

VIII—NARCOTIC CONTROL

The Committee was informed that the Department has a dual responsibility for narcotic control, administered under two separate Acts. It was further advised that the responsibility for the enforcement and control of illegal importation of narcotics is assumed by the Department of Justice.

Evidence from Department officials indicated that addiction in Canada has been fairly stabilized over the period from 1954 to 1959, and the Committee welcomed the announcement of the formation of the Mental Health Advisory Committee which is currently undertaking an investigation with respect to the treatment and rehabilitation of narcotic addicts.

From all the evidence submitted, however, it would appear that the principal problem of control of narcotics is the illegal importation into Canada. In this respect, we were advised that the Department has contributed a Government representative to the United Nations Narcotic Commission, and that for some years this body has attempted to limit the growing of raw opium products to the world demand for medical and scientific purposes only.

Recommendation

Your Committee recommends as follows:

- (a) that following the report of the Mental Health Advisory Committee, the Department should take immediate action to augment the present programme for the treatment and rehabilitation of narcotic addicts;
- (b) that every effort should be made through the Canadian representative on the United Nations Narcotic Commission, to restrict the growing of raw opium to the international demand for medical purposes.

IX—FAMILY ALLOWANCES

It was noted that as of March 18, 1960, approximately 5,847 children were not receiving benefits under the Family Allowances Act. The principal reason for this is the presence in the Act of Section 2 (F) which defines a parent as a father, step-father, adopted father, foster-father, mother, step-mother, adopted mother, foster-mother or any other person who maintains or has the custody of a child, but does not include an "institution".

It was explained to the Committee that it is not possible for the Department to recognize institutions as legal guardians and, therefore, children receiving, in many cases, the best of care, are unable to benefit under the provisions of the Act.

In the opinion of the Committee the exclusion of these children from benefits available to all other children in Canada is unfair and unjust.

The question was raised as to the justice of the policy of excluding from Family Allowances the children of Armed Forces personnel stationed abroad. The Minister replied that payments were not made in that "It has always been felt that the children of Service men serving abroad do get 'Special Allowances' but not through Family Allowances." Evidence tabled with the Committee raises doubt as to whether such 'Special Allowances' create a certain discrimination insofar as Service Personnel of junior rank are concerned. It was also not clear as to whether this discrimination did not extend in some degree to all personnel serving abroad.

Recommendations

Your Committee therefore recommends

- (a) That consideration be given to payment of Family Allowances on behalf of children cared for in institutions;