

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

I should like to put on record an article from the *Hamilton Spectator* of June 23, 1966. I quote:

Hamilton doctors will continue sending young children to the Ontario Hospital unless the city supplies adequate child mental health services.

That warning came yesterday from Dr. Grant Beacock, mental health research chairman for the Hamilton Social Planning Council.

The planning council advised board of control yesterday to take prompt action—recommending a major increase in the city's child mental health clinic staff.

When the clinic was set up in 1948, Dr. Beacock said, it had an authorized staff of 5.5., including professionals and clerical workers.

The authorized staff is still the same size, although the city population has grown by 50 per cent, he pointed out.

The actual staff, Dr. Beacock said, is two full-time and one half-time.

That is why serious cases sometimes wait two months for treatment and chronic cases go to the Ontario Hospital, health authorities have reported.

The staff should be brought up to an establishment of 15, the social planning council recommended, almost triple its present strength.

Added personnel would cost the city an extra \$100,000 yearly.

The present staff shortage is having a crippling effect on the clinic's operations, the council told board of control.

"The situation is so bad," said Dr. Beacock, "that Dr. William Hogg, one of the best child psychiatrists in the country, is doing most of his own social work and psychological work.

"He's even writing his own letters in longhand because he hasn't got secretarial staff."

Board of control has been made aware of the situation, a social planning spokesman said.

A request for more staff was rejected in 1962. Another request, contained in the health department's 1966 estimate, was chopped from the budget by the board.

The board promised to "study" the latest request.

A controversy over the treatment of youngsters at the Ontario Hospital arose from a story in *The Spectator* last month that a 10-year old boy was in an adult ward with alcoholics, homosexuals and mental patients.

The Welland boy, known as Grant, is still confined to the adult ward and a meeting of experts from various agencies is planned for tomorrow to discuss the case.

The boy, considered unmanageable, was turned over to the Welland Children's Aid Society, but they did not have the facilities to handle him. He was certified by doctors at Welland Medical Health Clinic for admission to the Ontario Hospital.

Treatment centres for retarded and disturbed children in Ontario are desperately overcrowded, and children in urgent need of care and treatment can only be put on waiting lists. The obvious answer is more facilities and more people; more hospitals, schools and clinics; more psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, social workers and therapists.

[Mr. Howe (Hamilton South).]

• (10:20 p.m.)

All of this means more money, but this kind of expansion is beyond the resources of most municipalities. It is long past time for the federal government to recognize its responsibility in this field, and to follow at once the recommendations of the Hall Commission in this field.

**Mrs. Margaret Rideout (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare):** The federal government recognizes the responsibility it has in the field of assistance to mentally retarded children. I may say that when the government was approached by the Canadian Association for Mentally Retarded Children a meeting was arranged between representatives of the Department of National Health and Welfare and Dr. Alan Roehr, the national director of the association.

I might mention that Dr. Roehr is a personal friend of mine and it was my privilege to speak to meetings of the association in Winnipeg, Toronto, and Fredericton. I had at that time an opportunity to discuss with Dr. Roehr, and others concerned with the mentally retarded, the problems they face and the projects they have in mind. I am thinking in particular of the crusade for Canada's mentally retarded.

The hon. member will be interested to know that the Department of National Health and Welfare, together with the other departments which offer assistance in this field, are meeting with Dr. Roehr and other association representatives in an endeavour to find out just how the federal government can assist further in this most important program. I might also say that existing programs include the mental health grant, the child and maternal health grant, categorical assistance programs and programs under the civilian rehabilitation branch of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

CANADIAN CONSTITUTION—SUGGESTED  
STUDY BY PARLIAMENTARY  
COMMITTEE

**Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, a few days ago I put the following question to the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson):

In the light of recent electoral developments in Quebec and the strong views on the need for constitutional change that have been expressed from time to time by the new prime minister of Quebec, will the government reconsider the urgency of the appointment of a committee of the house to study from a federal viewpoint the question of constitutional change for Canada?