

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): It occurs to me that there are many fields in this department where we would like to do more. However, there is a limit to the public purse. That is a rather harsh statement, but it is so.

As I have indicated before, we would like to do more in various fields. Actually, I would not want to state government policy as to what might be done at some time in the future. I would not like to give my own opinions, beyond this rather broad statement, that in all of these assistance programs there could be more done for the recipients.

In the case of blind persons, actually, the earnings allowed are considerably higher than they are in other cases—under the Disabled Persons Act, for instance, and so on. We are continuously having representations made in all these fields, not only in respect of the blind.

As minister I do not think I would care to set out for the committee my own particular ideas as to what the ultimate might be in all of these fields.

Mr. McDONALD (*Hamilton South*): Is it not the policy of this department to try to help all people, whether they are blind or suffer from some other incapacity?

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): Yes, absolutely.

Mr. McDONALD (*Hamilton South*): Would it not be a good thing for this department to try to find other means of helping these people, rather than to give them a pension, so as to give them greater incentive to go ahead and try to re-establish themselves in the world?

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): We are continuously reviewing the whole situation, with this in view.

Mr. CARTER: I would like to ask Dr. Davidson about that definition he gave a moment ago with respect to blindness. Is that definition subject to review periodically and, if so, when was the last review?

Dr. DAVIDSON: There is a rewording of the definition in the regulations which were discussed, so far as certain changes are concerned, with the provinces last September—and which, I think, are likely to be considered in their final form by the government in the course of the next few weeks.

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): I think it was mentioned at a previous meeting that we did have a conference, the first that had been held in some few years. They are not held every year. But at that time there were various suggested changes in the regulations agreed upon by both the provinces and ourselves.

There were others, other fields, where there is still a variance of opinion. But, as a result of this meeting last September, many of these regulations—well, I think they have gone to the provinces now, for their final approval.

Dr. DAVIDSON: They are now ready for your consideration.

Mr. CATHERS: Blindness carries with it great horror and great sympathy. Is it getting more assistance, however, than, let us say, some of these other things through which a man can be just as handicapped in carrying on his occupation? For example, a man may be knocked out at 50 years of age by a heart condition. He is not collecting anything.

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): Unless he is totally and permanently disabled.

Mr. CATHERS: How would his pension compare with that of a blind person?

Mr. MONTEITH (*Perth*): It would be the same. By the way, the federal government, in respect of the blind, pays 75 per cent of the pension. In the other assistance programs it is 50 per cent. The blind person is allowed an extra earning, before it affects his pension.

Dr. DAVIDSON: May I supplement that by saying to Mr. Cathers—and make a correction at the same time, in connection with an answer I gave to Mr. Bendickson—that a single person, under the Blind Persons Act can have