

DETENTION CAMP FOR ALIENS AT AMHERST

OTTAWA, March 30.—In committee today on the estimates of the Justice Department, Mr. Roche Lanctot brought up the matter of the pension which the Minister of Justice draws as an ex-judge, a matter to which he has already referred a number of times in the House.

Hon. C. J. Doherty pointed out that there was no special vote for his pension in the estimates, it being provided for by statute.

"You are the Minister of Justice. If you make the laws, why don't you repeal this unjust law?" asked Mr. Lanctot.

He was called to order by the chairman.

Prisoners of War.

On a vote for the maintenance of interned allens, Hon. Mr. Doherty said there were 2,752 in the various camps and places of detention. The allens were being held at Halifax, Quebec, Montreal, Kingston, Toronto, Spirit Lake, Kapucasing, Brandon, Vernon and Nanaimo, B. C. In addition a camp was being organized in the Port Arthur district, to accommodate 800 prisoners, and one at Amherst, N. S., for the reception of prisoners from Jamaica.

Mr. Doherty told Mr. Marcell that no prisoners were being detained in jail in Montreal, or elsewhere. In Montreal the building used for the detention of immigrants was now occupied by allens awaiting removal to the detention camps. The Minister said that at Petawawa there were 573 prisoners; at Spirit Lake, Que., 683, and at Kapuscasing, Ont., 438. Ontario and Quebec had agreed to give the Department of Agriculture tracts of land of one thousand acres, or thereabouts. These would ultimately be model farms. There were arrangements made for the clearing of land by prisoners of war, and it was expected that some of the people would settle in the localities, under the provisions of the Provincial laws.

A Political Office.

A brief debate upon the duties of the Solicitor General arose when Mr.

German, of Welland, suggested that neither the present incumbent nor the last had carried out the intention of the statute, under which the office had been established. It had been intended that the Solicitor General should conduct causes for the Government, instead of the Board of Council receiving fees. Mr. Doherty said the Solicitor General had attended quite a number of important cases for the Government, and had performed valuable service. For instance, he was called upon to deal with important questions arising out of the Ticket-of-Leave Act.

Hon. Arthur Meighen added that the Act creating the office of Solicitor General had described his duties as "to assist" in the work of the Department of Justice. He might thus be employed in a number of ways, besides conducting cases in the courts. He was disposed to agree that the practice of having the Solicitor General appear in the courts had become practically extinct. However, he himself had conducted some litigation, notably in the proceedings before the Exchequer Court in regard to the expropriation of property in connection with the Winnipeg terminals of the N. T. R. In reply to Mr. Wilson, of Laval, Mr. Meighen said that he had four cases now in course of preparation.

Conditions in Penitentiaries.

On the estimates for Kingston penitentiary Dr. Edwards, of Frontenac, had some remarks to make. He said that the population of the Canadian penitentiaries was 1,907, according to the last report. Over 55 per cent of the number were convicts under 30 years of age. The increase in the number of prisoners, indicated beyond a doubt, he thought, that the system which had prevailed for a number of years had been a failure. There had been some effort to make it appear that things had improved at Kingston since the investigation in 1913. He believed they had improved, but that the general conditions in that institution were very much the same as before that investigation.