

McCann) belongs to one of the learned faculties, and the other, the hon. member for North Battleford (Mrs. Nielsen), is fully qualified as a mother to speak on behalf of the children.

As I did not agree with the so-called social legislation which was introduced in 1935 by the Bennett government, I do not agree with this kind of legislation, and for several reasons. The main one is that I strongly object to centralization. In my view the more centralization we have in any field, the less efficiency we have.

This bill is astonishing in many respects. It refers to health, social security and social welfare. That is the basis of the bill. Every hon. member who has already spoken on the bill has repeated time and again health, social security, social welfare. What is that? There is no definition in the bill. We have to guess what it is. We have so much difficulty with the interpretation of our obscure legislation as it is now that the least we can ask is a definition of these three terms, "health," "social security" and "social welfare," which together form the cornerstone of this bill, if I understand it well. Why are these terms not defined? Is it to make the bill vague? Is it to circumscribe the operation of the measure to the narrowest possible application? I do not know; I hope not. But here in this bill I point out is a legislative deficiency for which there is no excuse whatever.

What is social welfare? I do not know. What is social security? Who knows what social security is? It may mean everything, and those who are charged with the interpretation of the legislation may remain silent when the question is asked of them. What is health? Health is not defined in the bill. Nobody can say what is the lawmaker's intent with regard to a definition that does not exist. That is the first observation that I have to make in that regard.

The department is defined. There is a very bright definition of it in clause 2, which says:

"Department" means the Department of National Health and Welfare.

Very able! Most profound! The second definition is also very profound. What is the minister?

"Minister" means the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Most profound! The third definition apparently has been written by some solon of no common genius, because it reads:

"Deputy minister" means the deputy minister, or deputy ministers, of national health and welfare.

Those are the only definitions given in the bill, and I do not understand how the Prime

[Mr. Pouliot.]

Minister can introduce a bill containing only those definitions when others are so badly needed. I agree entirely with some statements of the hon. member for Renfrew South. He has told us that the purpose of a bill like this is to promote the health of the people of Canada. I cannot, however, share his views regarding centralization.

The next section deals with the establishment of the department, and the second subsection states:

The minister shall have the management and direction of the department and shall hold office during pleasure.

Section 6 of the bill reads:

The governor in council may establish such boards, committees and councils as he deems necessary, to assist and advise the minister and to cooperate with provincial authorities for the purposes of this act.

The minister is to have the management and direction of the department, but on the other hand he will receive assistance and advice from boards, committees and councils which are to assist and advise him. This means that the deputy minister or deputy ministers who are to be named apparently are not considered competent enough to advise the minister. If that is not carrying bureaucracy to the utmost, I do not know what it is. We are to have not only one deputy minister, but perhaps two, as well as all sorts of bureaucrats surrounding the minister and preventing him from seeing the sick man on the street or anywhere else.

Subsection 2 of section 4 reads:

Such other officers, clerks and employees as are necessary for the proper conduct of the business of the department shall be appointed or employed in the manner authorized by law.

All appointments are supposed to be made by the civil service commission. Years ago the present Minister of National Defence for Air (Mr. Power) said that all appointments to the national defence purchasing board would be made by the civil service commission. We know very well that no dollar a year men have been appointed by the civil service commission up to now. It is true that that board is now the Department of Munitions and Supply. Subsection 3 of section 4 gives me some anxiety. It reads:

Notwithstanding anything contained in the immediately preceding subsection of this section, the governor in council may designate persons who, prior to the commencement of this act, were members of the staff of the Department of Pensions and National Health to be members of the staff of the department, and, upon such designation, such members shall be deemed to have been transferred to the department on the date of the commencement of this act, but no person shall by reason of such designation be eligible to be certified as permanent by the civil service commission.