

sanship. But let me tell you, sir, what was done with those old clothes. Many of these settlers had been transplanted from the cities into rural sections which were not fit for colonization, and they found themselves in very hard circumstances, so much so that their little ones had no warm clothing to put on in the winter time. The consequence was that they had to stay indoors, which was prejudicial to their health. When I was able to get for them those long military coats, some of them worn out, but still able to provide warmth, the mothers would cut them down and tailor them to fit their young children, so that they could go out in the winter time and play in the sun and breathe the fresh air. Then a committee of this house sat which did not know these facts, and after that it was impossible for us to get any more of those old clothes for the children of the settlers. I got in touch with the officer in charge of the matter in the Department of Finance. Mind you, sir, he was a very nice man, and he told me that he would be pleased to do it, but he said that his authority for doing it had been taken away from him and that the thing simply could not be done. When I went to the Department of National Defence to beg for some of those old clothes for the poor children of my county, they said, "We cannot do it. The committee of the house has decided against it."

We should not wait until these little children are all dead or have suffered from the cold before we decide to look after them. There is no plan of social security or social insurance which will resuscitate them after they are dead or after they contract an illness like tuberculosis or anything which will be for them a predisposition to death. We complain that so many young men are unfit for military service. That was the complaint of the Minister of National War Services, whose excellent speech about it in London, Ontario, had wide publicity in the press. We complain about it and some think that we shall cure all that with paper and with insurance policies. We cannot wait until after the deliberations of the committee; it must be done right away. These people have not the opportunities of the children of members of the House of Commons to be well fed, well clothed, and so on; they need help at once. It is not a pleasure; it is a humiliation to go to anyone to beg for clothes, and if the thing is done it is on account of the supreme duty which Canadian citizens have, which men have, to help each other.

The Prime Minister and some of his colleagues are listening to me now. I thank them and all hon. members for listening to me, but I tell them that there is something more

important than any plan which is concocted by a doctor of economics or of political science from Queen's university, the university of Toronto or anywhere else. What is important now is to visualize what is going on, to recognize the immediate needs of the nation and to provide the remedy and the cure. We cannot wait while these people suffer from the carelessness of all with regard to them. We must open our eyes and see what is going on.

I hope that this war is the last that not only ourselves but even future generations will see. We do not know about the future, but whether we have war or peace it is essential that our fellow citizens shall enjoy the best possible health; and I do not see why old clothes which may be sold to the Jews as rags would not be put to better use if they were given to the mothers of little children to clothe them and enable them to go out in the winter time and breathe fresh air. Distribution should be made alike to needy Jews and Gentiles; there should be neither Jew nor Gentile in such a distribution; it should be to all Canadians who need it. As far as I am concerned I would pay freight, and I know every hon. member would be ready to do the same thing.

This is not an affair of propaganda of any kind; it is a matter of helping our people with the "left-overs"; it is the best possible recuperation, better than any plan of social reorganization in this country. As I said to a former chairman of the committee of the whole when he was speaking of patriotism, "If all Canadians are dead, to whom will you preach patriotism?" This is the time to see to it. I do not believe much in all the plans for the future if we do not make the present safe for our own people.

On motion of Mr. Hlynka the debate was adjourned.

At eleven o'clock the house adjourned, without question put, pursuant to standing order.

Friday, March 5, 1943

The house met at three o'clock.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

REQUEST FOR REFERENCE OF AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT TO COMMITTEE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. GORDON GRAYDON (Leader of the Opposition): I should like to ask the Prime Minister if at an early day he will be willing to move that the auditor general's report be referred to the public accounts committee. This committee has not met since the war