

It is quite an experience when you come into a city like Calgary, Vancouver, Toronto, or some of our other cities, to see all our staff, and most important of all, to visit our institutions, particularly our very large hospitals.

In 1958 as I stated we visited western Canada, and in 1959 we visited our hospitals and staffs in eastern Canada, Toronto, London, Montreal, Quebec city, Saint John, Halifax and Charlottetown. Unfortunately I did not get across to Newfoundland. We have not as yet established a hospital of our own there, but it is our intention to build soon, and have our plans about ready.

We have pretty well worked out with the officials and with the government in Newfoundland the steps that are to be taken to set up a hospital there.

That then, Mr. Chairman, is so much for the work that was done during the recess.

The most important work of our department today is that of medical treatment. I might say that I was very pleased indeed, as I visited our hospitals, with the attention our veterans are receiving. Our hospitals are well staffed. And the work done is becoming more and more the most important the Department of Veterans Affairs has to do.

Many of our men who had been in hospitals for many years are now over 70 years of age and are not able to look after themselves they now require more nursing attention and more attention from the different staffs. We also find that the number of those who require hospitalization is rapidly increasing. So this is very important work.

I wish to say that I am very pleased indeed with the work that Dr. Crawford who is the head of our treatment organization and his different staffs are doing in these institutions.

The work which you will have before you this year is not as extensive as we had rather hoped it would be. Your chief task this year will be to review the estimates of the department. This in itself if thoroughly done—and I am sure it is your intention to do it in a thorough manner—will take considerable time.

We also will have one bill before us, a bill to amend the War Veterans Allowance Act; I am not going to tell you what amendments we propose at the present time. You will know that in due course. They are not particularly extensive.

There will be many opportunities during the review of the estimates to discuss different phases of veterans legislation. The Pension Act can be discussed. The War Veterans Allowance, and Children of the War Dead Acts all these can be discussed while the estimates are before the committee.

I have no doubt we will also have delegations from different veterans organizations, and I might say here that we welcome these delegations as we have in the past; and we will welcome their suggestions.

We do not promise to carry out all the suggestions and recommendations that are made at different times, but we do welcome them. Any recommendations that are made, I can assure you, will be given very careful study.

We have a very interesting delegation before us this morning, and I add my welcome to that of the chairman to this delegation of non pensioned veterans widows. I know them well. They are old friends of mine. I have seen them off and on on a good many occasions, and I want to say that they always present a very interesting brief, and present it in a very interesting manner. We have been very happy in the past in that we have been able to carry out—I am speaking now of veterans committees—most of the major representations which have been made to the committees, by this organization.

Of course, they are like every other group of people in Canada, whether it is the western grain growers, the fishermen from the eastern coast, or the