

of course being the top class. Since the outbreak of war I am informed that more than 60,000 men have been discharged or have deserted from the armed forces, which I submit is an appalling indictment of conditions in our country.

Conditions are not growing better. Last year I had occasion to refer to the shocking conditions that existed in Halifax, and I should like to draw attention to the fact that conditions in that city have grown worse during the past year. Recently the Rockefeller foundation sent two of its physicians, Doctor D. Bruce Wilson and Doctor W. A. McIntosh, to make a survey of conditions in Halifax, at the request of the provincial minister of health, Doctor F. R. Davis. What does their report show? The deathrate in Halifax has risen from 14.5 in 1937 to 17.2 in 1941, and is almost 45 per cent higher than anywhere else in Nova Scotia. Yet in order that they may do their duty and defend our country in this time of war we are sending literally thousands of our young men and some young women to Halifax, or through Halifax to other points. It seems to me that the condition of this great Canadian city affects not only the citizens of Halifax and the people of Nova Scotia, but the people of this country as a whole. Conditions in that city ought to be a dominion responsibility. Tuberculosis, one of that city's major health problems, is not even reported as it occurs, though these doctors state that an early report by medical men would cut down the incidence of that disease very considerably. Another appalling fact is that two and a half times as many new cases of syphilis were reported in 1941 as in 1939, and the extent of the social diseases problem is unknown because provision for treatment and control is entirely inadequate. In their report these medical men state that some of the doctors in Halifax are not even reporting these cases and that the committee which was established in that city to look after this particular social disease has not been meeting. They go on to tell us of the disgraceful manner in which the food of that city is handled. They tell us of the filth around the market place, the filthy lavatory accommodation and the wretched and entirely inadequate milk supply. Yet, as I say, we are sending thousands of our young men and women through that city. I am not going to quote further from that exceedingly gloomy report, but to my mind it is a disgrace not only to the city of Halifax, not only to the province of Nova Scotia, but to the entire Dominion of Canada.

I raised this question last year after I had seen the terrible slum conditions in Halifax, but apparently very little has been done to

[Mr. Coldwell.]

meet the situation there. The report of these two medical men states that the slum population of Halifax is out of all proportion to the size of the city itself. I believe the Minister of Pensions and National Health (Mr. Mackenzie) has obtained or is about to obtain a copy of the report to which I have referred, and no doubt he will give it his attention; at least I hope he will do so.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): I may inform my hon. friend that we passed an order in council yesterday providing a substantial contribution toward the betterment of health conditions in Halifax.

Mr. COLDWELL: I am pleased to hear that, and may I say that I trust the minister will supervise the expenditure of the financial aid in order that it may do the job I am sure the government hopes will be done in that city. In line with this plea for the prevention rather than the cure of the disease—for such, to my way of thinking, is the real purpose of any health scheme we may adopt or support in this country—we have to consider allied nutritional problems.

I have seen a good many reports on the nutrition of the Canadian people, a people with a comparatively high standard of living. Yet it is surprising how many people in Canada are insufficiently and inadequately nourished. To a large degree that is due to inadequate incomes, but not altogether, for one sometimes finds malnutrition in families where the wrong kind of food is eaten, but who have enough money to get the right kind of food.

Those of us who visited Great Britain a year ago had the privilege of seeing some of the great community kitchens established in that country; and we learned there, with a good deal of satisfaction, that in spite of the fact that many kinds of food are scarce, and some unobtainable, and in spite of the fact that they have had to cut down very largely on the foods to which the British people were used in normal times, yet government supervision of feeding in Great Britain, even on the lower levels, so far as types of food are concerned, had improved the health of the people to the point where, we were told, the British people to-day, taken as a nation, are probably better nourished than they were in the days before the war. Therefore I say that we should be giving attention to the problem of nutrition.

I mentioned the incidence of the venereal disease, but when I was doing so I omitted to say that I hoped adequate provision would be made this year to deal with that problem. I do not know just what is in the appropriation for that work.