

*Supply—Health and Welfare*

he explain the fact that the three maple leaves on an earlier stamp have been replaced by one maple leaf?

**Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Postmaster General):** Mr. Speaker, they have not been replaced. Consequently I am afraid I do not understand the hon. gentleman's question.

**LABOUR CONDITIONS****REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON EXTENSION OF WINTER WORKS PROGRAM**

On the orders of the day:

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Guy Marcoux (Quebec-Montmorency):** Mr. Speaker, my question was meant for the Minister of Labour but, in his absence, I shall put it to his parliamentary secretary.

It has to do with the statement the minister made last Friday in regard to the extension of certain winter works periods. Could the parliamentary secretary ask the minister to give us a more specific statement a little later on, so we may know exactly what conditions are to be met and whether it will be up to the provinces or the federal government to decide whether there will be such extensions?

[*Text*]

**Mr. J. A. Byrne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Labour):** I would be delighted to do so, Mr. Speaker.

**SUPPLY**

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Lamoureux in the chair.

**DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL HEALTH AND WELFARE**

1. Departmental administration, \$2,099,000.

**Mr. Slogan:** Mr. Chairman, at the adjournment yesterday I was making some remarks regarding the dental health of Canadians. I think it is significant that about one quarter of the 200 or so recommendations in the Hall report deal with the dental health of Canadians. I think this again points up the importance of the subject. I had pointed out that dental diseases are almost universal, but at the same time they are largely preventable. However, because of the apathy of the public and the complacency of governments we are a nation of dental cripples. I could quote examples of the incidence of dental diseases among children but I hardly think I need do so. The tragedy of the situation is that those preventive measures which could be undertaken

by the government at a very nominal cost are not being undertaken. Therefore a great deal of responsibility for the situation must rest on the shoulders of the government.

I must congratulate the minister on answering one of my questions, after many futile attempts, concerning fluoridation; but although the government was willing to put the facts before the people it has consistently refused to recommend this measure to the people, even though the Hall royal commission has recommended that in view of the reduction in dental disease to be expected from the fluoridation program, every community water system in Canada be equipped to provide the proper level of fluoride.

At the last meeting of the Canadian Dental Association a resolution was adopted recommending fluoridation to the people of Canada. The report released at the time of the meeting showed that 92 per cent more Canadians were using fluoridated water in 1963 than in 1962, a total of almost four million, or one in five. I think this number should be substantially increased, and there are three areas in which a great deal could be done. One area, of course, is research, and I dealt with that yesterday to a large extent and showed that the amount of money allocated to dental research in national health grants is approximately 1 per cent to 2 per cent and has been steadily declining over the last three years.

A program to educate the public in this field should also be considered, and, I must congratulate the toothpaste companies for their television advertisements, because they are bringing to the attention of the people the need for oral hygiene; and through improved oral hygiene alone the number of dental cavities can be cut in half. The government should assume responsibility in this regard. The department is putting out some pamphlets which I think are very good, but there should be more of them and they should be more widely distributed.

There is another subject I should like to touch upon, and that is prepaid dental plans. The dental associations across this country are studying the feasibility of prepaid dental health insurance, and are doing this largely on their own. It should be incumbent upon this government to allocate funds for studies in respect of the feasibility of dental health insurance, in so far as it differs from medical health insurance and insurance principles.

There are a number of questions I should like to ask the minister and I hope she will provide us with some answers, particularly in respect to questions and recommendations