answer is that the United States Congress has already appropriated the funds for the Garrison project. It is now up to the Executive of that country to release those funds for spending. The decision not to release funds associated with those aspects which would affect Canada was made by the United States Department of the Interior. The U.S. Secretary of the Interior has given us his personal undertaking in that regard.

• (1510)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MIDDLE EAST—VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have a delayed answer to a question asked by Senator Bosa on November 18 regarding a possible meeting between the Right Honourable the Prime Minister and the leaders of the two warring states in that area.

The answer is that the Prime Minister will not be meeting the leaders of Iran or of Iraq during this trip. He arrives in Luxor, Egypt today, and he will be meeting with President Sadat tomorrow morning.

THE CONSTITUTION

REFERENCES TO APPEAL COURTS BY PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the last delayed answer I have is to a question asked by Senator Roblin on November 18 concerning references to appeal courts by provincial governments in respect to the constitutionality of the government's constitutional proposals.

The question was in two parts. The first was as to whether the federal government would be represented at those hearings, and the second was as to what the position of the federal government would be in the event of certain conclusions being arrived at by the said courts.

The answer to the first part is that the federal government will indeed be represented at any such hearings, and will make a presentation of its views on the matter before the court.

As to the second part, the question is hypothetical, since it asks for the government's position on a situation that may or may not arise, or which may arise in various forms, and the government will respond to the results of any court decisions on the basis of the actual decision and other circumstances then existing.

[Senator Frith]

CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES AS CAUSES OF CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR

REPORT OF HEALTH, WELFARE AND SCIENCE COMMITTEE— DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from Thursday, October 23, the debate on the consideration of the report of the Standing Senate Committee on Health, Welfare and Science entitled "Child at Risk", tabled in the Senate on October 16, 1980.

Hon. John M. Macdonald: Honourable senators, this item has stood in my name on the order paper for some time so I shall take just a few minutes of your time this afternoon to say a few words about this report.

The report of the Standing Senate Committee on Health, Welfare and Science entitled "Child at Risk" is a very impressive document. It is an impressive document in that it is a very readable result of an in-depth study of a subject which has not been given very much consideration in the past. Yet the subject is a matter of importance not only to individuals but to society as a whole.

I admit that when the proposal was first advanced for the committee to make the study, it did not appear to me to be necessary although it might possibly be desirable in a vague sort of a way. I knew, of course, it was a matter dear to the heart of Dr. McGrand, and I expect the fact that such a distinguished and respected senator wanted the study made influenced many of us in its favour.

However, honourable senators, on reading the report I realized a real need existed for this inquiry, and from the foreword it is evident it exists from two points of view. One is the effect on the individuals directly concerned who have been influenced in prenatal life or in early childhood by something which led them to a life of violence or crime in later life. Or if the effect was not that serious there were lesser undesirable characteristics which prevented such persons from becoming happy and productive members of society.

The need from the second point of view is the cost in dollars to society of criminal acts as well as the suffering of many individuals and families as a result of crime and violence. The dollar costs set out in the foreword are frightening. For example, between 1974 and 1978 there was an increase of over 17 per cent in the rate of Criminal Code offences, and of more than 10 per cent in the rate of crimes of violence. Some 138,972 violent crimes took place in Canada in 1978. I think it is a matter of grave concern when, as it is stated in the foreword, recent enlightened efforts to reform offenders and re-integrate them into society, rather than punish them, have not produced encouraging results as 80 per cent of persons admitted to federal institutions have been previously convicted.

And then, the cost in dollars is very high. Apparently, the expense of operating a federal institution averages \$25,000 a year per inmate. In the year 1977-78 the total cost of operating federal penitentiaries amounted to \$295,526,000, and in the same year it cost the provinces about \$600,000 a day to operate their correctional institutions. In that year alone the total cost was over half a billion dollars, and it would now be