

in our hospitals across the country. We are quite satisfied that we could not get the same type of service if we employed people who are not grouped into an association. The way the corps operates, and the fact that they are members of a corps and are in uniform, has been most helpful.

Mr. PUGH: That certainly bears out the situation in British Columbia; we have the same comment out there.

Mr. LALONDE: We do not think we would achieve the same results if we were employing, let us say, a receptionist.

Mr. BROOME: Mr. Chairman,—

The CHAIRMAN: Is it on the subject?

Mr. BROOME: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Macdonald had a general question which we could take care of now.

Mr. LALONDE: The corps of commissionaires operates as a separate entity. They have a headquarters in Montreal with a board of directors composed of five or seven members, I am not sure which, but recruited from across Canada. Then they have provincial headquarters in each province, I believe. As far as the department is concerned, all we do is pass a contract with the corps to provide so many hours of service to cover so many posts at the rate laid down by treasury board. If they accept that contract they provide the men and we have no authority over those men. If, for example, one of them gets out of line or does something which he should not have done, we have no disciplinary powers over that man. We must report him to his commandant, and the commandant deals with him as a member of the corps, not as a member of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. BROOME: I wanted to go back to this methods and inspection division; I assume that is part of 448.

Mr. LALONDE: Yes.

Mr. BROOME: And it has been in operation just about a year. I was wondering whether you anticipated any savings from this department. I am rather concerned as to the over-all growth of the civil service. It does grow and, as an outsider, I think there is room for increased efficiency in government departments; this looks very much like a step in the right direction. I was wondering whether you anticipated an increase in efficiency and lower costs?

Mr. LALONDE: Our experience in the past year, Mr. Broome, is that the methods division has not been able to achieve a great deal. We conducted a competition to fill the position of chief of that division, and this man has been studying the set-up of the department. I think he knows enough now to make a useful contribution. Mr. Mace has given him certain specific tasks which have resulted in better procedures. We are certain that there will be a lot more instances in the next few years where this division will recommend to us changes in our administrative set-up. They will recommend changes in procedures which will enable us perhaps to amalgamate functions and reduce staffs. How far that will go, I cannot say at this time; but very definitely we are convinced that it will pay not only for itself but it will pay dividends in the long run. When you go through the various items in the estimates you will notice that there has been a decrease in staff—

Mr. BROOME: What would be the total number of employees?

Mr. LALONDE: —in most of our administrative directorates; but that has been absorbed by an increase in treatment staff. We are still short of personnel in treatment.

Mr. BROOME: I can understand that.