

*Supply—Health and Welfare*

our social security. In Halifax we have a school of social work, but I am not making this suggestion from any selfish motive. I happen to be a director of that school. The school was organized about six or seven years ago. It was organized by the various institutions in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and I believe in Prince Edward Island. Those universities gave every assistance they could. A survey was made, and a certain amount of money was obtained from the public in the three maritime provinces. This was done at the instance of social workers in Nova Scotia. One of these was Dr. Curran, a Roman Catholic priest, and the other man was Dr. Prince, of the university of King's College. It was through their efforts that the school was finally started. We did get some assistance from the department.

However I think that in matters of this kind it would be almost impossible to have our social services properly administered—and I am talking about administration, not the supplying of money or anything else—without this sort of help. I have in mind the welfare of the people, so far as the social services are concerned.

There has been a tremendous increase in the good done in the three maritime provinces through social services. I am heartily in accord with this procedure. As a matter of fact, I visited the minister and some of his officials when representations were made to him last fall. I am just saying now that I am in complete accord with the last two speakers, and I believe that instead of lowering these small subsidies, if they may be so described, they should be increased.

Before this school was started—and I speak with some knowledge of the subject—it was almost impossible in Nova Scotia to get anyone to look after the social welfare of the people. Today, however, graduates of that school find employment in the local governments of the three provinces, and they do good work. However, I know that only two years ago two bright young university graduates who were short of funds came there. The money which had been given by this government for scholarships had been taken up, and those boys had to go off to work somewhere else. That was a serious loss to the social welfare of Nova Scotia.

**Mr. Knowles:** I am sure the minister is deeply interested in and sympathetic to the requests that have come to him from the national committee in connection with schools for social work. I just wish to make it clear to him—although I know he already realizes it—that the support for their two requests, namely for an increase and that it be put on a five-year basis, is unanimous. I hope the

minister will take good advantage of that unanimous support and do his best to see that these requests are met.

**Mr. McCusker:** The minister usually meets us, instead of having to be prodded in matters of this kind. I should not like to have this vote passed without saying that I have received many representations from people in my constituency asking me to support what has been said tonight. I shall not take time to repeat it.

Item agreed to.

Welfare branch—

242. Administration, \$86,320.

**Mr. Drew:** Mr. Chairman, under this item in the estimates it is not my intention to enter into any debate in regard to the report of the committee on old age security appointed last March, which has tabled its report. At the time the motion was before the house to set up the committee I, and other members of the opposition, objected to that appointment of a committee on the ground that it would only delay a decision by the government and prevent any action being taken during the present session to implement the government's promises.

Members of the committee have worked very hard. They have heard a great deal of evidence. The report, which constitutes a digest of that evidence, contains much statistical information which will be helpful to all hon. members. However, the recommendations, which are the result of the decisions of the majority of the members of the committee, do not carry out the earlier undertakings of the government, and do not go as far as they should go if this extremely important subject is to be dealt with in a way which will satisfy the older generation of Canadians.

In our increasingly complex society people naturally think with growing concern about what will happen to them in their old age, or at a time when they are no longer able to earn a livelihood. There is increasing agreement that pensions should be paid as a right at an age when the earning capacity of our people is substantially or entirely reduced because of their age. In considering this subject the questions about which our people are most concerned are the age at which pensions will be payable, whether they will be subject to a means test or not, and whether they will be adequate to maintain those who receive them under the conditions which exist in this country from time to time.

There is also increasing agreement that the means test is unfair, because it does penalize those who are prudent and have saved something throughout the working years.