

245. Departmental administration, \$623,428.

Mr. HANSELL: Mr. Chairman, I am in almost the same position I was in last night, or the other night, in that I have an important speech to deliver and only six minutes in which to deliver it. I shall try to make my speech in those six minutes—or even less. That is difficult for me to do; my congregations always complain because they say I am a long-winded preacher.

There are two phases of the work of the Department of National Health and Welfare I should like to dwell upon for a moment. I wish to bring to the attention of the minister these two matters. I am sure we are all glad that the present government is contemplating some advance with respect to the health services of Canada. The other day we listened to the Prime Minister's announcement, which I think has been quite acceptable, generally speaking, to the people of Canada.

But there is in Canada today one class of people who have been entirely neglected in any health legislation that has been passed either in this house or in any provincial legislature. I refer to incurable cripples, wheel-chair cases, bedridden cases. The medical profession have gone as far as they can with these cases and have pronounced them incurable. I have in mind those who have been crippled as a result of poliomyelitis or those who were born crippled or the epileptic cases. If I were a medical man I could put on *Hansard* the names of many other maladies which I do not now know. All these people are beyond the aid of medicine or of the medical profession. What is being done for them?

The question might be asked, what can be done for them? In a medical sense, nothing, but they must be cared for. Most of them are unable to earn a living or to engage in gainful employment. The result is that they are thrown upon the mercies of relatives or friends or charitable institutions. If they have not those to turn to, they must beg the relief authorities for a handout. This class of incurable citizen has been entirely neglected and forgotten.

They are not great in number; I do not know how many there would be in Canada. They are scattered from coast to coast and are unable to get out or send people around to organize for them as unions and other organizations have done in order to bring pressure upon the proper authorities. A little over a year ago, an organization was set up by a young woman in Calgary named Miss Eva Warden. At nineteen years of age she took poliomyelitis and is today a wheel-chair case. Her mother is a widow. You tell me what she can do.

[The Deputy Chairman.]

She started this organization and has had a flood of requests for information from all over Canada. She is doing her best to keep this organization going, in order to focus public attention upon their needs. I do not know whether the minister will suggest that this matter should come under the Department of Finance, but I do ask him to take it into consideration and, if possible, to put on the statute books, or aid the provinces in putting on their statute books some form of legislation that will prevent these unfortunate people from being cast upon public charity.

Perhaps mine is the small voice crying in the wilderness, but I think I have the unanimous support of this entire house and of the legislatures when I ask that something be done. This is not a party platform; we do not have these things pegged into our party platforms; it is a humanitarian thing. I believe all should lend their support to something of this kind. Will the minister not take this into his deepest consideration?

Hon. PAUL MARTIN (Minister of National Health and Welfare): May I assure my hon. friend that I am doing that very thing.

Mr. POULIOT: I fully agree with what the hon. member for Macleod has said in his fine speech. Once again I congratulate him wholeheartedly. Last year I took up the same question. I do not understand why there should be this gap in connection with those who suffer from infirmities. The old people have something and the needy mothers receive help from the provincial governments, but no help is given to those who suffer from infirmity, who are poor and who cannot subscribe to any form of contributory insurance.

I have made a survey which I shall speak about at another time, but tonight I appeal to the minister. I know his big heart and I know he plays no politics in connection with health. I know he places that as being of the greatest importance to the state. He understands these problems. I remember, when his predecessor sat there two or three years ago, he said, in answer to a resolution moved either by the hon. member for Compton or the hon. member for Terrebonne—I see it is eleven o'clock.

Progress reported.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): Tomorrow we shall take up the two resolutions in the name of the Minister of Justice, one being a measure to amend the Railway Act, the Exchequer Court Act and the Judges Act and