

The National Housing Act was revised and broadened in the light of the intensive studies which had been conducted by the parliamentary and general advisory committees on reconstruction and other agencies. Now that the war-time demand upon materials and labour has terminated we find evidence that its provisions are destined to make an increasing contribution to the solution of the country's acute housing problem. You will find a copy of the Act at page 115 of Appendix 1.

The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration Act, and the United Nations Mutual Aid Act, copies of which are tabled as Appendices 32 and 33, have a place in this context, because, undoubtedly, whatever the financial arrangements may be, the contribution to be made by Canada to the relief of devastated countries will help to maintain production and employment in the transition period at home.

In the field of social security, two important measures were adopted by Parliament in the session of 1944:

- (a) The Department of National Health and Welfare Act.
- (b) The Family Allowances Act.

In connection with the National Health and Welfare Act, a copy of which is tabled as Appendix 32, I have already referred to the fact that certain functions of the Department of Pensions and National Health were assigned to this new department. At the same time, the minister of that department has been charged with the development of a national co-ordinated system of social welfare services. A beginning to this end has been made in the Family Allowances Act and in the Dominion-Provincial Conference looking to a new agreement covering the financial and constitutional powers of the Dominion and the Provinces so that each jurisdiction may play its appropriate part in the development of real security for the people of Canada.

The Family Allowances Act, found at page 87 of Appendix 1, is an essential foundation stone in the erection of a structure of national social security in Canada, and is already playing an important part in supplementing the incomes of the low-income group. It is of special importance to war workers whose employment has been interrupted, in that it supplements unemployment insurance benefit in proportion to the number of children in the family. It also constitutes an important addition to war pension in families where there are children.

The year 1944 witnessed a number of other important steps in the organization of the country for the period of demobilization and reconstruction.

A cabinet committee on reconstruction was formed by P.C. 7993, copy of which is tabled as Appendix 35.

In recognition of the importance of disseminating suitable public information; the rehabilitation information committee, an interdepartmental committee of public officials, was set up by P.C. 8094 to co-ordinate the activities of the several government departments concerned with demobilization, rehabilitation and re-establishment.

Appendix 1, the reference manual on rehabilitation, represents a part of the work of this committee, and the smaller handbook on rehabilitation for the use of government officials, which I now table as Appendix 36, was also compiled under the direction of the same committee.

I have also arranged for the distribution to the committee of a number of other booklets and pamphlets which were issued by the committee or by departments of the government with the approval of the committee. These are:

Issued by the Department of Veterans Affairs:

"Back to Civil Life" (Appendix 41)

"What's Ahead" (Appendix 42)

"The Veterans' Land Act, 1942 Handbook" (Appendix 43)

"The Community and Re-establishment" (Appendix 44).