

announced that some other school had to be closed, the citizens of that community would ask the same question. What is the basis of the decision to close that particular school?

While I am on my feet let me say that I have had, as the minister would expect, a great deal of correspondence from people in the community of Macleod. I shall read only a paragraph from one of the letters to indicate that the people there are satisfied that the Macleod student flying training school is one of the best. The minister will know more about it and perhaps can confirm that opinion. Here is the paragraph:

Macleod No. 7 S.F.T.S. was one of the schools closed. Now the record of this station will stand any investigation, the flying hours are among the highest, the health is exceptional, the upkeep has been small in comparison, the accidents have been almost nil, the surrounding country is level and lends itself to assisting forced landings; it is on the sewage system, the water is no problem, the lights are direct, everything would tend to make this station one of the easiest places to keep intact.

That is the tenor of most of these letters that I have received. Assuming that the Macleod training school is one of the best, I am wondering why that particular school should have to be closed.

Would the minister also mind telling me what are the six flying training schools located in Alberta?

I wish the minister would throw some light on this question of closing schools, because naturally the people of a certain town who have been informed that their school is one of the highest rating naturally ask why that particular school should have to be closed.

Mr. POWER: Every school has the highest rating. I do not know of any school that has not the highest rating. My hon. friend over here has a school in his constituency at Dunnville, an excellent school, but it was closed, and the same with the school at Goderich, an excellent school. The hon. member for Moose Jaw has had three schools in his constituency closed, at Moose Jaw, Caron and Mossbank, all excellent schools, but they are all closed just the same. We closed an elementary school, an excellent school too, in the constituency of the Prime Minister. I closed an elementary school in my own constituency once. It was an excellent school, with an excellent man in charge, but it was closed. We have to close them somewhere. The R.A.F. schools closed first, and we have to close something like an equivalent number. I do not know that there are many reasons I could give why one particular school should be closed more than another, except that the officers of the depart-

[Mr. Hansell.]

ment checked up and said that they thought it should be done. In some cases I intervened. I thought Brantford could stand the closing of its school without interfering with its economy because it is a manufacturing town where a lot of manufacturing is being done. Regina had two schools, and one had to be closed. The same with Saskatoon, where there were two schools. We closed down the I.T.S. and left the other, and so on all down the line. I cannot give my hon. friend any particular reason for the closing down of the school at Macleod any more than I could with respect to the school at Yorkton. I do not know that I should be asked to go into these details. They are all good schools—the training is good; the sewage is good; the people are good; everything is good.

Mr. HANSELL: I quite agree with the minister that they are all excellent schools and I am glad at least to hear that the sewage is good. That is not the question I asked. The question I asked was as to the basis of the decision to close certain schools. I agree that they are all excellent schools, but they cannot all be the best. There must be one a little better than some of the others, and of course the people of Macleod think theirs is just a little better than some of the others. I am asking the minister the question so that I can satisfy my constituents. When I asked him the basis of the decision to close down certain schools he said—and I do not think it was a slip—that his officials checked up. What did they check up? Was it the efficiency of the school or what? I am not suggesting that there is any favouritism one way or the other. I think everyone in the house will agree that the minister's department is one department that has been run with exceptional efficiency. We have trained a great air force in Canada and credit has to go to the minister. But again I ask him the basis of the decision to close certain schools.

Mr. POWER: The officers looked over the schools. There is sometimes the question of travelling from one school to another, and so on. I do not think there is any particular reason why the school at Macleod should have been selected rather than some other. I really do not know. The officers came to me with a list of schools which they thought ought to be closed and in certain cases I intervened for economic reasons; for instance, at Regina and Brantford where normally the schools would not have been closed at all, but I thought those places could better afford to have their schools closed down than some other places.